JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

BASECAMP ANTARCTICA EXPEDITION CRUISE

16 days from **£11,750pp**

ANTARCTICA / ANTARCTIC PENINSULA AND SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS / ARGENTINA / BUENOS AIRES / TIERRA DEL FUEGO



WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

- A passion for the region runs through all we do
- All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America
- Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

- Fully bonded and licensed
- ATOL-protected
- On your side when it matters
- Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

- Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks
- We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions
- Let us show you the Latin America we know and love

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Embark on a once-in-a-lifetime journey to the pristine wilderness of Antarctica, where breathtaking landscapes and extraordinary wildlife await.

DAY 1	**Arrive in Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel in downtown Buenos Aires.**
DAY 2	**City tour of Buenos Aires**
DAY 3	**Fly to Ushuaia, in Tierra del Fuego**
DAY 4	**Embark the ship and Navigate the Beagle Channel**
DAYS 5-6	**Drake Passage crossing**
DAYS 7-13	**Landings and excursions around the Antarctic Peninsula**
DAYS 14-15	**Return across the Drake**
DAY 16	**Disembark the ship and fly to Buenos Aires**

ITINERARY

Basecamp Antarctica offers a unique and immersive experience that goes beyond the typical Antarctic Peninsula voyage.

Unlike standard trips, this expedition allows you to establish a "basecamp" in the waters surrounding the continent, providing unparalleled opportunities for adventure and discovery.

Engage in a variety of activities such as kayaking, mountaineering, snowshoeing, photography and even camping on the ice, all designed to bring you closer to the stunning environment and its wild inhabitants.

Each day brings new adventures and opportunities to witness the awe-inspiring beauty of this remote region. With less re-positioning of the ship compared to other voyages, comes extended time onshore and a chance to explore more deeply and intimately, making the most of your Antarctic experience. In the company of a team of expert naturalists and seasoned expedition guides, you'll gain a greater understanding of Antarctica's fragile ecosystem and be captivated by the majestic icebergs, playful penguins, and the serene silence of this untouched paradise.

DAY 1

Arrive in Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel in downtown Buenos Aires.



Upon your arrival at the airport, one of our local representatives will greet you and accompany you to your hotel in downtown Buenos Aires.

Buenos Aires is a sophisticated, cultured, and cosmopolitan city, renowned for its intriguing museums and the captivating port area of La Boca, with its cobblestone streets and brightly coloured houses.

The city centre boasts the colonial heartland, government buildings, and churches, alongside chic shopping districts that exude a nostalgic Parisian ambiance. The bohemian neighbourhood of San Telmo is dotted with charming old houses, antique shops, tango bars, and elegant restaurants.

Slightly further from the centre is the Recoleta district, which vividly reflects French belle époque and Italian influences. Buenos Aires is also home to the widest avenue in the world, Avenida 9 de Julio, which is 140 meters wide and has up to seven lanes in each direction. Additionally, the city boasts the largest number of bookstores per capita in the world, making it a paradise for book lovers.

DAY 2

City tour of Buenos Aires



Your city tour begins on Avenida 9 de Julio, where you'll see the iconic Obelisk, a cherished symbol of Buenos Aires. Traveling along this grand avenue, you'll encounter the 19th-century Teatro Colón, renowned globally for its remarkable architecture and exceptional acoustics. The tour then leads you to Plaza de Mayo, encircled by the historic Metropolitan Cathedral, the town hall, and the presidential palace, Casa Rosada.

If time allows, the tour extends to the enclave of La Boca, a neighbourhood initially established by Italian immigrants, celebrated for its vividly painted, corrugated iron houses. La Boca is also notable for its vibrant arts scene, featuring numerous street performers and artists who contribute to its lively atmosphere.

DAY 3

Fly to Ushuaia, in Tierra del Fuego



Proceed to the airport and catch your flight to Ushuaia, located in Tierra del Fuego, at the southernmost tip of the continent. The flight duration is approximately 3-5 hours, depending on the number of stops.

