

# Antarctic Explorer - AEP150G

Aboard *MV Greg Mortimer* | 19 – 28 January 2022





# Punta Arenas

DAY 1 | Wednesday 19 January 2022

Position at 2100

Latitude: 53°16'S

Longitude: 70°51,6'W

Course: 170°

Speed: 10 knots

Wind Speed: 13 knots from W

Barometer: 1028 hPa

Air Temp: 15°C

Explore. Dream. Discover.

—Mark Twain

What a beautiful day to welcome you aboard the *Greg Mortimer*! We had calm seas, clear skies, and even felt the heat of the sun as we met you all at the dock.

We can only imagine what it took to reach the ship from your homes in this new age of travel. But finally, we were all together onboard, with those challenges behind us and thoroughly looked after.

Together we totalled 76 guests from 12 different countries, along with the 13 Expedition team and 95 ship's crew from around the globe.

Once onboard and settled into comfortable staterooms, our expedition team introduced themselves at the welcome buffet, a carefully chosen sample of what is to come over the next 10 days. Briefings, welcome speeches and emergency procedure drills ensued. Understandably it can take some days to become accustomed to ship life, but it took almost no time before there was a buzz of excitement about our upcoming adventure.

During dinner, our crew cast off our lines and we slipped away from the port, most of us unable to detect any motion given how smoothly the ship glides through the water. Before too long we had our first exciting wildlife encounter, Sei whales - the third largest of the whales!

This trip is very special, not only as it represents the first taste of freedom for many of us after time at home, but also because we will travel through the Chilean fjords, presenting us with fresh vistas of wild, glacier-carved landscape.

The Strait of Magellan links the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, between the southernmost tip of mainland South America, and Tierra del Fuego. Lying entirely within Chilean territorial waters, except for its easternmost extremity, which is Argentinian, it is 350 miles (560 km) long and 2–20 miles (3–32 km) wide at different points.

The first European to navigate the strait was Ferdinand Magellan (October 21–November 28, 1520), a Portuguese captain representing Spain, whose expedition is believed to have completed the first circumnavigation of the world. Although the strait follows a winding course among numerous islands and channels and has a cold, foggy climate, it was an important sailing route before the construction of the Panama Canal (completed in 1914) and

reduced the Atlantic-Pacific passage by several thousand miles.

The anticipation to explore was palpable, and in the evening, we raised our glasses to travel companions, adventure and seeking out new places and new experiences.



# Chilean Fjords, Beagle Channel

DAY 2 | Thursday 20 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 54°34'S

Longitude: 072°04'W

Course: 120°

Speed: 10 knots

Wind Speed: 13 knots

Barometer: 1007 hPa

Air Temp: 4° C

A wonderful feeling to be able to cast off and head for our goal at last.

—Roald Amundsen, *The Amundsen Photographs*, edited by Roland Huntford, 1987

This morning dawned to a beautiful, sunny day as we made our way through the spectacular Chilean Fjords. The water was flat, calm like a mirror reflecting the majesty of the surrounding mountains, as we glided effortlessly along on the *Greg Mortimer*. Snow-capped peaks rose in contrast against a clear blue sky.

After breakfast, John Kirkwood gave his talk on sea birds, blending perfectly his fantastic knowledge with a great sense of humour which made for a fun, entertaining lecture.

To our starboard side, we were treated to some Magellanic penguins, as we sailed steadily onwards. By about 10:30 we had Isla O'Brien on our port side and to the east of the island was the Paso Darwin, marking the beginning of the Beagle Channel. We enjoyed time on the observation deck, making the most of photo opportunities and hoping to spot whales or dolphins as we cruised.

Sailing onwards to our approach of Isla Timbal Grande, we spotted humpback whales to our port side, and a seal to the bow of the ship, swimming just below the surface.

Both groups enjoyed a delicious lunch with the anticipation of an afternoon cruising onwards down the channel. It did not disappoint! A stunning glacier to our port side with a huge waterfall cascading out of it started the afternoon perfectly.

By 4:30pm we were passing Ushuaia on our port side, looking stunning in the sunlight shrouded by the mountain peaks rising up behind the town. A multitude of birds here, Terns displaying in the air and dipping down into the water. Giant petrels on the water, flying away as the ship approached, and the occasional penguin surfacing then disappearing into the deep fjord.

At the Captain's Welcome, we toasted a successful voyage ahead, then enjoyed yet more wonderful food in the dining room. The perfect weather and clear skies continued into the evening, and kept people coming out on deck to admire the splendour as we sailed on towards the Drake Passage and the open sea.

## Cape Horn

Poem inscribed on the Cape Horn Albatross Monument by Sara Vial (Translated from Spanish)

