



South Georgia and Antarctic Odyssey



29 December 2019 – 17 January 2020 | *Greg Mortimer*



About Us

Aurora Expeditions embodies the spirit of adventure, travelling to some of the most wild and remote places on our planet. With over 28 years' experience, our small group voyages allow for a truly intimate experience with nature.

Our expeditions push the boundaries with flexible and innovative itineraries, exciting wildlife experiences and fascinating lectures. You'll share your adventure with a group of like-minded souls in a relaxed, casual atmosphere while making the most of every

opportunity for adventure and discovery. Our highly experienced expedition team of naturalists, historians and destination specialists are passionate and knowledgeable – they are the secret to a fulfilling and successful voyage.

Whilst we are dedicated to providing a 'trip of a lifetime', we are also deeply committed to education and preservation of the environment. Our aim is to travel respectfully, creating lifelong ambassadors for the protection of our destinations.



DAY 1 | Sunday 29th December 2019

Ushuaia

Position: 08:00 hours
Latitude: 54°48' S
Longitude: 68°18' W

Course: At anchor

Wind Direction: NE

Barometer: 1002 hPa & falling
Air Temp: 12° C
Sea Temp: 10° C

Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet uncaptured by language. —Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

After months of preparation, weeks of anticipation and long-haul flights from around the globe, we finally arrived at Ushuaia, known locally as el fin del mundo (the end of the world), ready and raring to begin our Antarctic adventure.

Following a brilliant tour of this bustling town; including stops at the Old Prison and Maritime Museum, we loaded onto buses headed for the Port, and pulled alongside the *Greg Mortimer* waiting patiently for our arrival.

We smiled for the cameras, before heading onboard to meet our Hotel Team, to become acquainted with our staterooms and to start exploring our home for the next few weeks. Half unpacked and slightly settled in, it was time to meet our fellow adventurers down at the Elephant Island Bar for afternoon tea, while others headed to the outer decks, returning to the Bar when Expedition Leader Stephen called us together.

Stephen gave us an update on a delayed departure out of Ushuaia, before introducing the rest of the Aurora Expedition Team for this New Year's itinerary to Antarctica and South Georgia. The sound of seven-short-one-long rings from the ship's signal system was our cue to don our new blue jackets, bulky orange lifejackets and gather at the Lecture Room to run through an important safety briefing.

At 1930 we headed to the Restaurant on Deck 5 to enjoy a delicious first dinner, complete with panoramic views of Ushuaia shadowed with mountain ranges brilliant in the steely light and snow-capped peaks.

The gentle after dinner light enticed many of us out onto the outer decks or back into the town, while others made our way to our cabins for much-needed sleep.

Today, 30th December, we are based in Ushuaia. Watch out for an IAATO briefing this morning; and make sure to sign up for a scenic tour of the local national park in the afternoon!



DAY 2 | Monday 30th December 2019

Ushuaia

Position: 08:00 hours
Latitude: 54°48' S
Longitude: 68°18' W

Course: At anchor

Wind Speed: 10 knots
Wind Direction: NE

Barometer: 1005 hPa & falling
Air Temp: 13° C
Sea Temp: 10° C

At a time when it's possible for thirty people to stand on the top of Everest in one day, Antarctica still remains a remote, lonely and desolate continent. A place where it's possible to see the splendours and immensities of the natural world at its most dramatic and, what's more, witness them almost exactly as they were, long, long before human beings ever arrived on the surface of this planet. Long may it remain so. —David Attenborough

Our day started with the anticipation of hearing news of our impending departure. As it turned out, repairs were still underway, and we would have to wait a little longer to find out about when we would be released from the port. This provided a good opportunity to carry out some of the briefings that must be done before a visit to Antarctica.

Antarctica and the surrounding islands have unique and fragile ecosystems that can easily be disrupted by human activity. In order to have the privilege of accessing this part of the world, we have to follow protocols concerning biosecurity, safety and wildlife watching guidelines. IAATO (International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators) is the organisation that oversees that cruise ship companies are operating respectfully in the area and educating their guests about the natural environment.

In the afternoon we used the opportunity of our delayed departure to further explore the local area. For many this was the first time to the world's southern-most city, and as the local guide said on the bus, sometimes in Ushuaia you can get all four seasons in one day, and even in one hour – which turned out to be the case for us.

We headed out to the National Park, or 'the end of the world' as the local guides described it. It marks the most southerly point of the continent and is also the end of the famous Pan-America route that starts in Alaska.

For those who wanted a more challenging hike, there was a wonderful walk that took us through some of the gorgeous scenery of the park. For those of us that wanted to learn a bit more about the area and take a look around, we had the chance to take stops in different locations, including the little post office in a dramatic location, sitting on a rickety old pier perched over the waves coming into the beach.

Our trip turned out to be a very successful bird watching occasion, with species such as the Chimango (a type of hawk), Peruvian swallow, Upland goose, Skua, Austral parakeet, Patagonian Sierra finch and the Black chinned Siskin, to name a few that were spotted.

On our return to the ship, we enjoyed a delicious dinner which was welcomed after an afternoon walking around in the sun and the wind, before a briefing in which Stephen informed us that the ship was almost ready to depart, and we would be leaving at 9am the following morning. Finally, we were ready to head south!





DAY 3 | Thursday 31st December

Leaving Ushuaia, Beagle Channel, Drake Passage

Position: 15:00 hours

Course: 162°

Wind Speed: 20 knots

Barometer: 995 hPa & falling

Latitude: 55°31' S

Speed: 14.2 knots

Air Temp: 10°C

Longitude: 66°12' W

Sea Temp: 9°C

We must always remember with gratitude and admiration the first sailors who steered their vessels through storms and mists, and increased our knowledge of the lands of ice in the South. —Roald Amundsen

It was a perfectly still morning and some enthusiastic early risers set off at 6am for a morning dose of twitching. Alexander and Heidi led their intrepid team of birders around the bay of Ushuaia, and they were not to be disappointed with a solid sighting of local and migratory birds.

On their return to the ship, Stephen made the announcement that we had all been waiting for, the all clear to leave port. The coast guard had arrived at 7am to finish their final inspections and the repairs that we were waiting on had been approved. Our much-anticipated clearance had now been given. A sigh of relief was heard around the ship and the crew prepared to set off on the trip of a lifetime to the Mighty Antarctica.

The crew threw off the ropes and the ship's horn sounded to the mountainous port town of Ushuaia. We gently pulled from the dock, filled with anticipation of what was to come. We were off on the first part of the voyage cruising down the beautiful Beagle Channel. Immediately nature turned on her charm with sightings of seals, albatross, penguins, petrels and gulls. This was only a taste of what was to come.

The channel was almost glassed out and the reflections of the mountains painted scenic pictures on the water. The Drake Passage lay calmly ahead, and the first black-browed albatross began gliding in the wake of the ship.

Alexander informed us all of the feathered friends we would now encounter with his first lecture on seabirds. The anticipation only heightened in the next lecture given by our

whale specialist Pete. He spoke of the incredible mammals that lived below us and our eyes drifted and began keenly scanning the horizon for the exhalation of a whale.

The staff gave a recap on the events so far and our historian Alasdair set the challenge for the coming evening. Reminiscing about the sailors who had ventured to these remote destinations in the previous centuries, he told of their penchant for dressing in ladies clothing and challenged the crowd to follow in their footsteps. The lecture theatre filled with bemusement for the thought of who amongst them would be brave enough to re-enact this past time.

The anticipation was now built for the New Year celebration that lay ahead. Drinks and nibbles were served in the Elephant Island Bar before heading off into the dining room for the last dinner of the decade, the New Year's Eve of 2020.

The dining room mood was elated as people spoke of their excitement to be heading to the South. On return to the bar Vishal and his team mixed cocktails for the band of passengers and within no time the Conga was well underway.

Then, from within the frivolity of the conga line, two figures emerged in the shape of our kayak guides. Russell and Danny had come good on the challenge of nautical cross-dressing and the party was officially underway.

Midnight came with the clink of champagne glasses and we welcomed in the New Year with our fellow expeditioners. This moment we were sharing was only the beginning of what was to be a most excellent adventure... the story had only begun.





DAY 4 | Wednesday 1st January 2020

Drake Passage

Position: 08:00 hours
Latitude: 55°28.99' S
Longitude: 63°59.12' W

Course: 163°
Speed: 15 knots

Wind Speed: 18 knots

Barometer: 1006 hPa & falling
Air Temp: 7°C
Sea Temp: 7°C

A journey is a person itself; no two are alike.

And all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless.

We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us.

—John Steinbeck

A new year brings new possibilities and new horizons. As the *Greg Mortimer* forged further south through the Drake Passage, we come ever closer to new adventures, sights, and sounds that defy our ability to fully comprehend. All we know at this moment is that the passage is, thankfully, mild and as we reflect on (and recover from) last night's celebration and resolutions, we now look to Mother Nature to guide our experience and try to accept her offerings in a spirit of flexibility and acceptance.

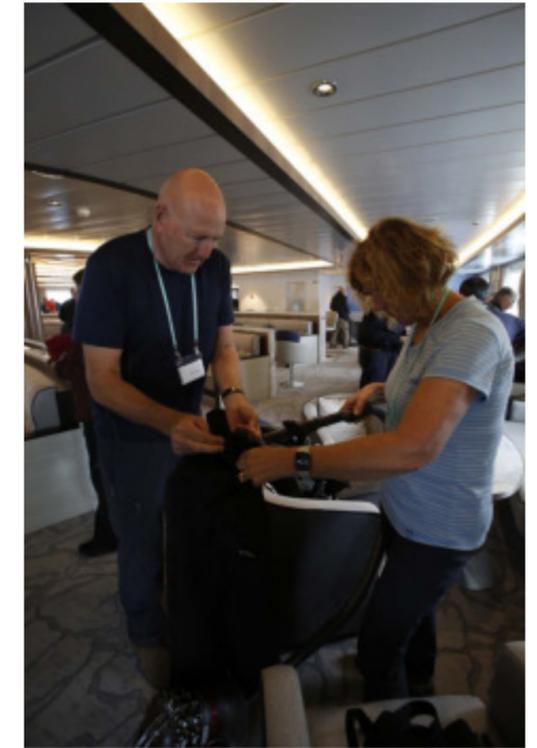
We cannot control the weather, but we can choose how we face it, just as the explorers that have come before us through these same waters.

Today was grey, and mostly misty—which we could interpret as a change in and interaction between the sea and air temperatures while we crossed over the Antarctic convergence zone. Speeding south on a relatively horizontal trajectory across the sea surface, it requires some focused thought to imagine the dynamic conditions below—through thousands of meters of seawater, currents swirling up and down and eddying in and out, bringing up plankton and nutrients, driving a food chain explosion in which we have (and will!) invest so much effort to witness.

Mild wind conditions led according to lower bird activity, but several species were sighted including prions and light-mantled sooty shearwater. The lack of activity surrounding the ship made it easier to focus on the ship-board programming including an historical overview of Antarctic exploration by Alistair followed by Heidi who offered a review of penguin species we are likely to see as well as insights into their ecology and behaviour we may observe during our off-ship excursions. And to better capture these behaviours (and others) on camera, Alex's presentation about expedition photography helped to prepare us for maximizing our ability to catch a shot of the innumerable special moments we have in store.

In the afternoon came what may be considered a significant tangible step towards our first landing: the vacuum party! All outer gear to be used during our upcoming Antarctic excursions was inspected and cleaned to prevent non-native seeds and other debris from contaminating the pristine environment we will be visiting. Having to each sign and certify that our gear was clean certainly brought home the concept that we are each doing our part to not leave a negative trace of our visit to the icy continent.

Before long, then, it was again time to come together over a drink, celebrate this first day of a beautiful new year, and enjoy a welcome speech from Captain Oleg and members of his officer team. And as we enjoyed another excellent meal from the dining team and in excellent company, or perhaps later upon reflection while preparing for bed, thoughts of what we will encounter on the morrow rise before us.



DAY 5 | Thursday 2nd January 2020

Melchior Archipelago, Cuverville Island

Position: 06:30 hours

Course: 171°

Wind Speed: 12 knots

Barometer: 989 hPa & falling

Latitude: 64°13.60'S

Speed: 12 knots

Air Temp: -1°C

Longitude: 62°58.95'W

Sea Temp: 2°C

Dare to live the life you have dreamed for yourself. Go forward and make your dreams come true. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

This was the day we had been eagerly awaiting since signing onto the expedition, a day of firsts...

First iceberg sighting! It was spotted in the wee hours of Thursday morning, appreciated only by the wonderful sailors on the bridge, and perhaps a few early risers. Then land ahoy!!!

