

MARINE MAMMALS OF ANTARCTICA

16 – 26 MARCH 2015

10 NIGHTS / 11 DAYS

With two decades of experience on the Antarctic Peninsula, founder and managing director of One Ocean Expeditions Andrew Prossin has noted the Antarctic seas come alive with marine mammal life increasingly as the tourist season progresses.

Through a collaborative research effort between Dr. Ari Friedlaender (Marine Laboratory of Duke University) and One Ocean Expeditions, heightened knowledge and awareness has been generated on humpback, minke and orca whales along the Antarctica Peninsula. The exciting launch of our proprietary ‘GRUVA’ (GoPro Underwater Viewing Apparatus) technology in every zodiac will enhance our marine mammal encounters. Paired with hydrophones, this technology provides unparalleled underwater viewing to watch live, or after the experience back on board.

Overview

March represents a critical time for whales in Antarctic waters as they feed on the vast krill swarms to build energy stores for either a long migration to tropical breeding grounds or to maintain their energy as they struggle to survive in the ice-choked waters that soon will encapsulate the region. For humpback whales, there is growing evidence that while many whales migrate, some remain in areas that remain ice-free for long periods of time due to warming climates. We will survey several of the bays that are the focus of long-term and unique research projects to determine how the abundance of whales changes throughout the course of the Antarctic summer.

We will also search for the elusive and cryptic minke whale in the far reaches and ice-choked passes and bays where they spend most of their time. We will also look for killer whales as they patrol the coastal waters for seals, whales, and penguins that make up their diet. Our photographer in residence will also lead the charge on deck and in the zodiacs with helpful hints of how to ‘pan’ for a shot in motion. Sometimes taking photos of whales can be more challenging than finding them!

Of course we’ll also have our usual discussions of other areas of interest in Antarctica with presentations on the bird and penguin life as well as Antarctic history. Where there are penguins, there will most likely be Leopard seals at this time of year so these locations will be of keen interests to seal enthusiasts.

As with all our expeditions, safety is our top priority. For that reason weather, ice or other conditions may require us to change our itinerary and shore excursions as we go but that is half the fun of Polar exploring. Predictability is a word that has no relevance in this environment.



Day By Day Expedition Itinerary

16 March 2015 / Ushuaia

Today is the first day of our adventure. As we board the Akademik Sergey Vavilov, in Ushuaia, the world's southernmost city at the tip of Argentina, and start to become familiar with 'our home' for the next 11 days we cannot help but wonder about the exciting journey ahead of us. In the early evening, we set sail and begin our voyage leaving behind Ushuaia and charting a course through the Beagle Channel.

17 – 18 March 2015 / Drake Passage

Crossing the Drake Passage, there is so much excitement in the air as we make our way ever closer to the white continent. As we cross these fabled waters, our on board naturalists will split their time out on deck looking for whales and being in the presentation room leading lively discussions about the marine life of the Antarctic. Crossing the convergence is an exciting event as we scan the waters for marine mammals feeding on the abundance of krill and other tasty morsels throughout these frigid waters. Along the way, we will witness many other spectacular sights from icebergs to an array of seabirds .

19 – 23 March 2015 / Antarctic Peninsula

Upon our entrance to the Antarctic Peninsula we plan our route primarily based on typical marine mammal movements and activity for this time of year. With our knowledge of marine mammal feeding grounds we can pick and choose the areas in which to explore and the order in which we do so. Based on weather conditions, we will explore the southern Gerlache Strait area and work our way in and out of the deep bays on this coast, looking for the typical hot spots as we go.

We will hope to make as much time as possible to explore by inflatable Zodiac boats and marvel up close at nature's glory. We find at this time of the season the whales are more social and demonstrative, which leads to more exciting viewings from the ship and the zodiacs. We may also visit Deception Island and Whalers Bay, the site of Norwegian whaling station from 1912 to 1931. This site offers an historical view of whale exploitation a century ago.

We'll be sure to plan visits to some of Antarctica's best known locations for magnificent scenery and we will observe Weddell, crabeater and elephant seals, skuas and other seabirds as well as a shocking abundance of penguins including some very large colonies of the comical Adélie penguin. And of course we will plan to take in several great hikes. Prepare to be dazzled by your first glimpse of the continent. The scenery here is amazing.