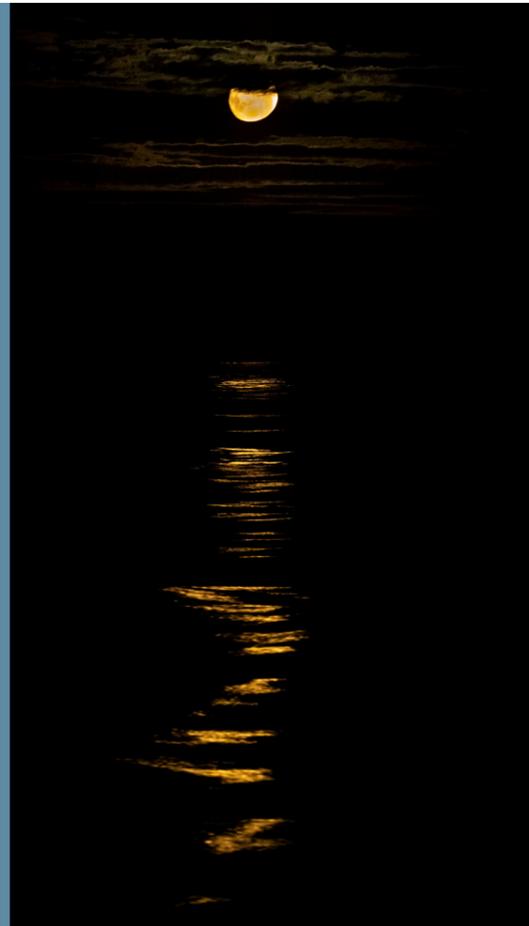
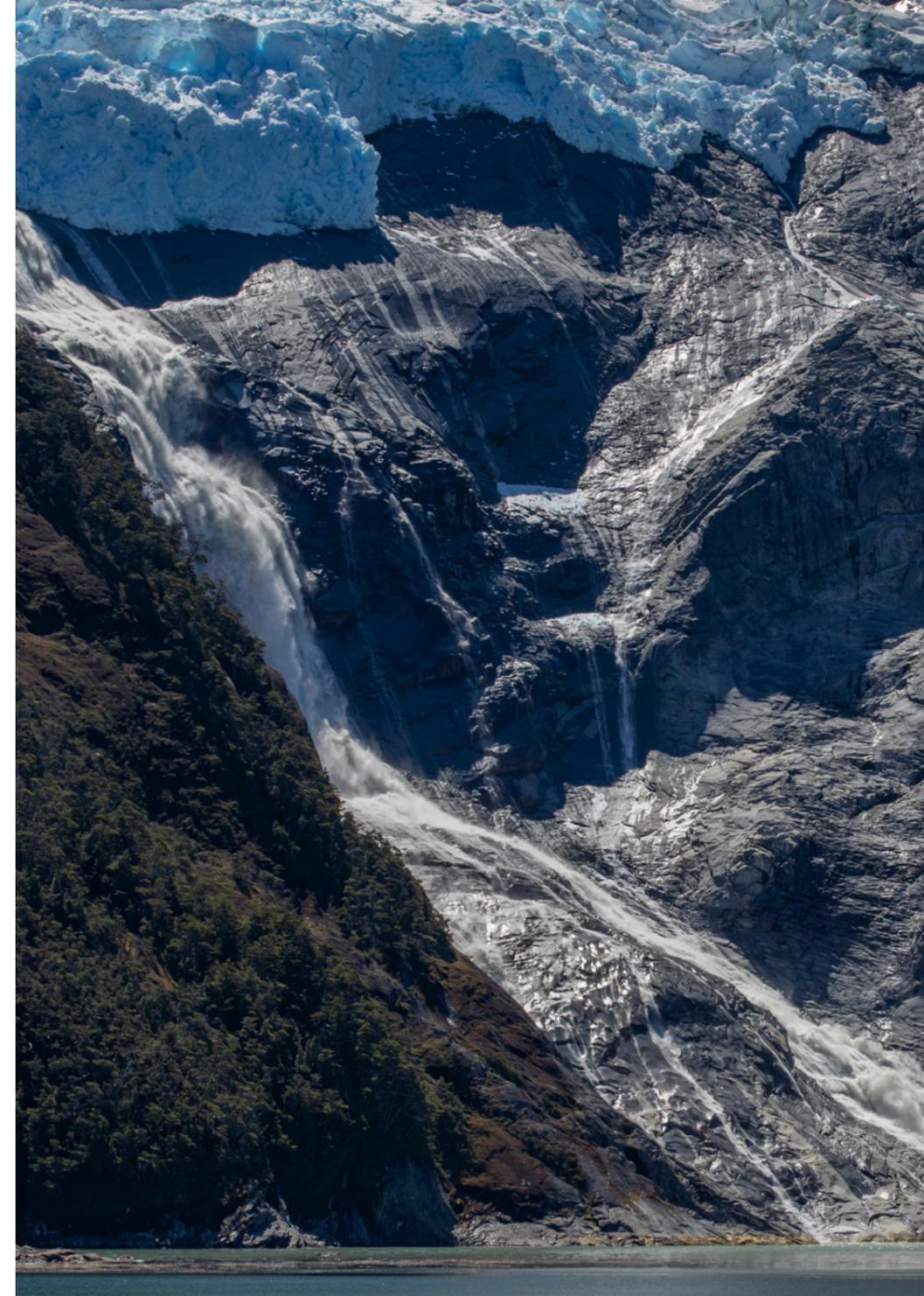
I am the albatross that waits for you  
at the end of the earth.

I am the forgotten soul of the dead sailors  
who crossed Cape Horn  
from all the seas of the world.

But they did not die  
in the furious waves.

Today they fly in my wings  
to eternity

in the last trough of the Antarctic winds



# Drake Passage

DAY 3 | Friday 21 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 57°04'S

Longitude: 65°65'W

Course: 180°

Speed: 12 knots

Wind Speed: 20 knots, NW

Barometer: 986 hPa

Air Temp: 4° C

I now belong to the higher cult of mortals, for I have seen the albatross.

—Robert Cushman Murphy

The mountain peaks and glassy waters of the Chilean Fjords were already far behind us when we woke this morning. For the first time feel the gentle sway of the *Greg Mortimer*, as we make good progress into to the Drake Passage. So far the ocean is treating us kindly, with a mostly light swell.

Nevertheless, everything is extra-challenging when there is a little movement, so we take good care when walking around the ship, and many expeditioners retreated to the comfort of their cabins for the crossing.

It's amazing to imagine the conditions endured by early Antarctic explorers, being tossed around in a small wooden ship, with limited food rations, and limited shelter from the elements. We certainly feel grateful for the comfort of the *Greg Mortimer*, whilst relaxing in our cosy cabins, watching movies, and filling our plates with fine food at the buffet.

Now that we are well underway, anticipation is building for our first glimpse of Antarctica, and even before that, our first iceberg. John's lecture this morning "Oceanography and Ice" whetted our appetite for the coming days.

Scott P presented some great advice on how to take better photos with your smart phone, inspiring us to embrace the technology we all carry in our pockets. No matter if you are a brand new, or a seasoned professional photographer, the best camera is the one you have with you.

The buffet lunch was a feast! Fresh salads, bread still warm from the oven, so many options it was hard to choose. I think we would have queued again and again at the buffet to sample each one of the dishes, had it not been for our full stomachs.

We are ever closer to the icy continent, so some vital preparation ensued this afternoon. Isabelle presented the IAATO briefing, which covers how to keep ourselves, the wildlife and ecosystem safe during our landings in Antarctica. It's amazing to think that in a short time, we will be seeing this wonderful wildlife for ourselves!

As we sail into the evening it remains light outside. The thick mist that has been with us all day still hangs in the air, keeping everything beyond our immediate surroundings a mystery. We retire to our cabins knowing that tomorrow the mystery will be revealed.



Birds have it better than we do, in many ways, and here are three, with wings they fly by day and night, and never have a cancelled flight, with feathers they have clothes that always fit, in styles that never change a bit, and what we envy most, I'd say, with bills they never have to pay.



