EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Antarctica in Depth - M/S Expedition (ANT 2015)

POLAR

TOURDURAT
13
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Relaxed
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Comfortable
tour Code: ANT

Tour Highlights - Antarctica in Depth - M/S Expedition

- ✓ Discover the amazing wildlife of Antarctica
- ✓ Learn about Antarctica's pioneer explorers
- ✓ Witness the raw beauty of the White Continent
- ✓ Sail with orca, minke and humpback whales
- ✓ See colonies of Adelie, gentoo and chinstrap penguins

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	1 night Standard Hotel 11 nights Comfortable Boat
Included Meals:	12 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 11 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Ushuaia
End Point:	Tour ends: Ushuaia
Transport:	Zodiac, MS Expedition
Countries:	Antarctica Region

Antarctica In Depth - M/S Expedition

A true adventure to the world's most remote wilderness! This 13-day Antarctica Classic in Depth expedition focuses on the South Shetland Islands and Antarctic Peninsula, home to some of the planet's most impressive wildlife and dramatic landscapes. Throughout the voyage, the team of lecturers and guides will share their knowledge of the region's remarkable natural history.

Wildlife

Whales

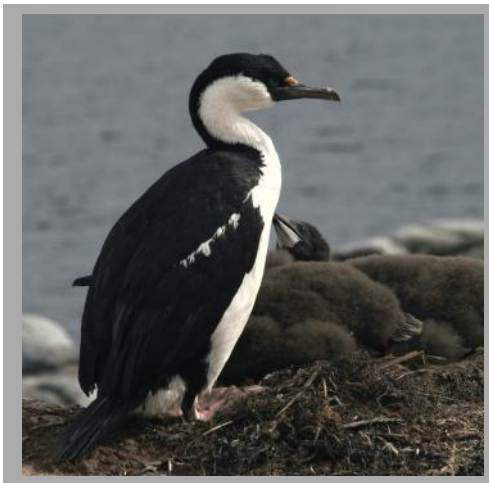
Thanks to the abundance of the small, shrimp like krill as the basis of the food chain, many species of whales make the water south of the Antarctic Convergence their summer home. Some of the species found in the frigid southern waters include: the Humpback Whale who consumes over a ton of krill each day; the Southern Right Whales easily identified by the whitish callosities on the jaws and forehead; the Sperm Whales made famous in Moby Dick; the Killer Whale which is actually not a whale at all but the largest of the dolphin family; the Sei Whale which can achieve speeds up to 55 km/h over short distances; the playful Minke Whales very common in the peninsula area; the Fin Whale who can attain a length of 25 to 27 meters making them the second largest whales; and the Blue Whale which is not only the largest whale in the oceans but also the largest animal that has ever lived.

Penguins

The common name for all flightless, aquatic birds, penguins are only found south of the equator. Penguins have been grouped into 18 species and 6 genera, with most making their homes in Antarctica and the sub Antarctic islands, though others are native to the coasts of Australia, South Africa, South America, and the Galapagos Islands. Penguins are speedy and agile swimmers, but extremely slow on land. The regions we visit aboard MS Expedition are inhabited by 6 different species including the giant King Penguin who can grow up to 1 metre in height (found only on South Georgia Island); the Adelie Penguin named after French explorer Dumont d'Urville's wife; the Chinstrap Penguin identified by the distinctive black line connecting the black cap to below the chin; the Gentoo Penguin with its orange bill and white flash above and behind its eyes; the Macaroni Penguin (Only on South Georgia Island) who number roughly 12 million and are easily identified by the orange tassels meeting between the eyes; and the Rockhopper Penguin (Only in Falkland Islands) who are similar to the Macaroni in appearance but slightly smaller and have yellow tassels.

Ship Description

At a nimble 105 metres (345 ft) in length, with a capacity to hold 132 guests, the M/S Expedition is an ideal vessel to ply polar waters. The M/S Expedition is large enough to provide stability, speed, spacious cabins and ample public space. Yet she is small enough to manoeuvre in remote areas and get you close to the action. Ship stabilizers ensure a smooth ride in rough waters, such as the infamous Drake Passage, allowing you to enjoy more of your time at sea. A fleet of ten zodiacs allows passengers to get out and actively explore the remote shores of our destinations. The M/S Expedition is a speedy vessel. A top speed of 16 knots means you'll spend less time getting from A to B, and more time to explore your surroundings.



Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Comfortable

Hand-picked and chosen for their character, location or local importance, these properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Relaxed

Easy paced tours with plenty of time to relax and absorb the sights and immerse yourself in the local surroundings.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

DAY 1 Arrive Ushuaia

Arrive into Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world, at any time. Make your own way to the hotel and enjoy the evening at leisure. Sitting on the shores of the Beagle Channel, Ushuaia actually means 'the bay facing westward' in the language of the original Yamna inhabitants. Once a penal colony (the presidio was disbanded in the 1940s) for political prisoners as well as hardened criminals, Ushuaia is now a major tourist attraction, particularly for people such as ourselves cruising to Antarctica. The town of 40,000 is also a major ski resort area for both alpine and cross-country skiers and offers magnificent hiking in Parque Nacional Tierra del Fuego, the only coastal national park in Argentina.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Ushuaia

Today we will embark on the expedition ship. Embarkation time is set for 4:00 pm. The morning is free to do any last minute shopping, an optional excursion to Tierra Del Fuego National Park or a good hike up to the Marshall Glacier. The evening is spent on board the ship watching the sunset over the Beagle Channel. Please note, whilst it is our intention to adhere to the itinerary described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion, it may be necessary or desirable, to make alterations. Our trips are at the mercy of the weather and ice, which is vastly changeable in these parts, but our experienced expedition crew will take advantage of any presented opportunities, to ensure that you have a truly memorable trip. On the first day onboard, your Expedition Leader will give you an expedition overview.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 3 The Drake Passage

Our adventure begins with a 400 mile crossing of the passage that bears the name of the 16th century English explorer Sir Francis Drake. The M/S Expedition is at home in this part of the Southern Ocean, known for the unimpeded fetch of the winds that encircle the Antarctic.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 At Sea

During our second day at Sea, we cross the Antarctic Convergence - a meeting of cold polar water flowing north and warmer equatorial water, moving in the opposite direction. This mixing pushes nutrient rich waters to the surface attracting a variety of seabirds, whales

and other species. As we make the passage, you will have time to become acquainted with the ship and frequent the common areas that include the lounge, dining hall, library and lecture hall where we meet our guides, ship's crew and expedition staff. We also begin the lecture and information sessions to learn the extraordinary human and natural history of the Antarctic region.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Arriving into the Great White Continent

This is what we've all been waiting for - a chance to step foot on the Great White Continent! Over the next few days we will navigate southwards making stops in the South Shetland Islands then through the Bransfield Strait and to the Antarctic Peninsula. Our goal is to attempt two excursions per day, while we navigate through the area, but our itinerary and daily schedule will be based on the local weather and ice conditions that we encounter.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands

The Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands abound with wildlife activity. Penguins gather with their fast-growing chicks, whales are seen in great numbers, seals haul out onto ice floes and beaches and numerous albatross and other seabirds trail in our wake. There is plenty of time to enjoy the sheer beauty and the breathtaking scenery of ice-choked waterways, blue and white icebergs, impressive glaciers and rugged snow-capped mountains. The Peninsula also has a remarkable history and during the voyage, we will learn about some of the most important and dramatic expeditions to this remote corner of the world. Keeping a lookout from the Bridge or the deck of the ship, as we thread our way along the continent, you'll feel the same sense of excitement as many of those early Explorers. The continent itself is roughly circular with a spindly arm, called the Antarctic Peninsula, reaching northwards towards Tierra del Fuego. South America is the nearest landmass, some 600 miles away.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands

Antarctica is a continent of superlatives. It is the coldest, windiest, iciest and highest of all the major landmasses in the world. It is the continent with the longest nights and the longest days and it is home to the world's greatest concentration of wildlife. It is also one of the last true wilderness areas left on earth - largely unchanged since the early Explorers and Whalers first landed on its inhospitable shores less than two centuries ago.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Antarctic Peninsula

Heading further along the peninsula, we will travel to shore by Zodiac and visit some of the vast penguin rookeries that can be found here. From a distance, the landscape appears to be dotted with tiny specs of white and black, revealed to be a mass of raucous penguins, once you step ashore. You will enjoy spotting a variety of breeds - Gentoo, Adelie and Chinstrap, all easily identifiable by their markings. You will have plenty of time to walk amongst these curious, aquatic birds - an excellent opportunity for some photography, or simply sit and enjoy the breath taking scenery in front of you.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 Antarctic Peninsula

We will attempt to make a Continental landing on our voyage - so get the camera at the ready ! We also hope to visit one of the Scientific research centres, which offers a fantastic insight into 'Life in Antarctica' for people that live there year-round.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 Antarctic Peninsula

We continue to soak up this glacial wilderness on our final day exploring the peninsula. Enjoy the serenity of these calm surroundings, miles away from anywhere - only to be experienced by the privileged few.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 Leaving the Peninsula

Today we leave Antarctica and head north across the Drake Passage.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 12 The Drake Passage

In between bird watching and whale watching and enjoying some final lectures by our expedition staff, this is a chance to relax and review the adventures of the past week before returning to Ushuaia.

