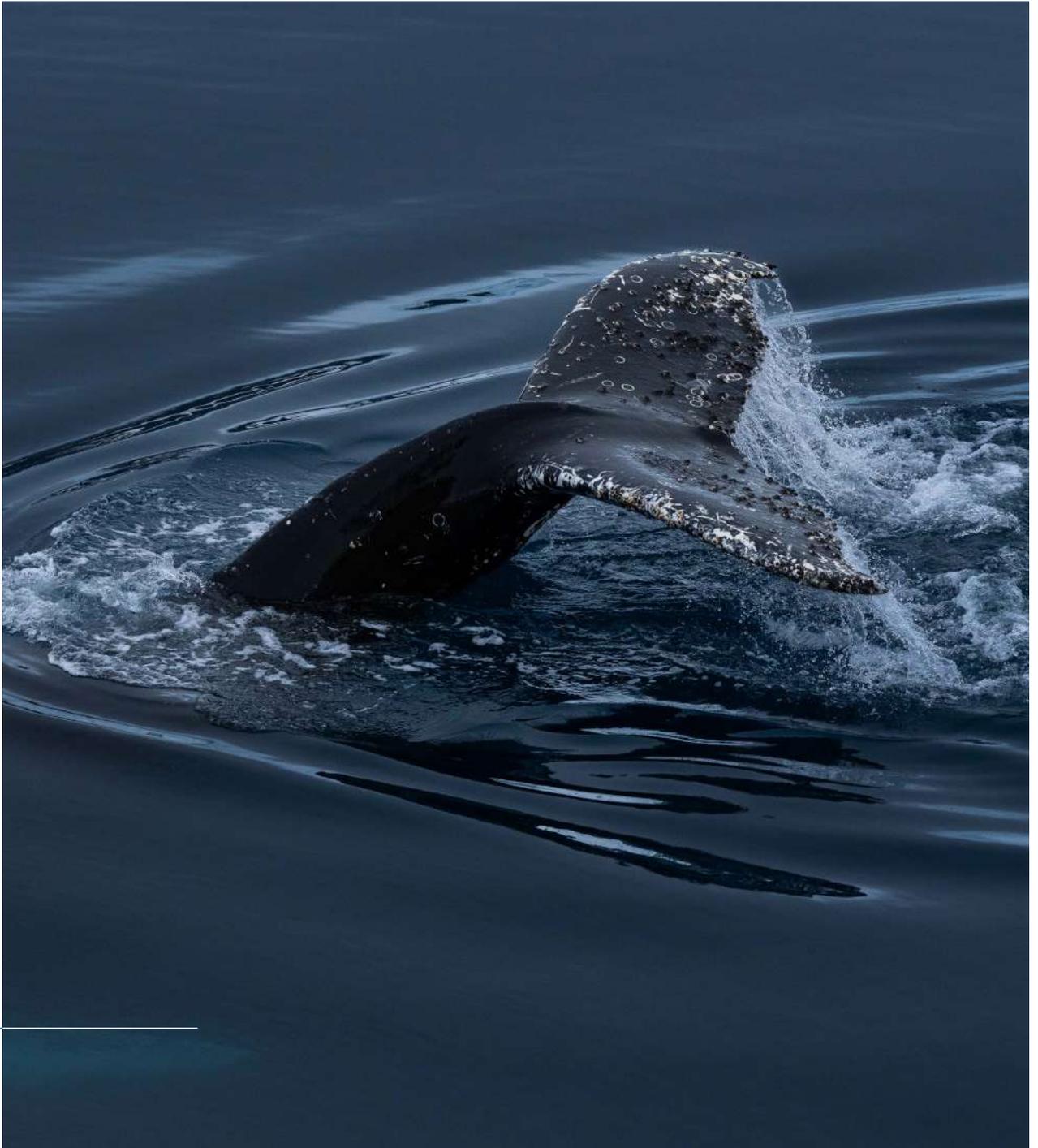


Across the Antarctic Circle

Aboard *Greg Mortimer* | 17 January – 28 January 2025





Across the Antarctic
Circle

17 January – 28 January 2025

Ushuaia

DAY 1 | Friday 17 January 2025

Latitude:
54° 48.6' S
Longitude:
68° 18.0' W

Course:
0°
Speed:
0 knots

Wind Speed:
40 knots SW
Barometer:
1011 hPa

Air Temp:
8°C

Today we are in the charming town of Ushuaia, 'the end of the world'. Some of us spent our morning leisurely exploring before making our way to the optional catamaran cruise in the afternoon. Many of us enjoyed sailing through the Beagle Channel towards the city's iconic Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse, where we observed local wildlife against panoramic views of the surrounding mountain range.

When we arrived at the *Greg Mortimer*, we met our onboard Expedition Manager, Samantha, and Expedition Photographer, Fiona, who checked us off the list and took a memorable photo for the photo board.

Once on board, welcome refreshments awaited us in

the Elephant Island Bar, then our hotel team helped us to navigate the decks to our cabins and settle us into our 'home away from home' for the next 11 days.

After this welcome briefing, we had a moment to get comfortable in our cabins before commencing the lifeboat safety drill. Once this was successfully completed, we all made our way into the dining room to enjoy a delicious dinner prepared by our talented galley team and served by our welcoming wait staff.

Together we total 129 Expeditioners from Australia (44), Canada (11), China (3), Italy (1), UK (15), USA (54), New Zealand (1), along with 84 crew from across the globe.

Ushuaia & Setting Sail

DAY 2 | Saturday 18 January

Latitude:
54° 48.6' S
Longitude:
68° 18.0' W

Course:
0°
Speed:
0 knots

Wind Speed:
35 knots NW
Barometer:
1015 hPa

Air Temp:
12°C

This morning, we found ourselves in the world's southernmost city, Ushuaia. We started the day with a delicious breakfast. At 9.00am, our tour buses arrived and our first adventure started. We went out to enjoy the amazing scenery outside Ushuaia. This stunning expanse of wild waters is surrounded by dense forests of lenga trees, and snow-capped mountains. Exploring these landscapes, we also enjoyed the views of the beautiful and famous peat bogs along the glacial valleys. We then arrived at the Garibaldi Pass where the National Route 3. crosses the Andes northwards. This narrow pass stands at 500 metres above the Escondido (hidden) Lake and provides an amazing viewing point of both the Escondido and Fagnano

lakes, running from east to west for about 100 kilometres along parts of Argentina and Chile.