# Drake Passage; Fournier Bay

DAY 4 | Saturday 22 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: : 62°28.197'S

Longitude: 063°47.652'W

Course: 168.2°

Speed: 13 knots

I watched the sky a long time, concluding that such beauty was reserved for distant, dangerous places, and nature has good reason for exacting her own special sacrifice from those determined to witness them.

—Admiral Richard E Byrd, Alone, 1938

It was another day of fog and rolling seas: not as rough as yesterday but not as calm as we would have liked. While some were excited about experiencing the realities of the fabled Drake Passage, most of us were pleased to have a relatively calm crossing. Most people who had been seasick on Day 1 of the Drake were up and about today. In the morning, Howard announced that we had made better than expected time across the Drake Passage and were aiming for an afternoon Zodiac cruise. The weather gods were not on our side as the northerly wind picked up cancelling our afternoon activity. No worries, the nearby Fournier Bay is famous as a humpback whale feeding ground, so we went there to see what we could find.

Entering this bay was a magical experience as the seas were calmed by the freshly-formed pancake ice. This looked like a frosted jigsaw puzzle cast upon the sea. It was a thrill to watch these enormous gentle animals rising through the pack ice, with two of them checking us out by spy-hopping; lifting their heads vertically out of the water to have a look at us. Passengers rushed from one side of the ship to the other as whales surfaced on either side of us.

Eventually, we had to leave Fournier Bay and its whales to sail towards the Errera Channel and our planned post-dinner Zodiac cruise and kayak paddle. This turned out to be a rare gem as our rubber and plastic flotilla headed in different directions to see what we could find. While some of us marvelled at the capers of the Gentoo penguins, others enjoyed watching a Leopard seal lazing on the ice, a Weddell seal on the rocks or even a young elephant seal meandering in the shallows. We all cruised amongst the icebergs, in awe of their astonishing diversity.

As often happens in Antarctica, the weather changed quickly, presenting a challenge for our intrepid paddlers as they faced a nasty headwind in order to get back to the ship. As a first paddle in Antarctica, this was certainly challenging, so it was pleasing to see how our kayakers were up for the challenge and proved themselves to be capable polar paddlers.

Wind Speed: 20kts from the N

Barometer: 998 hPa

Air Temp: 0° C



After a memorable first day in Antarctica, many people gathered in the bar to share their experiences and enjoy a laugh. After a great day of wildlife experiences, we were left wondering what our coming week in Antarctica will bring.



# Cuverville Island; Neko Harbour

DAY 5 | Sunday 23 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°41.718'S

Longitude: 62°37.846'W

Course: 293.4°

Speed: 0.6 knots

Wet clothes, bags and cameras may have been our first challenge of the day, but it didn't deter us from taking in the magic of one of the largest Gentoo colonies on the Antarctic peninsula.

Cuverville Island is the epitome of penguin life; the hustle and bustle of penguins coming and going along their highways. After a day of foraging, the return to colony requires a penguin-bath, so we watch them wash vigorously in the icy shallows. Some continue to seek out the perfect stones for their nests, while others loiter around the shore. Up on high the penguins stake out the only exposed rocky outcrops, to nest and nurture their young chicks.

First foot on the Antarctic continent was at Neko Harbour. For some that marks the seven continents and for others a start of their journey to bag the rest. Spectacular glaciers and great mountainous ranges line the coast. The ice is simply stunning and especially a towering cathedral with myriad chasms that felt so inviting, but were a clear warning to not get too close.

Penguins frolicked in the shallows and Gentoo parents protected their young. Leopard seals hauled out on ice while others patrolled the shallows. Humpback whales blow in the distance and the sound echoes across the bay. A feast for any wildlife enthusiast and a remarkable place that will be burned into the memory for years to come.

The snorkellers, immersed in the clear water, caught a glimpse of the 90 percent of the iceberg that hides below the surface. The scalloped patterns of deep blue and pure white are a spectacle that would convert anyone into a polar snorkeller. Those who ventured into the freezing water emerged later with nothing but smiles. The intrepid kayakers explored the shoreline as they weaved through brash ice and along the glaciers, with their intricate shapes and crevasses.

No matter what zodiac you are on or what part of the land you explored or how far you paddled, we look forward to sharing our experiences over a drink in the bar about all the different epic experiences and wildlife encounters had by all.

Wind Speed: 20 knots fresh breeze from NNW

Air Temp: -2° C

Barometer: 999 hPa



## Icebergs

Up to 4 billion tonnes of ice is released from the icecap into the southern ocean every year. White, slab-like 'tabular' icebergs, which form from ice shelves, can be several hundred kilometres long. Bergs from valley glaciers are smaller, denser and contain ice that's flowed under pressure from distant inland sources, having taken many thousands of years to reach the sea. The age of air trapped in bergs when the ice formed can be calculated from the flow rate of the parent glacier. Scientists analyse this air to chronicle changes in atmospheric gases over the millennia.



# Lemaire Channel; Petermann Island; Pleneau Island

DAY 6 | Monday 24 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°41.718'S

Longitude: 62°37.846'W

Course: 293.4°

Speed: 0.6 knots

Wind Speed: 20 knots fresh breeze from NNW

Air Temp: -2°C

Barometer: 999 hPa

Good Morning, *Greg Mortimer!* The early bird most certainly caught the worm! Grabbing our jackets, cameras, and morning coffee/tea, we woke up and headed to the outer decks to soak in the breathtaking views of the Lemaire Channel. With its towering peaks and dramatic landscapes, the overcast skies only deepened the blue of the ice and crevasses as our polar class vessel navigated through the icy waters of the glacier-lined fjord. This spectacular 11km journey is undoubtedly one of Antarctica's most beautiful cruises and an early morning mark in the win column!

Still buzzing from our morning transit (and extra cups of coffee), we made our way to breakfast and readied ourselves for our first excursion of the day... a landing on Petermann Island, home to endemic Adelie and Gentoo penguin colonies. Greeted by hauled out Weddell and crabeater seals, we trekked through the snow towards the Adelies who were busy feeding their chicks and chasing off the gentoos. As we smiled, laughed, and captured photos of our favorite waddlers, our snorkelling friends swam with penguins in the cove, and the kayakers paddled south through the ice, exploring caves and slumbering wildlife along the way.

