

The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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BEYOND THE POLAR CIRCLE 2020 (LE SOLEAL)

Cross the mythical line of the Antarctic Circle during this 17-day polar expedition cruise to the far reaches of the Southern Hemisphere. After boarding your ship in Ushuaia, you will set sail for the Falkland Islands, whose wild beauty is sure to captivate you. You will then make your way to South Georgia. This subantarctic region formed by an underwater mountain chain is home to a diverse and wild fauna. King penguins, fur seals and elephant seals are its most emblematic representatives. Before crossing the Antarctic Circle, the highlight of your cruise, you will be dazzled by your stops in the Antarctic Peninsula, realm of the unexpected. Weather and ice conditions permitting, the White Continent, an extreme environment where nature reigns supreme, will reveal to you its most beautiful secrets through numerous discoveries. Here, it is likely you will have the chance to observe Gentoo, Adelie and chinstrap penguins, humpback whales, seals and seabirds. Each day, whether on land, aboard your ship or during a Zodiac® outing, you will be surrounded by a grandiose decor ranging from icebergs to ice floe and ancient glaciers. Please note: your voyage prices include Flight Buenos Aires / Ushuaia + visit or time at leisure + transfers + flight Ushuaia / Buenos Aires



ITINERARY

Day 1 USHUAIA

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Capital of Argentina's Tierra del Fuego province, Ushuaia lies in a bay opening into the Beagle Channel at the country's southernmost tip. Its colourful houses are framed against towering mountains, snow-capped in winter and summer alike. Downtown, the End of the World Museum showcases Tierra del Fuego's natural and indigenous history. A ride on the heritage railway is an exciting excursion into the Tierra del Fuego National Park, while a cruise on Ushuaia Bay is the perfect way to spot sea lions and Magellanic penguins.

Day 2 AT SEA

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

Day 3 NEW ISLAND & GRAVE COVE

This island with its distinctive jagged relief is located on the western edge of the Falkland Islands and is home to a tiny village of two families. Step onto the golden sand of its flower-lined beaches, beside which an old stone house still stands, and you'll feel like you've entered a natural paradise. A narrow pathway weaves around typical Falkland moorlands. Follow it and in under 20 minutes you'll find yourself at the heart of a colony of southern rockhopper penguins, black-browed

albatross and imperial shags. It's the perfect opportunity to watch the albatross swoop down from the cliffs and skim the waves that crash against the rocks on the exposed side of the island. Make your way through the turbulent Woolly Gut strait and emerge in the stillness of Grave Cove. Located in the northern edge of the Falkland Islands, this bay owes its name to the vestiges of whalers' graves that overlook the beach. As you step off the boat and onto the white-sand beach, you might find yourself escorted by a few hospitable Commerson's dolphins, elegantly adorned in black and white. A stroll along the grassy dunes will lead you to a vast plain of lush green grass, tended by a few sheep. On the other side of the island you'll find one of the largest gentoo penguin colonies in the area. With some luck, you'll also glimpse a sea lion scouring the waves for his next meal.

Days 4 & 5 AT SEA

Days 6 - 8 SOUTH GEORGIA

Aboard your ship, discover South Georgia, a region formed by an underwater mountain chain that extends from the Andes to the Antarctic Peninsula. All the wildlife of the Far South can be found there: king and Gentoo penguins, elephant seals, fur seals... You might get the chance to discover the majestic glaciers of Gold Harbour and the vast plains of Fortuna Bay. If you are fortunate enough to land at Salisbury Plain, you can expect a wonderful spectacle: more than 300,000 king penguins, which you will recognise by the bright orange mark on their head and neck, have taken up residence there.

Day 9 AT SEA

Days 10 - 12 ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

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Succumb to the magic of a place unlike any other. To this day, the mythical Antarctic Peninsula still holds real fascination and promises its visitors unforgettable moments. Throughout your adventure in this icy realm, you will find yourself in the heart of a spectacular decor in subtle shades of blue and white, surrounded by exceptional wildlife. Penguins, humpback whales, seals and giant petrels are at home here, as are elephant seals, fur seals, Antarctic minke whales, and orcas. Depending on which sites you will be lucky enough to visit, you may get the chance to observe them and share with them the beauty of these extreme parts. Each day, based on ice conditions, the Captain and the Expedition Leader will suggest Zodiac® outings or landings to discover the infinite riches of the Antarctic Peninsula. Glaciers, ice floe, tabletop icebergs, mountain peaks that plunge straight into the sea, volcanic beaches, research stations, enchanting bays, and vestiges of the whaling industry: these are the faces of the Antarctic that will likely reveal themselves to you, in a hushed and surreal atmosphere. You will sail in the wake of Jean-Baptiste Charcot, Adrien de Gerlache and Sir Ernest Shackleton, great Antarctic explorers who, from the 19th century, set out to conquer these remote and uninhabited lands.