Ushuaia has experienced rapid growth in recent years, driven by government incentives for settlers, its status as a Free Port, and its role as a tourist hub. Most Antarctic cruises depart from here. The city's setting is breathtaking, with jagged mountains surrounding it down to the Beagle Channel's shore.

Many voyage operators offer a pre-cruise overnight stay in Ushuaia. Some provide a direct transfer to the ship from the airport, while others leave the overnight stay up to you. When given the option, we always recommend an overnight stay to guard against potential flight delays.

DAY 4

Embark the ship and Navigate the Beagle Channel

Transfer to the port and board your chosen vessel. After settling into your cabin, set sail and begin your navigation of the scenic Beagle Channel, surrounded by towering mountains. The channel is named after HMS Beagle, the ship that carried Charles Darwin during his famous voyage of discovery.



DAYS 5-6

Drake Passage crossing

Enter open water and traverse the Drake Passage. Crossing the Antarctic Convergence Zone, where three mighty oceans meet, can be a bumpy ride, but the upwelling and mixing of nutrients mean both marine and bird life are attracted in great numbers. Various species of albatross and petrels are often seen in the skies above, while up to 15 species of whale (including humpbacks and blues) could be spotted in the waves below.



DAYS 7-13

Landings and excursions around the Antarctic Peninsula



As you approach landfall, you'll be greeted by dramatic landscapes of grey stone peaks dusted with snow, towering blue-white icebergs, and a variety of wildlife. Your journey will take you past the snow-capped Melchior Islands and through the Schollaert Channel, between Brabant and Anvers Islands.

As with all expedition cruises, your itinerary is flexible and subject to change at any time. No landings or excursions are ever guaranteed, but the experienced crew will ensure that the most is made of the time available and, while conditions may change the plan, they will not spoil the fun.

Potential destinations may include the following (note that different vessels may target different regions):

- **Neumayer Channel**: Here, the ship may anchor, allowing you to engage in various basecamp activities from the sheltered waters around Wiencke Island. Enjoy the alpine scenery with Zodiac and kayaking excursions, or venture inland for snowshoe hikes and gentle mountaineering, weather permitting.
- **Port Lockroy**: After navigating the Neumayer Channel, you might visit the historic British research station on Goudier Island, now a museum and post office. Activities around Jougla Point may include encounters with gentoo penguins and blue-eyed shags. Nearby sites like Damoy Point offer opportunities for snowshoeing to the old ski-way, a favourite camping spot.
- **Pléneau & Petermann Islands**: If ice conditions allow, sail through the Lemaire Channel in search of Adélie penguins and blue-eyed shags. This area is also known for sightings of humpback and minke whales, as well as leopard seals. Kayaking, glacier walks, and more challenging mountaineering are possible here.
- **Neko Harbour**: This stunning location, with its massive glaciers and wind-sculpted snow, offers Zodiac cruises and landings for close-up views of the surrounding peaks.
- **Paradise Bay**: Experience the ultimate polar adventure by camping overnight in this serene and beautiful bay.
- **Errera Channel**: Explore sites like Danco and Cuverville Islands, or the lesser-known but equally beautiful Orne Island and Georges Point on Rongé Island.

DAYS 14-15

Return across the Drake

As you cross the Drake Passage once more, you'll be accompanied by the familiar seabirds you encountered on your journey south. The crossing is an opportunity to reflect on your experiences of the last few days, organise your photos and get some well-earned rest.



DAY 16

Disembark the ship and fly to Buenos Aires

Disembark in Ushuaia, transfer to the airport and fly back to Buenos Aires. From here, either continue home, or extend your adventures elsewhere. Contact our team of Travel Experts, for ideas and inspiration.



INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

- City tour of Buenos Aires
- Zodiac excursions on the Antarctic cruise
- Shore excursions on the Antarctic cruise
- Kayaking
- Mountaineering
- Photography
- Snowshoeing
- Hiking

ESSENTIALS

2 flights (3-5 hours); 12-night cruise.