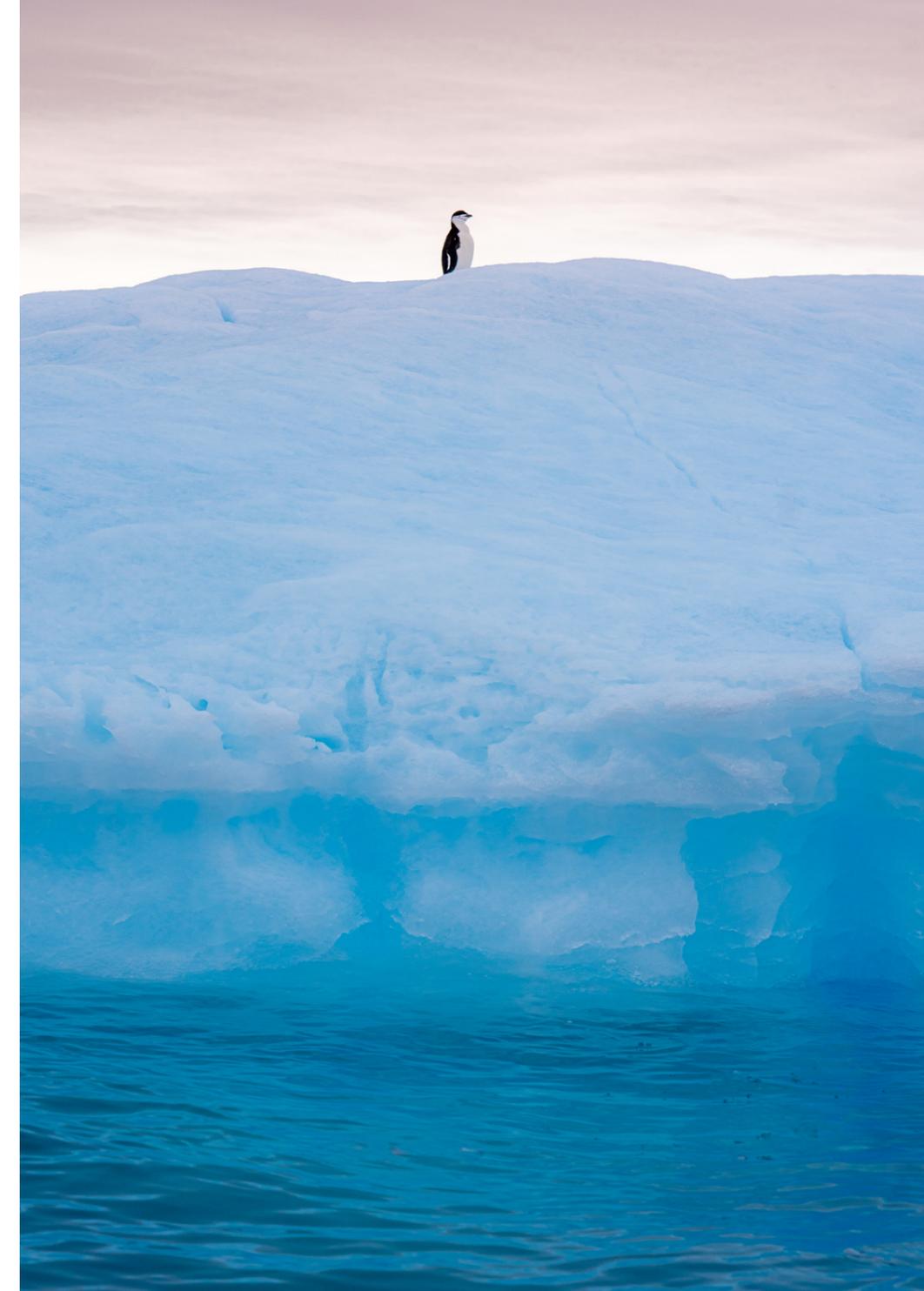
After a much needed warm-up and hearty lunch, it was time for round two... or is it three? At this point, who's counting?! It was time for a Zodiac cruise through the glassy waters surrounding Port Charcot/Pleneau Island. Elusive whales kept teasing many of us whilst we navigated through the beautifully sculpted icebergs. "This is where icebergs come to die!", Edwin shared with his Zodiac of snorkellers...but, if you asked a kayaker, they would tell you that the ice was still very much alive and active! Having their own Shackleton (or in this case, Weir) experience, our paddlers were freed from the ice, returning to the ship with tales of survival and adventure!

With stoke levels HIGH and our adrenaline pumping, it was time for the much anticipated POLAR PLUNGE! Fellow adventurers cheered on new friends as they took the plunge into the icy waters of the Antarctic. Wes stayed in for over a minute acclimatising to his new "office", while others quickly ran into the arms of Rosie who was ready with the towels. Reza had vodka shots to warm us up and Liz had a fist pump and haiku...

Oh, Antarctica!

You are as cold as you look.

Brrrr...the Polar Plunge!



# Polar Plunge

DAY 6 | Monday 24 January 2022



# Hidden Bay; Paradise Bay

DAY 7 | Tuesday 25 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 65°04.348' S

Longitude: 64°01.785' W

Course: 272.1°

Speed: 0.1 knots

There is, one knows not what sweet mystery about this sea, whose gently awful stirrings seem to speak of some hidden soul beneath.

—Herman Melville

We awoke to find ourselves blanketed in thick fog as we made our way back through the Lemaire Channel. Howard cheerfully called us for breakfast, and we felt reassured by his now familiar tones that another day of Antarctic adventure awaited us.

At breakfast we sat and gazed as our ship glided past ghostly icebergs and rocky shorelines emerging from the foggy gloom.

Our destination for the morning was Hidden Bay just around the corner from rocky Cape Renard. We found ourselves in a bay filled with icebergs and towering ice cliffs. Before we knew it, we heard the sound of Zodiacs on the water, and it was time to dress warmly and head back to the mudroom.

What an adventure awaited us. Fog lingered in the cold air and the gunmetal grey sea was flat and glassy. All around us, the water was full of ice. Hardy kayakers emerged from the ship in their brightly coloured craft, adding highlights of colour to the monochrome landscape. As we explored in our Zodiacs, searching for seals and penguins, we began to perceive all manner of hues of blue in the ice around us. Deep blue in the fissures of the cliffs towering above us, glistening pale blues danced among the icebergs beside us and all around the morning came alive with light and colour.