Our last stop was La Carmen Ranch, right at the shore of the Fagnano Lake where we experienced the wild nature of this lake, and the endless landscape of forest, colourful lupin flowers and diverse wildlife. At around noon everyone was back on the buses and we headed back to Ushuaia, but with one last stop – an amazing Fuegian lamb barbecue served to us at the Villa Las Cotorras resort in the heart of Tierra del Fuego.

Early in the afternoon, we returned to the ship and shortly after, we started our onboard activities and mandatory briefings.





Drake Passage

DAY 3 | Sunday 19 January

Latitude:
55° 40.9' S

Longitude:
066° 21.0' W

Course:
183°

Speed:
10.8 knots SSW

Wind Speed:
38 knots

Barometer:
1020 hPa

Air Temp:
6°C

With the seas down from 15 metres to 5 metres, it was time for the brave ones to emerge for breakfast or muster provisions for those left clinging to their beds. We practised moving around the ship, shuffling like penguins and holding onto anything more stable than ourselves. Those who searched the waves and skies outside may have caught sight of their very first albatross, as our ornithologist T-A confirmed they were accompanying our ship.

T-A then began the day's educational input with a fabulously informative and entertaining talk on seabirds, which told us all about the species gliding past us. We learned about their adaptations, feeding and breeding

habits, and afterwards went outside to conduct our first eBird citizen science survey.

After a few more Expeditioners made it to lunch than breakfast, Fi hosted a well attended and brilliantly interactive workshop on smartphone photography, where all of us came away with some memorable new tricks up our sleeves. Remember everyone, no more pinching and zooming!

It was then time for a polar nap before Tim's excellent talk on the geology of Antarctica, where we learnt how to find gold and what Antarctica would look like without any ice.



Drake Passage

DAY 4 | Monday 20 January

Latitude:

60° 15.0' S

Longitude:

065° 18.0' W

Course:

163°

Speed:

12 knots

Wind Speed:

21 knots SSW

Barometer:

1015 hPa

Air Temp:

1°C

The bridge was open for all those who were curious about what the control centre looks like, and plenty took up the offer, wondering if they could pose like Captain Kirk aboard the USS Enterprise. Alas, this was a step too far and most settled for scratching their curiosity itch around how the ship was manned.

Hannah was up next, rolling back the clock with her lecture on discovering the human history of Antarctica. Delivered with her signature dry wit, not only was it informative, but there were plenty of giggles along the way too.

Being the last day of crossing the Drake Shake that had transformed into a lake, plenty of us joined T-A and the

team for another bird survey. There were a few Cape petrels observed, and a wonderful encounter with black-browed albatrosses coming right up to the aft of deck 7 and locking eyes with all participating in the survey.

After another terrific lunch, T-A was up next in the lecture theatre, giving us an introduction to the penguins of Antarctica.

Mario later gave everyone a run down on the game plan for tomorrow. This was met with a round of applause as we will wake up and get our first glimpse of the wonderland that is Antarctica. Ania also gave us some great insight into many names of the white continent for our evening recap.



Orne Harbour & Georges Point

DAY 5 | Tuesday 21 January

Latitude:
64° 32.0' S
Longitude:
062° 39.0' W

Course:
139°
Speed:
0.9 knots

Wind Speed:
16 knots SSW
Barometer:
1019 hPa

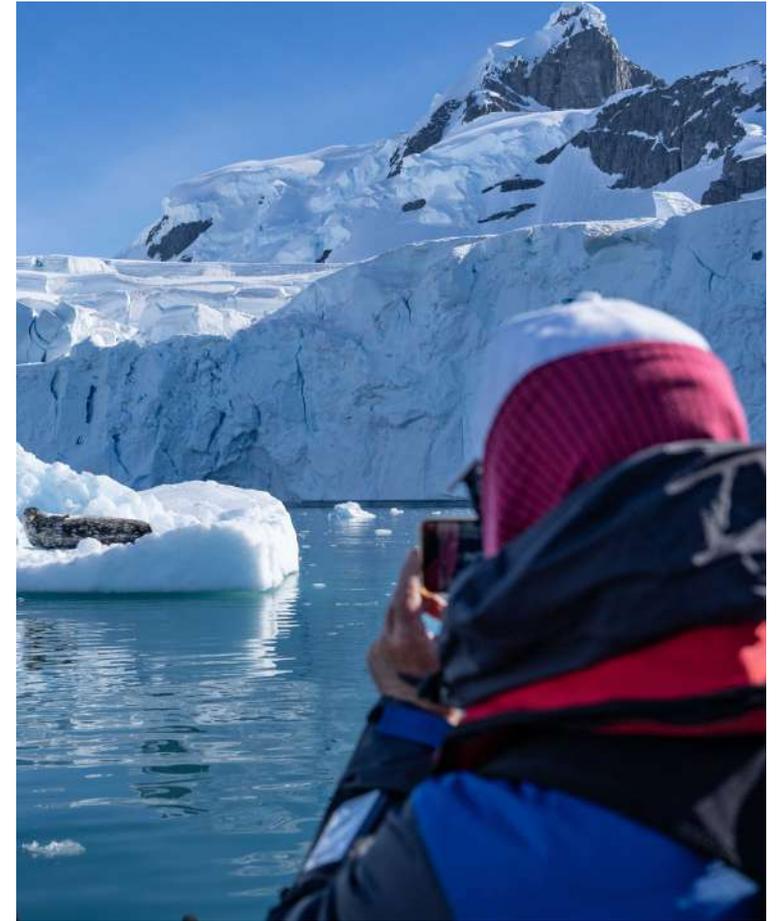
Air Temp:
0°C

The sun was shining as we boarded the Zodiacs to head for land. A continental landing was waiting for us in Orne Harbour, where we were met by Mario's smiling face to welcome us officially to Antarctic land. Looking up the steep zig-zagging hill showed us our destination. We could hear the faint call of penguins at the top. These whispers turned into a buzz of noise as we neared the top and, cresting the ridge, we looked out over Bransfield Strait. The effort to reach the top left many reconsidering their choice of clothing for Antarctica, as overheating quickly became apparent and many said to others that they thought Antarctica would be colder!

A Zodiac exploration around the harbour revealed for many, yet more penguins; shags, and for a lucky few, even humpback whales.

