

Voyage to Antarctica

January 22 - February 1, 2025 • 11 Days • \$11,500

NOTE: As of November 5, 2024, WAI has released unclaimed cabins back to the ship. If you have a serious interest in joining this group, please contact us by email and we will inquire about availability. fun@walkingadventures.com

Seven has long been considered a “lucky” number in the Western World. After epic journeys to the 7th continent with intrepid groups of walkers in 2009, 2010, 2015, and 2020, it’s time for a return to #7. All travelers are welcome, but those who have visited the other 5 continents with us are invited to become a part of an exclusive group—the WAI 7 Continent Club (travelers who have walked on all 7 Continents with WAI)! This tour offers walks in both Argentina (South America) and Antarctica.

Voyage to Antarctica is not your garden variety Adventure! Flying to the bottom of the world, sailing through the oft-tumultuous Drake Passage, going ashore in Zodiac rubber boats, walking/hiking over uneven, rocky terrain, encountering wildlife and icebergs close-up—all combine to make this the most adventurous Adventure on the WAI menu. Antarctica is a continent like no other! This is an experience like no other!

It is our profound pleasure and privilege to share with you our *Voyage to Antarctica*!

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Penguins** - pinstriped stars of any trip to Antarctica provide entertainment every time we go ashore
- **Birds** - albatrosses, petrels, terns, skuas, and shags amaze us with antics and acrobatics
- **Seals** - crabeater seals and fur seals are likely; leopard seals, the penguin predator, are also lurking; if lucky, we’ll see bobbing blobs of blubber called elephant seals
- **Whales** - humpbacks and minke are most likely, though several species feed in these waters
- **Ice** - you may be surprised at how varied and full of color, light, and texture ice can be
- **Naturalists** - education was never this fun and fascinating when we were in school!
- **Wow Walks** - stroll amidst surreal southern landscapes that few humans have trod!

NOTE: As of June 21, 2024, WAI is still offering cabins on this *Voyage to Antarctica* on a space-available basis. Space will be confirmed with our ship at the time of registration. Feel free to call for details and updates.

The following video was produced by our partner as a general overview.

Kayaking is the only activity portrayed that will likely not be offered on our cruise.

[Contact Us](#)

[Tour Type: High Adventure, Small Ship Cruising](#)

Trip Details

- [What's Included](#)
- [Reviews](#)

INCLUDING

- Accommodations onboard the *M/V Ortelius*, tour price is based on accommodations in Twin Porthole cabin (Upgrade details below in Cabins Available on Our Ship paragraph)
- Group departure transfer (one departure offered by the ship) from the ship to Ushuaia airport on February 1
- All Zodiac cruising and shore transfers
- 29 meals: all meals aboard ship - breakfast, lunch, dinner (BLD)
- Coffee, tea, & snacks throughout the cruise
- Complimentary use of rubber boots and snow shoes for shore excursions and walks
- All walks
- Walk credit for 2 walks for those collecting IVV credit
- Services of Expedition team for shore excursions, including leading some walks
- Lectures aboard ship by naturalist guides & expedition team members
- WAI guide service throughout (2 guides)
- Pooled tips aboard ship are not included
- Pricing is based on double occupancy; single accommodations are prohibitively priced aboard our small ship. Contact us for details.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Pre-cruise activities

The famed Beagle Channel and Tierra del Fuego National Park offer excellent opportunities to explore some of South America's most isolated and ruggedly scenic landscapes before you sail south for Antarctica. Walking Adventures therefore offers you the chance to visit one or both of these places before our cruise sets sail on January 22.

WAI pre-cruise packages allow you to spend either 1 or 2 pre-nights in Ushuaia, which not only allows you to rest up after your long flights, but also gives you the chance to participate in one or both of these "end of the world" excursions.

In order to participate in both of these pre-tour activities, it is necessary to arrive into Ushuaia on January 20 and spend two pre-nights at our group hotel (Los Naranjos). If you are interested only in the Tierra del Fuego excursion, you need to arrive into Ushuaia by at least January 21.

Travelers may choose either the 1 pre-night package or the 2 pre-nights package and may then choose whether to add one or both of these two optional day trips.

All four options are offered independently of one another so it is also possible to arrive on January 20 or 21 and opt out of the day trip excursions.

Below is a menu of pre-cruise services along with a brief description and pricing.

