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23 DAYS TRANSATLANTIC LUXURY CRUISE - PUERTO WILLIAMS TO CAPE TOWN

Ignite your adventurous spirit during three weeks of discovery, arcing east across the South Atlantic's archipelagos of wildlife and wonder. Explore the Falklands - spotting penguins, seals and whales - before discovering the snowy peaks of Shackleton's beloved South Georgia. Sail for the world's most remote inhabited archipelago, where volcanic islands shelter rare bird colonies, and vast numbers of fur seals and rockhoppers. Disembark in colourful Cape Town. _Some departures may have slightly modified itineraries. Please confirm the itinerary with an Expedition Specialist._



ITINERARY

Days 0 - 1 - Pre Cruise & Puerto Williams

_ ****Pre Cruise Benefits**** _

_ ****Hotel**** _

_ ****Charter flights**** _

Puerto Williams is a Chilean city located on Navarino Island on the southern shores of the Beagle Channel. It claims to be the "southernmost city in the world", however owing to its small size - 2500 residents approximately - the much larger Argentinean city of Ushuaia, which sits on the northern side of the same channel, also claims that title. The surrounding scenery is magnificent. The wild windswept mountains rise above the tree line and are regularly dusted with snow. The city itself has the dramatic backdrop called "Dientes de Navarino" (literally "teeth of Navarino"), which rival the famous Torres del Paine further to the north. The area was originally used by the Yaghan people, hunter-gatherers who despite enduring the harsh regional climate, could not weather the arrival of Europeans. The current city was established as a naval base in 1953 and honours the British-Chilean naval commander John Williams Wilson of the



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16th century. Initially it served to protect territorial possessions and fishing rights of the area, as well as offering logistical support to Antarctic bases. More recently it has become a departure point for scientific and tourism trips to the Antarctic region. In contrast to the bustle and traffic of a very commercial Ushuaia, Puerto Williams offers a quieter, more relaxed experience. It charms the visitor with a small village feel, complete with rustic buildings and the homely smell of drifting wood smoke. A haven of peace at the end of the world.

Day 2 - Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 3 - West Point Island

A north-westerly outpost of the scenic Falkland Islands, you'll be welcomed ashore by the calls and cries of a huge colony of black-browed albatross. Indeed, the island was originally known as Albatross Island before being renamed to reflect its geographic location. While the albatrosses - that flash white feathers in the rugged cliffs above the waves - are the most well known residents, they are far from the only animal inhabitants of this remote, isolated land. A huge army of birdlife calls the island sanctuary home, overwhelming the tiny human population and sheep that roam West Point Island's grasses. Meet the rockhopper penguins who scamper and burrow along the coast's boulders, as well as the imperial cormorants who rest here in great numbers. You're also likely to encounter Magellanic penguins during your explorations. Hike the island's

quiet landscapes, and look out for endemic plants like Felton's flower carpeting the green interior. Decorated with some of the archipelago's most dramatic scenery, explore this wind-lashed, distant land of soaring cliffs and towering coastal precipices. Cliff Mountain is the island's standout - a towering sandstone monolith, and the archipelago's highest cliff, falling away to swirling waves below. Look out to the waters to spot Commerson's dolphin chasing each other around the island's wave-washed footprint. Whales also visit, as well as the fur seals who you may spot lounging around West Point Island's inviting shores.

Day 3 - Saunders Island

Meet some of the world's most incredible wildlife, on the remote Saunders Island. Sitting to the north-west of the Falkland's archipelago, the British established their first settlement here in 1765, at Port Egmont. Remote, wild and wonderful, the island now serves as a lush grazing ground for plenty of sheep - but it's an astonishing place to encounter far rarer animals - from elephant seals to silvery grebes and Peale's dolphins. Connected by sinewy links of beach and sandy dunes, which create some of the most dramatic scenery in the Falklands, the archipelago's fourth biggest island is home to its best birdlife - including a colony of neatly tuxedoed king penguins. Saunders Island's topography tightens at The Neck - where you'll find even more penguin activity. Colonies squawk and chatter in huge crowds here, with Gentoo, Rockhopper and Magellanic penguins dipping into the water, and clambering over boulders. A gentle hike to the summit of Mount Richards will take you 457 metres above sea level, offering an expansive overview, from which you can look out across the tips of the moody waves to see Carcass Island and West Point Island emerging. The cliffs to the north of

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the mountain host rare black-browed albatross - a sight of sheer grace in flight - but comically clumsy at times when landing. Elsewhere, wide lakes are home to various water birds - including the rare black-necked swans. Take a read of our blog to find out more about the hugely diverse wildlife that is present on this unique island.