First Zodiac cruise or kayak in Antarctic waters! Finally, we could road test our cold-weather gear as we weaved and paddled around the Melchior archipelago on seas studded by incredible iceberg formations. We were treated to sightings of Gentoo and Chinstrap penguins, Weddell seals and a young leopard seal, Antarctic terns and kelp gulls with chicks, as well as a disused Argentinean station.

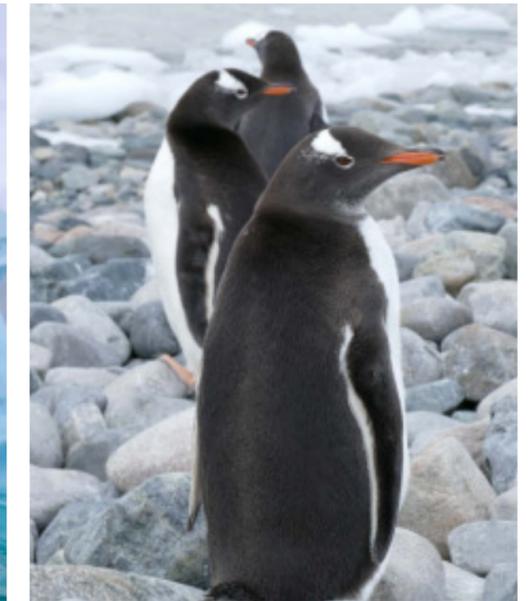
And first shore landing! What an incredible feeling, to finally set foot on Antarctic territory. For us it happened to be on the shore at Cuverville Island, home to several Gentoo penguin rookeries, backed by a hill overlooking a bay filled with icebergs. We gazed upon moss beds and dramatic cliffs, watched skuas stalking penguins, saw the occasional Antarctic shag and even a confused Chinstrap and Adélie penguin, and had regular sightings of

Humpback whales swimming in the ocean. Heidi, one of our resident naturalists, and Chris, an expeditioner, watched in horrified awe as two skuas beheaded the one and only penguin chick spotted during the landing.

Several pleasant hours were spent observing the penguins porpoising, pebbling, nesting, and even giving each other back massages, before the winds picked up and it was time to return to our comfortable ship, to swap stories of all that we had seen, and to share another delicious meal.

Another highlight of the day had been our resident nature photographer Ian's presentation about his career with the BBC. In particular, his time living and filming life on Cuverville Island. His stories of observing cheetahs in the African savannah, hiking through minefields in Afghanistan, spending long months in both polar regions of our planet, and working alongside Sir David Attenborough, were wonderfully augmented by his brilliant mimicking of animal sounds and his stunning footage of Antarctic regions.

We fell asleep dreaming of all that we had seen, and of the next excursion...



DAY 6 | Friday 3rd January 2020

Skontorp Cove, Danco Island, Enterprise Island

Position: 06:00 hours

Course: 300°

Latitude: 64°53.31'S

Longitude: 62°51.88' W

*This ice is ancient, made of compressed snows that were laid down, high on the mountains above, centuries ago. Its entombed bubbles contain a few molecules of air that were last breathed, perhaps, by Magellan or Vespucci. —David G. Campbell, *The Crystal Desert*, 1992*

Overnight, we headed further down the Errera Channel. A brilliant morning dawned bright and clear at Paradise Bay for a morning zodiac cruise and continental landing on the Antarctic Peninsula. Awaiting our arrival were enormous mountain peaks covered in snow which reflected for miles into the silky-smooth sea.

Our morning zodiac cruise held a feast for the senses. At the mouth of the bay we encountered kelp gulls, Antarctic terns and gentoo penguins. We marvelled at cormorant nests, built precariously on the side of sheer volcanic cliff faces who together looked quite content enjoying the morning sun. The cliffs are laced with green minerals along its cracks and inclusions, providing an eerily green and gold tinge.

Around the corner in Skontorp Cove waited towering glaciers, often active and always impressive with its caves, arches and crevasses. A modest whale blow caught our attention as we found ourselves accompanied by a humpback making its way through the pack ice. A few zodiacs were lucky to catch sight of a lone minke whale, making its way amongst the icebergs.

The Argentinean base, Almirante Brown; built in the early 1950's, is still used today for scientific research during the summer months. Damage from the 1984 fire that burned the main station structure is still evident. The old station lies between steep sea-cliffs and Paradise Harbour on one side, and a sheer glacier on the other. We went ashore for our

Wind Speed: 2 knots

Wind Direction: NW

Barometer: 989 hPa & steady

Air Temp: 2°C

Sea Temp: 1°C

continental landing, checked out the museum and made the hike up to the scenic vantage point over Paradise Bay. What a morning!

Back onboard, we cruised back down the Errera Channel to Danco Island. A balmy afternoon led many to take a hike up to some gentoo colonies overlooking out into the Gerlache Strait; while others followed Alasdair for a shore walk over to the foundations of the British Base 'O', a former scientific base established as part of Operation Tabarind. A serene afternoon was interrupted with a number of whale blows as we sighted humpback whales, feeding near the shoreline. We took to zodiacs and marveled at the majesty of the humpbacks, which were quite willing to permit us to get up close and personal!

The evening's activities included a zodiac cruise and kayak at Foyn Harbor around Enterprise Island. The filtered Antarctic sunset light provided our photographers the chance to take some fantastic shots of icebergs and the glaciers tumbling down to the shoreline; while others simply marvelled in the panoramic views. We were also able to get up close to the *Gouvernøren I*, a now-rusted whaling ship wrecked deliberately on the island in 1916. The kayakers wove their way through the maze of little islets and icebergs, snapping photos along the way and admiring the cathedral-sized bergs.

Back onboard after an action-packed day, it was time for a drink from the Elephant Island Bar, before falling into bed. But, just before we turned in for the night, Stephen announced that orcas had been spotted in front of the *Greg Mortimer*! A rare treat, we managed to see both a male (with a long, straight fin), and a few females (with a curved fin). Just another day on the Antarctic Peninsula!



DAY 7 | Saturday 4th January 2020

Deception Island, Half Moon Bay

Position: 07:00 hours
Latitude: 63°07.37'S
Longitude: 60°37.57'W

Course: 22°
Speed: 11.2 knots

Wind Speed: 7.7 knots
Wind Direction: SW

Barometer: 999 hPa
Air Temp: -1°C
Sea Temp: 2°C

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew, the furrow followed free: we were the first that ever burst into that silent sea. —Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Bransfield Strait was lit up with beams of sunshine as we approached Deception Island this morning. After breakfast the announcement was made that the captain had lined up the final approach to the narrow entrance to Port Foster. Neptune's Bellows is the name of the narrow passage into the caldera of this active volcano. Immediately on entering, on our starboard side was Whaler's Bay where we dropped anchor and made ready to go ashore. Steam was escaping from the edge of the beach, showing that there is indeed some volcanic activity beneath.

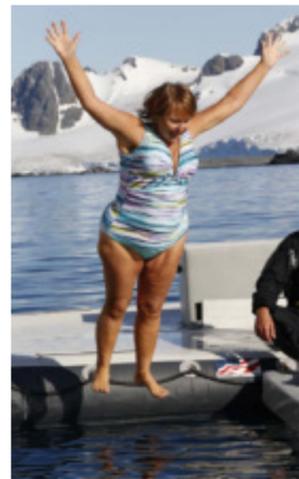
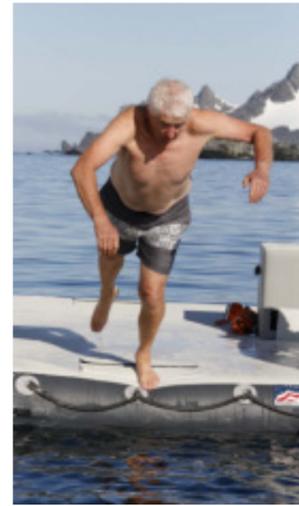
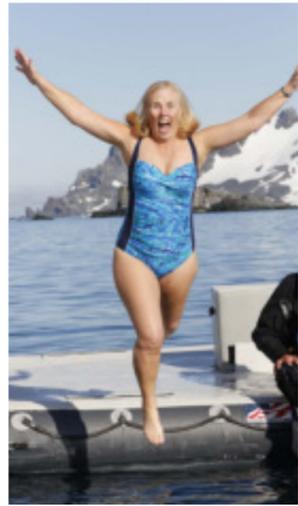
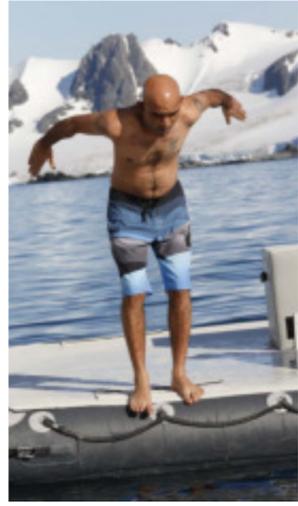
We had some time to wander among the remains of the whaling station, which was active in the earlier decades of the 20th century, mainly run by Norwegians employed by the Hektor Whaling Station. The British Magistrate and later the FIDS (Falkland Islands Dependency Survey) Base "B" have also left their mark on this harbour with a few buildings that have been abandoned when the volcano last erupted in 1970. The top of Ronald's Hill on the north side of the bay and Neptune's Window on the south side allowed opportunities to explore and stretch our legs. There was the odd scattering of Chinstrap penguins on the beach, visitors from nearby colonies on the outer shores of Deception Island. The citizen science Zodiac team headed back through the Bellows to measure the plankton concentrations but were distracted by a passing humpback whale.

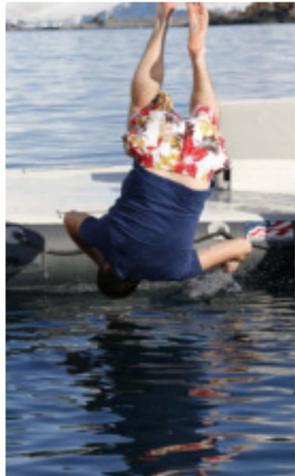
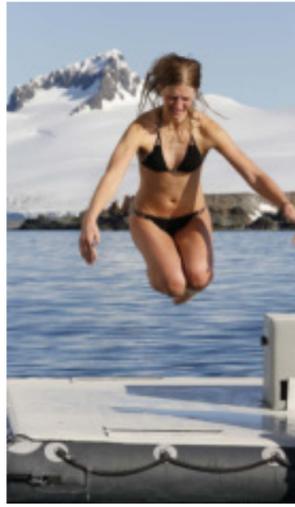
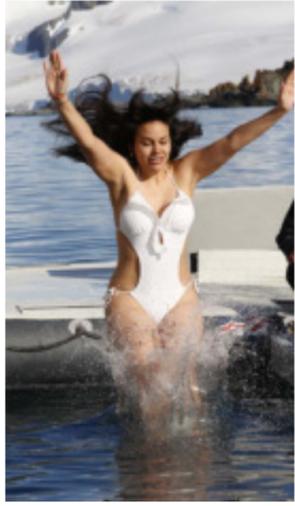
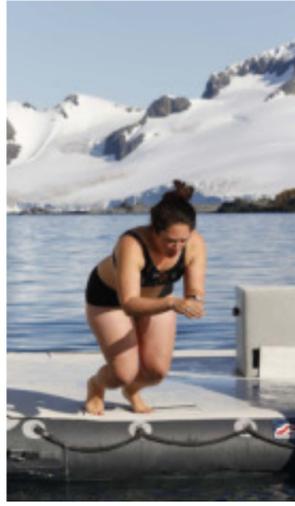
After returning to the ship we exited Neptune's Bellows and watched the dramatic sea stacks as we headed further north along the South Shetland Islands. Jocelyn gave us a short presentation describing the plate tectonics and volcanic geology of Deception Island and the Scotia Arch. We had walked among pyroclastic material of many different colours and hues.

The weather continued to improve and before we knew it there were bluebird-skies with only a few lenticular clouds hovering over the stunning ice-capped mountains of Livingstone Island. Our afternoon landing on Half Moon Island was nestled into a bay on the eastern end of Livingstone. A group of penguins both Chinstrap and Gentoo were on the beach preening and many more were swimming about in the shallow bay. A walk along the tombolo between the headlands allowed views of several small colonies of breeding birds. There were Kelp Gulls sitting on top of rocky stacks with young brown fluffy chicks, Antarctic Terns were attacking any bird that flew too close to their nests and above the scree Chinstrap penguins were closely guarding their grey chicks from the patrolling Brown Skuas.

Once back onboard the sun lured a few hardy souls into the water and 45 expeditioners took the polar plunge from the aft marina deck into the frigid Antarctic waters.