2-night Hotel Package in Ushuaia: January 20 & 21, 2025 (\$390 per person based on double occupancy; \$190 single supplement)

- Travelers arriving into Ushuaia on January 20 are transferred from Ushuaia Airport (USH) to our hotel (Los Naranjos), for a 2-night stay on January 20 and 21. The outgoing transfer to the port on January 22 is also included. Breakfast is included on the mornings of January 21 and 22, and dinner is included the evening of January 21. Our hotel is situated in the heart of town, walkable to several restaurants and attractions.

1-night Hotel Package in Ushuaia: January 21, 2025 (\$275 per person based on double occupancy; \$95 single supplement)

- Travelers arriving into Ushuaia on January 21 are transferred from Ushuaia Airport (USH) to our hotel (Los Naranjos), for a 1-night stay on January 21. The outgoing transfer to the port on January 22 is also included. Breakfast is included on the morning of January 22, and dinner is included the evening of January 21. Our hotel is situated in the heart of town, walkable to several restaurants and attractions.

January 21 Beagle Channel Excursion (\$250 per person. With 15 or more participants, the price drops to \$175 per person)

- We depart mid-morning for the Ushuaia wharf where we board a catamaran bound for the Bird and Sea Lions Islands. Our cruise continues around the Bay of Ushuaia

offering excellent panoramic views of the city ringed by mountains.

- At the end of the bay, we cross Paso Chico, passing into mythical Beagle Channel. Our route takes us through the Archipelago Bridges to the Island of the Birds, home to a diversity of seabirds such as cormorants, albatrosses, ducks and seagulls. Later, we approach Isla de los Lobos (Island of the Wolves) to spy on an colony of sea lions, disembarking for a short walk at Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse. Early this afternoon, we arrive back in Ushuaia and return to the hotel.
- A free afternoon back in Ushuaia also offers a chance to explore the Maritime and Prison Museum in Ushuaia on foot from our hotel. This cost is not included in your package, but your WAI guide will gladly walk you to the venue where you would pay the equivalent of about \$20 USD to take in fascinating local history of this remote outpost.
- In order to participate in the Beagle Channel Excursion, it is necessary to book the 2-night hotel package listed above arriving into Ushuaia on January 20.

January 22 Tierra del Fuego National Park Excursion & Walk (\$275 per person)

- After depositing our luggage at the cruise office this morning, our bus takes us 10 km west of Ushuaia to visit the stark beauty of remote Tierra del Fuego National Park. Features of the day include landscapes along the Beagle Channel, Lapataia Bay, Green Lagoon, the Ovando River, Acigami Lake. Two walk options are available, a guided walk of medium difficulty along the 7 km Coastal Path, or a guided walk combining shorter and easier trails. This is an IVV-sanctioned walk.
- Both walking groups meet at the end of their hikes for a special lunch (included) prepared by our guides and served in the pristine natural setting of the park. Early this afternoon, we explore more scenic highlights of the park by bus before a return to Ushuaia and a mid-afternoon embarkation on our Antarctic ship.

Cruise optional activities

Navigational workshop: During our voyage, we will visit some of Antarctica's remote islands, including the Wauwermans Islands, where we chart and make depth measurements while exploring the area in our Zodiac boats.

While all travelers are included in Zodiac shore excursions, navigation workshops and presentations about historic Antarctic voyages specific to this cruise are offered.

Select this activity if you're interested in learning the history, theory, and practice of land and sea navigation. Topics covered include the use of sextants, chart positioning, and GPS functions, among others. All courses are led by experienced expedition guides. These workshops and activities are complementary.

"Wow! What a great adventure! Another check on my bucket list is done, with Argentina as a bonus country. Antarctica was even more than I imagined. The Drake Passage was a powerful display of mother nature. The polar plunge was perfect - another check on the list."

- Eloy Y.

“Opportunity to meet locals, participate in or understand the culture and history and chances to walk around and truly see the cities and countryside.”

- Susan S., Maple Valley, WA

“I feel safe—details are taken care of. Your careful planning & giving us the best experience you are able to give. WAI has ‘heart’.”

- Thelma Y., Spokane, WA

“I love the guides; warm, friendly, and very knowledgeable.”

- Joanne I.A., Turlock, CA

“Spectacular scenery & the thrill of standing on the top of the hill. EVERY ship staff member was exceptional—best of any hotel or ship we’ve travelled with—really made our trip special. And WAI guides—as always, they elevated the mundane & the spectacular to make it even better.”

- Susan B., Springfield, VA

“Penguins, penguins, penguins! Loved it. The beyond description beauty of this part of the world. Zodiac cruises. The Penguin Post Office.”

