ANTARCTICA - ELEPHANT ISLAND - WEDDELL SEA - POLAR CIRCLE

This expansive expedition takes you into the Antarctic Circle, combining the rich animal life of the Weddell Sea with the surreal shores and islands of the Antarctic Peninsula. Such key landing sites as the legendary Elephant Island and Crystal Sound make this voyage truly exceptional.

This adventurous polar expedition in the Antarctic Circle combines the exciting Weddell Sea with the amazing Antarctic Peninsula, including such iconic landing sites as Ernest Shackleton’s legendary Elephant Island and the many icy and wildlife-filled islands of Crystal Sound.

ITINERARY

Day 1: End of the world, start of a journey
Your voyage begins where the world drops off. Ushuaia, Argentina, reputed to be the southernmost city on the planet, is located on the far southern tip of South America. Starting in the afternoon, you embark from this small resort town on Tierra del Fuego, nicknamed “The End of the World,” and sail the mountain-fringed Beagle Channel for the remainder of the evening.

Day 2 - 3: Path of the polar explorers
Over the next two days on the Drake Passage, you enjoy some of the same experiences encountered by the great polar explorers who first charted these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale spouting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic Convergence – Antarctica’s natural
boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer sub-Antarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Not only does the marine life change, the avian life changes too. Wandering albatrosses, grey-headed albatrosses, black-browed albatrosses, light-mantled sooty albatrosses, cape pigeons, southern fulmars, Wilson’s storm petrels, blue petrels, and Antarctic petrels are a few of the birds you might see.

Day 4: From Point Wild to the Weddell Sea
We will arrive early to the famous Point Wild, Elephant Island, where Shackleton’s crew made their first landing after the loss of their ship, Endurance. This inhospitable spit of land is a favorite among our guests, and if conditions permit, we will offer activities around the point before setting off for the Weddell Sea.

Day 5: Weddell Sea Devil Island
Today you enter the wondrous Weddell Sea, a relatively unvisited area in which we hope to carry out activities in Erebus and Terror Gulf. We may also visit such places such as Beak Island and Devil Island, which boast some stunning scenery as well as the pack ice for which the Weddell Sea is famous.

Day 6: Exploring the most remote regions
As we continue to explore the area of Erebus and Terror Gulf, we look for new opportunities for activities. You may also visit Vega Island, experiencing the wilderness of Antarctica in its most remote places.

Day 7: Orléans Strait whale search
Now we sail down the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula, entering the Orleans Strait. Here we hope to see humpback and orca whales as we sail toward Mikklesen Harbor for our afternoon activities.

Day 8: Port monuments and island wildlife
Passing the Lemaire Channel, you next arrive in the area of Port Charcot, where there is a cairn that was erected by the French Antarctic Expedition of 1903 – 05. In the afternoon, we head to Petermann Island to see a great variety of birdlife. You might also enjoy Zodiac cruises among icebergs that are highly popular with leopard seals and crabeater seals. Minke whales, humpbacks, and gentoo penguins can also be found here.

Day 9: Detaille Island’s historic station
Today we reach Crystal Sound, viewing the area’s beautiful ice formations and wildlife before landing at Detaille Island. This remote island was once home to a British research station that is now an historic monument.

Day 10: Amazing Argentine islands
Next you arrive at the Yalour Islands, a small archipelago composed mostly of isolated rocks and one principal island that offers us a rewarding landing. Home to Adélie penguins and some of the most southerly gentoos in the world, Yalour also has small patches of bearded and crustose lichen, including xanthoria, buellia, caloplaca, and usnea. Extensive moss beds and some Antarctic hair grass (Deschampsia antarctica) can be seen as well. We hope to also visit the nearby Ukrainian research station, Vernadsky, where a warm welcome awaits us. Here you can take a guided tour of the facilities, which include a small gift shop, a post office that is always popular with our guests, and Wordie House, a well-preserved historic hut. This hut still contains its rations, tools, and beds, so you can compare the amenities of an early facility with a modern one.
Day 11: Farewell to Antarctica
We have our farewell to Antarctica in the Melchior Islands for our final activities before heading towards the Drake Passage.