Lunch on board showed smiles all round. It wasn't long before another landing was announced, and we set out for Georges Point. A rocky landing made things more challenging, but a shorter walk and a new penguin species was the reward! Gentoo penguins with adorable chicks were soon targeted by a brown skua, which was only looking out for its own. A lone Weddell seal resting on an iceberg was curious enough to check us out – but not enough to lose any sleep over the encounter!







Neko Harbour & Lemaire Channel

DAY 6 | Wednesday 22 January

Latitude:
64° 49.0' S
Longitude:
62° 35.0' W
Course:
140°
Speed:
3.9 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots SSW
Barometer:
1021 hPa
Air Temp:
2°C

Our morning began with an exciting range of activities at Neko Harbour. Many going ashore embarked on a hike up to a higher vantage point, which provided breathtaking views over the harbour. The elevated position and panoramic perspective gave a true sense of the grandeur and isolation of the peninsula. Those wanting a gentler morning could enjoy two smaller hikes to view a gregarious colony of gentoo penguins. Having the opportunity to quietly observe these curious creatures allowed us to witness the caring and nurturing nature of gentoos as they raise their chicks before winter. The awe-inspiring sound of glaciers calving was another highlight of the morning. We witnessed massive chunks of ice breaking off and crashing into the water below with a thunderous roar or 'white thunder'.

After lunch, we embarked on a scenic exploration of the Lemaire Channel, a stunning passage known for its dramatic, steep cliffs and crystal-clear waters. En route, we stopped for a moment to observe several humpback whales enjoying their time in a cooler climate and displaying impressive examples of feeding techniques. We were soon confronted with the reality of Antarctica's icy conditions when part way through the Lemaire Channel, our progress was blocked by several dominating icebergs, forcing us to turn around. It was a stark reminder of the unpredictable and unforgiving nature of this vast frozen wilderness.







The Gullet & Detaille Island

DAY 7 | Thursday 23 January

Latitude:
66° 33.0' S
Longitude:
67° 26.0' W

Course:
158°
Speed:
5 knots

Wind Speed:
9 knots W
Barometer:
1017 hPa

Air Temp:
0° C

Snow petrels and other early birds witnessed our first crossing of the Antarctic Circle right on 6.00am. The Antarctic Circle is the imaginary line marking the latitude where, for at least one day each year, the centre of the sun doesn't pass below the horizon. This morning, a helpful humpback whale was positioned exactly along the line, so we could gauge where it was.

Our morning adventures were sneakily disguised as Zodiac and kayak explorations but quickly turned into something even more intrepid as, group by group, we had a surprise landing on a small circle of sea ice – our very own piece of frozen Southern Ocean! This ice was well over one metre thick and was floating 260 metres above the sea floor.

Back on board, we enjoyed lunch as the ship re-positioned towards Detaille Island. Once ashore, we visited Station W, a British scientific research base established in 1956 and then abandoned in a hurry in 1959 when winter sea ice threatened to trap the researchers there.

The afternoon's split landing gave us all the chance to explore the ice-jumbled waters around the island by Zodiac or kayak. There were a surprising number of crabeater seals hauled out on the ice, and we met snow petrels up close as they flew just overhead or rested on little pieces of ice at eye-level. A scattering of Adélie penguins was a highlight for some, and we all got to enjoy the aroma of their colony adjacent to Detaille Island.







At Sea, Port Lockroy & Jougla Point

DAY 8 | Friday 24 January

Latitude:
65° 15.0' S
Longitude:
65° 45.0' W

Course:
058°
Speed:
10.5 knots

Wind Speed:
8 knots S
Barometer:
1003 hPa

Air Temp:
1°C

Hannah's mid-morning talk was a fascinating insight into life at Port Lockroy, covering the history of the base, its restoration, and her time living there, which sounded both extremely rugged and extremely enjoyable at the same time.

The waters around Port Lockroy were busy with paddlers and kayakers exploring among the icebergs, many postcards were sent and the best souvenir of all? A jigsaw of the base! Slowly piecing it together in the comfort of

one's own home will bring back so many memories.

The highlight for many was watching gentoo penguins zipping past and streamlining through the water just beneath the Zodiacs. Those who took on the challenge of the polar plunge to finish the day didn't for some reason seem quite so lithe and comfortable in the water, but immense kudos to those who emulated the penguins and took the plunge.





Cierva Cove & Spert Island

DAY 9 | Saturday 25 January

Latitude:
64° 10.0' S
Longitude:
61° 21.0' W

Course:
037°
Speed:
6.9 knots

Wind Speed:
7 knots SSW
Barometer:
1009 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

We navigated calm waters filled with sculpted icebergs, each uniquely shaped and displaying vivid hues of blue and white, all of which have calved from surrounding glaciers to create a truly surreal, ever-changing environment.

Eventually, we started to see something else on the ice-free area of Cierva Point – red and square structures that did not seem like a natural part of the Antarctic landscape. This was Base Primavera, an Argentine Antarctic research station. As our exploration came to an end, Cierva Cove closed its gates with a fresh layer of fog rushing in.

The afternoon brought us to another incredible location –

Spert Island. It was a truly unforgettable adventure through some of the region's most dramatic landscapes. There is no doubt that everyone appreciated the towering cliffs, sea caves, and jagged rock formations carved by centuries of wind and ice. Our Zodiacs navigated through narrow channels and hidden passageways, revealing a world of striking natural beauty. The island's unique geology was no doubt a highlight of the exploration for many, with towering basalt columns and arches providing an otherworldly backdrop. The sound of ice cracking and waves lapping against the rocks, along with the enormous grounded icebergs present around us, created a serene yet powerful atmosphere.





Fort Point & Half Moon Island

DAY 10 | Sunday 26 January

Latitude:
62° 39.0' S
Longitude:
59° 40.0' W

Course:
7°

Speed:
6.9 knots

Wind Speed:
9 knots E
Barometer:
1011 hPa

Air Temp:
1°C

On this fine morning, we landed at Fort Point – the remarkable headland with dramatic sea-stacks on the southeastern point of Greenwich Island in the South Shetlands. This neat little isthmus is home to several species of seabirds: Cape petrels, southern giant petrels, shags, snowy sheathbills, storm petrels, and of course, penguins. We saw chinstrap and gentoo penguins coexisting on the beach with several fur seals! We got to see fur seals interacting with one another, rather than the isolated sightings that we had yesterday at Spert Island. The landing terminated in a glacial plain with freshly calved fronts on either side of the isthmus, making for a dramatic backdrop.