- Eileen R., Las Cruces, NM

“Was surprised at the size of the icebergs and height of the mountains. Was so great that we could go ashore to visit historical places and have closer contact with the penguins, seals, and birds.”

- Jean W., Florence, OR

“Antarctica was a unique tour—a once in a lifetime experience. It is beyond description—the adorable penguins, the daring seals, elusive whales & countless breathtaking icebergs. Another great well-planned WAI tour.”

- Margie M., Gaithersburg, MD

“Every WAI trip has been excellent in every way. We have built faith in WAI and always know that the value and the quality of any trip offered will exceed expectation... This trip has been a great adventure. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who loves the great outdoors. The beauty & quiet of Antarctica cannot be described with words alone. This is a must-see first-hand experience.”

- Kay H.V., Leesburg, FL

“Antarctica was way beyond my expectations. The beauty of this continent is indescribable. One has to experience it in person to comprehend its awesome & spectacular beauty & wildlife. An adventure experience like no other.”

- Kay E., Bedford, IN

- [360.260.9393](tel:360.260.9393)
- [Email Us](#)

Itinerary

This itinerary is only a projection of our likely experience. Every trip to Antarctica varies depending on ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. Landings are subject to site availabilities, permissions, and environmental concerns per IAATO regulations.

Official sailing plans and landing slots are scheduled with IAATO prior to the start of the season, but the expedition leader determines the final plan. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises.

Click on each day block for more details. (BLD) refers to meals included - Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.

[DAY 1~January 22: Set sail from Ushuaia, Argentina \(D\)](#)

Due to challenges involved in flying to the southernmost city on the planet during a North American winter, and the inability to catch up the ship after she sets sail, travelers are

strongly advised to arrive into Ushuaia at least 1 night early (January 20 or 21).

A series of optional services to maximize this “bottom of the world” opportunity are listed above under Optional Activities.

The epic Adventure departs late this afternoon, January 22, on the *M/V Ortelius* from Ushuaia, southernmost city on the planet. Embarkation is from 4 to 5 p.m. Shortly thereafter, we weigh anchor and your voyage begins where the world drops off!

This evening, we sail through the mountain-fringed Beagle Channel en route to Antarctica, the “7th continent”, a shadowy myth throughout human history until just a couple hundred years ago.

[DAYS 2 & 3~January 23 & 24: At Sea \(BLD\)](#)

Leaving the Beagle Channel, we head south into the Drake Passage, crossing the Antarctic Convergence where warmer currents meet colder Antarctic waters and encountering some of the same conditions experienced by great polar explorers who first charted these regions.

This rite of passage can be a challenge. At this latitude, no land masses provide obstacles to ocean currents and the U.S. Navy has classified this as one of the world’s most forbidding bodies of water.

Fortunately, our crossing takes place in the relatively placid period of Antarctica’s summer. Still, travelers need to be mentally and physically prepared for rough waters with seasickness remedies and an informed strategy for moving about the ship if conditions are rough.

This time onboard allows us to prepare for the exciting days ahead with lectures and other presentations by the ship naturalists and expedition team. We will likely encounter a changing variety of bird life including four different species of albatross, cape pigeons, southern fulmars, and three different species of petrel.

[DAYS 4 to 7~January 25 to 28: Antarctic Peninsula \(BLD\)](#)

As we continue south, we sail between gray stone peaks streaked with snow and towers of broken blue-white ice. Initially, we pass the snow-capped Melchior Islands and Schollaert Channel, sailing between Brabant and Anvers Islands.

We plan two shore excursions each day. Zodiac cruising is a regular feature of our landings, often zipping us amongst mountains of floating ice. Chances are good for encountering Humpback, Minke, and Fin whales, either from the ship, or even close up from our zodiacs!

Following are some of the sites we may visit:

Danco Island - Activities here may focus on the gentoo penguins nesting on the island, in addition to the Weddell and crabeater seals that can be found nearby.

Neko Harbour - An epic landscape of mammoth glaciers and endless wind-carved snow, Neko Harbour offers opportunities for a Zodiac cruise and landing that afford the closest views of the surrounding alpine peaks. In windless conditions the sea acts like a massive, magnificent mirror.

Paradise Bay - You may be able to take a Zodiac cruise in these sprawling, ice-flecked waters, where there's a good chance you'll encounter humpback and minke whales.

Port Lockroy - After sailing through the Neumayer Channel, you may get a chance to visit the former British research station - now a museum and post office - of Port Lockroy on Goudier Island. You may also be able to partake in activities around Jougla Point, meeting gentoo penguins and blue-eyed shags.