In particular we will be struck by the oddly-shaped icebergs that look like sculptures, as well as the colossal 'tabular' icebergs that break away from the continent's ice shelf. We hope the weather will be mild enough to allow us all to step foot on the White Continent itself. Some may wish to camp on shore overnight. Whatever your vantage point, whether it is onboard or onshore expect to feel transformed as you experience twilight and the abundance of mammals and wildlife from the very bottom of the planet.

24 – 25 March 2015 / Drake Passage

As we leave this magical place and make our way north, heading again across the Antarctic Convergence and the Drake Passage before rounding Cape Horn, we have no doubt that time will be spent sharing and reflecting on the wonderful experiences of the last few days. Our onboard photographic experts will provide tips and tricks in managing digital photographs in our expansive multimedia room. We also keep our eyes peeled for marine life as we head back north towards Cape Horn. Commerson's, Peale's and Dusky dolphins are all potential entertainers as we continue our journey and watch from the comfort of the bridge. Sailing down the Beagle Channel, we celebrate the conclusion of our Polar expedition at a special dinner.

26 March 2015 / Ushuaia

In the early morning, we will arrive back in Ushuaia. It is time to say farewell to your crew and fellow travelers. Guests will be transported to their hotels or to the airport for return flights home.

Please note

Specific sites visited will depend on ice and weather conditions, the planned itinerary will be updated at the time of final preparations as well as throughout the voyage in order to take advantage of favourable conditions.

Proof of our Polar Commitment

When travelling with One Ocean Expeditions, you will discover how much we care about the places and people we visit. We demonstrate this by finding ways to give back as well as taking away so many incredible memories. For more information on our commitment to responsible tourism, please review our document entitled, "Our Environmental Commitment".

Before you Book – Important Voyage Details

Itinerary Changes – We put safety first and that means weather, ice, wildlife, political or other conditions may require us to modify the itinerary as we go. However we aim to maximize your overall experience. We consider this half the intrigue of Polar exploring. In every expedition our undertaking is a little different and subject to modification. It may mean we have to cancel certain shore excursions if conditions are not suitable but we always find other fun things to do. Polar exploring is not predictable which is one of the many reasons we think it is so special.



Medical Documentation - Once you have booked your voyage to the Polar Regions, you will be required to complete a Medical Information Form. This form must be completed, signed and returned to One Ocean Expeditions no later than 90 days prior to departure.

Passport - Well before travelling, please ensure you have a current passport with an accurate photo, valid for at least six months after your scheduled return flight home. Also check that your airline tickets are in exactly the same name as your passport. Some countries may require you to have a return air ticket or sufficient funds to purchase such a ticket.

Budgeting – It is a good idea to bring along some \$US cash. There are some onboard expenses such as those incurred at the bar, in our gift shop, and for satellite communication, as well as several souvenir shopping opportunities throughout the voyage including at some of the research stations in the Antarctic Peninsula. Mail can sometimes be posted from these stations as well.

Clothes – We do not need to tell you it is cold in Antarctica. So make sure you come prepared with clothes that will adequately protect you from the weather and wet conditions (sea spray is common onboard Zodiacs). Expensive specialty gear is not required, but you should have warm, waterproof clothing available upon your arrival in Ushuaia. Please read the One Ocean Expeditions Pre-departure Information for more details about what to bring on the journey. We also have foul weather gear for rent or purchase on board the ship. You should prearrange the rental of this gear should you require it.

Onboard – Like the weather, sea conditions can also be unpredictable. Rough waters are not uncommon particularly through the Drake Passage. You will be safe and comfortable aboard with your experienced crew in control of our ship, but you may suffer the effects of motion sickness, unless you have taken precautions. We recommend visiting your doctor prior to departure for medication that can help you avoid this easily treated condition.

Gratuities - We suggest you allow the equivalent of \$US10 a day for gratuities for the crew and expedition staff. This is usually collected just prior to the end of the cruise. If you wish, the amount can be paid by Visa or MasterCard.