DAY 8 | Sunday 5th January 2020

Point Wild, Elephant Island

Position: 07:45 hours
Latitude: 61°04.16' S
Longitude: 54°42.48' W

Course: 270°
Speed: 12.5 knots

Wind Speed: 15 knots
Wind Direction: NW

Barometer: 1000 hPa
Air Temp: 2°C
Sea Temp: -1°C

Life to me is the greatest of all games. The danger lies in treating it as a trivial game, a game to be taken lightly, and a game in which the rules don't matter much. The rules matter a great deal. The game has to be played fairly or it is no game at all. And even to win the game is not the chief end. The chief end is to win it honorably and splendidly. —Sir Ernest Shackleton, who died on this day, 5th January in 1922.

Today was without doubt a red-letter day. It started with an even earlier than usual announcement from Stephen. The weather was fine and so the *Greg Mortimer* was steaming with all haste towards Point Wild with the hope of a landing. Breakfast had been brought forward a little so that we could take advantage of the calm and still conditions before they changed. As we travelled along the south shore of Elephant Island the morning sun picked out in sharp relief the beauty of its rugged snow stacked shore.

It also backlit the breath of the many Humpback whales (and some Fin Whales) gathered to feed here. However, when we rounded the end of the island and began our approach to point Wild the weather took a turn for the worse. We slipped under a dark and foreboding cover of cloud and found a little more wind which rucked the surface of the sea. Optimism about a landing was evaporating rapidly as the *Greg Mortimer* dropped anchor in the bay next to Wild Point. It began to look like this place of ill omen might yet again deny us a landing and keep its secrets.

An exploratory zodiac was launched with Stephen helming and after assessing the swell it was deemed possible to attempt a landing. Through the morning all people that wanted to go ashore made it and had the chance to spend time at this bleak but historical site. The exposed spit of rock and sand was softened a little by a colony of Chinstrap Penguins, many of which had young grey chicks under them. I think many people could not help

but imagine the struggle of the twenty eight men that found themselves marooned here over a century ago. It felt to me as if the ghosts of those men still clung to this place and I could almost see them standing at the water's edge as they watched their only real hope for survival disappear over the horizon. For from this very beach Shackleton with four other men rowed the *James Caird* away, out towards the open sea and South Georgia whilst all the others stood waving and shouting final words of encouragement.

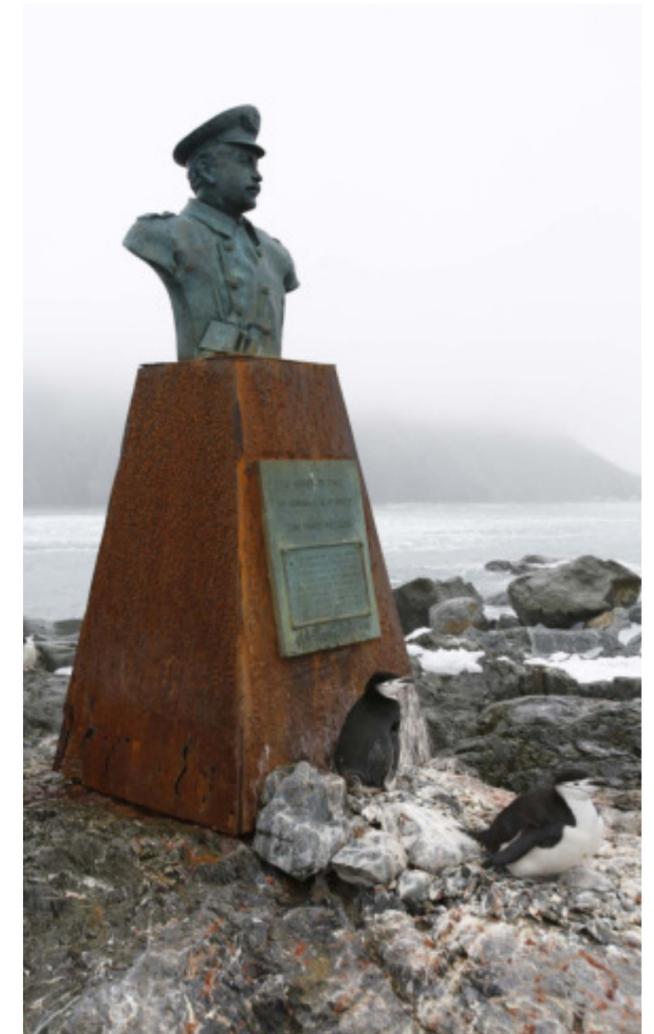
As the little boat rounded the point and disappeared from view, it took everyone's slender hopes for survival with it. The morning was made even better by the appearance of a truly beautifully marked Leopard Seal dozing on a small iceberg in front of the glacier just off Point Wild.

The ship headed down the south coast of Elephant Island while we ate lunch to anchor at a spot known only to Captain Oleg. All around the ship Humpback Whales were feeding and so as soon as we could we head out in the zodiacs to try and make contact with them. The great beasts seemed determined to put of on a show for us and for some time several Humpbacks fed slowly around us, sometimes surfacing so close it made all of us feel very honoured and very small in our zodiacs and kayaks.

High on the hills and ridges along the shore were large Chinstrap colonies and there was a constant traffic of penguins returning from fishing trips laden with food for their chicks which have just begun to hatch. It was amazing to watch them climbing the steep scree slopes and rocky faces to get back to their nest with such tenacity and determination.

When we up anchored the *Greg Mortimer* turned its bow towards amazing South Georgia and set off on the two day passage ahead.

Yes, today has been a truly red-letter day.





DAY 9 | Monday 6th January 2020

South Atlantic Ocean, heading for South Georgia

Position: 10:50 hours
Latitude: 59°38.37'S
Longitude: 48°32.27'W

Course: 56°

Speed: 11.3 knots

Wind Speed: 29 knots

Wind Direction: NNW

Barometer: 1005 hPa & falling

Air Temp: 0°C

Sea Temp: 0°C

Antarctica has this mythic weight. It resides in the collective unconscious of so many people, and it makes this huge impact, just like outer space. It's like going to the moon. —Jon Krakauer

After waving goodbye to the humpback and fin whales around Elephant Island, the *Greg Mortimer* entered the next phase of our wondrous journey today – a crossing northeast over the expanse of the Scotia Sea to South Georgia. Two days and three nights of ship time lay ahead, giving us a chance to relax and enjoy the delights of our beautiful home on the ocean.

After a string of early starts and much hopping in and out of zodiacs over the preceding few days, it was time for a good old sleep in – well, almost? The clocks went forward an hour, but in compensation Stephen allowed us to slumber on until the adjusted time of 08.00, with breakfast served at the respectable time of 08.30.

Sea days are a great opportunity for learning, so a packed educational program got underway at 10.00 with Alasdair's first instalment of a two-part discussion of Ernest Shackleton's famous Imperial Trans-Antarctic (Endurance) Expedition. In the first talk, he explained the background, planning and early stages of the expedition, and just why Shackleton was prepared to risk all to venture to the very extremes of the earth.

Stephen followed before lunch with a fascinating discussion of the nature of ice and its various manifestations in Antarctica – from the vast ice sheet that covers all but two percent of the continent, to icebergs with small country credentials, and finally to glacial remnants in the form of bergy bits, growlers and brash ice.

After lunch, Laura continued the science program with a comprehensive look at the plant kingdom and related organisms in the Antarctic region. We all saw the gorgeous lichens and mosses at Half Moon Island. It was now time to extend the coverage to everything from algae to the spectacular mega-herbs from the sub-antarctic islands such as Macquarie and those to the south of New Zealand.

Mid afternoon, the galley team put on a delicious afternoon tea, allowing time for us to fortify ourselves for Pete's talk: 'Antarctic and Southern Ocean Whaling: A sorry, bloody history'. In a grim but fascinating discussion, our whale specialist outlined the history of whale hunting from ancient times to the peak of the slaughter in the 20th century. At its most rapacious in the days of secret Soviet whaling, the director of their program planned to leave nothing but an oceanic desert in the wake of the killing. Truly chilling, and such a contrast to the way we watched in awe as whales fed and dived around us during our time in Antarctica.

A delicious buffet and good conversation over dinner rounded out a thoroughly entertaining and enjoyable day at sea. And it was all educational to boot! Some of us took in an evening documentary about charting Antarctica's climatic history – 'The Sky and the Ice' – while those beautiful birds with the checkerboard wings, the cape petrels, wheeled and darted about the ship, escorting the *Greg Mortimer* onwards to South Georgia and still more grand adventures.

DAY 10 | Tuesday 7th January 2020

South Atlantic Ocean, heading for South Georgia

Position: 10:30 hours
Latitude: 57°10.88'S
Longitude: 41°13.24'W

Course: 46.8°

Speed: 10 knots

Wind Speed: 27 knots

Wind Direction: SE

Barometer: 1011 hpa

Air Temp: 1°C

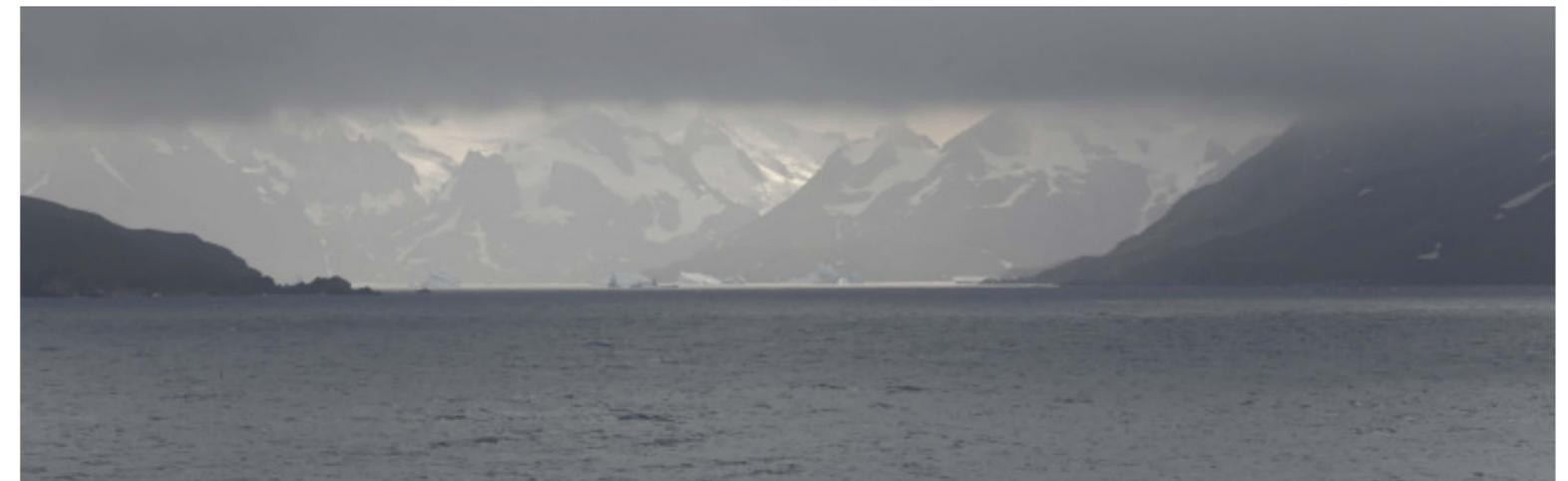
Sea Temp: 4°C

A Journey is a person in itself; no two are alike, and all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless. We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us. —John Steinbeck

Today we woke to slightly rougher seas with the wind gusting to 25 knots from the north-west, but the good ship *Greg Mortimer* ploughed smoothly on toward our fabled destination of South Georgia. The ship continues to impress with its comfortable ride. It was a typical Southern Ocean day, grey and overcast, but the wind settled down during the day to 15 knots. The flocks of Cape Petrels, or Pintados, that accompanied us most of the day yesterday had disappeared, with only a few white-chinned petrels and albatrosses to be seen.

After breakfast, Heidi brought us up to date on the biology and management of Antarctic krill, *Euphausia superba*. This amazing little decapod (10-legged) crustacean is the keystone species of the Antarctic marine ecosystem, occurring in swarms, sometimes huge, that feed busily on diatom phytoplankton under the sea ice and in open water, and in turn nourishing fish, petrels, penguins, seals and baleen whales. Heidi recalled how in Errera Channel in 2016, the Polar Pioneer encountered no less than three large krill trawlers operating in the area where a few days ago we saw dozens of feeding humpback whales and thousands of foraging penguins.

She described how the fishery is regulated by CCAMLR (the Convention on Antarctic Marine Living Resources), and in addition is now self-regulated by the industry association ARK, whose members, to their enormous credit, have agreed not to fish such sensitive areas in future.