Late mornings and afternoons are often spent in the lecture room, advancing our understanding of this environment through naturalist presentations on various aspects of the natural and historical wonders of this fascinating region at the bottom of the globe.

[DAY 8~January 29: South Shetland Islands \(BLD\)](#)

The volcanic islands of the South Shetland Islands are wind-swept, often cloaked in mist, and well known for their prolific wildlife!

Expect to see Chinstrap penguin rookeries, a variety of seabird species with likely closeup sightings of Fur seals, and perhaps Elephant seals.

At Deception Island, the ship plunges through Neptune's Bellows, a narrow opening that leads to a sea-filled caldera, creating a natural harbor for our ship! Ashore we'll find hot springs, an abandoned whaling station, and thousands of cape petrels, kelp gulls, brown and south polar skuas, and Antarctic terns.

Half Moon Island is an alternative stop. Here chinstrap penguins and Weddell seals often haul out onto the beach near Cámara Base, an Argentine scientific research station. Conditions on the Drake Passage determine the exact time of departure for our return to reality.

[DAYS 9 & 10~January 30 & 31: Return across the Drake \(BLD\)](#)

On our return voyage across the Drake Passage, we are again followed by a plethora of seabirds we became acquainted with during our southern passage. Intriguing lectures are made on the return voyage by the ship's illustrious expedition staff.

[DAY 11~February 1: Depart from Argentina \(B\)](#)

Disembark at Ushuaia this morning and catch flights home at the close of the most unforgettable adventure of your life!

Before You Book

Click on each heading for more details.

[How Do I Lock in My Place on This Adventure?](#)

January 23, 2024

During the week-long Priority Booking phase which ends January 29, pre-registered travelers have priority access to full registration, which requires an additional \$900 (\$1,000 total registration). Deposits are non-refundable after this time.

MODIFIED PAYMENT & CANCELLATION POLICIES FOR ANTARCTICA

Because of the high demand for cruising through Antarctica and the short supply of the more attractive small ship experiences, cruise companies are somewhat aggressive in their cancellation policies. Normal WAI cancellation policies (see the [General Tour Conditions](#)) are therefore superseded by those of the ship.

We will use the following tour payment schedule that synchronizes with non-refundable payments due the ship. All payments received from travelers are therefore non-refundable after the due date.

March 15, 2024: \$1000 per person

May 14, 2024: \$1000 per person

July 15, 2024: \$2000 per person

September 15, 2024: \$2000 per person

November 15, 2024: final balance

Once a tour has a viable number of participants, an “Adventure Advice” email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip. Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

Please follow this link to read our full [General Tour Conditions](#).

[What is a High Adventure Tour?](#)

“High Adventure” is a tag we add to tours to warn travelers of possible additional challenges. These challenges could stem from a variety of sources including:

- A high percentage of 1-night hotels
- More time driving than usual or challenging traffic settings (e.g. India)
- Walks routes that are more challenging on average (e.g. Appalachian Trail, Swiss & French Alps)
- More walking per day than usual (e.g. Hiking the Camino de Santiago)
- Walks and/or travel at high altitude (e.g. Peru; Colorado)

- A greater number of mid-tour flights (e.g. Chile)
- Cultural factors that can be stressors (lack of public toilets; extra caution required regarding food and gastro-intestinal challenges - e.g. India, Hiking the Camino de Santiago)

Why is Antarctica considered “high adventure”?

A number of factors contributed to Antarctica being considered one of the highest adventure experiences offered by WAI.

DRAKE PASSAGE—THE RITE OF PASSAGE!

The Drake Passage is the body of water that circles the globe between South America and Antarctica. Partly because there are no significant land masses to block the currents, and due to convergence of seas from all directions, it’s a rough body of water, not to be taken lightly. When aboard, the sea often does not look as rough as the boat feels. Though we are traveling in Antarctica’s summer, and seas are calm relative to winter conditions, the Drake is notoriously fickle, and it can truly be a rite of passage en route to the glories of Antarctica.

If we have a rough crossing, it is essential that you be alert whenever you are not securely seated or lying down. Moving about the ship is a skill you will develop in a few hours, but you need to take this aspect of the trip very seriously while we are in the passage!! Injuries have been sustained by WAI travelers on previous Drake Passage crossings.

The crossing lasts about 36 hours each direction. Seasickness meds are important, and you need to be prepared in this regard, but staying safe while moving about the ship is the bigger issue. Once we arrive in the waters around the Antarctic Peninsula, sailing is calm, and most people are quite comfortable without seasickness meds. More advice will follow in the Travel Tips document.