The afternoon was set in yet another stunning Antarctic location. Paradise Harbour awaited us in all its splendour and majesty. We anchored near the remote Antarctic Almirante Brown Base, an Argentinian research station. A special event was in store as a wedding was swiftly convened among the snowy bluffs near the station. What a delight it was to witness the couple's declaration of love in a ceremony tastefully conducted by our very own Assistant Expedition Leader David. The fit and adventurous among us climbed to a high overlook and eagerly slid down the trail back to the Zodiacs.

As the kayakers made their way along stunning ice cliffs, deep into Skontorp Cove, the rest of us in the Zodiac explored the majesty of the broken and tumbling glacial face falling directly into the water.

The evening was capped off with a BBQ on deck with a delicious meal of grilled favourites and salads

Wind Speed: 9 knots gentle breeze from S

Barometer: 1000 hPa

Air Temp: -1° C

accompanied by music. We sat in the cool of the evening air, surrounded by stunning mountains and a company of close new friends who we had met only days ago. Our lives felt richer for these shared experiences and the lifelong memories that were impressed in our minds this day.



# Portal Point; Hydrurga Rocks

DAY 8 | Wednesday 26 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°28.816' S

Longitude: 62°00.270' W

Course: 062.5°

Speed: 5.3 knots

Wind Speed: 25 knots strong breeze from W

Barometer: 1007 hpa

Air Temp: -2°

He who dares nothing need hope for nothing.

—Johann von Shciller

This morning we were met by blue skies and ice glittering with the sun's reflection. This has been the first bright day of our trip since we left the Chilean Fjords, and we're getting close to experiencing the full spectrum of Antarctic weather conditions.

Our morning landing was at Portal Point, which is a beautiful site on a grey day – but today was magnificent. On the western coast of Graham Land, on the Reclus Peninsula at the entrance to Charlotte Bay is Portal Point. It received this name when the British built a tiny refuge hut there in 1956 at the start of the route they established to the plateau, a survey group wintered here in 1957. The foundations of this hut can be seen today, although the building itself has been removed and reconstructed in the Falkland Islands Museum.

We landed on the rocks in the small natural harbour next to Portal Point and walked up the hill to find in front of us an astonishing view over the icebergs, glaciers and mountains panning far off into the distance. Our day was absolutely made, but got even better once we all hopped into the zodiacs and went in search of whales. We were gifted with the most spectacular display of several pods of humpbacks feeding at the surface. We were able to watch them lunge feeding, as well as rolling around on their backs, so we could get a great look at all of their interesting features such as their long pectoral fins, the tubercles on the face as well as the barnacles on the fluke.

After lunch we travelled up to Hydrurga Rocks, a rocky outcrop next to Two Hummock Island, with a huge concentration of life considering the small size of the place. Despite the slippery rocks and heavy snowfall, many said that it was their favourite landing. This was our first chinstrap rookery as well as our first sighting of fur seals. Snowy sheathbills darted from nest to nest, while giant petrels hung around a Weddell seal like polar vultures.

As we are nearing the last days of our trip, our experiences today have really reminded us what a special time this has been, packed with memories that are sure to last.



# Lindblad Cove, Astrolabe Island

DAY 9 | Thursday 27 January 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 63°43.317'S

Longitude: 059°41.981'W

Course: 101.5°

Speed: 6.5 knots

Wind Speed: 10 knots gentle breeze from SW

Barometer: 996 hpa

Air Temp: -2°C

Penguins are beautiful, interesting and funny. They are a pleasure to watch even though they do smell and their voices are not melodious.

—George Gaylord Simpson, *Penguins Past and Present, Here and There*

Today was the last day on our amazing voyage, our first outing was a new location for the entire team and for the MV *Greg Mortimer*, Lindblad Cove. It did not disappoint. We all had an enjoyable time visiting with a Humpback whale outside the bay, despite the rough seas and 2m swell. There were some incredible icebergs in the bay, calving glaciers and rock formations that made this a unique location that will surely be on the list of regular sites to visit on future voyages!

The snorkellers had their last snorkel in brash ice and managed some interesting photos to round out a voyage filled with adventure, conditions and wildlife that were as varied as the destinations each day. The snorkellers climbed mountains, swam with Humpbacks, walked amongst seals, visited with Gentoos, Chinstraps and Adelies and had photos taken on, and in the ice!

The weather hampered the kayakers from being able to get out on their last outing before leaving the white continent, but that did not stop them from being able to take some photos on a piece of ice acting like seals!

The afternoon was meant to be the last opportunity to participate in a Zodiac cruise, however, the weather was not kind to us at Astrolabe Island, and we had to abort the cruise at the last moment and stay on the ship. We took the opportunity to take some group photos out on the back deck before enjoying an afternoon tea in the Elephant Island Bar.

Disembarkation lectures were held, and we enjoyed our last delicious dinner prepared by our amazing Galley team. A final recap of the voyage from Howard, our Expedition Leader, took our minds right back to the first day when we were cruising the Chilean Fjords. We relived memories of penguins (and slippery penguin-poo covered rocks!), the variety of weather conditions from sunning ourselves in the Chilean Fjords, to zodiac-cruising through a blizzard, looking like true Antarctic explorers. The snorkellers were still buzzing after their close encounter with humpback whales the previous day, and we were all happy for them too (if a little envious!).

I am sure everyone enjoyed their last day in Antarctica and will be as sad to leave as we are to see them go! It has been another memorable voyage that we will never forget. We hope to see you all again soon!



# Frei Station, King George Island

DAY 10 | Friday 28 January 2022

Position at 0615

Latitude: 62°12'S

Longitude: 58°55'W

Speed: 0.1 knots

Wind Speed: 4 knots from NW

Barometer: 1012 hPa

Air Temp: -1°C

The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page.

—St Augustine

Late yesterday evening we felt the larger swells of the Pacific filtering through the Bransfield Strait. The sailing was smooth as we glided along, from the glacier covered Astrolabe Island to King George Island. We then anchored in Maxwell Bay across from Chile's Frei Station. Although much of King George Island is glaciated, this bay is an area of contrast, for here the terrain is stripped bare by the frequent high winds, revealing a stark volcanic landscape that has its own allure with small rocky towers and plugs. The more striking contrast is that this is the first time in over a week that we have seen anything in the way of civilised activity. It is a bustling little harbor, a small town really, with other ships going about their business, helicopters offloading supplies, and plenty of happenings on shore.