After lunch Stephen and Ashley led us through the bio-security briefing for South Georgia. A jewel in the corona of sub-Antarctic islands that circle the continent, South Georgia has suffered more than its share of exotic invasions by plant and animal pests. The island's administration has rightly implemented very strict guidelines to prevent further introductions, or transfer of biological or geological material between landing sites on the island. A short film emphasised the importance of bio-security, while showcasing some of the stunning scenery and profuse marine wildlife that the island is famous for. After this, Ashley shared a short presentation on her wedding: she and her husband Merfyn were hitched in the old Norwegian whalers' chapel at Grytviken – what a wonderful place to be married! We look forward to Ashley sharing her knowledge and experiences of South Georgia with us over the next few days. We completed the bio-security requirements by giving our boots a final scrub and clean, and our Velcro and pockets a final inspection and vacuum.

This afternoon, Ian shared more of the stories behind his photos. His modest delivery belied the difficulties that lay behind his extraordinary tales from remote locations, such the confiding Arctic fox vixen that left him in charge of her cubs, and the 'chopper' whose social role was to implement the 'sky burial' of his old friend in remote northern Nepal.

Tomorrow – South Georgia! In the morning we expect to have the island in sight. We will then round Cape Disappointment, where James Cook had to abandon hope that he had discovered a Great South Land, before entering Drygalski Fjord, a place of extraordinary beauty and our introduction to this remarkable island



DAY 11 | Wednesday 8th January 2020

Dryglaski Fjord, Larsen Harbour, Gold Harbour

Position: 07:30	Course: 48°	Wind Speed: 6 knots	Barometer: 1006 hpa
Latitude: 55°04.40'S	Speed: 9.5 knots	Wind Direction: NW	Air Temp: 3°C
Longitude: 36°20.59'W			Sea Temp: 5°C

For scientific leadership, give me Scott; for swift and efficient travel, Amundsen; but when you are in a hopeless situation, when there seems to be no way out, get on your knees and pray for Shackleton. —Sir Raymond Priestley

The morning dawned bright and clear, with little puffs of high cloud. As the good ship *Greg Mortimer* ploughed further across the South Scotia Sea, Stephen gave us a call to head up on one of the ship's outdoor platforms to see the array of birdlife following our wake toward South Georgia. Wandering albatross, sooty shearwaters and the ever-present giant and cape petrels soaring and diving around us was a highlight as we approached the island.

The seas had picked up as we approached South Georgia, with the wind tearing around the ship. However, as soon as we had rounded the southern tip of the island, the seas became still and the wind mild. Jocelyn called us up on deck and spoke about the unique geology of the area as we headed into Drygalski Fjord. 1500 metres of snow-tipped igneous rock flanked either side of *Greg Mortimer* and provided the perfect backdrop as we headed to take a look on a ship cruise.

We noticed the silty green of the water, Joselyn explaining the presence of silt coming from sediment banks being crushed into the water by the glacier contrasted with the deep blue of the sky and the black etches of the rock. The lines in the igneous rock were explained as a result of lava flows when the fjord was carved hundreds of millions years earlier. At the head of the fjord, we stood mesmerised by the actively calving glacier and an obliging leopard seal on an ice floe. Undoubtedly an incredible first cruise in this magnificent island.

The afternoon's activities shifted over lunch as we noticed large swells as we headed back out of the fjord. We instead decided to drop zodiacs and head in for a closer look at Larsen Harbour; a smaller fjord that branches off from Drygalski. Larsen Harbour is named after Karl von Larsen, a whaler who ran whaling operations in South Georgia in the early 20th century. As the last safe anchorage before the South Scotia Sea and the Antarctic Peninsula, Larsen Harbour was an important location for much of the early whaling operation in the south.

We spent a beautiful afternoon, looking at the craggy cliffs, working our way through clumps of bull kelp, with obliging fur seals hauled out on rocky shores and displaying their prowess in their underwater playground. The kayakers had a fantastic downwind paddle back to the ship; working their way around the coastline.

A short respite over dinner, before the grand finale of the day: Gold Harbour, the third largest king penguin colony in the world. We motored in to a volcanic beach, flanked beneath a glacier, with thousands upon thousands of king penguins providing our evening's entertainment. We noticed the beautiful, deep-yellow nape of the kings; so different from the brushtails in the Peninsula. Pete told us of how the colour of the nape corresponds to the age of the king penguin, with the deeper, yellow tint indicating older age.

As we left the beach, the last rays of sunlight managed to break through the low cloud illuminating the glacier in all its' glory, a magical end to our first day in the wonder of this island.



DAY 12 | Thursday 9th January 2020

South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

Position: 06:30
Latitude: 54°12.94'S
Longitude: 36°22.95'W

Course: 270°
Speed: 9.5 knots

Wind Speed: 5 knots
Wind Direction: SE

Barometer: 1002 hpa
Air Temp: 3°C
Sea Temp: 5°C

We had 'suffered, starved, and triumphed, grovelled down yet grasped at glory, grown bigger in the bigness of the whole'. We had seen God in his splendours, heard the text that Nature renders. We had reached the naked soul of man.
—Shackleton, *South: The Endurance Expedition*

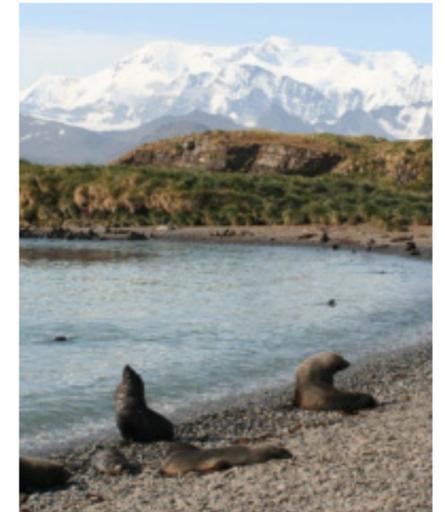
Our Expedition Leader's voice came over the loudspeaker bright and early this morning, as we had a big day ahead of us! The ocean swell that had interrupted the sleep of many an expeditioner during the preceding night meant that we had to find a more protected landing site for our morning's activities; and Jason Harbour fitted the bill perfectly, a circular harbour framed by tall mountains, some still capped with snow. It was a lovely site for a shore landing, and the adjacent Little Jason Lagoon was perfect for the paddlers. We all marvelled at the abundant wildlife and we laughed at the fur seals as they frolicked and quarreled and sunned themselves on the beach, in the lake and the lagoon, and in amongst the mounds of tussock grass.

The baby blonde fur seal garnered the most attention, it would be fair to say. There were plenty of fat big-eyed elephant seals lazing about, and a variety of birds to admire, including moulting king penguins, pintail ducks, pipits (South Georgia's endemic songbird), skuas, Antarctic terns, and giant petrels. We were able to visit the old post office built in 1911 for the whalers. Some of the expeditioners also found time to participate in their citizen science projects during a zodiac cruise around the harbour.

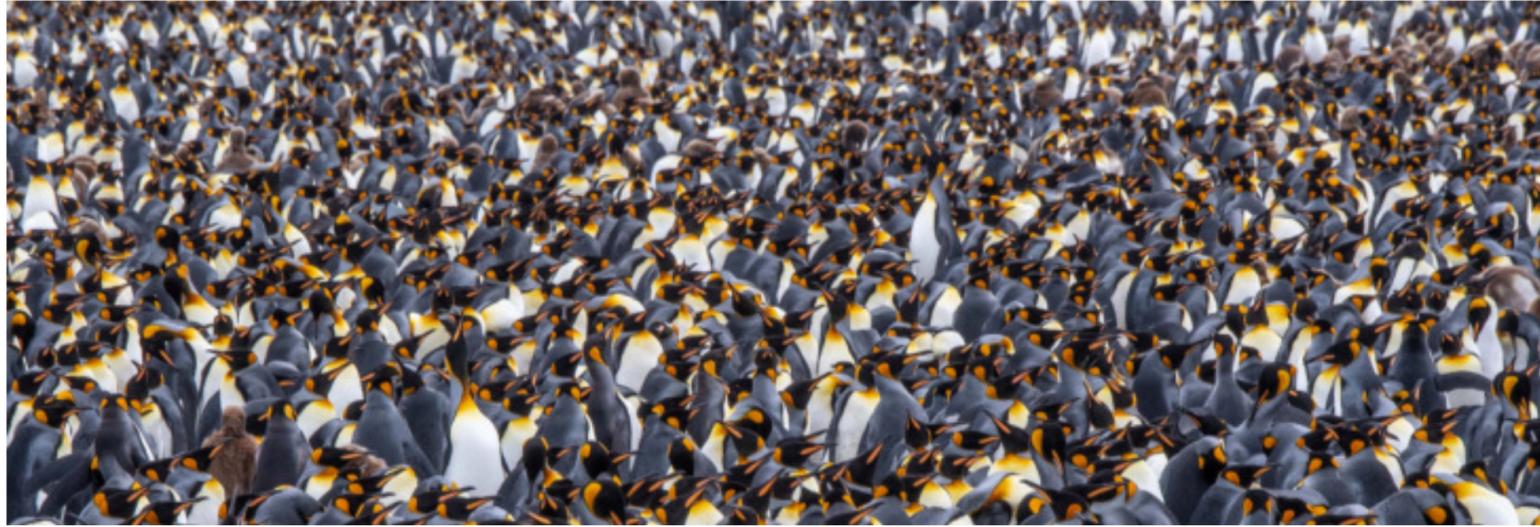
Afterwards we sailed to Fortuna Bay where two thirds of the group embarked on Shackleton's Walk, the final leg of his famous crossing of South Georgia down into Stromness, where together with his two companions Worsley and Crean, Shackleton raised the alarm and started mounting a rescue for his men stranded on Elephant Island. Our hikers climbed 300m up onto the saddle of the island, crossed over the pass and scrambled down the steep scree slope to the valley floor on the other side then onwards to the old abandoned whaling station, a 6km trek which they completed in good time (full bellies, muck boots, GPS waypoints, bare scree and relatively mild weather helped). The other third of the group sailed around from Fortuna Bay to Stromness Bay where they met the hikers, and many of the second group walked back across the valley to the waterfall that Shackleton and his two companions had climbed down using a rope.

Stromness Bay is now home to hundreds of fur seals as well as many birds, and the rusty remains of the old whaling station. The surrounding low-lying land is covered in many different grasses and mosses, liverworts, and flowers, and we had to take special care to remove the seeds from our shoes and clothing in anticipation of a visit to Grytviken the next morning, where biosecurity is closely monitored.

We rounded off the evening with a wonderful BBQ out on Deck 8, feasting in our party hats and warm clothes under the darkening sky to a party-starting soundtrack, before retiring to the bar or to bed.







DAY 13 | Friday 10th January 2020

Grytviken, Salisbury Plain

Position: 06:30 hours

Course: 335°

Wind Speed: 9.5 knots

Barometer: 989 hpa

Latitude: 54°16.99'S

Speed: 9.5 knots

Wind Direction: N

Air Temp: 4°C

Longitude: 36°30.06'W

Sea Temp: 5°C

*I have often had the impression that, to penguins, man is just another penguin – different, less predictable, occasionally violent, but tolerable company when he sits still and minds his own business. —Bernard Stonehouse, *Penguins**

In the early hours of this morning the good ship *Greg Mortimer* steamed into Cumberland Bay East and dropped anchor in King Edward Cove. We shared our breakfast this morning with members of staff from the South Georgia Heritage Trust, Sarah then gave us a presentation of all the great work that this charity does for the island. It was inspirational to learn that this is the largest island in the world to have rodents eradicated.

It was only possible because glaciers split the island into manageable portions and many educated visitors have helped to fund the project. Many thanks to those who also contributed generous donations to this great work. Behind the scenes the ship was visited by a South Georgia Government officer, to make sure we were following bio-security regulations and to stamp our passports. Then it was time to explore ashore.

Grytviken was the first shore-based whaling station to be built in South Georgia. This site has been cleaned up and made safe which allowed us to wander among the buildings and machinery and even look at some old derelict whale catcher boats pulled up on the beach. A visit to the museum and gift shop was high on our list of activities then many joined one of the guided tours of the site to learn about the technical side and life as a whaler.

Before leaving Grytviken, we gathered in the cemetery after carefully making our way around a prostrate elephant seal. There were several graves of some very young men, a testament to the dangerous life of a whaler. Alasdair shared some poignant words then we raised a glass of whiskey to toast “The Boss”.

This morning during our briefing Stephen showed us a very colourful weather map which painted South Georgia in several brilliant shades of pink and purple over the next 24 hours. There was some very windy weather on the way, but we hoped to have a little bit more time to enjoy one more special place. So, it was with all fingers and toes crossed for good luck that we steamed to the west and approached the Bay of Isles. Luck was with us! The Captain skillfully maneuvered the ship to a second slightly more protected anchorage, which allowed us to board Zodiacs and explore Salisbury Plain.