ZODIAC LANDINGS

Once you have been in a Zodiac rubber boat, you will never forget the feeling of being whisked ashore!! Ship staff members are always available at every landing to give you a helping hand as you get into Zodiacs from our steel gangway and then again to disembark once you arrive ashore. You need to be confident, however, that you can walk down a fairly steep gang-way and command enough leg strength to step down into the Zodiac, which can bob up and down a bit depending upon sea conditions. The crew is extremely efficient about helping us into and out of the Zodiac, so even though it is a unique way to reach land, it may be easier than it sounds!

WET LANDINGS

In nearly all cases, jetties or docks are not available for unloading. In these instances, rubber Zodiac rafts will bring you ashore and unload on beaches or shorelines. This may require wading through shallow water to reach dry land, but the water is always very shallow and the ship provides rubber boots onboard so you will not get your feet wet! Expedition staff are always on hand to assist.

EXTREME REMOTENESS

Once our vessel enters the Drake Passage we will be in the most remote parts of the planet with a complete lack of services, especially medical facilities (though the ship does have a doctor onboard). As a result, travel insurance is required by all ships sailing into Antarctic waters (see Travel Insurance paragraph below).

DOCTOR'S RELEASE FORM

Due to the remote destination to which we are sailing, the ship requires that all passengers be fit and physically prepared for the Adventure. As mentioned, no hospitals or services of any kind are available in Antarctica. A doctor is aboard the ship, but serious medical conditions en route could jeopardize the cruise for everyone if the ship is forced to return to Argentina pre-maturely.

After you register for this trip, you will receive an online link to the ship's Personal Information Form requiring information about your health. Upon their review of this information, the ship is entitled to request a medical release from your doctor. If you are concerned that you may have a medical condition that may disqualify you from participation, it is best to have your check-up before you fully register (but not before pre-registration).

[How Do We Walk in Antarctica?](#)

Short answer—"between piles of penguin poop"! Okay, here's the serious answer. Offering walks from a cruise ship through one of the most remote corners on the globe, with unpredictable weather, can be tricky. See the section below entitled WALK DESCRIPTIONS for information about specific walks. Following are general aspects unique to walking on Antarctica.

- We are subject to the ship's schedule, which is itself subject to a sailing itinerary tightly controlled by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.
- We will participate in multiple shore excursions via Zodiac boats (usually two per day) and walk various distances at each location. Those who've participated in our Galapagos Island walks will be familiar with the pattern used in Antarctica.
- Though there is no possibility for walks of a normal distance (3 to 6 miles), we will package various walks together to add up to at least two official walks for those tracking their walks and collecting walk stamps.
- IVV walk stamps (2) will be applied for from the International Federation of Popular Sports.
- Terrain will be uneven, sometimes icy, often rocky, and there are no roads or fixed trails. The ship will provide rubber boots to take the "wet" out of wet landings. These boots have proven to be adequate for the limited distances we will be walking ashore.
- Walking sticks are strongly recommended.

Your experience will be significantly affected by your level of physical fitness. If not walking regularly at home, we strongly recommend that you make a priority of "training" beforehand in order to both enjoy the trip and avoid medical issues due to overexertion. If you have questions about your ability to participate, please call our office at 1.360.260.9393.

We have adopted a walk difficulty rating system which contains a numeric indicator for trail incline and an alpha indicator for trail terrain. The explanation for this system is presented on the table below:

INCLINE

1. Minimal hills or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: <200 feet.
2. Some moderate hills and stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 200-1000 feet.
3. Some significant hill or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 1000-2000 feet.

TERRAIN

- A. Almost entirely on pavement.
- B. A significant part of the route is on well-groomed trails with very few obstacles.
- C. A significant part of the route is on somewhat difficult terrain (rocky / rooted paths or soft sand).

[Walk Descriptions](#)

Below are descriptions of walks we have enjoyed on previous Antarctica tours.

Some of these walks will almost certainly be part of our itinerary, but because landfalls depend largely upon weather and navigation factors, these descriptions are given only as examples of the kind of walking we will do during shore excursions along the Antarctic Peninsula and in the South Shetland Islands.

WHALER'S BAY, DECEPTION ISLAND ~ 5 KM, RATED 2B

Whaler's Bay in the caldera of Deception Island offers a few options for discovery. One direction takes us along a sandy beach for a short climb over lava flows to the viewpoint at Neptune's Window. A second spur trail climbs Ronald Hill, with an elevation gain of just over 300 feet, providing outstanding views, in good weather, of the island and sea-filled caldera.

