

Antarctic Peninsula (Basecamp Expedition) *With optional ski mountaineering expedition*



The Antarctic Peninsula cruise is offered in various formats, ranging in length from 10-13 days. The following itinerary is an example of a Basecamp expedition, and is ideal for those seeking a more active cruise itinerary. Taking place during the Antarctic summer, the Basecamp expeditions allow for a much greater array of activities than are offered on standard Antarctic cruises, including snowshoeing, mountaineering, kayaking, and camping on the Antarctic Peninsula.

For a full list of the available Antarctic Peninsula cruises, including upcoming departure dates and itinerary variations, please see our [Antarctic Peninsula overview page](#).

Day 1: Set sail from Ushuaia

Set sail from Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost city in the world.

Sail through the scenic Beagle Channel, enjoying a leisurely first evening on board the cruise ship.

Days 2 & 3: At Sea

The next two days will see you sail across the Sea of Hoces, otherwise known as Drake Passage. Crossing the Antarctic Convergence, you will arrive in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. In this area you can expect to see a variety of Albatrosses (Wandering, Gray Headed, Black-browed, and Light-mantled Albatrosses are all found in this region), as well as Cape Pigeons, Southern Fulmars, Wilson's Storm Petrels, Blue Petrels and Antarctic Petrels. Near the South Shetland Islands, you'll spot the first icebergs.



Days 4 - 8: Antarctica

The next 5 days will see you sail to “High Antarctica”, passing the Melchior islands and the Schollaert Channel between Brabant and Anvers Island, before continuing into the Neumayer Channel, where the ship will anchor close to Wiencke Island. Here you stay for two days in a multi-activity base camp, with the protected waters around Wiencke Island serving as the venue for a range of water and land-based activities.

You'll be able to scout the Alpine environment on foot, or by zodiac and sea-kayak. Walkers will be able to enjoy snowshoe hikes near the shoreline, while keen mountaineers will find their challenge in climbing hills and viewpoints further inland, i.e. Jabet Peak (540m). All climbs and excursions are dependent on good weather conditions. Typically you'll spend two nights at anchor in order to implement two camp nights and two full activity days.

Sea-kayaking is a particular highlight of the Antarctic Peninsula cruise, offering a chance to explore the rugged Antarctic coastline at a quiet and leisurely pace. No prior experience is needed, as full guidance and training is given, though experienced kayakers will have the option to embark on longer expeditions. Please note that sea-kayaking is weather dependent, so in the event of very poor weather conditions, it will not be possible to kayak.



Leaving Wiencke Island, you'll stop at the British research station and the Antarctic post office at Port Lockroy, on Goudier Island. Close to Port Lockroy you may, depending on the weather conditions, also have the chance to land on Jougla Point, where you can watch Gentoo Penguins and Imperial Shags up close. Keep an eye out for Leopard and Crabeater Seals, too!



Good weather conditions and time-allowing, the cruise continues through the spectacular Lemaire Channel to Booth, Pleneau and Petermann Islands, where you can find Adelie Penguins and Blue-eyed Shags. In this area, you also have a good chance of encountering Humpback Whales, Minke Whales and Fin Whales.

Another camp site is chosen which is suitable and close to the next day's activities.

At Neko Harbour you will have the opportunity to set foot on the Antarctic Continent, a magnificent landscape of huge glaciers, where a range of activities are possible, including zodiac cruises, hikes and kayaking. Here too there are additional opportunities for mountaineers to climb up to the higher grounds of the glacier. Spend the night at Neko or near Paradise Bay with a camp erected ashore.

Leave early in the morning on day 9 after breaking up the last camp, and sail via Melchior Islands towards the open sea of the Drake Passage.



Ski mountaineering (optional activity)

Guests on the Arctic Peninsula basecamp cruises will have the chance to take part in a unique activity, ski mountaineering.

At the end of the Antarctic summer the glaciers are still covered with snow and conditions are perfect for small scale expeditions. This is a chance to climb high snow-covered and glaciated peaks, while roped up in small groups, before skiing downhill individually.

You will need to be an experienced skier to take part in the ski mountaineering. Experienced mountain guides will be on hand to supervise the activity, with a ratio of 1 guide to every 8 participants.

Ski mountaineering is available as an optional activity on select Antarctic Peninsula departures – please contact us for availability.



Days 10 & 11: At sea

The next two days are spent at sea, as you journey north into the Drake Passage, retracing your course back to Ushuaia.

Admire the stunning views, and the oceanic wildlife, as your cruise winds its way to its end.

Day 12: Arrive Ushuaia

Arrive in Ushuaia in the morning and disembark after breakfast. A bus transfer will be arranged from the pier to the airport on the day of disembarkation.

Booking Information:

Please see the price guide on our [Antarctic Peninsula overview page](#) for a list of available departure dates and rates. Alternatively, please [contact us](#) for the latest availability, dates and information on any currently-available special offers.

What's included:

- Expedition cruise to the Antarctic Peninsula aboard the M/V Ortelius or M/V Plancius
- All meals while aboard the ship
- Lectures by noted naturalists and experienced guides
- All shore excursions and activities by Zodiac
- Free use of rubber boots and snow shoes
- All service taxes and charges
- Ski mountaineering (optional activity)

What's excluded:

- International flights
- Pre- and post-cruise accommodation arrangements
- Transfers to / from the vessel
- Passport and visa expenses
- Government arrival and departure taxes
- Meals ashore
- Insurance
- All items of a personal nature
- Tips

This cruise is organised and operated by **Oceanwide Expeditions**, a leading specialist in Arctic and Antarctic cruises. As agents for Oceanwide, Gane and Marshall can help you secure the best rates on all Oceanwide cruises, taking advantage of any special offers available at the time of your booking. We strive to keep our rates as competitive as possible, so if you see this cruise available for a lower rate from another operator, please let us know and we'll do our best to match or beat them!