

Unexplored Antarctica between Two Continents

From **16/01/2023**
to **13/02/2023**

Ship: **LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT**

From **Ushuaia**
to **Dunedin**



Overnight in Santiago + flight Santiago/Ushuaia + transfers + flight Dunedin/Auckland

Charcot, Bellingshausen, Dean, Fisher, Ross, Amundsen... Aboard **Le Commandant Charcot**, the names of these legendary explorers resonate at every moment. Thanks to its unique capacity to sail into the very heart of the ice, **Le Commandant Charcot** invites you, with respect and humility, to set off in the footsteps of these great Antarctic figures during an **all-new and unrivalled half-circumnavigation** that will sail from the far south of the American continent to New Zealand.

Antarctic exploration cannot be separated from the pioneers who travelled in these territories at the edges of the Earth. They left their names everywhere. Inaccessible and elusive are certainly the adjectives that best describe these lands that are among our planet's most little-known and remote. Like a real explorer, you will cross the legendary southern seas of **Bellingshausen** and **Amundsen**, approach **Marie Byrd Land**, one of the last **Terra nullius** of our planet, and attempt to reach the **Charcot** and **Peter I Islands**, enveloped in their blankets of ice. Very significant in the history of **South Pole exploration**, **Ross Sea** is also the **world's largest marine protected area**, the kingdom of prodigious wildlife. As a privileged witness, keep a watchful eye and observe the Antarctic petrels, whales, orcas, seals and penguins that are to be found here.

The power of the polar world will conquer you, leaving you with unforgettable memories of the impressive **Drygalski glacier** scattered with blue, the endless and constant **Ross Ice Shelf**, the majestic **Witkins** and **Getz ice shelves**, and the ice floe taking over the Amundsen Sea. Here and there, you will notice clues to the past presence of **Shackleton** and **Scott** who have forever marked this continent of extremes with their historic exploits. At the foot of **Mount Erebus**, the highest volcano in Antarctica, their memory becomes tangible: the former base camp has remained intact.

We are privileged guests in these extreme lands where we are at the mercy of weather and ice conditions. Our navigation will be determined by the type of ice we come across; as the coastal ice must be preserved, we will take this factor into account from day to day in our itineraries. The sailing schedule and any landings, activities and wildlife encounters are subject to weather and ice conditions. These experiences are unique and vary with each departure. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while respecting safety instructions and regulations imposed by the IAATO.



The information in this document is valid as of 25/01/2022

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

USHUAIA

Embarkation 16/01/2023 from 16:00 to 17:00

Departure 16/01/2023 at 18:00

Capital of Argentina's **Tierra del Fuego** province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed “**El fin del mundo**” by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible...

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Arrival 17/01/2023

Departure 18/01/2023

Use your days spent in the Drake Passage to familiarise yourself with your ship and deepen your knowledge of the Antarctic. The Expedition Leader will first present the IAATO rules of conduct that must be observed during landings in the region and will explain everything you need to know about the zodiac outings. Lectures about the history and wildlife of the Antarctic will be an opportunity for you to learn more about this magical region, where every cruise is a unique experience. From the ship's bridge, you will experience exceptional sailing moments before joining the naturalist-guides on your ship's exterior decks to look out for albatrosses, cape petrels, and other seabirds flying over the Drake Passage.

CROSSING THE ANTARCTIC CIRCLE

Arrival 19/01/2023

Departure 19/01/2023

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.

EXPEDITION TO CHARCOT ISLAND

Arrival 20/01/2023

Departure 20/01/2023

When he discovered this island surrounded by sea ice in 1910 from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?* as he mapped Alexander Island, Jean-Baptiste Charcot had not be able to get less than 40 miles away from it. Situated in a zone that experiences frequent low-pressure systems and regular cloud cover, the island remains in many ways an enigma. It is entirely covered in ice and sheer cliffs, with the exception of the rocky outcrops extending over a dozen kilometres in the far north-west. The ice in the narrowest part of Wilkins Sound has been cracking in recent times, thus officially detaching this island from its neighbour, Alexander Island, lying 50 km away. Very few people have landed on this largely untouched island, whose waters attract numerous seabirds, such as petrels, Antarctic terns and skuas.