The South Shetland Islands and King George Island were the first to see human activity in the 1820's, not from exploration or scientific study, as many of the stations do now, but as an economic endeavor in sealing. Seal skins were hugely profitable, and as the common story goes, humans hunted the seals to near extinction and the industry went bust. Thankfully fur seals are in a full rebound today, and in the late Austral summer, are often seen in streams, making their way from South Georgia Island to the South Shetlands.

Frei station is where we depart our wonderful adventure. Here there is an airstrip that will whisk us away back to our homes, far away.

So often the final days of an expedition are spent in a transitional space. We begin to move forward in our mind to the minutiae, and the to-do lists of our normal lives. Yet we are still trying to hang on to the present moment in this magical environment in which we are immersed. We are also beginning the process of recalling our experiences to make sense of them and integrate them into who we are. I see in a number of people's faces, that look, the desire to linger here a bit longer... to not let it end. To you, when you slumber, I wish you sweet vivid dreams and memories of this wonderful white, frozen landscape and the beings that inhabit it.

To all whom with we have shared this adventure, we wish you safe travels and a life filled with more wonderful experiences.

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



# Kayaking Log

By John Weir

Kayak Masters: John Weir, Wes McNeil

Number of Paddlers: 14

Total Paddle Outings: 7

Total Distance Paddled: 45.8 km

## Paddlers:

Swati Yalamanchi

Dan Lamor

Lothar Schmidt

Jeff McHarg

Eran Haifer

Sue van Heerden

Monica Lemor

Jordan Haifer

Emily Melvin

Marcos Lamor

Doron Haifer

Max Shevyakov

Jon Lamor

Glenn Haifer

## Day 4 pm: Errara Channel Islands. 3.3 kms

After a relatively gentle crossing of the Drake Passage, MV *Greg Mortimer* found a sheltered anchor in the Errara Channel. This was our first opportunity to put our kayaks in the water. After going through the long process of getting into our rather awkward drysuits and other equipment, we readied our kayaks for our first Antarctic paddling adventure. Launching from our floating platform at the stern of the ship, we paddled away under grey skies with mist and fog hiding the mountains around us. Finding our paddling balance, we made our way down Ronge Island with Danco Island in front of us. As we paddled south, we felt the wind and swells picking up and eventually decided to turn around and make a quick retreat back to the ship. It was a perfect first paddle and a taste of the majesty of Antarctica.

## Day 5 am: Cuverville Island. 5.5 kms

We moved a short distance from our evening paddle and arrived at Cuverville Island. The ship anchored near the island and we paddled under a grey and overcast sky from the ship. Cuverville Island was blanketed in fog and mist and the dark cliffs looked eery and foreboding. We paddled past rocky points that hosted penguin rookeries and around the island past stranded icebergs. We reached a rocky beach that was filled with Gentoo penguins and landed to wander amongst these earnest and dutiful creatures. Eventually, we paddled on past towering icebergs, back to our warm ship.

## Day 5 pm: Neko Harbour 10.2 kms

While we had a well earned lunch the ship moved to the beautiful and calm Neko Harbour. Another beautiful kayaking outing awaited us. We paddled down into Andvord Bay past a coastline of towering icecliffs. Landing places were few and we delighted at the icebergs and colours in the ice as we paddled. Eventually we came to some rocks that allowed us to clamber from our kayaks and stretch. This was our first landing on the Antarctic continent and we celebrated our small group of Antarctic paddling adventurers. A small and special club indeed! We returned to the ship spotting seals amongst the icebergs.

## Day 6 am: Petermann Island 6.1 kms

An early morning passage of the beautiful Lemaire Channel saw us arrive and anchor beside the low lying Petermann Island. As the zodiacs loaded up for a visit to the hut and penguin rookery, a hardy crew of Antarctic paddlers set off to circumnavigate the island. This paddle promised to expose us to more open seas and we were not disappointed. As we rounded the seaward point and turned south, we encountered a large group of crabeater seals hauled out on ice floes. We paddled on down the final part of the exposed island coast and the wind and swells increased testing our growing kayaking skills. We rounded the southern point and were rewarded with a return to sheltered waters. On the way back to the ship, we paused for a break in a lovely hidden rocky cove that was filled with Adelie penguins.

## Day 7 pm: Pleneau Island 6.5 kms

As we enjoyed our lunch, the ship moved a short distance and anchored off Booth Island near Port Charcot. We slipped our kayaks back into the water, pleased that the paddling conditions were calmer. We headed off towards Pleneau Island passing a vast array of grounded icebergs. Searching for seals and other wildlife we wound our way in-between the bergs, ice floes and brash ice. We followed leads and channels between the ice before turning back to retrace our path to open water. As we negotiated our way through the ice, a large iceberg some distance away rolled and provided some entertaining moments as the resulting swells moved the ice around us. Eventually, with the help of our safety zodiac, made our way back out of the ice and we returned to the ship with stories to tell. What an exciting paddle it was.

## Day 8 am: Hidden Bay 6.1 kms

A foggy morning greeted us as we once again launched our kayaks into a glassy grey sea. Hidden Bay promised another stunning paddle past icy cliffs in the search of seals and other sea life. We paddled along the shore towards the entrance to the bay and found our way between narrow gaps in tiny islands that led out into the open water of the channel. We paddled through mist and fog, discovering hidden bergs and spectacular icy vistas. We reached a point where a narrow cleft divides Cape Renard from the mainland. Our return to the ship was swift, accompanied by zodiacs appearing all around us from the mist.

## Day 8 pm: Paradise Harbour, Brown Base and Skontorp Cove 8.1 kms

Our afternoon paddle in Paradise Harbour was a delight. Departing the ship, we paddled past the red brown painted huts of Brown Base and along stunning rocky cliffs filled with nesting seabirds. On we paddled past steep ice cliffs and eventually into Skontorp Cove. This stunning inlet felt like an amphitheatre, walled in with stunning ice cliffs. A massive glacier plunged all the way down into the water and the ice appeared suspended in motion as broken and deeply fissured ice hung over the water. We paused our paddling, marvelling in the tranquillity and raw power of the atmosphere. We felt humble before this display of the true majesty of the Antarctic landscape. As we paddled back to our ship once again, the fit and adventurous among us landed at Brown Base and scrambled up a small peak for another view of the stunning Paradise Harbour vista.