This large glacial outwash plain is home to some quarter of a million King Penguins. Our new landing place meant that there was some distance to cover before viewing breeding penguins but with so much life on shore the journey was one never to forget. There were Antarctic Fur Seals in the thousands with the cacophony of calls from females reuniting with their young black-coated pups. The precocial young pups seemed to be everywhere and their antics were fun to watch. But the real grace of this special island is the poise and gleaming colours on the adult King Penguin.

Tonight we steam into the Scotia Sea with our memories of this wild, remote and beautiful island



DAY 14 | Saturday 11th January 2020

At sea, South Georgia to the Falklands

Position:	14:30	Course:	275°	Wind Speed:	26 knots	Barometer:	1000 hpa
Latitude:	53°26.33'S	Speed:	13.4 knots	Wind Direction:	S	Air Temp:	6°C
Longitude:	43°58.21'W					Sea Temp:	5°C

Birds were flying from continent to continent long before we were. They reached the coldest place on Earth, Antarctica, long before we did. They can survive in the hottest of deserts. Some can remain on the wing for years at a time. They can girdle the globe. Now, we have taken over the earth and the sea and the sky, but with skill and care and knowledge, we can ensure that there is still a place on Earth for birds in all their beauty and variety - if we want to... And surely, we should. —Sir David Attenborough

Today was spent at sea trying to outrun a storm that had forced us to leave South Georgia a day early. The seas were the largest we have experienced so far on our expedition, measuring somewhere between 3 and 4 meters and swirling like we were in a washing machine. Despite the motion of the ocean, the MV *Greg Mortimer* travelled well! Those beautiful stabilizers did their job with most of the guests were fit as fiddles as we made good time steaming towards the Falkland Islands.

The seabirds loved the conditions. We had many Wandering Albatross circling the ship. These are the largest (with respect to wing length) of all the world's birds and their majestic soaring flight contrasted nicely with the butterfly like wing beats of black-bellied and Wilson's storm-petrels which were equally abundant. Flying among them were prions, giant petrels, white-chinned petrels and black-browed albatross all making hay as the wind blew!

In the morning we steamed past Shag Rocks and saw thousands of birds using this important upwelling. Food must be abundant here as we also saw Humpback Whales close by. There was even a rumour of a sighting of the highly endangered Southern Right Whale foraging among the hundreds of cormorants who call this rock home.



In between spending time outside watching and photographing wildlife, we were entertained by the teams' naturalists and the ships talented crew. In the morning we heard a great lecture by Joselyn on what "lies beneath marine ecosystems" where she described many of the things we don't usually talk about including ice fish and salp. This was followed by a series of bridge tours where guests got to ask the Captain and his team about which buttons to press to steer the ship - important information for any future mutiny!

Lunch was again delicious, and we allowed the bread pudding to settle as we watched another of Alasdair's famous presentations. This time he described Frank Hurley in a lecture entitled "A Photographers Life" where we learned that you never let the truth ruin a good story. Alasdair summarised Hurley's life brilliantly and drew from the biography he wrote on this famous Australian photographer in a way that moving and revealing of the true character of this complex character.

This was followed by a great lecture by Russel who described an epic kayak trip he and his brother took from Brazil to Florida in 2013-2014. This seven-month odyssey sounded amazing – and tiring!! He showed photos of the muddy South American coast through to the turquoise water of the Bahamas and regaled us with stories highlighting the kindness of strangers and the support two young kayakers got on an adventure of a life time.

Our day closed with the seas calming, a recap, glass of wine and sumptuous meal. Lingered were the memories of South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsulaand enthusiasm for what lies ahead.



DAY 15 | Sunday 12th January 2020

At sea, enroute to the Falklands

Position:	05:30 hours	Course:	282°	Wind Speed:	18 knots	Barometer:	1008 hpa
Latitude:	52°31.44'S	Speed:	10.6 knots	Wind Direction:	NW	Air Temp:	9°C
Longitude:	52°37.63'W					Sea Temp:	7°C

There are other places in the world where nature stuns, amazes or utterly dominates man's achievements, but there are few places where all these forces combine. Antarctica is a continent that continually humbles man and not least man's greed. —HRH Prince Edward, *Foreword, Wild Ice: Antarctic Journeys*

We awoke to calmer seas than we'd had for the previous few days, and countless albatross and Giant Petrels soaring around the ship. Whilst eating breakfast in the dining room we had stunning views of the undersides of Wandering Albatross as they glided and banked, blocking out the windows with their massive bodies. Our education for the day began with Laura talking to us about Aliens in Antarctica – those species of plants, insects and animals that are not native to the region and can do considerable damage to the native species and ecosystems. We learnt how many are present in the Antarctic region (over 500!), how they got here (humans!) and how some of them can decimate wildlife populations and native habitats. It really highlighted how important our biosecurity procedures are.

We also learnt about the huge amount of effort it takes to rid these regions of invasive species and what an astounding achievement the South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project was to rid the island of rats and mice. This eradication was 8 times larger than any other eradication ever done, particularly impressive given the remoteness, rugged terrain and unrelenting weather of the sub-Antarctic. We saw firsthand the astounding recovery of the island in the absence of rodents with pippets calling in areas they previously were never seen.

Ian also gave us an insightful lecture about his time in filming in Afghanistan. He told us yarns of cross-dressing to sneak across the border, exploring mines, following farting donkeys through the countryside, jumping out of Russian helicopters and interviewing Generals. Now the sight of a simple Marigold flower brings all these experiences back to life for Ian. Ian luckily made it back home after his trip, despite flying into New York on 9/11 with a visa for Afghanistan in his passport!

The afternoon was spent out on deck with our Naturalists, searching for whales and seabirds (with some lucky enough to spy some dolphins) or uploading our favourite photos for the voyage log. It is fascinating to see how different people interpret the landscape of Antarctica through a camera lens, with countless small and different moments captured. We also learnt everything there is to know about the Falkland Islands from our Naturalists – the culture, birds, marine mammals, plants and history. If the Falklands were a country they would have the 5th highest GDP per capita and penguins and sheep far outnumber the "Kelpers" (Locals).

A very entertaining evening was had as we held an auction to raise much needed funds for the South Georgia Heritage Trust to continue their excellent natural and cultural heritage conservation work. Much sought-after items included hand-drawn cards from our Naturalist Heidi, a 5 day stay in Doctor Suzanne's holiday home in Wanaka New Zealand, a penguin tie with matching cufflinks and a limited-edition print from our Photographer Ian. Danny our kayak guide found his calling as an auctioneer and with the help of an unidentified penguin heckling the crowd raised an impressive \$4000 USD for the trust.

DAY 16 | Monday 13th January 2020

At sea then Stanley, Falklands

Position: 07:55 hours
Latitude: 51°51.54'S
Longitude: 56°40.29'W

Course: 288°
Speed: 11 knots

Wind Speed: 12 knots
Wind Direction: W

Barometer: 1010 hpa
Air Temp: 10°C
Sea Temp: 8°C

Believe me my young friend, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats...simply messing. —Water Rat to Mole from *Wind in the Willows*

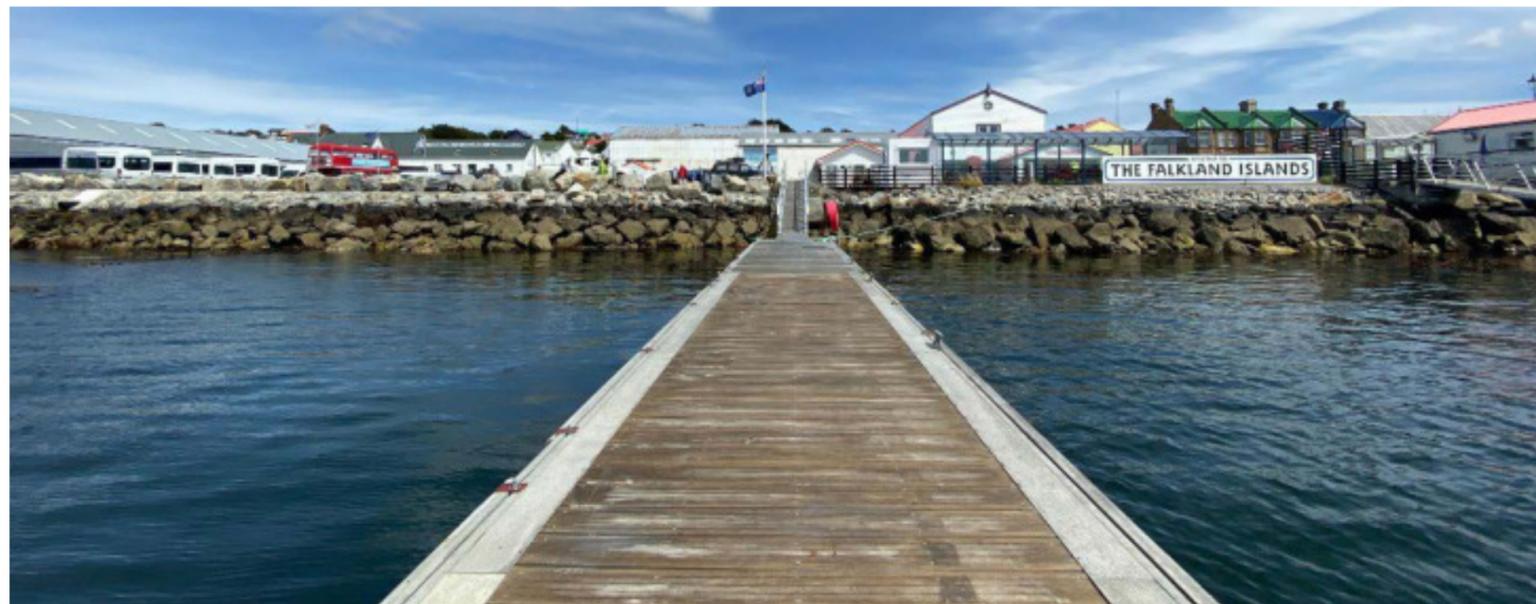
Summer had definitely arrived in the Falkland Islands this morning as we finished our two day transit from South Georgia. Indeed, with the sun beating down; a following swell and pods of Commerson's Dolphins riding our bowline, the outdoor platforms were the place to be. We were drawn back inside to listen to Isabelle's lecture on her experiences with working with whales; followed by Di's Q and A session about Aurora's new destinations and our new sister ship to the *Greg Mortimer*, the *Sylvia Earle*. Danny also spoke about their experiences in working in Iceland and Greenland; including touring across Iceland on skis to surf the Westfjords; while Isabelle spoke about her experiences working in Svalbard & Greenland.

After a sumptuous lunch, we motored into the historic Port of Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands since 1845. The decks were filled with the anticipation of this historic place and the first town we had seen in almost 3 weeks. We spotted our first rockhopper penguins, upland geese and ducks. Once the *Greg Mortimer* had been cleared by the Falklands customs, we dropped the zodiacs and headed into explore the historic township. It was a beautiful day to be out, with barely a puff of wind and glorious blue sky above.

Heidi and Alex led a walk along the foreshore looking for shorebirds, while Alasdair led a guided history tour towards the Falkland Islands museum, complete with an extensive collection of historical monuments and stories of whalers and sailors who'd explored both South Georgia and Antarctica.

Some opted for a 8.6km walk down toward Gypsy Cove complete with glorious white sand, while others opted to enjoy the sunshine and lie down on the grass at the foreshore. Most headed into explore the array of shops found ashore, searching for souvenirs. Unfortunately, the local distillery had closed for the day such was their popularity, but a pint at the pub was not a bad substitute either!

Buzzing from a brilliant afternoon, we zoomed back to the *Greg Mortimer* and immediately headed out to the outside decks to savour the sunshine with a drink from the Elephant Island Bar. A delicious buffet dinner was a satisfying conclusion to the day before we headed to our cabins for a well earned rest



DAY 17 | Tuesday 14th January 2020

Saunders Island, West Point; Falkland Islands

Position: 06:30 hours

Course: 104°

Wind Speed: 27 knots

Barometer: 993 hpa

Latitude: 51°18.17'S

Speed: 10.9 knots

Wind Direction: NW

Air Temp: 14°C

Longitude: 60°17.88'W

Sea Temp: 8°C

A first walk in any new country is one of the things which makes life on this planet worth being grateful for. —Charles William Beebe

After a day of Falkland Island culture, it was time to get back amongst nature, and what a day we had. We awoke to views of Saunders Island from our portholes, and we soon zipping ashore accompanied by Commerson's dolphins surfing the bow wave of the zodiacs right into shore. We landed on a white, sand beach where we were met by Biffo and Andrew, the owners of this little piece of paradise. We wandered across the isthmus of the island, astounded at the sight of King, Magellanic and Gentoo penguins nesting amongst the Sea Cabbage with its silvery leaves and bright yellow flowers, and sheep grazing in the hills behind! We scurried along the cliff top to find a colony of Black browed albatross.