Back on board, we enjoyed a great lunch, followed by an informative disembarkation briefing. Mixed emotions aside, we got ready for our last Antarctic excursion – Half Moon Island, a beautiful little landing replete with penguins and glacial scenery. The misty conditions were quite atmospheric. It felt crazy to think that just a few days before, many of us had never even seen a penguin. Now, we recognise their behaviour and personalities, and understand their remarkable adaptations and roles within the Antarctic ecosystem. The prospect of conveying these experiences to those who await us back home seems near impossible – to try to explain the magic of a place like this isn't something that can be simply accomplished with photographs.



King George Island & Martel Inlet

DAY 11 | Monday 27 January

Latitude:
63° 14.0' S
Longitude:
058° 49.0' W

Course:
340°
Speed:
2.9 knots

Wind Speed:
14 knots ENE
Barometer:
1005 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

The view on land was a surreal contrast to the wild and uninhabited places we had become accustomed to throughout the voyage. There were buildings dotted all over the hillside, also vehicles, radio antennas, phone masts, and even a Russian Orthodox Church! This is as close to a metropolis as is possible in this part of the world.

Numerous countries operate scientific bases here, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, South Korea, Peru, Poland, Russia and Uruguay. The largest station is the Chilean base, Presidente Eduardo Frei Montalva. It's this base that operates the gravel airstrip that we would fly out of, weather permitting.

Hannah gave a lecture about women in Antarctica, and Tim held a FjordPhyto workshop in the library, giving us the opportunity to look at some phytoplankton under the microscope.

After a hearty lunch, the ship moved to Martel Inlet, and the Zodiacs were lowered for an excursion. The Brazilian Comandante Ferraz Antarctic Station is located there and has a fascinating and dramatic history, having been almost destroyed by fire in 2012 and then completely rebuilt and reopened in 2020. Those who braved the rain were lucky enough to see a couple of humpback whales feeding and a very curious leopard seal.



South Shetland Islands & King George Island

DAY 12 | Tuesday 28 January

Latitude:
62° 10.0' S
Longitude:
058° 23.0' W

Course:
148°
Speed:
9 knots

Wind Speed:
25 knots SWS
Barometer:
984 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

After waking to a decent covering of snow on the decks, we watched on as the Expedition Team assessed conditions for a landing at Turret Point. Unfortunately, the sea state meant that running a shore operation wasn't possible and any thought of a Zodiac exploration was off the cards for reasons of both safety and comfort.

So instead, many of us chose to join Grant and Bertrand in the lecture theatre for a summary of how the three different brush-tailed penguins (Adélie, chinstrap and gentoo) have been faring around the Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetlands, then to watch a special screening of the *The Penguin Counters* film. Part-way through the film,

the unexpected news came through that the tiny unlikely weather window for planes to land at the gravel airstrip this afternoon was actually very likely to happen, and that our two planes would soon be on their way.

Thereafter followed a bit of a scramble to do our final packing, readjust our onward travel arrangements and enjoy one more lunch together with our shipmates before our long journeys home began.

Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard *Greg Mortimer* to Antarctica. We hope to see you on the high seas again some day!



BBQ





Polar Plunge











Snorkelling Log

Guides: Ania Baranek, Richard Devanney

21 January 2025, AM: Orne Harbour

Our first outing of the voyage was at Orne Harbour. We were the first Expeditioners off the ship, which made us the first guests to set foot on the continent of Antarctica. It was a beautiful location and we had sunshine for the entire morning. We had 40 minutes to walk up quite a steep hill to a small chinstrap penguin colony. We also saw some cormorants and some moss and lichen. The view from the top of the hill was fantastic.

Once back at the landing site, we got back into the Zodiac and headed to the snorkelling site. The first snorkel was a mandatory outing, and Richard gave us a briefing that included information about the boundary for the snorkelling, who would be buddying with whom, and various safety procedures. We then put on our equipment and lowered

ourselves into the water. It didn't take long before we were surrounded by chinstrap penguins. They moved quickly and gracefully between us. Eventually it started to get a little chilly, so we climbed back aboard the Zodiac and headed back to the ship. A very unique perspective of Antarctica!

21 January 2025, PM: Georges Point, Rongé Island

After a delicious lunch and a short ship's re-positioning, we arrived at a beautiful site called Georges Point. The weather was fine, and as we launched our Zodiac, we were welcomed by warm, sunny rays on our faces. Huge icebergs were floating around, which only added to the already-surreal feel to the place. Our snorkel guides, Ania and Rich, took us to the landing site, where we were welcomed by our Expedition Leader, Mario. Contrary to Orne



Number of Snorkellers: 7

Total Outings: 5

Snorkellers:

Janet McDougall

Craig McDougall

Janet Wilson

Douglas Ervin

Sandra Zeuner

Alf Zeuner

Randy Nelson

Harbour this morning, Georges Point is dominated by gentoo penguins. We enjoyed a relaxed time on land, while our guides scouted the area to find the best spot for snorkelling. It wasn't far away from the landing site, so we quickly got geared up and jumped into the water. This time, a little deeper than before. The water visibility was great, and there was a lot of krill around. We were hoping for a few playful penguins to jump into the water in front of us, but we didn't catch a glimpse of them this time, although they were definitely around. Nevertheless, we enjoyed a 20-minute snorkelling session in very calm conditions, gaining more confidence and feeling more relaxed in the water. On the way back to the ship, a short photo session with a large, turquoise iceberg happened. We were truly lucky on our first day in Antarctica. What an introduction to our ultimate adventure on the White Continent! We can't wait for more.

22 January 2025, AM: Neko Harbour

Our outing today took us to Neko Harbour, a stunning spot despite overcast skies. It was a nice contrast to the sun we had yesterday. The weather was calm, with still waters, setting a serene atmosphere. We started with a short but rewarding landing after where we hiked up a gentle hill to a small gentoo penguin colony. The surrounding scenery was spectacular, with towering ice cliffs framing the harbour.

After our hilltop visit, we boarded the Zodiacs and made our way to the snorkelling site. The water was cold, but visibility was excellent. As we slipped into the water, we were immediately surrounded by curious gentoo penguins. They darted and dived around us, seemingly unfazed by our presence. Their graceful movement in the water was fascinating to watch, compared

with their awkward waddle on land. After around 20 minutes, we climbed back into the Zodiac and made our way back to the ship, ready for a hot chocolate and an afternoon passage through the Lemaire Channel.