BELLINGSHAUSEN SEA

Arrival 21/01/2023

Departure 21/01/2023

Stretching from the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula to the Amundsen Sea, the Bellingshausen Sea was named after the Russian admiral and explorer who has been attributed the first confirmed sighting of mainland Antarctica, in 1820. Its waters surround, among others, two of the largest islands in the Antarctic: Alexander Island and Thurston Island. You will sail amid ice floe, blocks of sea ice and majestic icebergs. The coastal areas along the Bellingshausen Sea are home to large colonies of emperor penguins. Depending on the season, you may get the chance to observe some of these creatures in the open sea.

EXPEDITION TO PETER I ISLAND

Arrival 22/01/2023

Departure 22/01/2023

You will then head for the legendary Peter I Island. Located 450 km away from the Atlantic coast, it was discovered in 1821 by the Russian explorer Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen, who named it in honour of the Russian tsar Peter the Great. In 1909, Captain Charcot sighted it for the first time from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?*, but was unable to land there: *"In the parting mists, one or two miles away, an enormous black mass shrouded in clouds appears suddenly before us: it is Peter I Island."* Surrounded by pack ice and with about 95% of its surface covered by ice, this volcanic island, whose highest peak reaches 1,640 metres, is protected by ice cliffs some 40 metres tall, making any approach difficult.

AMUNDSEN SEA

Arrival 23/01/2023

Departure 23/01/2023

The great Norwegian explorer **Roald Amundsen** – famous as one of the first five men to reach the **geographic South Pole** – gave his name to this **southern sea** in 1929, following an expedition in its waters. Almost entirely frozen by a thick ice floe, **Amundsen Sea** stretches along Marie Byrd Land in Antarctica, between Bellingshausen Sea to the west and the Ross Sea to the east. The monumental icebergs are all that break the monotony of the infinite ice floe here: let yourself be immersed in a feeling of tranquillity before this vastness. These privileged moments sailing in the Amundsen Sea are opportunities to make the most of the original equipment and spaces on *Le Commandant Charcot*.

Find yourself in this refined cocoon. Nourish yourself with the knowledge of the scientists and expert naturalists, who provide unique support during your polar cruise. Or simply contemplate the fascinating and captivating decor from the ship's exterior decks.

MARIE BYRD LAND EXPLORATION

Arrival 24/01/2023

Departure 30/01/2023

Marie Byrd Land is one of the most remote territories of our planet's most inaccessible continent. It is a real privilege to just be able to contemplate its shores! Between the **Ross Sea** and its large shelf to the east and **Bellingshausen Sea** to the west, the frozen coastlines of these lands are bordered by the **Amundsen Sea**, partially covered by a thick ice floe. Stretching over more than a million km² (over 620,000 square miles) in Western Antarctica, its ground is also isolated from the rest of the continent by the Transantarctic Mountains. It is certainly this geographic remoteness and its harsh climate that have made it one of our planet's rare **Terra nullius**, a territory claimed by no State. In 1929, Marie Byrd Land got its name from Admiral Richard E. Byrd, in honour of his wife, following his expedition to the region. The exploration of its ice-sculpted landscapes will plunge you into the infinite Antarctic desert, where penguins, seals, whales and orcas are the only living souls. Depending on the time and weather conditions, your exploration of the region will take you towards a string of islands which, although little-known, remain fascinating: Siple Island and its eponymous mount, resulting from an old volcano, Clark Island and Dean Island.

THE ROSS SEA EXPLORATION

Arrival 31/01/2023

Departure 31/01/2023

"The last ocean" is what scientists from all around the world call this deep bay that runs along the edge of Antarctica between Marie Byrd Land and Victoria Land. In 2016, Ross Sea, the last intact marine ecosystem, became the world's largest marine protected area. The starting point for the greatest southern expeditions - particularly to the South Pole - it was explored by James Clark Ross between 1839 and 1843. It was then that he discovered the enormous barrier formed by a gigantic ice shelf extending out to the open sea and from which titanic icebergs are calved.