Sea Kayaking – If you have some experience sea kayaking and are interested in doing this activity during the expedition, you will need to book this option prior to departure from home. We cannot book this activity once onboard. There is a separate document for sea kayakers that you will need to review beforehand.

Embarkation Protocol - Due to new International Security Regulations, you will not be able to come to the ship on your own. Guests arrive with the rest of the group accompanied by the One Ocean Expeditions' Representative. Full details of embarkation/disembarkation procedures will be supplied with your final documentation. Once onboard, you will be participating in an obligatory lifeboat drill. We will also conduct important briefings on landing procedures and Zodiac operations.



Polar Camping - If conditions are suitable and you choose to camp on the continent, we will provide all the required gear such as tents, bivy sacs and sleeping bags. This excursion is managed with strict environmental regulations. A portable toilet is used and absolutely everything is transported back to the ship afterwards.

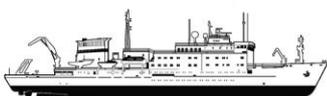
Insurance - On all One Ocean Expeditions' voyages, you must have comprehensive travel insurance. Your own domestic government medical insurance and private health care plans will not cover you in most overseas countries. Your travel agent can recommend a policy designed to cover participants on these cruises. Your policy must provide coverage for your medical costs in case of hospitalization, emergency travel and repatriation.

We require that you obtain adequate insurance before joining the voyage. Cancellation insurance is also recommended.

Please check the terms of your policy carefully, particularly with regard to limits of cover (i.e. replacement of photographic equipment, baggage loss, claims procedure, costs due to airline delays etc). Also ensure you are familiar with the procedure for making claims (for example, most policies stipulate that claims must be made within a certain time after completion of your journey). Once you have paid your deposit or full payment, certain fees will apply if you have to cancel your holiday (see the cancellation provisions in our terms and conditions). For this reason you should take out insurance at the time of paying your deposit, which should then protect you in such a situation.

Visas - No visas are required to visit the Antarctic continent or its offshore islands, however, you will need a valid passport with you throughout the journey. For most voyages, our ship departs for the Antarctic continent from the port of Ushuaia, Argentina. At the time of printing, no visas for Argentina are required by holders of New Zealand, British, or European passports. However passengers holding Australian, Canadian and US passports will have to make a reciprocity fee payment before entering Argentina, see below details:

The National Immigration Agency has changed the method by which tourists and business visitors from the US, Canada, and Australia will be required to pay in order to gain visa entry to Argentina. The reciprocity fee is no longer payable at the airport upon arrival. Instead the payment must be carried out online, prior to arrival, using the credit card based Provincia Payment System. The system has been effective as of 31st October 2012 for flights to Aeroparque and 28th December 2012 for Ezeiza International Airport. A press release clearly states that "after these dates cash payments will not be accepted at the airport".



A press release from the US state department offers these instructions for how to pay the reciprocity fee online:

- 1) Enter the web site www.migraciones.gov.ar or www.provinciapagos.com.ar of Provincia Pagos and register to start the process.
- 2) Complete the form with the corresponding personal and credit card information.
- 3) Print the payment receipt.
- 4) On arrival in Argentina, this printed receipt must be presented at Immigration Control. The receipt will be scanned by the Immigration officials, the information will be checked, and the traveler's entry to the country registered.

Passengers holding passports issued by other countries should carefully check with their travel agent or Argentinean consular authorities. If your flight to Ushuaia is via Santiago, tourist visas are required for Chile for some nationalities. If you plan any side trips to other countries you will need to investigate visa requirements as it is your responsibility to ensure you have all required visas for your trip. Rules and regulations governing the issuance of visas are constantly changing and vary for different nationalities. You should check visa requirements with your travel agent or relevant consular authority well before traveling.

The information provided here is given in good faith and has been compiled with all reasonable care. However, some of the information may become out of date. Please keep this in mind and check with us if you want to be sure about anything. The document was correct at time of printing but you can check online for the most up to date version. If you have any queries, please contact your travel agent or our staff. We are here to help you!

October 2013