HANNAH POINT ~ 3.5 KM, RATED 2B

Hannah Point offers a marvelous out and back hike from the landing beach around penguin rookeries, past blubbery piles of elephant seals, cutting across the sloped hill of cinder and gravel back down to a beach where we have the chance to discover fossils.

CUVERVILLE ISLAND ~ 2 KM, RATED 2B

Cuverville Island is a stone's throw from the mainland of the Antarctic Peninsula and is home to one of the largest Gentoo penguin colonies in Antarctica. Walking here generally takes place along the shore, with the option to climb a hill that gains us close proximity to the penguin rookeries and provides stunning views out over the iceberg-strewn water (where our ship awaits us) and over to the mainland.

NEKO HARBOUR ~ 1 KM, RATED 2B

The hike here passes penguin rookeries and ascends a snow field to a rock outcrop with commanding views of the bay. Glaciers feed into the bay here, often calving while we are in the area. When conditions are right, some of our best photography takes place on this hike!

JOUGLA POINT ~ 1.5 KM, RATED 2C

This walk is normally paired with a visit to Port Lockroy, the British scientific station boasting the only post office on our journey. The route begins with a detour of 100 meters to a blue-eyed shag rookery. Retracing our steps, we climb to a high point on the island, with awesome views of the Neumayer Channel. This involves crossing a snow patch and tricky footing, at times, over loose stone, sometimes stepping from stone to stone.

PETERMANN ISLAND ~ 2.5 KM, RATED 2B

A hike on Petermann Island leads to Petermann's southernmost point. The route has two spur trails. The first spur takes us to a small rock promontory past the world's southernmost Gentoo penguin colony. Crossing a rocky stream, snow patches, and rocky areas takes us to a viewpoint with a nice view of the colonies. We return to the start point and go left on the longer spur, (twice the distance of the first) that passes colonies of Gentoo and traverses partially melted snow fields to a rock outcrop with views of the other side of the island.

PLÉNEAU ISLAND ~ 1.5 - 2 KM, RATED 2C

The visit here generally goes first to see a Gentoo penguin colony where Elephant seals are also known to lounge. Retracing our steps, we climb through rock outcroppings, used earlier in the year as penguin rookeries, to the summit of this small island. Breathtaking views can be had here of the iceberg-bejeweled bay on the opposite side of Pléneau. This hike has tricky footing in several places, and the rock surfaces can be slippery. The second half of our visit to Pléneau typically involves a Zodiac iceberg cruise where we've had encounters with leopard seals in the past.

[About Our Ship](#)

The ice-strengthened vessel *M/V Ortelius* is an excellent vessel for Polar expedition cruises in Antarctica. The ship was built in Gdynia, Poland in 1989, was named "Marina Svetaeva", and served as a special purpose vessel for the Russian Academy of Science. The vessel has since been re-flagged and renamed "Ortelius".

The ship's namesake, Dutch/Flemish cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1527 -1598), published the first modern world atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* or Theatre of the World in 1570. At that time, the atlas was the most expensive book ever printed.

The vessel has the highest ice-class notation (UL1 equivalent to 1A) and is therefore capable of navigating in solid one-year sea ice and loose multi-year pack ice. *M/V Ortelius* is an exceptional expedition vessel for 108 passengers with lots of open-deck spaces.

The vessel is manned by 20 highly experienced international nautical crew, 19 international hotel crew, 7 expedition staff in Antarctica (1 expedition leader and 6 guides/lecturers), and

1 doctor.

M/V Ortelius offers a comfortable hotel standard, with two restaurants and a bar/lecture room. Voyages are primarily developed to offer passengers a quality exploratory wildlife program, trying to spend as much time ashore as possible. As the number of passengers is limited to approximately 108 on the “Ortelius”, flexibility assures maximum wildlife opportunities.

To see the the deck plan for the *M/V Ortelius*, click [here](#).

[Cabins Available on Our Ship](#)

All cabins are spacious outside cabins with a minimum of two portholes or windows per cabin and all cabins have a private shower and toilet.

The vessel offers simple but comfortable cabins:

- 4 quadruple cabins with bunk beds (these can also be used as triple or twin cabins)
- 26 twin porthole cabin with 2 single lower berths
- 12 twin cabins with windows and 2 single lower berths
- 2 twin deluxe cabins with windows and 2 single lower berths
- 6 superior cabins with double beds

Twin Porthole: The tour price is based upon twin porthole cabins with 2 single lower berths (twin beds). These cabins are mostly located on deck 4 (2 are on deck 3) and are approximately 145 square feet in size.