Weather and ice conditions permitting, you will be able to discover several of the region's emblematic sites. Among the possible ports of call, **Cape Adare**, at the far north of the Borchgrevink Coast, is home to one of the world's largest Adelie penguin colonies. We will also try to get to Terra Nova Bay, home to the stunning **Drygalski Ice Tongue**. At least 4,000 years old, it stretches 70 km (43 miles) out to sea from the David glacier and measures 24 km (15 miles) at its widest. On **Ross Island**, at the base of Mount Erebus, you will follow in the footsteps of the famous explorers Shackleton and Scott who chose **Cape Royds** and **Cape Evans**, respectively, to set up their base camps in anticipation of their future historic exploits. In the **McMurdo Sound**, separating the island from the continent, the scenery is surreal: the **Taylor Glacier** stretches its branch into the valleys devoid of snow above which stand mountains of stratified rock. A little further, in the Bay of Whales, another tale is told, that of the Norwegian Roald Amundsen, who left from this point to reach, for the first time, the South Pole in 1911.

CROSSING THE INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE

Arrival 01/02/2023

Departure 01/02/2023

Your itinerary enables you to cross **the International Date Line**. This imaginary line across the Earth's surface approximately follows the 180th meridian in the Pacific Ocean. Because of the roundness of the Earth and the necessity of having reference time meridians, we have to change dates when we cross this line. So if your ship is travelling west, you will need to add a day to the expected date; conversely, if travelling east, you will take away a day. This paradox, already noted by Magellan's crews during his circumnavigation, serves as dramatic motivation in several novels, including Jules Verne's famous *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

THE ROSS SEA EXPLORATION

Arrival 02/02/2023

Departure 06/02/2023

"The last ocean" is what scientists from all around the world call this deep bay that runs along the edge of Antarctica between Marie Byrd Land and Victoria Land. In 2016, Ross Sea, the last intact marine ecosystem, became the world's largest marine protected area. The starting point for the greatest southern expeditions - particularly to the South Pole - it was explored by James Clark Ross between 1839 and 1843. It was then that he discovered the enormous barrier formed by a gigantic ice shelf extending out to the open sea and from which titanic icebergs are calved.

Weather and ice conditions permitting, you will be able to discover several of the region's emblematic sites. Among the possible ports of call, **Cape Adare**, at the far north of the Borchgrevink Coast, is home to one of the world's largest Adelie penguin colonies. We will also try to get to Terra Nova Bay, home to the stunning **Drygalski Ice Tongue**. At least 4,000 years old, it stretches 70 km (43 miles) out to sea from the David glacier and measures 24 km (15 miles) at its widest. On **Ross Island**, at the base of Mount Erebus, you will follow in the footsteps of the famous explorers Shackleton and Scott who chose **Cape Royds** and **Cape Evans**, respectively, to set up their base camps in anticipation of their future historic exploits. In the **McMurdo Sound**, separating the island from the continent, the scenery is surreal: the **Taylor Glacier** stretches its branch into the valleys devoid of snow above which stand mountains of stratified rock. A little further, in the Bay of Whales, another tale is told, that of the Norwegian Roald Amundsen, who left from this point to reach, for the first time, the South Pole in 1911.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT

Arrival 07/02/2023

Departure 09/02/2023

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, the world's first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. *Le Commandant Charcot* is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.

MACQUARIE ISLAND

Arrival 10/02/2023

Departure 10/02/2023

Long celebrated as one of the wonder spots of the world, **Macquarie Island** is an island of great beauty and

outstanding natural diversity, a breeding place for more than 3.5 million seabirds, most of which are penguins. There are **four species breeding** on Macquarie Island: **Royals, Kings, Gentoos and Rock Hoppers**. There are also three types of **fur seals** and one seventh of the world's population of **elephant seals** breeding on the Island. In 1948 The Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) established its expedition headquarters on Macquarie Island. If time and weather permit, guests will have the opportunity to land ashore and view the prolific wildlife that resides here.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT

Arrival 11/02/2023

Departure 12/02/2023

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, the world's first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. *Le Commandant Charcot* is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.

DUNEDIN

Arrival 13/02/2023

Disembarkation 13/02/2023 at 07:00

Dunedin is New Zealand's oldest city and is often referred to as the Edinburgh of New Zealand. This city of the south, wears its Scottish heritage with pride. The city contains some of the best preserved Victorian and Edwardian architecture in the Southern Hemisphere. The Silverpeaks hinterland to the North West provides a picturesque backdrop and **The Otago Peninsula**, which lies within the city boundaries, has internationally renowned wildlife reserves, including the only mainland breeding colony of Northern Royal Albatross.