Day 13 ANTARCTIC POLAR CIRCLE

Weather permitting, we'll cross the mythic line of the Antarctic Polar Circle, located along 66°33' south of the Equator. This iconic area demarcates the point from which it is possible to view the midnight sun during the December solstice. Within this circle, the sun remains above the horizon for 24 consecutive hours at least once a year. Crossing this line, an experience known to few people, is sure to be an unforgettable highlight of your cruise through the polar regions.

Day 14 AT SEA

Days 15 & 16 CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

If there is one place, one sea, one waterway dreaded by tourists, researchers and hardened seafarers alike, it is undoubtedly Drake Passage. Situated at the latitude of the infamous Furious Fifties winds, between Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands, it is the shortest route to Antarctica. Seasoned navigators will tell you that you must earn your visit to the White Continent! As the Antarctic convergence zone where cold currents rising up from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, Drake Passage harbours a very diverse marine fauna. Don't forget to look to the sky to catch a glimpse of elegant albatross and Cape petrels, playfully floating about in the wind around your ship.

Day 17 USHUAIA

Disembarkation.

Please Note:

We are privileged guests in these extreme lands where we are at the mercy of weather and ice conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each cruise a unique experience. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while complying with the safety rules and instructions imposed by the IAATO.

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YOUR SHIP: LE SOLEAL

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Le Soleal

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Luxury Small Ship A sleek silhouette, a welcoming intimate atmosphere, and the same philosophy that has made her sister ships, L'Austral, Lyrial and Le Boreal, such a success. This magnificent yacht of only 132 staterooms and suites, all with balconies, has contemporary decor inspired by the luxury yachting world, with fluid lines and a modern colour scheme combining natural wood with shades of grey and white. White Corian counters in the lobby contrast with the warmth of leather to recall a boat's hull, while the central sculpture of enamelled pieces takes its inspiration from the sea. In the lounge bar, the carpet picks up a tennis stripe theme symbolising a certain idea of cruising, one synonymous with French elegance and a chic seaside spirit. Wheelchairs 3 specially adapted wheelchair cabins (Deck 3 = Superior cabin no. 307, no balcony, Deck 4 = Prestige Cabin no. 407 - with balcony and Deck 5 = Prestige Cabin no 509, with balcony) and lifts to all decks/areas. Read about our recent Ponant cruise to Antarctica Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant cruise ships.



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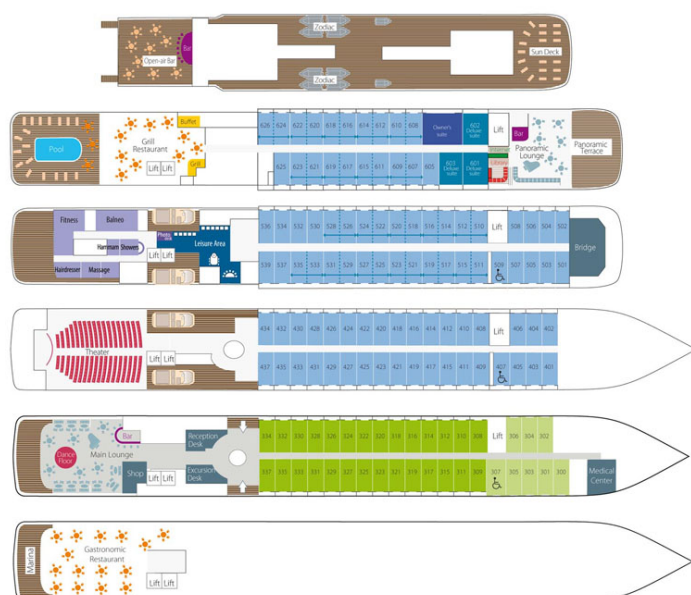
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INSIDE YOUR SHIP





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PRICING

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

Port charges 1184 AUD pp



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