23 January 2025, PM: Detaille Island

Oh, what a day! Overnight, we crossed the fabled Antarctic Circle, and the next day, the landscape had changed dramatically. Sea ice, snow, towering icebergs surrounded us from each direction, and after a misty Zodiac exploration in the morning, the sun came out and we couldn't wait to snorkel that afternoon! The ship was anchored quite a distance from the landing site, so we enjoyed a Zodiac shuttle among fabulous ice formations as we made our way to the historic Base W, one of the best-preserved huts in Antarctica. After a short visit inside, we were picked up by our guides and zipped off to the

nearby snorkel site. It proved to be one of the best spots for snorkelling on this voyage. Not so much marine life this time, but the sheltered bay we swam in was very picturesque and the water visibility was just stunning. The best part? We found a few small pieces of sea ice and brash ice that we could swim around, and it was lots of fun to see it underwater. A beautiful day, after all – not many people can say they have snorkelled South of the Antarctic Circle! No-one can take those bragging rights away from us now.

24 January 2025, PM: Goudier Island (Port Lockroy) & Jougla Point

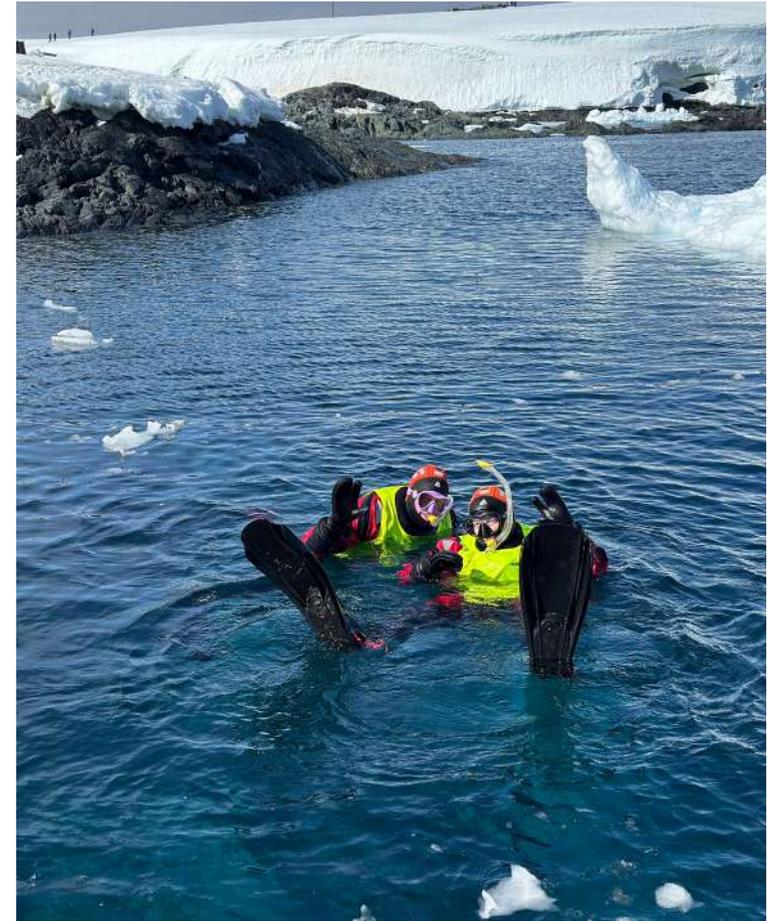
Foggy conditions set the tone for the afternoon outing at Port Lockroy. We had a very short but atmospheric Zodiac ride to the landing at Port Lockroy base. After 20 minutes, it was time to head just around the corner to the snorkel site, which was



a small bay, very sheltered with little swell. After a briefing, we entered the water and explored the shallow water, which was especially clear. Penguins were all around us, getting in and out of the water, so we were able to just stay still and watch them. At this point of the trip, it was the largest number of penguins we had seen in the water.

As the weather was calm with no wind, we felt warm enough after the snorkel to do a short landing at Jougler Point. We were also the last to land there, so effectively had the place to ourselves (along with the guides)! The fog had increased as we headed back to the ship, but we didn't have far to travel to get warmed up again.









Paddling Log

Guides: Tim Vanhoutteghem, Rob Barth, Erin Scott, Anula Jochym, Tim Stredwick

21 January 2025, AM: Orne Harbour 1km

Our first outing as a team! After leaving the carnage of the mudroom, it was out into the stunning landscape of Antarctica. We launched near the landing site and started off with a tailwind and easy drift down the coast. Straight off the bat, there was a colony of chinstrap penguins as well as a couple of blue-eyed shags hanging around. Farther down the coast we ended up at the base of a magnificent cliff face with chinstraps, gentoos and kelp gulls all nesting at the base. We paused here to watch for a while and even had some humpback whales cruise past. After poking our heads around the corner, it was time to get back on the Zodiac and check out the shore.

21 January 2025, PM: George's Point 2.8 km

We capitalised on a rather unusual opportunity this afternoon and while general operations went to land at Georges Point on Rongé Island, we took off to nearby Cuverville Island, which until recently, had been closed to tourism. With no-one around, we got up close with our first gentoo penguin colony, and even saw two wayward Adélie penguins! We had glassy calm waters and sunshine as we paddled anticlockwise around the north end of the island. We encountered Weddell seals on ice floes, picked our way through a bay of grounded growlers, and saw two sailboats. A beautiful afternoon spent surrounded by wildlife!



Number of Paddlers: 8
Total Paddle Outings: 6
Total Distance Paddled:
16.2 km

Paddlers:
Michael O'Connor
Geraldine Johnson
Melissa Joll
Ronald Brody
Sonia Wilkan
Gary Wilson

Denelda Bolt
Sarah Bolt

22 January 2025, AM: Neko Harbour

We went for a short but sweet paddle at the spectacular Neko Harbour – a bay with a perimeter of active tidewater glaciers, the thunder of which we heard throughout our time on the water. The water was mirror calm, with light brash ice, which we bumped our way through listening to its characteristic crackle in the water. We inspected a few small icebergs, saw a Weddell seal, and took some quiet time on the water to listen to the remarkable acoustic landscape in which we were immersed. A serene morning, followed by the chance to go ashore and hang out with the penguins... but not before an absolutely spectacular acrobatic show by a breaching humpback whale on our way to the ship!