[Day 4 - Port Stanley](#)

Despite it being a stalwart of Britishness, Stanley more resembles Patagonia than Portsmouth. But, despite the windswept, vast and achingly beautiful landscape of the Falkland Islands, don't be too surprised to find the odd pub serving ales and even fish'n'chips. While landmarks such as Christ Church Cathedral, with its whalebone arch are 100% local, there is also good smattering of imported garden gnomes and Union Jacks to remind you whose territory you are really on. The Falkland Islands' ownership has long been a matter of controversy, ever since colonisation in the 18th century. At various points in their life they have been considered French, British, Spanish and Argentine. The Falklands War in 1982, despite only lasting for a short while, proved that the Brits clung to this remote outpost and the islands remain part of the British Commonwealth today. Margaret Thatcher, under whom the war was masterminded, remains something of a local hero as can be seen in the street signs (such as Thatcher Drive). For those who want to dig deeper into the past, the Historic Docklands Museum provides lots of information on the chequered historical and political background of the Falklands. However, the true heroes of Stanley are of course the thousands and thousands of penguins. Five species nest here during mating season (including the rare rockhopper penguin). There are virtually no barriers between you and the wildlife; allowing

for a truly interactive, authentic and totally unforgettable experience.

[Days 5 - 6 - Day at sea](#)

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

[Days 7 - 9 - South Georgia](#)

Charcoal-black mountains ladled with snow, giant glaciers and thriving wildlife combine to make South Georgia one of the great natural islands. Adventure to these far flung lands - where the animals are in charge and humans come a distant second. Here you'll witness a cacophony of calling birds, natural set pieces like elephant seals clashing and thrashing, and crowds of colourful king penguins stretching out as far as the eye can see. An overseas territory of the UK, these isolated, subantarctic islands once formed a remote whaling centre - and you can still visit the former whaling stations. Nowadays the giants of the sea are free to cruise the icy waters uninhibited. Written into explorer history due to its links with Ernest Shackleton's tale of Antarctic exploration, shipwreck and survival, the Endurance's crew were saved when he reached the salvation of these shores in 1916 - before returning to collect the remaining sailors from Elephant Island. A museum commemorates the legendary mission, and you can see the memorial to Shackleton that stands over his final resting place on this fabled island. South Georgia's colonies of king penguins - with vivid bursts of yellow and orange around their necks - stand, squabble and curiously investigate, enjoying the isolated respite of this island. They're

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joined by smaller penguin species like Macaroni penguins, and other glorious birdlife like the majestic wandering albatrosses, which you can see gliding on gusts of wind, over the choppy waves.

[Days 10 - 12 - Day at sea](#)

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[Days 13 - Gough Island](#)

Look for Gough Island on a map, and you'll struggle to locate it, cast far into the expanse of the South Atlantic Ocean. An almost entirely uninhabited volcanic island, barely within the grasp of humans historically, just a small bunch of hardy researchers live here. They share their home - a full 1,700 miles to the west of Cape Town - with a stunning array of seabirds, including endemic species like the Gough moorhen and Gough bunting. Part of the UK overseas territory of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha - the world's most remote inhabited archipelago - Gough Island forms part of a remarkable UNESCO World Heritage Site and serves as a vital island sanctuary for rare and celebrated birdlife. Blasted by harsh winds and rough seas throughout the year, Gough Island's coastline has been shaped and sculpted into a dramatic, imposing site. An island of extraordinary wildlife, migrating whales cruise through the waters around it, while colonies of albatross and rockhopper penguins wander its shores and cliff faces. If you arrive on these shores following a downpour, you'll be treated to displays of waterfalls cascading through the undergrowth. Gough Island

may serve as a sanctuary for seabirds, but a concerted effort has had to be made to deal with mice, which were brought by humans in the 19th century. With few predators, they thrived here, endangering the Tristan albatross in the process. A project has been launched to decrease the mice population and protect the island's delicate ecological balance.

[Days 14 - Nightingale Island](#)

Uninhabited except for the majestic, million-plus seabirds that call this castaway island home, it doesn't get much more raw and remote than Nightingale Island. Adrift between South America and Africa, in the Tristan da Cunha archipelago, the island takes its name from British explorer Gamaliel Nightingale and is the smallest of these distant volcanic lands. Craggy coastline and rugged cliffs rise imposingly from the waters of the South Atlantic, as you approach this remote volcano island - which erupted most recently in 2004. Largely free from human interference, Nightingale Island is known for the abundant birdlife that thrives here and is a shelter for some of the world's rarest species. Designated as an Endemic Bird Area and an Important Bird Area, the island's birds are awarded special protection, and only select visits to these shores are permitted. Amid the cawing and calling of the island's endless flocks, you can spot the rare canary-like Nightingale bunting, and Wilkins's bunting - which are found only here. Little gangs of rockhopper penguins patrol the rocks and hop over boulders - easy to distinguish against the blackened landscape, with their distinctive yellow flashes of feathers. You'll also see the graceful glide of Atlantic yellow-nosed albatrosses, and the plunges of great shearwaters. Keep one eye open for the glint of gold during your expedition ashore - rumours swirl that undiscovered pirate treasure was once stashed somewhere on the island.