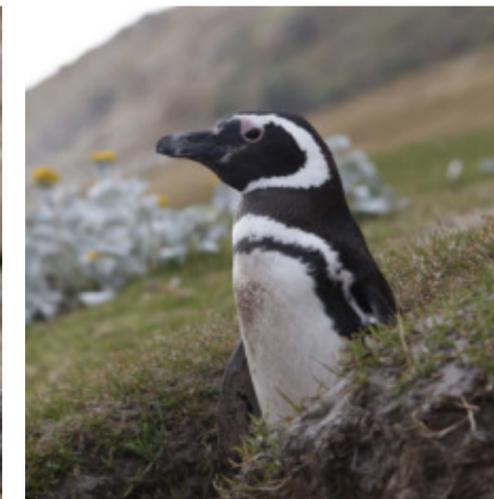
What a sight to see. Fluffy grey chicks perched atop their pedestal nests, adult birds with their magnificent face markings preening and clacking their beaks at each other while others soared around above the colony. Rockhopper penguins with their spiky hairdo and red eyes perched amongst the albatross while Cormorants attended to their chicks in the lower stalls and Turkey vultures sat watch over the colony, waiting for an unwary parent to leave the nest.

After a quick lunch back on shore while the ship was repositioned, we had a most civilized landing at West Point where we were met by the managers of the property, Ian and Jacquie 7th generation Falkland Islanders. We strolled through the misty hills, admiring the Balsam Bog plants – large cushion plants so solid you could kick them and not make a dent, the Diddle-dee with its little pink fruit growing prostrate to the ground from the constant winds and then tucked in the sheltered nooks and crannies.

We soon reached another Black-browed albatross colony. This one was as nature intended, recovered from the impact of hungry sheep, with lush green tussock grasses high enough to hide a person. Adult albatross perched on top of the pedestals, their creamy white bodies and pink bills a beautiful contrast to the bright green tussock.

As we stood and watched, enthralled, adult birds soared around us, just the whoosh of their wings heard as they passed a foot over our heads, flying for the pure joy of the wind beneath their wings. The Falklands must be one of the few places in the World this spectacle can be witnessed.

Eventually we tore ourselves away from this magnificent sight and walked back through the misty hills to find a sight straight out England – a white cottage with a pitched roof, picket fence, manicured lawn and sweet-smelling cottage garden. Only the vultures perched on the eaves gave away the fact we were in the Falklands and not the remote reaches of Scotland! Inside the cottage lay a sumptuous English afternoon tea – scones, shortbread and every kind of cake and slice imaginable! After stuffing ourselves full of baked delights we rolled back to the ship like well-fed elephant seal weaners, a wonderful landing to end the trip





DAY 18 | Wednesday 15th January 2020

Drake Passage

Position: 14:00 hours

Course: 197°

Wind Speed: 32 knots

Barometer: 991 hpa

Latitude: 53°45.90' S

Speed: 13.1 knots

Wind Direction: SW

Air Temp: 8°C

Longitude: 64°16.88' W

Sea Temp: 8°C

The land was gone, all but a little streak, away off on the edge of the water, and down under us was just ocean, ocean, ocean—millions of miles of it, heaving and pitching and squirming, and white sprays blowing from the wave-tops... and we had the sky and the ocean to ourselves, and the roomiest place I ever did see... —Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer Abroad

After a broken sleep for many, the day revealed itself with a thud. It had been a rough night for many onboard, with swells reaching up to 9 metres overnight. We rolled and lurched between the swell as the waves repelled off the side of the boat. Albatross seemed to be the only ones enjoying the seas as they cheekily glided past the dining room windows relishing in the wind tunnels created by the ship. It was unusually quiet at breakfast as only half the dining room was present but Vegemite on toast managed to get a good crowd of Australians through the morning and the heavy seas.

Alasdair soldiered on with the first presentation of the morning and spoke of the historical conservation in the early days of Antarctica.

Alex followed with a lecture about Plastics in the ocean and how it was affecting the seabird population globally. It was a sobering reality to see young albatross dying with stomachs full of plastic. Learning that microplastics look similar to small bits of squid made us understand how this was happening on such a large scale. Sourcing their food from the same areas where large bodies of plastics have accumulated in the oceans made us all realise the issue, we have with waste management and inspired conversations on projects that were tackling the challenge.

The wind continued to howl throughout the day, picking up to gusts of 60 knots. Those who had looked forward to a little of the real Drake Passage certainly got a fill of this legendary beast. We would not be beaten though and persisted on with afternoon lectures while the boat continued to bounce off the relentless seas.

In the afternoon, four of our fearless expedition women presented "4 Chicks in a Freezer – A tale of survival" and told us tales of how they had each spent time at Antarctic bases. Their cross collaboration of stories in various roles gave a fascinating insight into a life that people rarely got to see.

Throughout the day people continued to flock to the library with their photos from the trip, keen to share with their fellow passengers and the excited by the potential that their shot might accompany a story in the voyage log.

Still the wind howled and after dinner Pete introduced a documentary "The Loneliest Mountain" about Greg Mortimer's first ascent of Mount Minto in 1988. Greg had sought the advice of Pete about accessing the Ross Sea by yacht. Pete was part of the crew on the expedition and together they forged through the ever-shifting elements of the Antarctic sea.

We continued into the night looking forward to the sight of land and calmer seas. The Beagle channel lay ahead.



DAY 19 | Thursday 16th January 2020

Beagle Channel

Once you have been to the white unknown, you can never escape the call of the little voices. —Frank Wild

The penultimate sunrise of the voyage found us safely back in the Beagle Channel, having narrowly avoided the storm bearing down on the Falkland Islands. Several passengers were very relieved that the passage through the open ocean was over, and gradually the pink came back into their cheeks!

It was a relaxed day for the most part, spent reminiscing on all that we had seen and experienced over the preceding three weeks, reflecting on what we had learned about this incredible part of the world, uploading and/or downloading trip photos, and enjoying our last meals together.

Heidi took us for a trip down memory lane in the lecture theatre, detailing the places we had visited and Jack shared some statistics about how much food and alcohol we had consumed as a team of 118 passengers and 103 crew including the expedition team. We were staggered to learn that we had eaten about 1000 steaks between us, we averaged 720 eggs per day, and we had drunk over 1300 bottles of wine and champagne.

Lamb cutlets were the favourite savoury dish, and key lime pie was the hit dessert! It is very unlikely that anyone returned home lighter than before they had joined the *Greg Mortimer*!

Several passengers and staff shared their trip highlights. Everyone agreed that the wildlife and scenery had blown them away, the lectures had been very interesting and had enhanced their enjoyment and understanding of the places visited, the staff had been very helpful and friendly, and many new friendships had been formed.

In the evening we gathered for the Captain's farewell and a few more brief speeches, we enjoyed the photo log put together by Ian which provoked many gasps and a few giggles, and then we feasted for the final time as a group.

In the words of the incoming Captain, may God and your luggage be with you on your journey home! And may you become a lifelong ambassador for this unique, fascinating and incredibly precious part of the world



DAY 20 | Friday 17th January 2020

Docked in the port of Ushuaia

I am the albatross that waits for you
at the end of the earth.

I am the forgotten soul of the dead sailors
who crossed Cape Horn
from all the seas of the world.

But they did not die
in the furious waves.
Today they fly in my wings
to eternity
in the last trough of the Antarctic winds

Translated from Spanish

The morning began once more with Stephens soothing voice bringing us around to consciousness. This is it, the last day of our journey on board the *MV Greg Mortimer*.

We have transited the Southern Ocean to reach far flung destinations, shared our experiences, whether we be kayakers, history buffs or naturalists. Different viewpoints of the same experience, just as each and every one of us will take away our own unique lived experience from our marvelous time aboard.

Last night our trip of a lifetime ended as it began, with a drink in hand at our Captain's Farewell Drinks, we toasted to our voyage and our new friends. From all the Aurora Expedition Team, a big thank you to all expeditioners for sharing this journey with us.

Thank you also for your great humour, enthusiasm and adventurous spirit. May your memories live long and bright!



Kayaking Log

By Alex Chavanne

Kayaking Masters: Alex Chavanne, Russell Henry, Danny O'Farrell

Total Distance Paddled: 65 kilometres

Kayakers:

Robyn Bramwell	Gavin Bramwell	Lisa Duncan
John Archer	Holly Bullins	Leslie Cadzow
Glenda Cadzow	Margaret Chellew	Mark Chellew
Ronald Conrad	Helen Liossis	Edward Herweynen
David Kalman	Shelby Kalman	David Laabs
Susan Laabs	Noel McKay	Glenda Ramsay-Mckay
Owen Staines	Catherine Staines	

DAY 4: AM: Melchior Islands – Distance: 7 km

The gentle roll of the ship eased as we entered the sheltered anchorage of the Melchior Islands. There was a bit of swell though that sneaked in between the islands and getting off the ship proved to be a bit bouncier than had been anticipated. Nevertheless, all the kayakers came out this snowy morning for the first paddle in Antarctica. It was a great place to prepare ourselves for the upcoming days of paddling, as the numerous small islands offered protection from the wind that was blowing in the area. The group paddled out together past large well sculpted ice bergs, and into narrow passages that echoed with the cry of nesting terns and gulls. Several Weddell seals were spotted resting and we stopped to listen to them snore before continuing on. With less than an hour remaining, we paddled back to the ship, through numerous bands of brash ice and into the slightly lumpy bay where the *Greg Mortimer* was anchored.

PM: Cuverville Island – Distance: 12 km

After a scenic cruise past multitudes of humpback whales over lunch, the ship anchored among some large icebergs off the coast of Cuverville Island. The kayakers got off to a good start, having split up into a leisurely group and active group. Both groups ultimately circumnavigated the island and met on the east side for an immensely pleasing paddle along the sheltered side with mirror calm conditions and majestic mountain scenery. Both groups went to shore to enjoy the penguins and watch as the gentoo penguins finished up their egg incubation. During the landing, the wind had picked up a bit, and the active group decided for a return to the ship while the leisurely group went for it and paddled back for an exciting and ironic bouncy finish.

DAY 5: AM: Paradise Bay – Distance: 12 km

This morning, the GM sailed into Paradise Bay as the sun glittered off a mirror calm surface, and icebergs bounced in the gentle wake of the ship. It wasn't necessary to convince any of the group to join, and everyone got out in either a long paddling group or shorter paddling group. The long and active group got out and paddled out to a number of beautiful icebergs and found a leopard seal that ultimately became interested in the paddlers and it was time to move on. Everyone then paddled along the steep cliffs covered in lichen, nesting cormorants, cape petrels, and terns. Passing along a mighty glacier in Skontorp Cove, we enjoyed moments of silence as our boats glided among brash ice and the reflection of the surrounding mountains. All the kayakers met on a point

and stepped out of our boats onto the Antarctic continent. It was a momentous occasion for some who's seventh continent it was. A foul toast was proposed, and we had a drink to having a chance to paddle in this amazing place. Many more activities were proposed for the day, so we all paddled back to the ship.

PM: Danco Island – Distance: 8 km

A short sail was in order to our next destination of Danco Island in the middle of the Errera Channel. The conditions were still ideal, and more than half the paddlers got out onto the water for a fantastic afternoon. We set off to paddle amongst enormous grounded bergs and watch as chunks fell off creating great splashes. Deciding we should have a one-way paddle, we continued on to make a circumnavigation of the island. On the inside of the island, we found lots of brash ice, and found a leopard seal with a stunning backdrop of glacier covered mountains. Onwards, we passed bergs and along shore while penguins porpoised and we came back within sight of our home for the trip. On the way around the last point, we heard the blow of humpback whales, and we paddled out towards several that we are traveling through the channel. We stopped, and in the calm water we watched a whale come over and eye the kayaks from underneath before moving on. We finished with a close fluke to finish the trip and paddled back onboard to move on.

PM: Enterprise Island – Distance: 4 km

This evening several of us got out for a relaxed paddle after dinner. Taking the most of every opportunity we set out to paddle amongst some well sculpted bergs as the evening stayed calm but turned cool. The paddlers wound between ice and small islands, taking a closer look at some of the historical artifacts of the area. The kayaks, being nimble, got up inside the boat to find old harpoon tips stacked inside, relics from another era. After taking in the Governoren, we set off back to the ship to wrap up a full Antarctic day.

DAY 6: AM: Deception Island – Distance: 7 km

There are few places in the world where one can reasonably expect to be able to paddle into the heart of an active volcano, and Deception Island, our first stop for the day is one of those. Located south of the South Shetlands, we sailed north overnight, and soon after breakfast sailed through the narrow opening to the flooded caldera. Kayaks were soon off, splitting into a longer group that paddled back out the narrow passage and then through sea stacks and then back past a small chinstrap colony and yet another shipwreck. The shorter paddle took off and admired the same colony of penguins while learning a bit about the vulcanism of the area and Antarctica. Back along the cliffs covered in lichen and nesting birds, then back to the ship so that everyone could have as much time on shore as they needed.