Twin Window: A limited number of upgrades are available to twin window cabins for an upgrade fee of \$450 per person. These cabins are on deck 5 and are approximately 180 square feet in size.



A limited number of other cabin options may be available upon request as follows:

Quadruple Porthole: 4 people in bunks. Savings credit is approximately \$2000 per person. These cabins are on deck 3 and are 143 square feet in size. Inquire about availability before registering.



Twin Deluxe: Two of these cabins are currently available for an upgrade fee of \$890 per person. These cabins located on deck 5 and are approximately 191 square feet in size.



Superior: These are the only cabin with double beds. A limited number are available for an upgrade fee is \$1600 per person. These cabins are located on deck 5 and are 199 sq feet in size.



[Ship Fuel Surcharges](#)

It is possible that a fuel surcharge may be assessed if world fuel prices (Brent barrel) exceed a price of USD \$90 (current price is \$78). In this case, a net fuel surcharge will apply of USD \$25 per passenger per night to be billed 90 days prior to departure. If fuel world prices (Brent barrel) exceed a price of US \$120, a total fuel surcharge of USD \$50 per passenger per night, may be billed 60 days prior to departure.

[How Is Airfare Arranged?](#)

The official starting point for *Voyage to Antarctica* is at the dock for our ship, the *M/V Ortelius*, in Ushuaia, Argentina. Embarkation begins on the afternoon of Wednesday, January 22, 2025.

Because of the urgent need to board the ship on time, and because of the ship's mandate that luggage needs to be delivered to the ship the morning of departure, it is necessary that you arrive one day early (January 21).

In addition, our friends on the *M/V Ortelius* have warned us that flights arriving into Ushuaia are notorious for delays, not to mention late snow storms and air traffic snarls that are common in North American in January. Because there is no way to catch up with the ship once it sails for Antarctica, investing in an extra night in an Ushuaia hotel to cushion your window of time between arrival in Ushuaia and embarkation on the ship is essential. Therefore, please plan to arrive into Malvinas Argentinas International Airport (airport code

USH) on Tuesday, January 21, 2022.

Hotel lodging in Ushuaia for the night of January 21 will be offered by WAI. In addition, optional pre-day activities in Ushuaia and nearby Tierra del Fuego National Park will likely be offered once we have a finalized schedule and a better idea of flight schedules.

Details about necessary flight arrangements will be provided by email after you register for the Adventure. Please do not book your airfare prior to receiving these flight details from us!

When you receive these flight details, we recommend that you contact Laura Pfahler, the travel agent we work with, to help book your flight arrangements.

- Laura Pfahler: 503.434.6401 or llp@wtpdx.com

[Travel Insurance](#)

Due to the extreme remoteness of our destination, and the complete lack of medical services or facilities in Antarctica (though the ship does have a doctor onboard), travel insurance is required by all ships sailing into Antarctic waters. This insurance must include a minimum of \$100,000 coverage for emergency medical evacuation.

Many travel insurance providers are available for you to consider. Laura Pfahler and Sharon Mitchell of World Travel Inc. are travel agents who provides air travel and insurance services to many WAI travelers.

Laura Pfahler: 503-434-6401 or llp@wtpdx.com

Sharon Mitchell: 971-261-2091 or smitchell@wtpdx.com

Check out [Insurance Tips](#) from World Travel for a short introduction to travel insurance. (NOTE: WAI receives no commission or financial remuneration from World Travel Inc.).

Be aware that some travel insurance policies contain time-sensitive provisions (i.e. some benefits, such as coverage of pre-existing conditions, are available only if the policy is purchased within a certain number of days of the purchase of the travel package). In addition, remember that airfare is not covered by any travel insurance policy you may have purchased for the tour.

As always, do some shopping to ensure you are getting the best value. Using the [SquareMouth.com](#) website can be a good way to compare pricing.

Other options include:

- Allianz
- Betins

- Travel Guard
- Travel Insured International

WAI bears no responsibility for travel insurance benefits advertised by various credit card companies. If you are relying on this type of benefit for insurance, we advise you to verify coverage types and limits and that your purchase does in fact qualify you for this insurance.

NOTE: We suggest purchasing from a reputable, well-established insurance company (avoid buying insurance from an unknown company found only online). Travelers interested in purchasing “cancel for any reason” insurance coverage should be careful to check pricing and terms BEFORE they register for a tour. Recent changes in the international travel landscape has caused changes in the policies of some insurance companies, and made the purchase of this particular type of policy even more time-sensitive.