# Snorkel Log

By Edwin Sargeant

Snorkel Guide: Edwin Sargeant & Liz MacNeil

Number of Snorkels: 7

Total Outings: 8

Snorkellers:

Roshan Adam

Irmo Holslag

Steven Lambert

Tammy Lambert

James Piper

Ellie Piper

Pedro Silva

## Day 5 am: Cuverville Island

Cuverville was our first snorkel of the voyage where we got to try out the gear and get used to the environment. The weather conditions in Cuverville were challenging with the slushy wet snow and a small beach to prepare our gear on. Everyone walked with the penguins before snorkelling and heading back to the ship.

## Day 5 pm: Neko Harbour

This was an opportunity to climb up the hill to a vantage point where we could get a view of the harbour. Some of the team got the opportunity to 'bum slide' with the expedition leader before getting into the water to snorkel around an iceberg for the first time!

## Day 6 am: Lemaire Channel

We were woken up early by Howard to come on deck and witness the majesty of the Lemaire Channel on our way to Petermann Island.

## Day 6 am: Petermann Island

Petermann island provided us with the opportunity to zodiac cruise to the back of the island, where we were able to see several hauled-out seals on floating icebergs and then visit the landing site. We saw the penguin rookery and the historic hut before snorkelling in the bay with the penguins. This was a magical treat to be so up-close with them and to be able to see them 'fly' underwater so effortlessly.

## Day 6 pm: Port Charcot

We did not snorkel on this outing; we did a Zodiac cruise only. We got the opportunity to see a baby elephant seal on the rocks out the front of Port Charcot on our way off the ship. We spent some time looking at the giant icebergs and hauled out seals, and on our way back to the ship we even got a glimpse of a pod of humpback whales.

## Day 7 am: Hidden Bay

Hidden Bay gave us the opportunity to get onto an iceberg and take some photos. We spent the first half of our outing looking at the icebergs and seals and then managed to swim around a floating iceberg.

## Day 7 pm: Brown Station

Brown Station was a great opportunity to climb the mountain and get some photos from the Zodiac! What a memorable landing where we were on top of the mountain, in our bright red dry suits, having our photos taken from far below! Snorkelling was magical, looking at all of the life below the 'cormorant wall' that runs up to the entrance to the station while a wedding was taking place in the background!

## Day 8 am: Portal Point

Our outing at Portal Point started off ordinary enough, we did a Zodiac cruise around the reefs and then went to the landing site to look at the wildlife before getting into the water close by. While the snorkellers were in the water, there was a call on the radio that there was a pod of humpback whales visiting nearby so we took the opportunity to quickly get out of the water and race over there. Once we arrived, we found ourselves in the middle of them so we got in the water and had the most amazing experience swimming amongst them! Definitely a memorable day!

## Day 8 pm: Hydrurga Rocks

Hydrurga Rocks was an opportunity to walk amongst the chinstrap penguin colony and the fur seals before snorkelling in the small cove nearby. The snorkelling gave us the opportunity to take some photos playing with the ice and a group photo with all of us together.

## Day 9 am: Lindblad Cove

Lindblad Cove was a new site where we explored the coastline with the zodiacs and found a pod of humpback whales before snorkelling in the brash ice and taking photos. This was our last snorkelling outing on the voyage.

## Day 9 pm: Astrolabe Island

There was no landing on Astrolabe as the weather conditions were unsuitable.



# Bird and Mammal Sightings

## Bird Species

19 – 28 January 2022

	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Gentoo Penguin				●	●	●	●			●
Chinstrap Penguin					●			●		●
Adelie Penguin						●				
Macaroni Penguin										
Magellanic Penguin	●									
Unidentified Penguin (swimming)										
Wandering Albatross			●							
Royal Albatross										
Black-browed Albatross										
Grey-headed Albatross										
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross				●						
Giant Petrel sp. (Northern or Southern)	●			●	●	●	●	●		
Antarctic Petrel					●					
Cape Petrel		●	●							
Snow Petrel						●	●			
Antarctic Fulmar (=Southern)				●	●					●
Blue Petrel										
Grey Petrel										
Prion sp. (probably mostly Antarctic)										
White-chinned Petrel										
Sooty Shearwater										
Great Shearwater										
Wilson's Storm-petrel				●	●	●	●	●		
Black-bellied Storm-petrel										
Imperial Cormorant (South American)	●	●								
Antarctic Cormorant				●	●	●	●	●	●	●

## Bird Species

19 – 28 January 2022

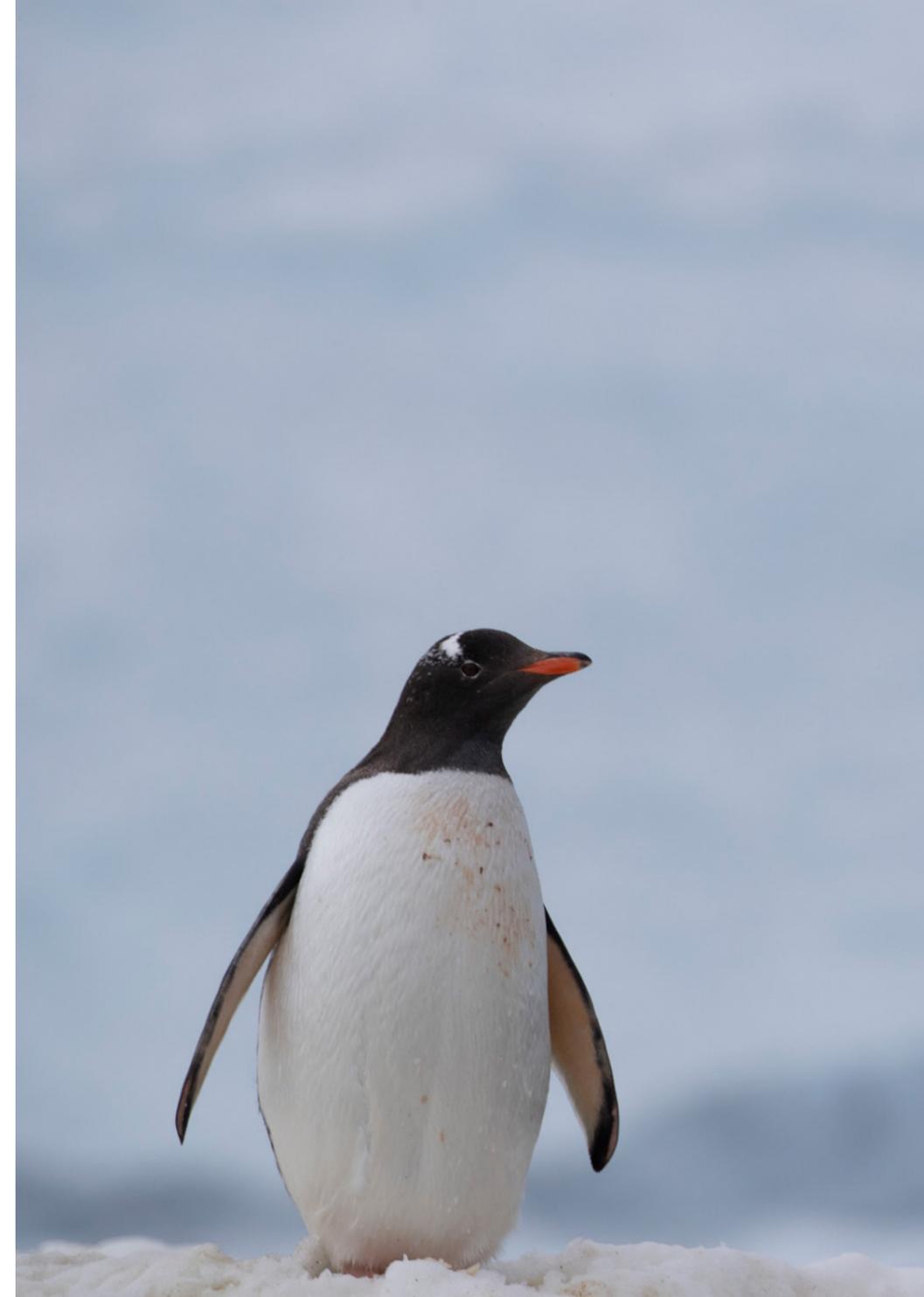
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
American Sheathbill (Snowy)					●	●				
Chilean Skua	●	●								
Brown Skua				●	●	●		●	●	●
South Polar Skua						●	●	●		
Kelp Gull	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Dolphin Gull	●									
Tern (probably mostly Antarctic)				●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South American Tern	●	●								