PM: Half Moon Island – Distance: 10 km

We had a magnificent paddle. That's all that really needs to be said about this afternoon. The sun was shining, and the mountains of Livingston Island provided a backdrop of unparalleled splendour. All the paddlers who were fit to paddle got out on the mirror calm water and took off around the island. The short group took it easy, enjoying the penguins and sunshine, while the long paddlers took off to a rocky point and played among the rocky chutes. On the far side of the island, all the paddlers found some popcorn ice. Sitting in the water, compressed air popped out of the ice pieces as they melted, and it sounded

like we were sitting in a bowl of rice crispy cereal. Weddell seals littered the beaches, and we all hung out, taking it easy regarding the chinstrap penguins. We finished our paddle, and all returned to the ship for the Polar Plunge.

DAY 7: AM: Point Wild – Distance: 3 km

The chance of getting off the ship at Point Wild is always a matter of luck, and the chances of getting in kayaks and then landing there is even more slim. The group struck it lucky, and we were all able to get off for an atmospheric paddle out to point wild where we all made a mild surf landing. We got to spend an enjoyable half hour ashore, reminiscing about the early days of Antarctic exploration, and what it must have been like to spend months on this small spit of land. Avoiding our first rowdy fur seal, we got back in our kayaks and paddled through a heavy brash ice to get to the glacier face where we sat and observed small calvings for some time. We headed back to the ship to warm up before a planned afternoon outing.

PM: Muckle Bluff – Distance: 7 km

We were in for a bit of exploration this afternoon as the expedition team and guests were headed into unknown territory. The kayakers set out in turquoise water and were treated to a paddle through whale soup. The whole group sat quietly as whales came up amid the group and dived, fluking repeatedly right next to the paddlers. It was a magical experience as there was no wind, and the glaciated scenery of Elephant Island provided another stunning backdrop. The long group set off for a little bit of an extra paddle, while the slower group set off straight for shore. We all arrived in a secluded shallow bay where we got out of our boats for a wonderful wildlife experience. We saw breeding gentoo, chinstrap, and macaroni penguins, as well as a king penguin, a teaser for upcoming South Georgia. Many seals were littered around the shore, including Weddell seals, elephant seals and fur seals. Back in our boats, we paddled back to our ship to complete another fantastic Antarctic paddling experience.

DAY 10: PM: Larsen Harbor – Distance: 10 km

After the ship left the protection of Drygalski Fjord, we began to encounter strong wind, in excess of 30 knots, and so turned around and went back in to anchor off Larsen Harbor. The kayakers got out, and splitting into two groups, one paddled down to the end of the harbor under massive cliff faces, while the other took it easier and paddled into shore, getting a taste of the wildlife that makes South Georgia so special. On the return, as has happened regularly on this trip, the wind picked up, and all paddlers had to hug the coast, getting a little protection, before surfing some small wind waves back to the ship.

PM: Gold Harbor – Distance: 7 km

After dinner, though the clouds made the landing site look ominous, a small group of paddlers set out for a short paddle at Gold Harbor. Setting off with the chorus of thousands of king penguins in the background, the paddlers made their way all the way down the long beach, to a place they could get into a lagoon behind the landing site. Just 40 years ago, the glacier that now hangs precipitously above the cliffs on the wall, used to cover the entire lagoon. Now, the lagoon serves as a training ground for penguins, elephant seals and fur seals as they grow and learn to swim. We made a short landing there, and it was hard to find a place that was clear enough to get ashore. After our landing, we popped back in our boats and made our way back to the ship in the falling darkness and got onboard for a good night's rest.



DAY 11: AM: Jason Harbor – Distance: 8 km

Jason Harbor is one of the best landing sites to use when there are rough conditions on the east coast. Overnight, a modest swell had picked up due to a storm offshore, and we couldn't make a landing at the planned landing site of St. Andrews Bay. Jason Harbor offered a wonderful alternative though, and again, splitting into two groups, we both made our way out into Cumberland Bay to admire the Allardyce Range of mountains that runs along the spine of South Georgia. The longer group paddled on, while the shorter group turned and spent a wonderful time in another shallow lagoon where elephant seals and fur seals curiously came up to our boats and gave us a sniff or nibble. Meeting onshore, both groups got a good opportunity to walk around amidst the wildlife and experience an aggressive fur seal before we once again, got back in our kayaks for a pleasant paddle back to the ship in a freshening breeze.

DAY 16: AM: Saunders Island – Distance: 2 km

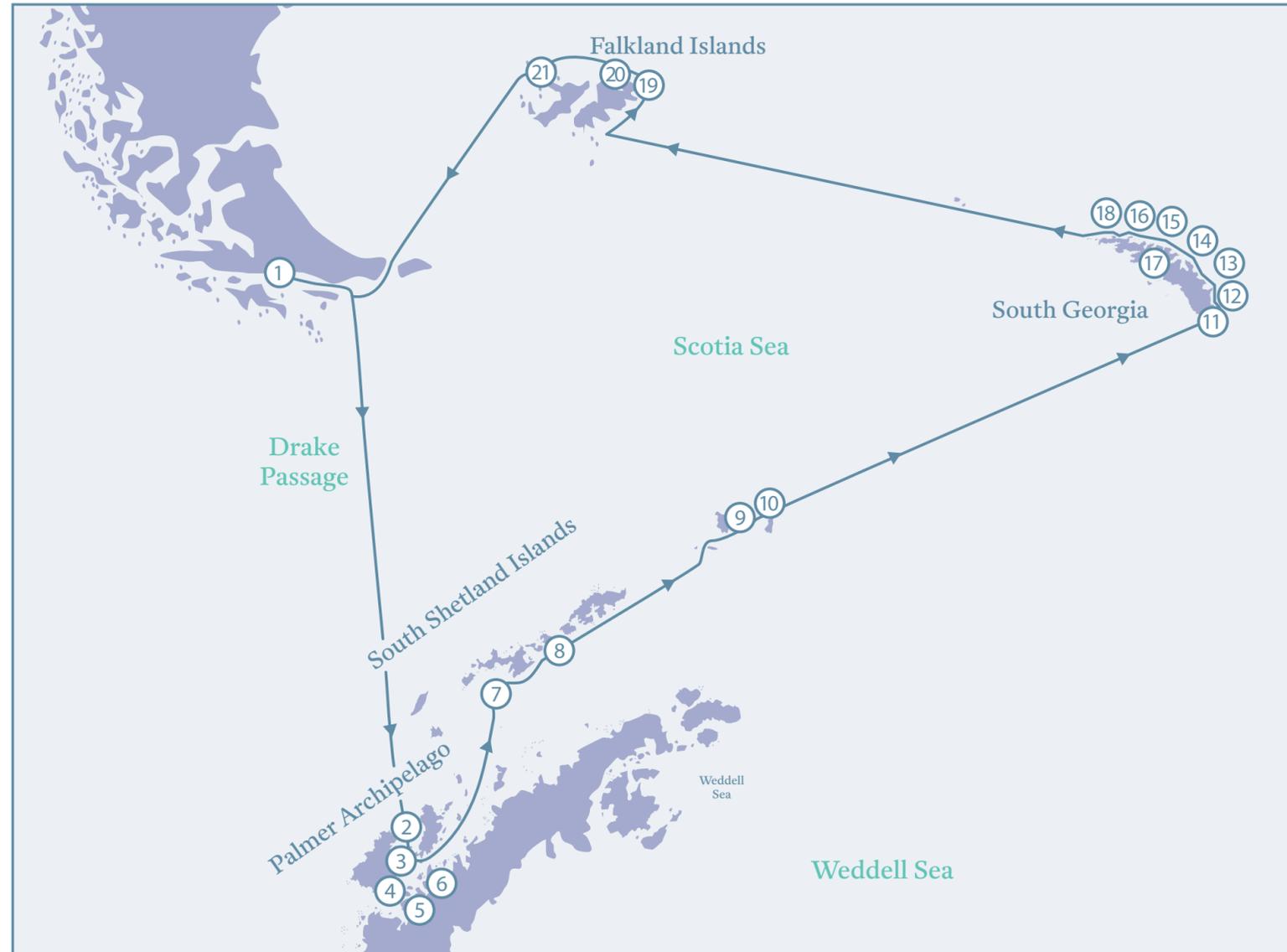
The morning dawned foggy with a 15kt breeze blowing past the ship. We all knew it was our last chance to paddle so we pushed on and got set up for a lovely last day in the Falklands. Saunders Island has wonderful wildlife around, and once on the water we were immediately entertained by curious dolphins that came right up and in between our boats. Starting out our paddle we were beset by a stiff 25kt wind blowing straight along the cliffs and with gusts over 30 knots we all tucked in tight to the cliffs and talked about alternate plans. We decided to head in to shore, made a beach landing on the beautiful white sandy beach and took one last group photo before the kayaks were loaded back on the zodiacs for a quick ride back to the ship. A very short but lovely last paddle.



South Georgia and Antarctic Odyssey

29 December 2019 – 17 January 2020 | Distance Travelled: 3,397 nautical miles (6291 kilometres)

Southernmost point of voyage: 64°50'S, 62°55'W



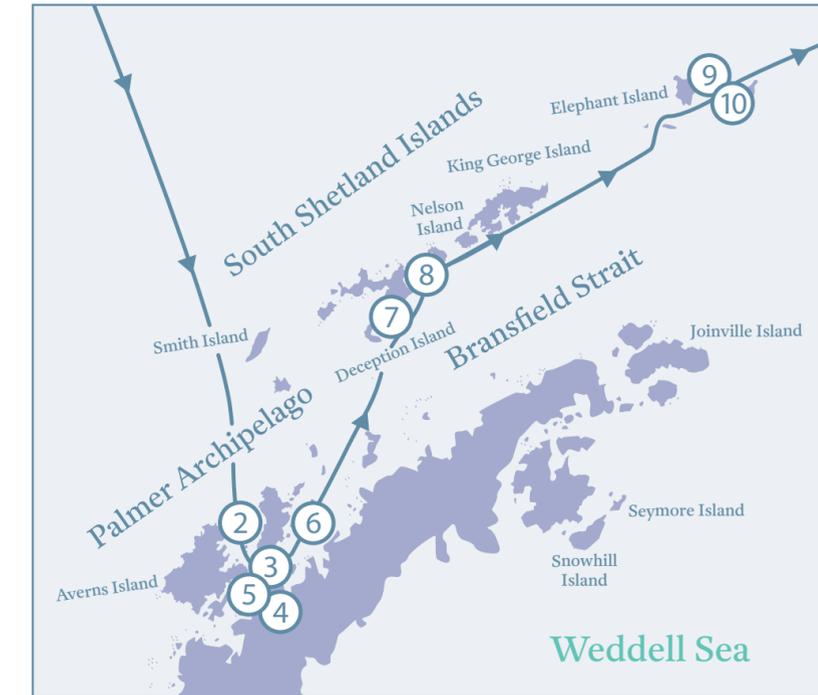
Destinations

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 01 Ushuaia | 07. Deception Island | 13. Gold Harbour | 19. Port Stanley |
| 02. Melchior Island | 08. Half Moon Island | 14. Jason Harbour | 20. Saunders Is |
| 03. Cuverville Island | 09 Elephant Island & Point Wild | 15. Fortuna Bay | 21. West Point Is |
| 04. Paradise Harbour | 10 Muckle Bluff | 16. Stromness | |
| 05. Danco Island | 11. Drygalski Fjord | 17. Grytviken | |
| 06. Foyn Harbour | 12. Larsen Harbour | 18. Salisbury Plain | |