23 January 2025, AM: The Gullet 2.5 km

Paddling The Gullet was an unforgettable experience of immersing ourselves in one of the world's most surreal landscapes. Seated in our sit-on-tops, we glided between enormous icebergs, their towering walls glowing in shades of blue and white. The water around us was scattered with brash ice, crunching against our kayaks as we navigated through the icy maze. The gentle swell beneath your kayak gave a sense of a 'breathing ocean,' as if the sea itself pulsated with life. This rhythm, combined with the pristine silence, created a calming yet exhilarating atmosphere. Our adventure reached its peak when we landed our kayaks on an ice floe, stepping carefully onto the frozen surface. Without a doubt we were all buzzing with excitement while claiming this piece of pack ice as our own paddling haven.

23 January 2025, PM: Detaile Island

The first challenge of the outing was finding the landing site, but after successfully navigating our way there, we had a short time onshore to explore the hut. Once we got on the water, it was a cruisy paddle through the channels between the rocky islands. We made our way along the coast in dreamy conditions. The water was glassy and crystal clear, the sun was out and the views were breathtaking. After seeing an Adélie penguin on a mission, we stopped by some ice floes with crabeater seals on them, before heading deeper into the maze of brash and sea ice. Eventually we got so far we couldn't keep going, so it was time to backtrack and get picked up for a scenic Zodiac trip to find the ship.

24 January 2025, PM: Goudier Island/Jougla Point

After getting a chance to explore Port Lockroy on land and to mail off our postcards, we embarked on an eerie paddle in the thick fog. The water was completely glassy as we set off into the void, starting our paddle in the Peltier Channel and moving down around the little headlands of Wiencke Island, around Jougla Point, and finally over to Goudier Island. We floated past many penguins and shags in their colonies replete with chicks and little avian dramas. After crossing over to Goudier and remarking on the number of sailboats in the harbour, we watched a seal attempt to make it onto an ice floe, ultimately unsuccessfully. We finished our foggy yet bright paddle in the calm waters around the Boogie Woogie Islands!



25 January 2025, AM: Cierva Cove 2.5 km

The usual short Zodiac trip with intrepid Erin on the helm, and we were launched and ready for paddling action. Meandering in the general direction of the Argentine Base Primavera, we watched the brash ice undulate like a magic carpet in front of us in the low swell. Despite the patchy low cloud, visibility was generally good ahead of us, but the *Greg Mortimer* in a fog bank behind us was only just visible. Gentoo penguins popped up around us and snow petrels passed overhead, as slowly the noise – but not the smell – of the gentoo colonies on rocky offshore island could be heard. Far too soon it was time to return to the *Greg Mortimer* after a short but spectacular paddle.

26 January 2025, AM: Fort Point 1.2 km

We had our last Antarctic paddle excursion in the South Shetland Islands at Fort Point, and it was a sporty one! We had worked up the entire trip to be ready for the exposure and conditions that we faced on this paddle, and it was worth it. We started with a bit of wind and waves, but we explored around the rocky headland and sea-stacks that make Fort Point so spectacular – weaving in among the rocks and visiting the fearless chinstrap penguins that call this coastline home. We carried on, enjoying the diversity of seabirds on the cliffs and marvelling at the towering sea-stacks, before hopping into the Zodiac and going for a closer look at the penguins and fur seals on land.







Kayaking Log

Kayak Guides: Tim Vanhoutteghem, Rob Barth, Erin Scott, Anula Jochym, Tim Stredwick

21 January 2025, AM: Orne Harbour 7.3 km

Our first paddle of the trip, and our first excursion in Antarctica! We were greeted by relatively calm conditions at Orne Harbour, which allowed us to start at the western end of the bay and follow the coastline for a while, before transiting across the harbour and into the next bay. We started to feel comfortable in our new boats, and among the ice. Antarctic terns and Wilson's storm petrels flew overhead, and we saw our first penguins – chinstraps, and some with chicks! Little did we know that this first paddle would be a journey with significant mileage; however, as we made good time across the bays, we were even able to make it out of the northern extent of Orne Harbour and along the glaciated coastline beyond. A very solid first paddle!

21 January 2025, PM: Georges Point 6 km

We began the paddle with big goals ahead. Paddling away from the landing site, we made our way through an iceberg graveyard. With big and small icebergs towering either side of us, it was time to make our way around Cuverville Island in an anticlockwise direction. Cuverville Island is a large island with a gentoo penguin colony on it. It also has some insanely high sea cliffs on its northerly side. As we paddled around it, we saw a few crabeater seals as well as some small colonies of gentoo penguins. But most impressive perhaps was the huge sea cliff we paddled under. It towered way above us as we paddled at the base of it, looking at the penguins. After making our way around the island, we came across an even bigger penguin colony, so we watched them until it was time to get back on board for some well-deserved food.



Number of Kayakers: 15

Total Outings: 8

Total Distance Paddled:
29.5 km

Kayakers:

Angela Fisher

Dean Fisher

Ali Zwain

Christine Ayton

Miguel Marquez

John Charles

Tracey Charles

Roy Graham

Amanda Graham

Heather Sim

Matthew Size

Thomas Shelmerdine

Kate Kirkman

Julia Chinn

Tom Thayer

22 January 2025, AM: Neko Harbour

Neko Harbour is one of the most incredible and dynamic glacial landscapes, constantly changing, as we kept noticing throughout our paddle. We could hear glaciers cracking and crumbling – although for many it would sound more like a thunder or jet plane somewhere in the distance – with the clouds rising and closing in on us again. Kayaking in the endless soup of crackling and melting ice was one-of-a-kind experience. It was one of those days where the destination didn't matter – we were fully immersed in the journey itself, accompanied by Antarctic terns, Wilson's storm petrels and a sleepy Weddel seal. We spared a few moments to take it all in: everyone got a moment to find their own piece of calm. And what a better way to finish this outing than to head to the continent's shore landing and a breaching whale?

23 January 2025, AM: The Gullet 3.5 km

A sublime morning of kayaking started with a short Zodiac trip from the *Greg Mortimer*. Then we were on the water and 14 of us were scrunching and clattering our way through patches of brash ice. Although overcast, the day was bright and visibility was good. The highlight for all was landing on a large piece of sea ice, tested first of all by Rob in the Zodiac, then Tim with his ice axe. A truly unique and unforgettable experience for the intrepid kayakers, who then with whoops of excitement and perhaps a little trepidation, slid seal-like back into the water. The photo of the whole group 'ashore' on the ice will hold such special memories of that day forever.