Overnight: **Comfortable Boat**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 13 Arrive Ushuaia

And so our adventure comes to a close. We'll say our goodbyes as we disembark in Ushuaia in the morning.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 12 breakfasts, 10 lunches,11 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Cabins

Prices are based on the use of outward facing, category one cabins on the lower deck. Category one cabins are triple or quad share. They are comfortable with a private toilet and shower, and porthole. The MS Expedition has a number of different cabin categories, all outside facing and with two beds (apart from suites, which have queen size beds). Some cabin types have larger windows. We can also offer single occupancy, subject to availability. Call us for details on the cabin choice to fit your requirements.

Ship Dining

Onboard our expedition ship you'll find a diversity of gourmet international cuisines prepared and catered by professional chefs; all meals are included in the price of your expedition. Dining is casual, tables are unassigned and the dining room is capable of seating the entire passenger compliment at one time. There is always a selection of different meals available, and vegetarians will find plenty of options. Special dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice; please advise us at time of confirmation. Coffee, tea and water are all provided free of charge. All other beverages, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, are not included and can be purchased in the dining room, pub or in the lounge.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Antarctica Region

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Antarctica Region

Water £: The mighty seventh continent is the last true wilderness of significant size and is as far away from human influence as it's possible to get without leaving the planet. Antarctica is the coldest, driest and windiest place on Earth with no trees or rivers. Despite this, for a few weeks each year, its perimeter supports an astonishing array of life. Thriving rookeries of noisy penguins adorn the summer shores patrolled by skua hunting for an easy meal. In the sea, millions of tiny krill support a thriving population of whale and seal species while in the air albatross soar on the ocean breeze. Antarctica has a stark beauty which is without comparison. Ice-choked channels and snowy landscapes provide ever-changing scenes of beauty which are without comparison. Giant tabular icebergs calved from the edges of the ice shelf float majestically through the waves, their perfectly flat tops resembling giant aircraft carriers of epic proportions. This icy land has long been a draw for adventurers and explorers. In the early 20th century the likes of Scott, Amundsen, Oates and Shackleton all pitted their wits and strength against the harsh conditions. Some of these famous explorers were to pay for their curiosity with their lives. Today, with the advent of polar-rated expedition vessels, it is now possible for adventurous travellers to reach the edges of this remote region. To travel here is a real privilege; it's a journey that those with an interest in the natural world should strive to do at least once.

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

To add to your polar adventure, take to a kayak for an eye-to-eye view with seals and whales or camp in some of the most remote and beautiful places on earth.
Kayaking is available as an optional excursion on our Antarctica trips for GBP 549 per person.
Camping is available as an optional excursion on our Antarctica trips for GBP 199 per person.
These optional extras are only available if you book prior to your departure and you must book it directly with the ship's operator.
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Tipping - Local Crew

Tipping is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. It is an expression of satisfaction. The suggested amount is USD $10 - 15 per person per day spent on board. Of course, tipping is a personal choice and the suggested amount is set only as a guideline. The money is collected by the Hotel Manager at the end of the voyage and distributed among the crew and Expedition Staff. The Officers choose not to participate in the tipping pool.

Foreign Exchange

Antarctica Region

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on credit or debit cards from ATMs in major cities.

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a service charge. The ship accepts Visa and Mastercard.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be difficult to exchange and are not accepted aboard.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: A combination of US dollars cash and cards is best. It is advisable to take a minimum of US$200-500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations (notes should be in good condition).

Where to Exchange: Banks or Forex offices in major cities.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

Although no visas are required for citizens of UK, CAN, USA, AUS and NZ visa waivers may apply. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Please note that flights on the tour may transit through the USA. According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.
Holders of the UK, AUS, NZ, CAN and several EU country passports can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) if they hold a machine readable passport. They must also be entering the country by sea or air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/onward ticket. As well as being machine readable, if your passport was issued on or after 26 October 2005, it must contain both a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home. In addition to passport information, you must also supply the full address of your first night's accommodation in the USA. This information can be obtained from your joining instructions which are sent out approximately 3 weeks before travel.

