

# HARVARD

ALUMNI TRAVELS



## ANTARCTICA & SOUTH GEORGIA on *L'AUSTRAL*

NOV 7–27 2024

### PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Join Harvard Alumni Travels on a polar expedition cruise to the southern lands.

First, chart a course for South Georgia where, in the middle of the black-sand beaches dominated by snow-covered mountains, Sir Ernest Shackleton miraculously ran aground during the famous Endurance Odyssey in 1916.

Further south, above the mythical Screaming Sixties latitudes, the South Orkney Islands were formed from a mountain range rising from the middle of the Antarctic Ocean. You might get the chance to call at Laurie Island, home to Orcadas Base, a research station established in a former whaling station.

Ultimately, land on the frozen shores of the nearly inaccessible White Continent, Antarctica.

Throughout your trip, a team of naturalist guides will share the secrets of these faraway lands inhabited by unique wildlife. Discover the vast territory of the penguins—Adelie, king, chinstrap, gentoo, Magellanic, southern rockhopper—albatrosses, numerous species of seals, and majestic whales blowing on the horizon.

Please note: We are privileged guests in these extreme lands where we are at the mercy of weather and ice conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each cruise to these regions a unique experience. The ship's captain and your expedition leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while complying with the safety rules and instructions imposed by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO).

## SCHEDULE BY DAY

*B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner*

### THURSDAY, NOV 7

#### DEPART FROM HOME CITY

Depart on independent flights to Buenos Aires, Argentina. Please book a flight arriving at Ezeiza International Airport (EZE) arriving on November 8, 2024, by 2:30pm.

### FRIDAY, NOV 8

#### BUENOS AIRES

Upon arrival in Buenos Aires, check in to your hotel. A transfer from Ezeiza International Airport (EZE) to the Hotel Madero (or similar) will be provided for all participants arriving in

Buenos Aires on November 8, if we receive your arrival information by August 9, 2024.

A port city built on the south-western shore of the Rio de la Plata, between the Atlantic Ocean and the vast Argentine Pampas, Buenos Aires is a unique city in Latin America. Nicknamed "the Little Paris of South America," the Argentine capital is a clever blend of architecture with European influences and a joyful Latin American atmosphere. Designed on an orthogonal grid plan, it has 48 districts, all of which are as charming as they are different, with a range of styles such as Belle Époque, gothic and baroque. With its markets overflowing with treasures, its legendary cultural and architectural heritage, and tango providing its background music, the Argentine capital delights on every street corner.

Overnight: *Hotel Madero* (or similar)

## **SATURDAY, NOV 9** **BUENOS AIRES / EMBARK**

In the morning, take a guided tour of Buenos Aires.

Begin at Plaza de Mayo, the city's main foundational site where the Government House, the Cathedral and the old town hall are located. Continue through San Telmo, one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city, and arrive in La Boca, famous for its colorful and picturesque houses on Caminito Street. Head north to Recoleta, an opulent district of wide avenues, verdant parks, and magnificent residences. Visit the monumental cemetery where Evita Perón and other historical personalities are buried.

After lunch, transfer to the pier to embark *L'Austral*.

Overnight: *L'Austral*(B, L, D)

## **SUNDAY, NOV 10–** **THURSDAY, NOV 14** **AT SEA**

During your journey at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness center.

This journey without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the lectures and shows proposed on board or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. Lovers of the open sea may visit the upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species.

Overnight: *L'Austral*(B, L, D)

## **FRIDAY, NOV 15–SUNDAY, NOV 17** **SOUTH GEORGIA**

From aboard your ship, discover South Georgia, a region formed by an underwater mountain chain that extends from the Andes to the Antarctic Peninsula.

All the wildlife of the Far South can be found there: king and gentoo penguins, elephant seals, fur seals, and more.

You might get the chance to discover the majestic glaciers of Gold Harbor and the vast plains of Fortuna Bay.

If you are fortunate enough to land at Salisbury Plain, you can expect a wonderful spectacle: more than 300,000 king penguins, which you will recognize by the bright orange mark on their head and neck, have taken up residence there.

Overnight: *L'Austral*(B, L, D)

## **MONDAY, NOV 18** **AT SEA**

Overnight: *L'Austral*(B, L, D)

## **TUESDAY, NOV 19** **SOUTH ORKNEY ISLANDS**

More than 85% glaciated, these remote mountainous islands are hidden in the Southern Ocean, some 600 km from the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula. The archipelago is composed of four main islands: Coronation Island, Signy Island, Powell Island and Laurie Island. Discovered in 1821 by seal hunters, they were also explored in 1823 by the British navigator James Weddell, who gave them their current name. Despite the ravages caused by whale and seal hunting, today a sizeable leopard seal population can be found there, along with chinstrap penguins and snow petrels. Laurie Island is home to Orcadas Base, an old scientific station that is still in operation.

Overnight: *L'Austral*(B, L, D)

## **WEDNESDAY, NOV 20** **AT SEA**

Overnight: *L'Austral*(B, L, D)

## **THURSDAY, NOV 21–SATURDAY,** **NOV 23** **ANTARCTIC PENINSULA**

Succumb to the magic of a place unlike any other. To this day, the mythical Antarctic

Peninsula still holds real fascination and promises its visitors unforgettable moments.

Throughout your adventure in this icy realm, you will find yourself in the heart of a spectacular decor in subtle shades of blue and white, surrounded by exceptional wildlife. Penguins, humpback whales, seals and giant petrels are at home here, as are elephant seals, fur seals, Antarctic minke whales, and orcas.

Depending on which sites you will be lucky enough to visit, you may get the chance to observe them and share with them the beauty of these extreme parts.

Each day, based on ice conditions, the Captain and the Expedition Leader will suggest Zodiac outings or landings to discover the infinite riches of the Antarctic Peninsula. Glaciers, ice floes, tabletop icebergs, mountain peaks that plunge straight into the sea, volcanic beaches, research stations, enchanting bays, and vestiges of the whaling industry: these are the faces of the Antarctic that will likely reveal themselves, in a hushed and surreal atmosphere.

You will follow in the wake of Jean-Baptiste Charcot, Adrien de Gerlache, and Sir Ernest Shackleton, great Antarctic explorers who, from the 19th century, set out to conquer these remote and uninhabited lands.

Overnight: *L'Austral* (B, L, D)

## **SUNDAY, NOV 24–MONDAY, NOV 25 DRAKE PASSAGE**

If there is one place, one sea, one waterway dreaded by tourists, researchers, and hardened seafarers alike, it is undoubtedly Drake Passage. Situated at the latitude of the infamous Furious Fifties winds, between Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands, it is the shortest route to connect Antarctica to South America. Seasoned navigators will tell you that you must earn your visit to the White Continent!

As the Antarctic convergence zone where cold currents rising from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, Drake Passage harbors a very diverse marine fauna.

Don't forget to look to the sky to catch a glimpse of elegant albatross and Cape petrels, playfully floating about in the wind around your ship.

Overnight: *L'Austral* (B, L, D)

## **TUESDAY, NOV 26 USHUAIA / DISEMBARK / FLY TO BUENOS AIRES / FLY TO U.S.**

Disembark this morning in Ushuaia, capital of Argentina's Tierra del Fuego province. Considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole and nicknamed "El fin del mundo," Ushuaia nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth.

While your time here is limited, it is a fitting conclusion to an unforgettable journey.

Transfer to the airport for your charter flight to Buenos Aires. From here, connect with flights homeward.

## **WEDNESDAY, NOV 27 ARRIVE U.S.**