23 January 2025, PM: Detaille Island 2.2 km

Today delivered perhaps the nicest Antarctic paddling conditions possible, with sunny blue skies and glass-calm waters. We started by going to check out Base W, the remarkably preserved British Antarctic Survey hut from the 1950s. After having our time on land, we launched our kayaks and checked out the north side of Detaille Island. It was an 'icy' afternoon with lots of large icebergs, some sea ice floes and growlers and bergy bits everywhere. We manoeuvred around the ice and the little skerries and tidal channels, exploring about while getting a suntan. After an afternoon such as this, it's hard to believe the sun isn't always shining in Antarctica!

24 January 2025, PM: Goudier Island/Jougla Point

The afternoon started with a landing at famous Port Lockroy. Everyone went ashore and hopefully after some of you bought a fridge magnet or something to remember the trip by. Maybe there were even a few postcards sent too. Once we got on the water we had a very overcast but relaxing paddle, checking out the back side of Goudier Island and watching a few gentoo penguin chicks hang out. After we passed some expedition yachts at anchor, we paddled past Jougla Point and out around the corner. We watched some gentoos swim in the shallows and once we ran out of room to paddle, we located the ship and jumped back on board.

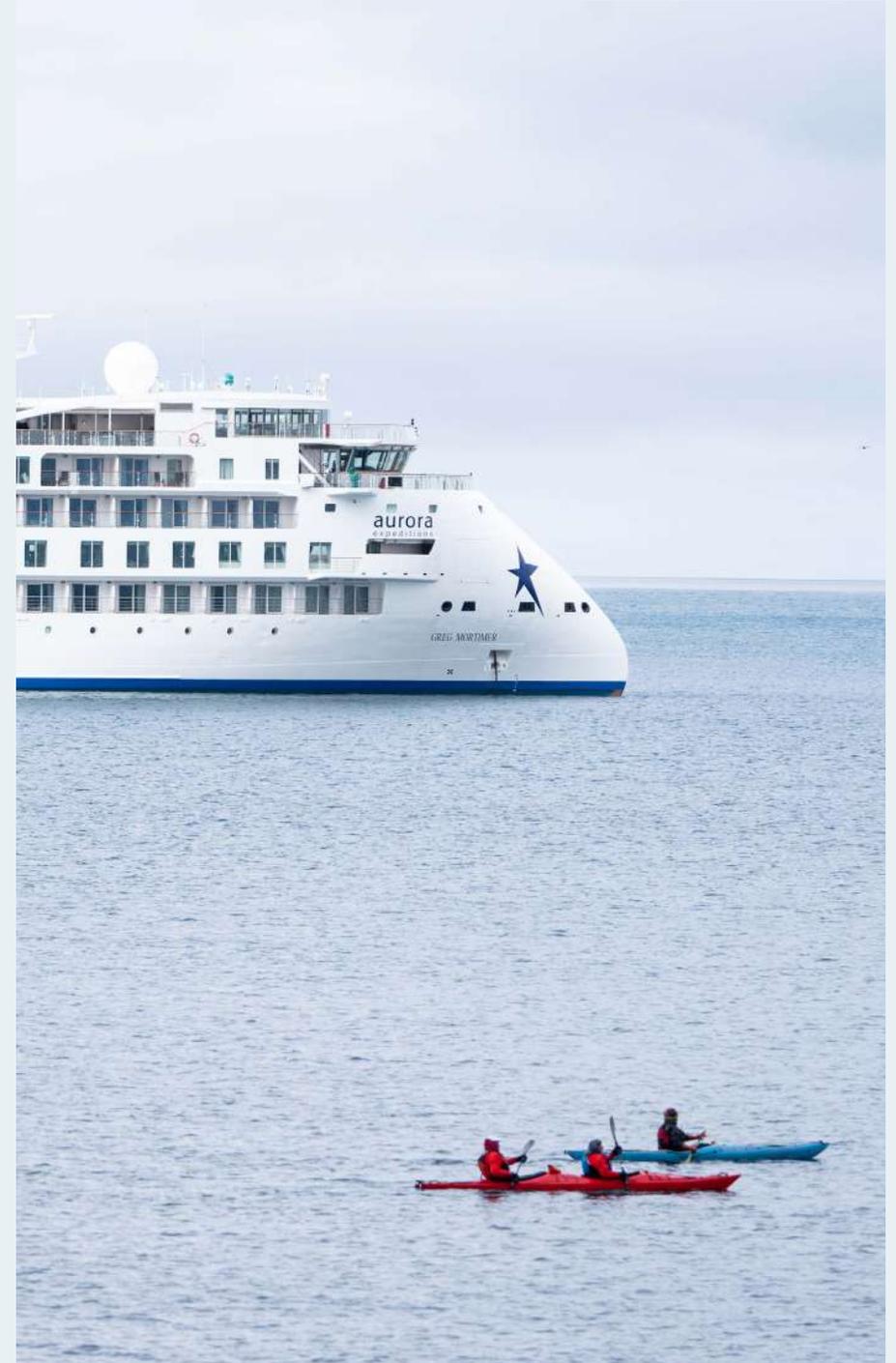


25 January 2025, AM: Cierva Cove 3 km

Nestled in the pristine wilderness of the Antarctic Peninsula, Cierva Cove offered us a quite special opportunity for a zen kayak and iceberg extravaganza. Gliding through the crystal-clear waters, surrounded by towering glaciers and jagged icebergs, we got to appreciate the always-confused-chinstraps and admire gentoos that took their salt water showers very seriously. Some of us got to enjoy the presence of logging whales and leopard seals, casually lounging on icebergs. And of course, once again, we got to experience the powerful antarctic silence, broken only by the sounds of brash ice rising and falling in the swell. Our beautifully timed paddling ended with the fog closing in on us, as we cruised back to the ship.

26 January 2025, AM: Fort Point 3.5 km

Our last paddle of the trip was a sporty one! We set out in blustery conditions at Fort Point in the South Shetland Islands. We launched in the north-facing bay in a bit of chop, and paddled past the beach where we saw chinstrap and gentoo penguins, fur seals, and many different seabirds. Then things got real as we navigated around the point itself, where we encountered some dynamic seas, and got to experience some exposed coastline conditions. We had to focus and work as a team to stay together as a group and upright – some of us more successfully than others! At least we know our drysuits work, after one of us went for a second polar plunge! We poked into a couple little coves to get a closer look at the chinstrap penguins, and when we rounded the headland into the south-facing bay, we were greeted with some relief from the wind, and enjoyed some calmer conditions.







