

Small Ship Adventure Co.

Specialising in Small Ship Cruising Worldwide



ANTARCTICA, SOUTH GEORGIA & THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

Optional Pre-Voyage Extension to Patagonia & Torres Del Paine

Aboard the Clipper Adventurer

January 13 – February 3, 2012

ITINERARY

Friday, January 13, 2012

Depart from home on your independent flight to Buenos Aires.

Saturday, January 14

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Upon arrival, transfer to our centrally-located hotel. Spend the rest of the day relaxing or enjoy a sightseeing tour. Brunch, welcome dinner, and overnight at our hotel.

Sunday, January 15

Buenos Aires / Ushuaia / Board Clipper Adventurer

Early morning transfer to the airport for your flight to Ushuaia where we have lunch and a tour before boarding the *Clipper Adventurer*. Set sail for the Falkland Islands this afternoon.

Monday, January 16

At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea as we make our way to the Falkland Islands. Lecturers introduce us to the natural and historical highlights ahead.

Tuesday, January 17

Carcass Island / Saunders Island, Falkland Islands

On Carcass Island we explore gentoo and Magellanic penguin rookeries and walk the beautiful beaches rich with seabirds. On Saunders Island we hope to see gentoo, rockhopper, Magellanic, and king penguins, as well as black-browed albatross.

Wednesday & Thursday, January 18 & January 19

Cruising the South Scotia Sea

Our lecturers recap our experiences and prepare us for our visit to South Georgia. On deck, join naturalists in search of the seabirds and marine mammals that flourish in these nutrient-rich waters.

Friday – Sunday, January 20 – 22

South Georgia

Flexibility in this area is a must. Many of our leaders have been to South Georgia numerous times and, if the weather is in our favor, we may want to make a landing before breakfast or even after dinner. We call at some of the many islands, bays, and coves where we can see outstanding birdlife and elephant and fur seals close at hand. The following is a list of places we plan to visit on South Georgia. Some of them are pending final government approval.

Elsehul Bay – This beautiful bay is home to thousands of fur seals as well as macaroni penguins, the most numerous of all penguin species. Listen for the high-pitched trumpeting of king penguins amid the magnificent sounds of marine mammals that echo in the bay.

Salisbury Plain – Two glaciers flank Salisbury Plain on South Georgia's north coast. Here, more than 200,000 king penguins congregate and breed, and we are greeted by one of the more remarkable sights—and sounds—on Earth.

Stromness Bay – Site of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his party's arrival after their harrowing crossing of the island's glaciers on foot. Stromness offers views of cliffs and a glacier from which the adventurer and his companions descended.

Grytviken – We go ashore and explore here, discovering the old ruins of this once-active whaling station. The cemetery holds a special fascination, as it is here that Shackleton is buried. Walking along the coast, we spy seabirds, penguins, and marine mammals.

Gold Harbour – At the foot of the Bertrab Glacier, Gold Harbour is often referred to as the “jewel in the island's crown.” In addition to a large king penguin colony, we are likely to see elephant and fur seals, gentoo penguins, giant petrels, and perhaps even some light-mantled albatross.

Monday, January 23

South Scotia Sea

Our lecture series continues as we venture south. Naturalists recap our memorable visit to South Georgia and introduce us to the history, geology, and wildlife of the Antarctic Peninsula and its surrounding islands.

Tuesday, January 24

South Orkney Islands

These mountainous islands were once known as “The Inaccessible Islands.” In winter a solid sheet of fast ice joins this island group to the Antarctic Peninsula, some 450 miles away. A scene of unparalleled beauty awaits, with penguins everywhere, including Adelie, chinstrap, gentoo, and the occasional macaroni penguin.

Wednesday, January 25

Elephant Island

This morning we arrive at Elephant Island, made famous by the Shackleton expedition. Awesome glaciers, speckled with pink algae, create a dramatic backdrop. Weather permitting, we enjoy a Zodiac cruise around the island and have an opportunity to view a thriving chinstrap penguin colony.

Thursday – Monday, January 26 – 30

Antarctic Peninsula

As we cruise the waters of the Antarctic Peninsula and its adjacent islands, our daily schedule of landings are dependent upon weather and ice conditions. There is the possibility that we may visit a research station and witness the scientific activities conducted by the multinational community of scientists working there. The expeditionary nature of our voyage precludes guaranteeing specific stops; in the past we have visited the locations below. This list serves as a guideline only of the places you may experience.

Brown Bluff – Located on the Antarctic continent, Brown Bluff rises 2,450 feet above an ash beach littered with bizarrely shaped boulders. Some 20,000 pairs of Adelie, and hundreds of gentoo penguins, make their home here. Skuas and pintado petrels nest near the top of the cliff and kelp gulls fill the air with perpetual sound and motion.

Deception Island – As we approach Deception through Neptune’s Bellows, a channel just wide enough for our ship to navigate, southern fulmars and pintado petrels soar overhead. Our anchorage is inside a volcano whose collapsed cone was filled by rushing seawater.

Lemaire Channel and Pleneau Island – Cruising the beautiful Lemaire Channel, we keep watch for the humpback and minke whales frequently spotted here. This narrow channel is one of the most visually impressive areas of the Antarctic Peninsula. Steep mountain peaks jut out of the sea on both sides, and the waters are often choked with icebergs and frequented by crabeater seals. A stunning labyrinth of grounded icebergs lies in the shallow waters west of Pleneau Island, presenting a superb Zodiac cruising experience. Crabeater and leopard seals haul out on the ice, and elephant seals and gentoo penguins occupy the island itself.

Petermann Island – This island is home to the world’s southernmost colony of gentoo penguins. Snow-capped and small at just a mile long by half a mile wide, it offers close-up, picture-perfect scenes of penguins—both gentoo and Adelie—as well as skuas and blue-eyed shags.

Tuesday & Wednesday, January 31 & February 1

Drake Passage

During our Drake crossing, we have opportunities to see and photograph wandering and black-browed albatross, sooty shearwaters, and white-chinned petrels. We also keep a lookout for the whales often seen in these waters.

Thursday, February 2

Ushuaia, Argentina / Disembark / Buenos Aires

Disembark in Ushuaia and transfer to the airport for your flight to Buenos Aires, connecting with your independent overnight flight home

Friday, February 3

Onward arrangements

Connect to flights homeward.