Anyone applying for ESTA (Electronic Travel Authorisation) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).
For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit www.usembassy.org.uk
Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

Argentina: Although a visa is not required by Australian, American and Canadian passengers to enter Argentina there is a reciprocal payment to be made.
The fee must be paid online prior to entering the country. The receipt generated at the time
of online payment must be printed and given to local migration authorities together with passport upon passengers arrival to Argentina.
These payments are as follows: Australian - US$100; Canadian - US$70; American US$131. The fee can be paid at http://www.migraciones.gov.ar/accesibleingles

Vaccinations & Protection

Antarctica Region

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Antarctica Region

Polar Temperatures during Antarctic season: Min.: -15°C; Max. 12°C; Average 0°C.

Clothing

Dress on board is informal. Pack comfortable, casual clothing for all activities. Wind and waterproof outer layers are essential, and themost important piece of clothing you will bring is a parka. Beware of tight clothing that leaves no room for trapped air, which is an excellent insulator. Wool, silk and some of the new synthetic fibres, like polar fleece, retain heat better than cotton.
Parkas
This will be provided by the ship operator. Please register your size with us before travel and we will arrange for your parka to be available in your cabin on arrival.
Gloves
Keeping your hands warm and dry can be a challenge. Thin polypropylene gloves can be worn underneath warm outergloves. This allows you some protection from the cold when removing your gloves to operate your camera etc. We strongly recommend that you bring more than one pair of gloves, in case one gets wet (or lost).
Hat/Cap
Warm, woollen hat/cap to protect your ears, as well as a scarf, neck gaiter or other face protection, such as a balaclava.
Trousers
Water-resistant trousers of coated nylon or, even better, Gore-Tex® are essential for your comfort. They can be worn over your regular clothes to keep you warm and dry. We suggest that you purchase trousers a few sizes larger than you normally wear as you will be wearing them over other clothing. Gore-Tex® or similar fabrics are excellent for keeping out wind and water without trapping excess heat. Rain gear and Gore-Tex® products can be found in any outdoor sport clothing store. In addition to your waterproof trousers, warm ski pants are suggested if you have them. Warm trousers such as jeans, corduroys etc are also good.
Socks
Warm wool socks worn over a thin pair of silk, polypropylene socks should provide enough warmth and insulation for your feet. Bring several pairs of socks, since you will inevitably get your feet wet.
Outer Clothing
Woollen, knit or cotton sweaters/tops, polar fleece tops (medium weight), several cotton turtlenecks and T-shirts for layering on and off the ship.
Underclothing
Thermal underwear is highly recommended as it will keep you warm without adding bulk. Most polar travellers prefer a lightweight version.

Equipment

Sunglasses and sun cream
Personal toiletries
A refilllable water bottle
Books/reading material
Camera and memory cards (and something to protect the camera when out in the elements)
Seasickness remedy
Walking poles
Personal First Aid

Footwear

Complimentary, used waterproof boots will be supplied onboard. However, guests might want to bring their own if they are the following sizes due to the limited quantities onboard:
- men's UK size 12 & 13 1/2
- women's UK size 3 and below & size 7 and above

Guests must bring their own if they are:
- men's UK size 6 1/2 or smaller
- men's UK size 13 1/2 or larger
- women's UK size 2 or smaller
- women's UK size 9 1/2 or larger

These are rubber, waterproof boots that are just below your knees with a strong, ridged non-skid sole.
You usually have to step from the Zodiac into icy water up to 30 cm high on most landings. Do not bring heavy, cumbersome boots that make it difficult to walk, or boots with metal cleats as they cannot be used for landings. For maximum warmth, wear loose-fitting boots and two pairs of socks. We strongly recommend investing in some good thermal socks, as your feet can get quite cold when sitting in the Zodiacs. Try out your boots before the voyage.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Please note that a 15kgs luggage weight limit is sporadically enforced on the internal flight to Ushuaia, occasionally charges may be levied against passengers taking luggage in excess of 15kgs.

Luggage allowance on tour: 15Kg

General Information

Country details

Antarctica Region

Size of Country: 14,000,000 sq km

Time Difference to GMT: -3

Electric Supply & Plugs

Antarctica Region

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO_2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk

- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety andÂ security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. ForÂ UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link atÂ http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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