[What if WAI Cancels the Tour](#)

Walking Adventures International reserves the right to cancel this tour departure with fewer than 15 participants, in which case registered participants will receive a 100% refund of payments received.

This refund policy contains one exclusion. Many suppliers require non-refundable deposits as a condition of booking services. Though it is rare, unforeseen circumstances can force us to cancel a tour. In cases where supplier’s non-refundable policies are imposed, WAI attempts to retrieve as much of these deposits as possible but cannot guarantee a 100% refund. In cases where full refunds cannot be obtained for a cancelled tour, we will do our best to transfer unrefunded money as traveler credits to be applied to a future tour to that destination.

[Wellness Procedures for This Tour](#)

Our approach to wellness on tour has traditionally been to encourage travelers to:

- Focus on health before the tour so you start healthy.
- Pace yourself while on tour; travel is inherently stimulating and can produce adrenalin boosts that mask energy drain. Guard your energy reserves and consider the length of the trip and whether to opt out of some activities and/or walks.
- Be self-aware. If you feel yourself tiring or feel a bug coming on, take precautions to block it (e.g. extra rest, extra doses of vitamin C, etc).
- If you feel a bug coming on or if you take ill, distance yourself from others when possible.
- If you feel ill, isolate yourself in your cabin and away from others. In fact, because of our isolation from medical services once aboard ship, strict quarantine measures on those with illness symptoms are enforced by ship staff.

Click [WAI Wellness on Tour Policy](#) to view the WAI policy on Wellness on Tour.

[What Happens Next?](#)

After registration, an “Adventure Advice” email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps required by our ship. Other general advice is also included to help you prepared in the months before your trip. Please do not buy airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

A second document of Travel Tips will be published in the months leading up to departure to further aid your preparation.

The interim deposit payments required, along with the final payment, will be preceded by reminders from WAI 2-3 weeks before each due date. All payments are non-refundable after the due date. Please see our [General Tour Conditions](#) for the full terms and conditions for participation in this Adventure.

Around 2 weeks before departure, you will receive a final email packet with details of the program, including hotel names and contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a more detailed daily schedule.

We look forward to sharing with you this expedition to Antarctica, the 7th continent!



Adventure Pace

Tour Pace: 1 2 3 4 5

Walk Challenge: 1 2 3 4 5

[About Adventure Pace](#)

Adventure Pace

How much Adventure do you want? Here are a few features to help gauge the following factors on each tour.

Tour Pace: On a scale of 1 (slowest pace) to 5 (fastest pace), we’ve rated the following factors: number of 1-night hotels; driving miles per day; fullness of schedule; mid-tour airline flights; high elevation setting; and average amount of walking per day.

Walk Challenge: This number represents an average walk difficulty rating for the tour using a scale of 1 (easiest) to 5 (hardest).

[Contact Us](#)

Important Info



Group Size

20 to 30 travelers



Accommodations

Accommodations aboard our ice-strengthened vessel the M/V Ortelius



Meals

All meals included aboard the M/V Ortelius. Letters BLD indicate which meals are included.



Airfare

Not included. Travelers fly in and out of Ushuaia, Argentina, from where all ships depart for Antarctica.



Transportation

Included. The M/V Ortelius has the highest ice-class notation and well-suited as an expedition vessel for 108 passengers for a voyage to Antarctica.



Traveler Age

Our travelers usually range from 50-75 years of age. All ages welcome!

Your Guides



Scott Isom has had a passion for the outdoors ever since his childhood days spent exploring the waterfalls and outstanding hiking trails of the Columbia River Gorge with his family. He and his family now call Puyallup, Washington home.

Scott has led tours two previous expeditions to Antarctica, and has been leading Adventures on all 7 continents since 2007. He is WAI's busiest guide and on-site Adventure planner.

Scott and will be accompanied by another lucky, yet-unnamed WAI guide with boatloads of support from guides and naturalists aboard the M/V Ortelius. He is eager to explore the wonders of Antarctica again with you!



Roger Dorway has led many tours on various continents and is pleased to now add Antarctica to the list!

Roger's business background connecting buyers and sellers has provided him with a gift for connecting with people. After retiring a few years ago, he was able to increase his days on the trail, and has enjoyed sharing natural wonders and cultural and historical insights as part of the WAI guide team. He looks forward to sharing our awe-inspiring 7th Continent with you!