The accommodation in Buenos Aires is in a good, practical, upper-mid-range option; the Ushuaia hotel is a conveniently located mid-range property; the expedition cruise vessel is a good standard ship designed specifically for sailing in icy waters, and operated by a trusted partner with excellent service levels. All hotels can be altered and several different ships navigate the Antarctic Circle itinerary (albeit with different routes and durations).

Breakfast daily; full board days 4-15.

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 25 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by the latter on their return.

16 days, 15 nights: Buenos Aires 2; Ushuaia 1; Antarctic cruise 12.

These adventure activities are offered on selected departures:

- Kayaking (some previous experience recommended).
- Camping out on the land (no experience required).
- Mountaineering (two levels are offered, one for beginners and one for experienced mountaineers).
- Photography (no experience required).
- On-land hiking. A variety of hikes of differing difficulty means that everyone will have the chance to do some walking if they like.

Other options may be possible. Ask our Travel Experts for full details.

It is advisable to pre-book (and pre-pay if and when required) for any optional activities, as many of these have limited numbers and can fill up before the cruise commences.

For basecamp itineraries, operators tend to include all excursions in the price, but some exceptions may apply. Please contact us for details of each voyage.

Cash machines are available in Buenos Aires and Ushuaia, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds.

We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money.

On the cruise ship you can pay your bill for extras at the end of the cruise with a credit card (Visa or Mastercard, excludes American Express and Diner's Card), or often in US dollars cash or Euros.

For our latest currency advice for Argentina please see our FAQs section.

Meals and some drinks are included on board the ship. You pay for your extras at the end of the cruise.

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have an allowance for cruise ship staff, hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants. On the cruise, a tip of $US 8-10 per person per day for the crew and guides is considered appropriate.

Tipping guidelines can be found in our Briefing Dossier.

Travel insurance is essential. Make sure your insurance covers you for the full amount if you have to cancel.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket.

The cruise ships will be well heated, with well equipped cabins and there is sometimes a limited health spa on board. There are optional excursions on some departures (enquire) such as kayaking and hiking. Previous experience is advisable for some activities.

The cruise:
Antarctica is very remote: once committed to your journey, you are at the mercy of the weather and ocean conditions, the melting and freezing of ice-packs, and the movement of icebergs. No specific landings are ever guaranteed and it may not be possible to reach the Antarctic Circle. This is expeditionary cruising: you will be facing the same environmental challenges as the early explorers, albeit in much greater comfort, and with the assistance of modern technology and communications.

You need to be sufficiently agile to get in and out of small landing craft and walk over rocky terrain. There is a doctor on board but if you fall ill while on the cruise or have an accident, it could be a long time and maybe an arduous journey before you return to a destination with good medical facilities, so bear this in mind if you have a pre-existing condition.

Buenos Aires is hottest January-March (very humid with tropical showers, occasionally over 40°C during the day). November and December may be a little cooler.

Patagonia/Tierra del Fuego is best to visit in the summer (December-February) when days are long and mild. March and November can be sunny and clear, but it may be windy.

Antarctica is accessible by ship from late October to March, the southern hemisphere summer. Outside this period days are short and dark. The Peninsula has a typical maritime climate with average temperatures during the cruising season varying between 1°C and -15°C. Antarctica is a desert, so you won't see much precipitation.

The southern hemisphere summer is hot in Buenos Aires, so take loose-fitting light clothing for maximum comfort at this time. An umbrella is a good idea in case of showers. Spring and autumn are milder and less predictable.

South America is in general a relaxed continent and you won't need clothes for formal dining but you may wish to take some smart casual wear if you intend to visit top of the range restaurants.

