

## VOYAGE INFORMATION

Voyage Name	Wild Antarctica (Sail/Fly)
Voyage Code	ANW004S
Dates	15 to 26 February, 2022
Duration	12 days / 11 nights
Start	Ushuaia, Argentina
Finish	Punta Arenas, Chile
Ship	Sylvia Earle
Forms Due	15 November, 2021

### Welcome!

Thank you for joining Aurora Expeditions on our *Wild Antarctica* Sail/Fly expedition.

Famed for its tremendous tabular icebergs, year-round sea ice, fascinating fossils and the pivotal role it played in Shackleton's Endurance expedition, the Weddell Sea offers unsurpassed opportunities for exploration. Embark on a true Antarctic expedition as we not only explore the west Antarctic Peninsula, but also attempt to venture east towards the icy perimeter of the Weddell Sea, often guarded by impenetrable pack ice and home to awe-inspiring tabular icebergs. Wild Antarctica voyages may include a flight across the Drake Passage in one direction.

## ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1	Arrival airport transfer and overnight in Ushuaia
Day 2	Embarkation Day
Day 3	Drake Passage crossing
Day 4	Drake Passage & South Shetland Islands
Days 5-10	West Antarctic Peninsula & Weddell Sea
Day 11	Fly King George Island to Punta Arenas
Day 12	Punta Arenas

## VOYAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Be awed by the array of wildlife who play and hunt in the Antarctic Sound.
- Marvel at enormous tabular icebergs in the Weddell Sea
- Learn about the incredible fossil-rich volcanic islands from our onboard palaeontologist

## EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS

- Arrival transfer from airport to hotel on Day 1 (preferred flights only)
- One night's hotel accommodation with breakfast in Ushuaia on Day 1
- Ushuaia city tour on day 2 (lunch not included)
- Luggage transfer from your hotel in Ushuaia to ship on Day 2
- Flight from King George Island to Punta Arenas on Day 11
- Transfer to group hotel in Punta Arenas on Day 11
- One night's hotel accommodation with breakfast in Punta Arenas on Day 11
- On-board accommodation during voyage including daily cabin service
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner
- All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises
- Educational lectures and guiding services from expedition team
- Free access to our onboard doctor for consultations relating to sea-sickness. A standard fee of US \$60.00 (reclaimable through your travel insurance provider) applies for medical consultations not related to sea-sickness
- A 3-in-1 waterproof polar expedition jacket
- Complimentary use of muck boots during the voyage
- Comprehensive pre-departure information
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees

## EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS

- International or domestic flights to or within South America, unless specified
- Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary
- Airport arrival or departure taxes
- Passport, visa, reciprocity and vaccination charges
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
- Hotels and meals not included in itinerary
- Optional excursions not included in the itinerary
- Optional activity surcharges
- All items of a personal nature including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, gratuities, Wi-Fi, email or phone charges.

**Note:** A \$15 USD per person per day gratuity for the crew is automatically added to your onboard account. It is at your discretion if you would like to remove the tip (or increase/decrease the amount) when you settle your bill. It is not necessary to tip the expedition team members. This gratuity amount is included for suites as part of their 'Suite Benefits'.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

Please refer to this itinerary as a guide only, as changes may occur due to unpredictable sea and weather conditions. Flexibility is key, when joining us on our expeditions.

### Day 1 Arrive Ushuaia

Arrive in Ushuaia, where you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to your group hotel (preferred flights only). Upon arrival at your included hotel, kindly remind hotel check-in staff to provide you with Aurora Expeditions cabin tags. Please clearly label the tags with your name and ship cabin number.

### Day 2 Embarkation

This morning, please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Please take your cabin luggage down to hotel reception by 8.00 AM. Your luggage will be collected from your hotel and transferred directly to port for clearance and delivered to your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Keep any valuables or personal items with you throughout the day. Once you have checked out of your hotel by 11.00 AM, you have free time before meeting back in the hotel lobby at 2.00 PM to commence a tour of Ushuaia.

Ushuaia, capital of Tierra del Fuego is located at the shores of the Beagle Channel and surrounded by the Martial Mountains giving you a unique landscape in Argentina, which is the combination of mountains, sea, glaciers and forests.

On this half day introductory tour, you will visit “La Mision” neighbourhood, the old Government House, and the upper area of the city, which offers beautiful panoramic views of Ushuaia and the Beagle Channel.

During the excursion you will see the antique houses that belonged to the first families settled in Ushuaia. The excursion ends with a visit to the Old Prison Museum before transferring to the pier for embarkation at approximately 4.00 PM.

After embarkation, you’ll have time to settle into your cabin before our important mandatory briefings. As the ship pulls away from port, we’ll gather on the deck to commence our adventure with spectacular views over Ushuaia and Tierra del Fuego.

This evening, get to know your fellow expeditioners and friendly expedition team and crew at a welcome dinner to celebrate the start of a thrilling adventure to Antarctica.