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Days 15 - Tristan da Cunha

Sailing to these lonely volcanic islands feels a little like dropping off the map, as you aim for the seemingly endless ocean horizon. A true adventure, the journey rewards generously, as you track down the world's most remote archipelago, and discover its incredible, endemic birdlife. A full 1,500 miles away from the nearest neighbour, St. Helena, it's fair to say that the Tristan Da Cunha archipelago is a long way off of the beaten path. Venture to the only inhabited island, where a hardy 250 souls live out their lives. Tristan Da Cunha was first discovered at the beginning of the 16th century by Portuguese explorer Tristao da Cunha - who named the island after himself. He was unable to actually step out onto its land, however, as the waves churned violently below his ship, rendering the shores inaccessible. A volcanic island, the 2,000-metre tall Queen Mary's Peak dominates it - although the islanders were unaware of its sleeping power until it rumbled into life in 1961. The population were forced to abandon the shores temporarily for their own safety. The extraordinary, rare wildlife is the main reason why most set their compass for these far-flung islands. Tristan Da Cunha is alive with vibrant birdlife, from Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross to Tristan thrush, and many, many more - including the endemic and endangered Tristan wandering albatross. Roughly 90% of the northern rockhopper penguin population also visit to breed on this vital outpost, while sea lions lay around on the shores, and whales and dolphins cruise the waters.

Day 16 - Inaccessible island

Days 17 - 20 - Day at sea

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is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Days 21 - 22 - Cape Town

Sprawling across endless, staggeringly blue coastline, and watched over by the iconic plane of Table Mountain, Cape Town is without doubt one of the world's most beautiful cities. A blend of spectacular mountain scenery, multiculturalism and relaxed ocean charm awaits in the Mother City, where you can venture out to rolling vineyards, dine in laid back sea suburbs, or spend days exploring cool urban culture. Cape Town's natural splendour fully reveals itself as the cable car rears sharply to the top of Table Mountain. From the summit, 3,500 feet above sea level, you can let the scale of the panoramic vistas of the city rolling down towards the ocean wash over you. Another heavenly perspective waits at the top of Lion's Head's tapering peak. A sharp hike and an early start is required, but the views of the morning sun painting Table Mountain honey-gold are some of Cape Town's finest. Cape Town's glorious sunshine and inviting blue rollers can be a little deceiving - these oceans are anything but warm at times, with nothing between the peninsula's end and Antarctica's icy chill. This cool water has upsides though, bringing a colony of adorably cute African penguins to Boulders Beach. Boarded walkways offer the perfect vantage point to see the cute creatures dipping into the sea and lounging in the sun. Nearby, journey to the end of Africa at the Cape of Good Hope, where you can stand at the bottom of this mighty continent, watching out over the merging waves of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Cape Town's beauty is counterpointed by the ominous island form, which sits four miles offshore from the bustling

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restaurants and lazy seals of the lively V&A; Waterfront. A living history lesson, you can sail in the ships that transported prisoners out to Robben Island, before a former prisoner tells of the traumas of life on this offshore prison. Your guide will show you the cramped cells, and render Mandela's long walk to freedom in heartbreaking, visceral clarity.

Please note

Itineraries are subject to change.

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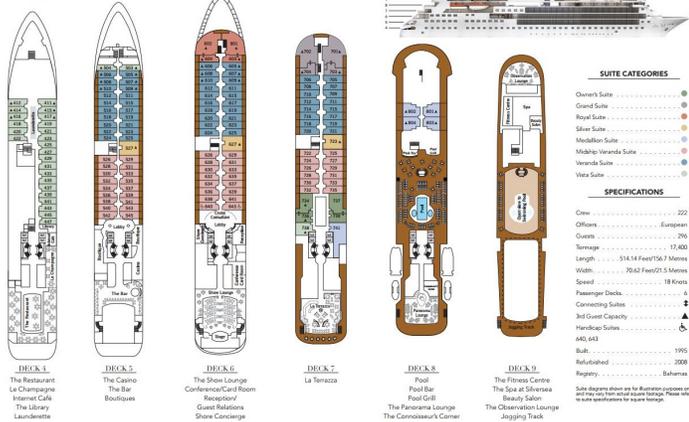
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