On the cruise:
Protective clothing is the single most important way of ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable cruise and the key is to dress in layers. For Antarctic landings, some operators provide a complimentary parka consisting of a fleece jacket and an outer shell which is wind and waterproof. In addition, you should bring (to be worn beneath your parka) a breathable, thermal base layer to wick away perspiration and a warm mid-layer such as a fleece or down sweater; trousers (with thermal lining, or base layer of thermal leggings) and an outer shell of waterproof trousers; hat, warm socks, scarf, gloves and sunglasses. Rubber boots are essential for Antarctic landings; these can be pre-ordered and are loaned on board free of charge. Dress on board ship is informal and it's sensible to bring a spare change of warm, dry clothing for wearing out on deck between landings.

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following: typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. You should consult your GP for specific requirements.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying via the US, you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

Some cruise ships will accept individuals travelling alone who are willing to share a cabin with a person of the same sex. They will be charged the per person price based on two travelling together. If you prefer not to share a cabin you can opt to pay a single cabin supplement.

Once on board ship many factors play a role in shaping the expedition's progress – the prevailing wind, weather and ice conditions, for example. Ideally, once in Antarctica, you will depart the ship by Zodiac to make at least 2 excursions daily – on land, by Zodiac or a combination of both, lasting anything between 2-4 hours. There are no man-made jetties in Antarctica so landfalls are 'wet landings' where you scramble ashore from the Zodiac in wellingtons and waterproofs. You are then free to explore on your own or in groups, before later being picked up again by Zodiac. Evenings may be spent relaxing, reliving the days' events with a briefing or lecture, or out on the deck, keeping an eye on the dramatic, ever-changing scenery. Itineraries will vary from the original plan if conditions demand/permit.

It's a long time at sea, but the variety and intrinsic fascination of what can be seen is spell-binding.

The theatre of wildlife in Antarctica as a whole displays an ever changing narrative of birth, struggle, pleasure, fulfilment and death. You may witness the comedy of a waddling penguin building its nest, a mother bird feeding its young or reuniting with a returning mate; a wily seal escaping the clutches of a hunting whale.

A large variety of marine birds, including 6 species of penguin – emperor, king, macaroni, chinstrap, gentoo and Adélie, visit the White Continent – though generally it will be the latter three that are seen on the peninsula. Mammals abound here: blue, orca, humpback, minke and southern right whales prowl the chilly ocean, while Weddell, Ross, crab-eater, leopard and elephant seals sprawl on the beaches.

Plant life in Antarctica proper is restricted to lichen, mosses and algae but there are hundreds of colourful varieties of these.

What to see as the season unfolds:

November:
- Start of the season: clean, untouched landing sites.
- Courtship rituals of penguins and other seabirds, nest building.
- Elephant and fur seals court and carve out their territories.

December – January:
- Long days of summer light, milder temperatures.
- Penguin chicks hatch in the Antarctic Peninsula.
- Whale sightings start to increase.

February – March:
- Excellent whale-watching opportunities.
- Penguin chicks begin to fledge.
- Fur seals increasingly numerous on the Antarctic Peninsula.
- Colourful snow algae break the snow white domination of the landscape.
- Spectacular sunrises and sunsets add a rosy glow to the ice.

Specific to your cruise:

Drake Passage and the Antarctic Convergence:
Over 35 species of bird may accompany your crossing. Species include giant petrels, Antarctic fulmars, and the black-browed and wandering albatrosses with wingspans up to 3m.

South Shetland Islands:
Visitors include chinstrap, gentoo, macaroni and Adélie penguins; giant petrels, Wilson's and black-bellied storm petrels, brown and south polar skuas, Cape pigeons, Antarctic terns, blue-eyed shags, Dominican gulls, elephant, fur, leopard and crab-eater seals; humpback, minke and orca (killer) whales offshore.

Antarctic Peninsula:
Chinstrap, gentoo and Adélie penguins abound. Breeding birds include skuas, Antarctic terns, giant petrels, snowy sheathbills, Antarctic shags, kelp gulls, Wilson's storm, and Antarctic and snow petrels.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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