Bird & Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	January										
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Snowy Sheathbill					●	●		●	●	●	
South Polar Skua					●	●	●		●		
Brown Skua						●		●	●		
Skua (unidentified)											●
Kelp Gull		●			●	●		●	●	●	
Antarctic Tern					●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South American Tern		●									
Gentoo Penguin					●	●		●	●	●	●
Chinstrap Penguin					●			●	●	●	●
Adélie Penguin					●	●	●	●		●	
Snowy Albatross			●								
Southern Royal Albatross			●								
Black-browed Albatross			●	●							
Grey-headed Albatross			●	●							
Northern Giant Petrel			●								
Southern Giant Petrel			●	●	●	●	●		●	●	
Southern Fulmar				●							
Cape Petrel				●		●					●
Snow Petrel							●		●		
Blue Petrel			●	●							

Bird Species	January										
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Antarctic Prion			●	●							
White-chinned Petrel			●	●							
Wilson's Storm Petrel			●	●	●	●	●		●	●	
Antarctic Shag					●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Magellanic Cormorant		●									

Mammal Species	January										
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Antarctic Fur Seal							●		●	●	
Crabeater Seal						●	●		●		
Weddell Seal					●	●	●				
Leopard Seal								●	●		●
Humpback Whale					●	●	●		●	●	●
Minke Whale								●	●		
Fin Whale				●							
Orca					●						

Map



Across the Antarctic Circle

17 January – 28 January 2025



Our Expeditioners

Christine Ayton	Julia Chinn	Charles Golding	Pat Keith-Magee	Michael O'Connor	Susan Su
Barbara Blissert	Alexander Cobb	Amanda Graham	Kay Keith-Magee	Roberta Poritsky	Damien Taylor
Sarah Bolt	Jeanette Conn-Taylor	Roy Graham	Kate Kirkman	Ian Price	Donna Thayer
Denelda Bolt	Jacqueline Crist	Annie Griesemer	Chris Knight	Jane Price	Tom Thayer
Lauren Brandt-sarif	Simone Dal Pino	Ian Hamilton	Tracey Lee	Melinda Ramm	John Torrence
Theo Brandt-sarif	Garzella	Jackie Hamilton	Teddy Lee	Glenn Robertson	Garry Visontay
Ron Brody	Rosalind Doye	Marla Hamilton Lucas	Nicholas Links-Fisher	Cheryl Robertson	Wendy Visontay
Brett Byworth	Robert Doye	Andrea Hegerty	Dave Lucas	Landa Robillard	Jie Wang
Margo Cairns	Joan Epstein	Jeremy Hegerty	Kelly Maas	Mary Ruetimann	Gavin Waugh
Antony Cairns	Douglas Ervin	Teresa Hirasuna	Miguel Marquez	Markus Ruetimann	Ria Waugh
John Calder	Ian Farr	Boiminh Ho	Craig McDougall	Trevor Sarif-Killea	Gary Wilkan
Brenda Calder	Jane Farr	Xinyang Hu	Janet McDougall	Paul Shabsis	Sonia R Wilkan
Geneve Camara-Schultz	Bruno Fiannaca	Grant Humphries	Phil Milne	Tom Shelmerdine	Janet Wilson
Robert Canfield Jr	Kathryn Filipek	Guy Ingram	Nicholas Neissa	David Shelmerdine	Karen Yeasting
Ronald Carleton	Marcus Filipek	Alice Ingram	Jimmy Neissa	Steve Shivinsky	Jason Yeasting
Ellie Carleton	Dean Fisher	Ni Jiang Jiang	Janet Neissa	Linda Shivinsky	Alf Zeuner
Debbie Castroverde	Angela Fisher	Gerrie Johnson	Matt Neissa	Heather Sim	Sandra Zeuner
Eloy Castroverde	Bob Frere	Douglas Johnson	Will Neissa	Matt Size	Yan Zhang
Tracey Charles	Heather George	Ross Johnson	Randy Nelson	Lorraine Skowronski	Ali Zwain
John Charles	Peter George	Rob Johnson	Jack Nelson	George Skowronski	
Bertrand Charry	Lisa Gleim-Jonas	Melissa Jolls	Liza O'Connell	Leigh Smyth	
Zhenghe Chen	Amy Gold	Bill Jonas	Tim O'Connell	Les Smyth	
	Charles Gold				

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Mario Placidi Spring

Assistant Expedition Leader: Isabelle Howells

Onboard Expedition Manager: Samantha Deer

Ornithologist/Naturalist: T-A Hooley

Geologist & Citizen Science Coordinator: Tim Gunns

Historian: Hannah Johns

Expedition First Responder: Meli Pelzmajer

Photography Guide: Fiona Wardle

Marine Biologist: Kyle Smith

Expedition Guide: Ed Nolan

Zodiac Master: Sergei Andronov

Onboard Expedition Assistant: Ana Prado

Lead Kayak Guide: Tim Vanhoutteghem

Kayak Guide: Tim Stredwick

Kayak Guide: Rob Barth

Kayak Guide: Anula Jochym

Kayak Guide: Erin Scott

Lead Snorkel Guide: Ania Baranek

Snorkel Guide: Richard Devanney

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Oleg Kapko

Chief Officer: Andrey Zakalashnyuk

Safety Officer: Sergii Voina

Bosun: Marvin Linga

Deck Cadet: Joao Varlos De Souza Lima Filho

Ship Doctor: Javier Martinez Rodriguez

Ship Doctor: Nicolas Diaz Rodriguez

Chief Engineer: Dimitar Vasilev

First Engineer: Denys Odrynskyk

Hotel Director: Alex Barkar

F&B Manager: Rajesh Murao

Chief Purser: Pia Blanca

Executive Chef: Edgar Mangalinao

Sous Chef: Edgar Agnelo Xavier Pereira

Head Waiter: Neelam (James) Lopes

Hotel Controller: Christopher Santos

IT Officer: Ihor Yesmienieiev

Receptionist: Jaica Puyod

Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez

Head Stateroom: Roniel Garcia

Spa Manager: Venila Vythilingum

Able Seaman: Angelo San Antonio

Able Seaman: Roberto Ixtan Mejia

Able Seaman: Nikola Georgiev

Able Seaman: Noel Refugia

Able Seaman: Joel Noble

Able Seaman: Roberth Herman Presida Enitencio

Photography thanks to:

Fiona Wardle

Special Activity guides





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