Day 12 – 13: Familiar seas, familiar friends
Your return voyage is far from lonely. While crossing the Drake, you’re again greeted by the vast array of seabirds remembered from the passage south. But they seem a little more familiar to you now, and you to them.

Day 14: There and back again
Every adventure, no matter how great, must eventually come to an end. It’s now time to disembark in Ushuaia, but with memories that will accompany you wherever your next journey leads.

Please Note:
All itineraries are for guidance only. Programs may vary depending on ice, weather, and wildlife conditions. Landings are subject to site availabilities, permissions, and environmental concerns per IAATO regulations. Official sailing plans and landing slots are scheduled with IAATO prior to the start of the season, but the expedition leader determines the final plan. Flexibility is paramount for expedition cruises. The average cruising speed for our vessel is 10.5 knots.
YOUR SHIP: HONDIIUS

Hondius is the first-registered Polar Class 6 vessel in the world, meeting the latest and highest Lloyd’s Register demands for ice-strengthened cruise vessels. Hondius also exceeds the requirements of the Polar Code as adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), allowing you to enjoy the polar regions as much as possible while impacting them as little as possible. Upon completion, Hondius will be the most flexible, advanced, innovative ice-strengthened vessel in the polar regions. It is optimized for exploratory voyages that provide you the utmost first-hand contact with the Arctic and Antarctica.

Hotel comfort, expedition class
Hondius offers high-quality accommodation for 176 passengers in a range of suites and cabins. The spacious 'Hondius' suite (35 square metres, 377 square feet), six grand suites with balconies (27 square metres, 291 square feet), eight junior suites (19 to 20 square metres, 205 to 215 square feet), eight superior cabins (20 to 21 square metres, 215 to 226 square feet), 11 twin deluxe cabins, (19 to 21 square metres, 205 to 226 square feet), 14 twin window cabins (12 to 14 square metres, 129 to 151 square feet) as well as 28 twin porthole cabins, two triple porthole cabins, and four quadruple porthole cabins that vary in size from 12 to 18 square metres, or 129 to 194 square feet all offer a high level of accommodation. The passenger capacity certificate for Hondius is 196 persons.

One deck consists of a large observation lounge and separate lecture room, which are reserved for a wide variety of interactive workshops, exhibitions, and performances particular to Hondius. Though elegantly designed in stylish mid-century modern decor, this vessel holds true to Oceanwide’s distinctive cozy and informal atmosphere.

Swift & safe ship-to-shore operations
It is the philosophy of Hondius’ managers to keep sea time as short as possible so that they can focus instead on fast, effective access to shore and near-shore activities. To give you the maximum contact with the nature and wildlife you traveled so far to see, they employ a tough fleet of rigid-hull inflatable
Zodiac boats that guarantee swift and safe landing operations for all passengers at the same time. Hondius has two separate gangways and a sheltered indoor Zodiac embarkation platform that can also be used for special outdoor activities, such as kayaking.

The fast, flexible, friendly heart of the polar regions

The top priority is taking advantage of every wildlife and terrain opportunity as it occurs. To keep the itineraries flexible and the response time rapid, Hondius is equipped with advanced stabilizers and two main engines capable of powering the vessel up to 15 knots. But Hondius sacrifices no warmth to achieve its keen polar edge: You will have 72 crew and staff members (including expedition and hotel staff) at your service while on board, ensuring that what little time you do spend on the ship you will spend comfortably entertained.
INSIDE YOUR SHIP

Grand Suite with Private Balcony  Junior Suite

Quadruple Porthole  Superior

Triple Porthole  Twin Deluxe
Twin Porthole  Twin Window
## PRICING

### 14-Mar-2023 to 27-Mar-2023

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