South Georgia and Antarctic Odyssey

29 December 2019 – 17 January 2020 | Distance Travelled: 3,397 nautical miles (6291 kilometres)

Southernmost point of voyage: 64°50'S, 62°55'W



Antarctic Peninsula

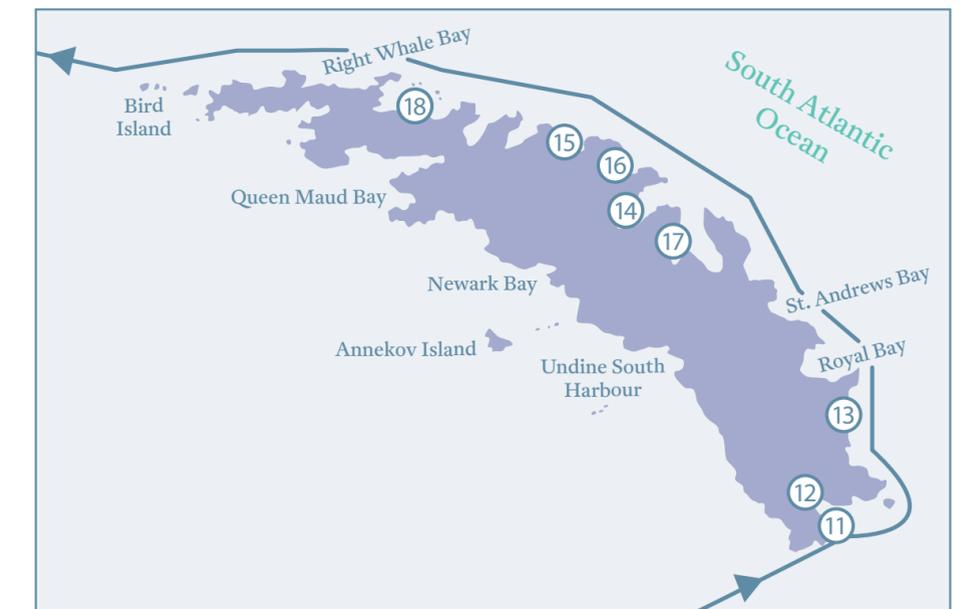
Destinations

- 02. Melchior Island
- 03. Cuverville Island
- 04. Paradise Harbour
- 05. Danco Island
- 06. Foyn Harbour
- 07. Deception Island
- 08. Half Moon Island
- 09 Elephant Island & Point Wild
- 10 Muckle Bluff

South Georgia

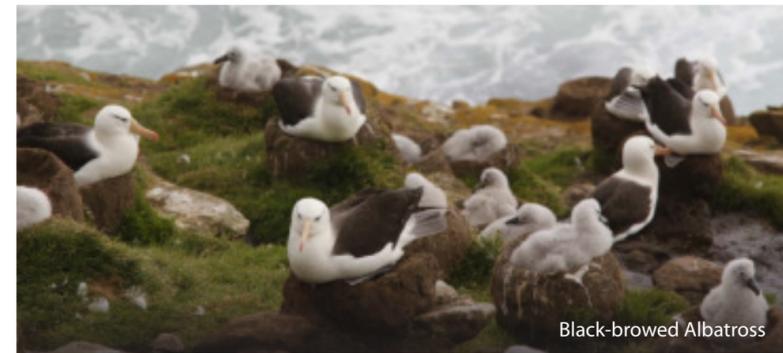
Destinations

- 11. Drygalski Fjord
- 12. Larsen Harbour
- 13. Gold Harbour
- 14. Jason Harbour
- 15. Fortuna Bay
- 16. Stromness
- 17. Grytviken
- 18. Salisbury Plain

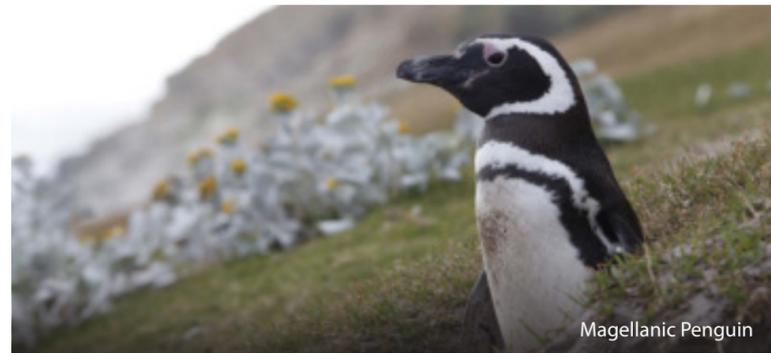


Bird Species Log

Bird Species	December - January																		
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
South Georgia Pintail											x	x	x						
Yellow-billed Pintail			x																
Crested Duck		x	x																
Red Shoveler			x																
Flightless Steamer Duck		x	x																
Falklands Steamer Duck															x	x			
Kelp Goose		x	x												x	x			
Upland Goose		x	x												x	x			
Ashy-headed Goose		x																	
Magellanic Penguin			x												x	x			x
King Penguin								x			x	x	x						x
Adelie Penguin					x						x								
Gentoo Penguin					x	x	x	x			x	x	x						x
Chinstrap Penguin					x		x	x											
Macaroni Penguin								x								x	x		
Rockhopper Penguin																x	x		
Wandering Albatross				x								x	x	x	x	x			x
Southern Royal Albatross			x																
Black-browed Albatross			x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Grey-headed Albatross												x	x						
Light-mantled Albatross											x	x							
Northern Giant Petrel								x			x	x	x			x	x		
Southern Giant Petrel			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cape Petrel				x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x							
Snow Petrel											x								
Antarctic Fulmar (Southern)				x		x	x				x								
Soft-plumaged Petrel											x								
Antarctic Prion											x	x	x						
Slender-billed Prion																			x
White-chinned Petrel			x	x															
Great Shearwater																			
Sooty Shearwater																			
Wilson's Storm-petrel			x	x		x	x	x			x	x	x	x					
Black-bellied Storm-petrel				x															
Diving Petrel (sp.)																			



Black-browed Albatross



Magellanic Penguin

Bird Species Log

Bird Species	December - January																		
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Antarctic Cormorant											x	x	x	x					
South Georgia Cormorant																			
Imperial Cormorant																			
Rock Cormorant																			
Black-crowned Night-Heron																			
Chilean Skua																			
Brown Skua																			
South Polar Skua																			
Kelp Gull																			
Dolphin Gull																			
Antarctic Tern																			
South American Tern																			
Blackish Oystercatcher																			
Magalellanic Oystercatcher																			
Southern Lapwing																			
Snowy Sheathbill																			
South American Snipe																			
Black-faced Ibis																			
Andean Condor																			
Straited Caracara																			
Chimango Caracara																			
Turkey Vulture																			
Austral Parakeet																			
Ringed Kingfisher																			
Thorn-tailed Rayadito																			
Fire-eyed Diucon																			
Chilean Swallow																			
Austral Thrush																			
Long-tailed Meadowlark																			
Patagonian Sierra-Finch																			
Yellow-bridled Finch																			
Black-chinned Siskin																			
Rufous-collared Sparrow																			
Dark-faced Ground Tyrant																			
South Georgia Pipit																			



King Penguins



Gentoo Penguin

Mammal Species Log

Mammal Species	November - December																		
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Antarctic Fur Seal								x		x	x	x	x	x					
South American Fur Seal																			x
Southern Sealion			x																x
Southern Elephant Seal							x	x				x	x	x					
Weddell Seal					x	x	x	x											
Leopard Seal					x	x		x			x								
Sei Whale				x															x
Fin Whale				x				x	x	x									
Humpback Whale				x	x	x	x	x					x	x					
Antarctic Minke Whale							x												
Killer Whale (Orca)							x												
Hourglass Dolphin										x									
Commerson's Dolphin																		x	x
Peale's Dolphin																			x



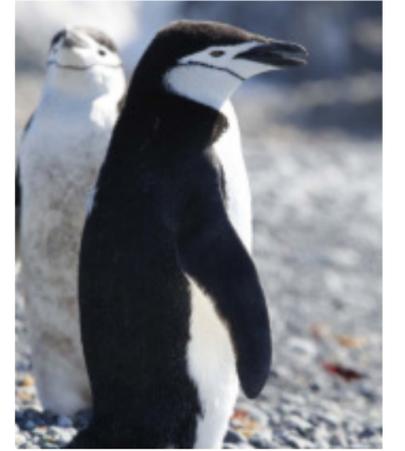
Humpback Whale



Leopard Seal



Humpback Whale





Expeditioners

John Archer	Bruce Caldwell	Lisa Duncan	Ross Hansen	Jamie Lafferty	Lesley Patterson	Maureen Storer
Gregory Barber	Andrew Carmichael	Elton Edwards	Lorna Heaslop	Kaye Lane	Jan Pearson	Cameron Tantau
Robyn Barber	Jane Carmichael	Julie Edwards	Will Heaslop	Roger Lane	Steve Pearson	John Tuffley
John Bell	Michael Carter	Chris Evans	Ed Herweynen	Rosemary Latimer	Adele Philippson	Robyn Tuffley
Robyne Bell	Doug Cavaye	Don Evans	John Hill	Helen Conrad Lioasis	Barry Philippson	Christopher Walti
Monica Bishop	Lisa Cavaye	Sally Farrier	Brinley Hosking	Jo Mazlin	Marian Phillips	Olga Walti
Hester Bolitho	Margje Chellew	Alan Finkel	Sarah Hosley	Noel Mckay	Julie Postle	Conrad White
Bonnie Bower	Mark Chellew	Alexander Finkel	Deborah Humble	Jeremy Millar	Glenda Ramsay-McKay	Debra White
Gavin Bramwell	Gary Clark	Elizabeth Finkel	Anne Jameson	Jim Morten	Keith Roberts	Bruce Williams
Robyn Bramwell	Lawrence Coelho	Victor Finkel	David Kalman	Rosie Morten	Di Schinella	Diane Williams
Holly Bullins	Karen Cohen	John Freeman	Shelby Kalman	Eija Naervaenen	Sue Sewell	Jann Williams
Chris Burgess	Ron Conrad	Suellen Freeman	Pat Keane	Tony Norton	Tony Sewell	Jasmin Woff
Christine Burgess	Rob Cooper	Marianne Gabriel	Kathy Kehoe	Alyson O'Riley	Peter Smith	Steven Woff
Doug Burke	Christina Cui	Bronwyn Gillies	Geoff King	Bob O'Riley	Sheila Smith	Lee Xin
Sharon Burke	Lynn Deng	Rick Guan	Robyn King	Judy Parker	Cathy Staines	Hao Zeng
Glenda Cadzow	Bill Donnelly	Leigh Hall	Dave Laabs	Kirill Parker	Owen Staines	Eunice Zhao
Leslie Cadzow	Liz Donnelly	Margaret Hall	Sue Laabs	Ian Patterson	Graham Storer	

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader:	Stephen Anstee	Kayaking Master:	Alex Chavanne
Deputy Expedition Leader:	Ashley Perrin	Kayaking Guide:	Russell Henry
Assistant Expedition Leader:	Hilary Gibson	Kayaking Guide:	Danny O'Farrell
Trainee AEL:	Jack Alscher	Photography Guide:	Ian McCarthy
Naturalist/Whale Expert:	Dr Pete Gill	Expedition Guide:	Isabelle Howells
Naturalist/Ecologist:	Dr Laura Williams	Expedition Doctor:	Dr Suzanne Knapp
Naturalist:	Heidi Krajewsky	Expedition Doctor:	Dr Rachel Hawker
Naturalist:	Dr Alexander Watson	Zodiac Master:	Sergei Khyunku
Naturalist:	Joselyn Fenstermacher	Mudroom/Shopkeeper:	Reza Rusooly
Historian:	Alasdair McGregor		

Greg Mortimer Crew

Master	Oleg Klaptenko	Hotel Controller	Franz Wusits
2nd Master	Sten Saterskog	Receptionist	Mary Sarah Baldovino
Chief Officer	Oleg Kapko	Receptionist	Mary Jane Lacerna
Second Officer	Andrei Valeahu	Head Stateroom	Irene Abania
Deck Cadet	Genadi Hristov	Spa Manager	Grace Tembo
Safety Officer	Lukasz Zuterek	Able Seaman	Khennette Verzova
Bosun	Duglas Garay	Able Seaman	Samuel Ricafort
Ship Doctor	Mauricio Usme	Able Seaman	Junar Gorecho
Chief Engineer	Dimitar Vasilev	Able Seaman	Leo Marzan
First Engineer	Ruslan Rotar	Able Seaman	Bobby Payumo
Hotel Director	Franz Wusits	Able Seaman	Anatoli Kornichuk
Chief Purser	Jane Saladaga	Able Seaman	Mickey Ledonio
Executive Chef	Przemyslaw Wisniewski	Ordinary Seaman	Alfredo Murillo
Sous Chef	Allan Estoque		

Ship's log written by Expedition Team members & compiled by Hilary Gibson



Paper made from 100% recycled material.

Explore our unique itineraries to these amazing destinations...



Adventure With Us

Intimate, educational, small group voyages to some of the world's wildest and most remote destinations, aboard quality expedition vessels.



The Arctic

Polar bears roam pack ice for seals, walrus and whales. Deep fjords and towering icebergs meet colourful tundra and fossil-rich plains.



Scotland

Abandoned castles, exquisite abbeys, stone age villages and haunting Neolithic relics. Breeding seals and Europe's largest seabird colonies.



Patagonia & Chile

Wild and isolated, Patagonia's wind-swept plains and glaciated peaks are the ultimate playground for intrepid travellers.



Costa Rica & Panama

Filled with remote national parks and biological reserves brimming with colourful wildlife. Traverse the Panama Canal on a guaranteed daylight crossing.

Our other destinations include: Iceland, Ireland, Sweden and Norway