(Breakfast and dinner included. Lunch is at own expense)

### Day 3 Drake Passage crossing

As we commence the Drake Passage crossing, we make the most of our time getting comfortable with the motions of the sea. Our expedition team prepare you for our first landing with important wildlife guidelines and biosecurity procedures, and start our lecture program to help you learn more about Antarctica’s history, wildlife and environment.

Our wildlife experiences begin as we enjoy watching and photographing the many seabirds, including majestic albatrosses and giant petrels following in our wake. They rise and fall skilfully, using air currents created by the ship to gain momentum.

### Day 4 Drake Passage & South Shetland Islands

Nearing the South Shetland Islands and the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula on day four, the excitement is palpable with everyone converging on one of the observation decks, watching for our first iceberg. The ocean takes on a whole new perspective once we are below the Antarctic Convergence and are surrounded by the surreal presence of floating ice sculptures. The memory of your first big iceberg sighting is likely to remain with you for a lifetime. Weather permitting, we may attempt our first landing in Antarctica by late afternoon.

## **Days 5-10 Weddell Sea & Antarctic Peninsula West Coast**

It's almost impossible to describe the feeling of arriving in Antarctica. Spotting your first iceberg and taking a deep breath of some of the most fresh, crisp air on earth is an experience that will stay with you forever.

Once we arrive, the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands are ours to explore, and we have a host of choices available to us. Because we are so far south, we will experience approximately 18-24 hours of daylight and the days can be as busy as you wish.

Your experienced expedition team, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to design your voyage from day to day, choosing the best options based on the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities.

We generally make landings or Zodiac excursions twice a day. You'll want to rug up before joining Zodiac cruises along spectacular ice cliffs or among grounded icebergs, keeping watch for whales, seals and porpoising penguins. Zodiacs will also transport you from the ship to land, where you can visit penguin rookeries, discover historic huts and explore some of our favourite spots along the peninsula.

While ashore we aim to stretch our legs, wandering along pebbly beaches or perhaps up snow-covered ridgelines to vantage points with mountains towering overhead and ice-speckled oceans below. If you have chosen an optional activity, you'll have the option to do that whenever conditions allow, and of course keen polar plungers will have the chance to fully immerse themselves in polar waters - conditions permitting!

In addition to Zodiac cruises and shore excursions, we may ship cruise some of the narrow, dramatic straits separating offshore islands from the mainland, or linger in scenic bays to watch whales travelling or feeding. This is a great time to enjoy the observation lounge or make your way to the bridge for uninterrupted views of Antarctica in all its splendour. Keep an ear out for the creak and deep rumble of glaciers as they carve their way from summit to sea, and take a quiet moment to experience the wonder of this incredible white continent.

Central to the story of where Sir Ernest Shackleton's ship, the *Endurance* became trapped in formidable sea ice, the Weddell Sea certainly is high on the list for most polar adventurers. A small set of islands standing off to the east of the Antarctic Peninsula collectively form the Antarctic Sound – the gateway to the Weddell Sea. With a well-deserved reputation as being an iceberg alley, many large tabular bergs escape the Weddell Sea through the Antarctic Sound, often making navigation difficult. However, the rewards can be great. Fossils are a reminder of a more temperate era – gastropods, large clams, and spiral-shaped ammonites, all turned to stone.

Be spoiled for wildlife encounters as the Weddell boasts a large Adélie penguin colony just outside of the Antarctic Sound, some of which breed on the rocky slopes of a small volcanic island, where a large colony of Antarctic blue-eyed shags jostle for space with nest-building Wilson's storm petrels. On thrilling Zodiac cruises or slicing a path through the maze of sea ice in your kayak, keep watch for chinstrap and gentoo penguins in and out of the water, where you're likely to spot humpback, minke and orca whales. With good ice and plenty of luck, you may even get close to a well-known emperor penguin colony. Your camera is sure to get a solid workout during your time in the Weddell Sea.

## **Day 11 Fly King George Island to Punta Arenas**

As we approach Frei Base on King George Island, it is time to farewell Antarctica and our amazing adventure before boarding our flight to Punta Arenas, Chile. On arrival at the Punta Arenas airport, you will be transferred to our group hotel.

NOTE: King George Island is located at the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula in the South Shetland Islands and is one of the most remote places on Earth. A clear sky with perfect visibility is required in order to take off and land safely. We apologise in advance if you experience any delays.

## **Day 12 Punta Arenas**

After breakfast, bid a fond farewell to your fellow passengers as we all continue our onward journeys, hopefully with a newfound sense of the immense power of nature. (Breakfast included)

NOTE: Please advise your Aurora Expeditions' Reservations Consultant or travel agent if you require an airport transfer, so it can be booked in advance. The departure airport transfer is not included in your voyage cost and will be at an additional cost.