## Mammal Species

19 – 28 January 2022

	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
South American Fur Seal	●	●								
Antarctic Fur Seal								●		
Southern Elephant Seal				●		●				
Crabeater Seal				●	●	●		●		
Weddell Seal				●		●	●	●		
Leopard Seal						●				
Minke Whale						●				
Sei Whale	●									
Fin Whale										
Humpback Whale		●		●		●		●	●	●
Southern Right Whale										
Orca										
Long-finned Pilot Whale										
Unidentified Dolphin	●									
Hourglass Dolphin	●									
Peale's Dolphin										
Dusky Dolphin	●									







## Expeditioners:

Roshan Adam	Beth Kristenson	Bamansa
Ibrahim Alalwan	Stephanie Kwan	Mark Oda
Aleh Astafyeu	Steven Lambert	Tiffany Oda
Iurie Belegurschi	Tammy Lambert	Luke Oda
Guillermo Blugerman	Estelle Lemieux	James Piper
Monica Bluvstein	Monica Lemor	Ellie Piper
Jerome Cha	Marcos Lemor	Mariia Reshtovaniuk
Sandra Chesshire	Daniel Lemor	Oleg Reshtovaniuk
Howard Chesshire	Jonathon Lemor	Jerry Saliman
Richard Coombs	Ben Levy	Lothar Schmidt
Joaquin Delgado	Gabbi Levy	Eric Schubert
Ron Gates	Jerry Levy	Dawn Schubert
Michel Groleau	Joanne Levy	Rebecca Sekar
Glenn Haifer	Chi Liu	Marc Sherman
Eran Haifer	Mark Luttinen	Max Shevyakov
Doron Haifer	Lisa Luttinen	Natalia Sikorskaya
Jordan Haifer	Les Macleod	Cantinho Silva
Cynthia Harris	Meg Macleod	Donna Simpson
Ann Heil	Jeff Mcharg	Myles Stedman
Mary Heil	Emily Melvin	Deborah Tippet
Yvonne Henderson	Lynne Middleton	Alex Tsui
Irmoz Holslag	Andy Middleton	Ray Vallejo
Steve Howe	Jane Moore	Sue Van Heerden
Judith Howe	Arya Moshiri	Charles Waggoner
Daniel Kordan	Sandra Nunes Leal	

## Expedition Team:

Expedition Leader: Howard Whelan
Assistant Expedition Leader: David Berg
Naturalist: John Kirkwood
Kayaking Master: John Weir
Kayaking Guide: Wes McNeil
Snorkeling Guide: Edwin Sargeant
Snorkeling Guide: Liz MacNeil
Photography Guide: Scott Portelli
Expedition Guide/Naturalist: Isabelle Howells
Medic: Scott Thompson
Sales & Communications Coordinator: Justine Bornholdt
Sales & Communications Coordinator Trainee: Rosie Leaney
Zodiac Master: Sergei Hincu
Mudroom/Shopkeeper: Reza Rusooly

## Senior Officers & Heads of Department:

Master: Oleg Klaptenko	Sous Chef: Nellan Lewars
Chief Officer: Alexandru Taraoi	Head Waiter: Narendra Seeram
Safety Officer: Goran Goles	Hotel Controller: Rohmat Nurhidayat
Second Officer: Sergii Voina	IT Officer : Ihor Yesmieniev
Bosun: Oscar Antonio Castejon Torres	Receptionist: Kateryna Tauzhnianska
Deck Cadet: Sander Magi	Receptionist: Marie Annecy Reynoird
Deck Cadet: David Bote Martin	Head Stateroom: Elieser Nunez Almendarez
Ship Doctor : Ivan Savic	Spa Manager: Alena Antonova
Ship Nurse: Susara Hendrika Mostert	Able Seaman: Khenette Verzosa
Chief Engineer: Sergiy Melnyk	Able Seaman: Petko Vladimirov Petkov
First Engineer: Warlito B. Verzosa	Able Seaman: Yevgen Kotuz
Hotel Director: Franz Wusits	Able Seaman: Maksym Khlivniuk
F&B Manager: Miguel Cabanillas Alvarez	Able Seaman: Joel Valdevieso Noble
Chief Purser: Liza Merillo	Able Seaman: Giovanni Dela Torre
Executive Chef: Pierpaolo Fadda	

## Photography thanks to:

Scott Portelli  
John Weir  
Edwin Sargeant





