



# 10D/9N ANTARCTICA JOURNEY:

FLY THE DRAKE & EXPLORE  
THE WHITE CONTINENT





# ITINERARY

DAY BY DAY



This fast, immersive Antarctic air-cruise pairs a short stay in Punta Arenas with a swift charter flight to King George Island and several days exploring the Antarctic Peninsula from the Ocean Explorer. Designed for travelers who want maximum time on the ice with minimal sea time, the itinerary blends dramatic polar scenery, close wildlife encounters, Zodiac excursions, expert-led lectures, and comfortable city stays in Punta Arenas and Buenos Aires.

## DAY 1 : ARRIVAL & WELCOME IN PUNTA ARENAS (MARCH 13, 2026)

Your journey begins when you land in Punta Arenas, located at the tip of continental Chile on the Strait of Magellan. An English-speaking guide meets you at the airport and transfers you to your hotel, giving you time to settle into a comfortable standard city-view room at Dreams Punta Arenas. Spend the afternoon acquainting yourself with this historic port city: stroll along the waterfront, visit local museums that tell the region's maritime and exploration history, or admire the remnants of colonial architecture. In the evening you'll join a welcome dinner to meet fellow travelers and your expedition staff. This first night sets a relaxed, social tone, expect orientation briefings, a chance to confirm final travel details, and practical advice about clothing, cameras, and what to expect during the flight and Antarctic operations the next day. Overnight at Dreams Punta Arenas.

## DAY 2: FLIGHT TO ANTARCTICA & FIRST ZODIAC ADVENTURE (MARCH 14, 2026)

After breakfast you'll be transferred to the airport for a charter flight bound for King George Island, a flight of less than four hours that replaces a multi-day sea crossing for ship-based itineraries. As you fly south, watch the coastline shrink and the polar horizon widen; weather permitting, you may get your first airborne view of ice floes and Antarctic peaks. Upon landing you'll have time on the island to stretch your legs, photograph research stations and seabird colonies, and adapt to the crisp Antarctic air. Then you board the Ocean Explorer and receive a safety briefing before setting out by Zodiac for your first on-water excursion. Expect a hands-on introduction to Zodiac boarding, wildlife etiquette, and the expedition team's routines. Your initial shore steps and Zodiac cruises are designed to be gentle but unforgettable, meeting penguins, scanning for seals, and learning how the team works to keep the environment safe.

## DAY 3: ANTARCTIC PENINSULA & SOUTH SHETLANDS (MARCH 15, 2026)

Today you enter the heart of the **Antarctic** wilderness. The landscape shifts quickly from coastal outcrops to sweeping icescapes and towering glacial faces. Each Zodiac excursion is an opportunity to witness wildlife in tightly choreographed, low-impact landings: gentoo penguins on rocky beaches, shag colonies clinging to outcrops, and seals dozing on ice floes. Your Expedition Team leads interpretive talks focusing on local ecology and geology, and helps you compose photographs that capture scale and motion, crumbling seracs, blue-tinged glaciers, and the minute behaviors of nesting penguins. Expect alternating moments of quiet observation and active exploration: short beach walks, photography stops, and Zodiac cruises around dramatic icebergs. Weather and ice conditions shape the day, but the focus remains the same: maximize meaningful, safe encounters with this fragile environment while learning the natural history behind what you see.

## DAY 4: ANTARCTIC PENINSULA: SCENIC CRUISING & LANDINGS (MARCH 16, 2026)

Continue deeper into Peninsula territory with carefully chosen landing sites and Zodiac excursions that showcase the best coastal scenery and wildlife. You may navigate narrow channels framed by steep, glaciated peaks and glide past sculpted icebergs carved into unexpected shapes. Shore landings provide time to observe penguin colonies at close range and to walk short, interpretive trails that reveal Antarctic plant life, nesting birds, and tidal-zone creatures. The expedition staff often times Zodiac cruises to coincide with whale activity, giving you a chance to see humpback and minke whales feeding in nutrient-rich waters. Evenings are spent aboard the ship exchanging field notes, attending lectures on glaciology and Antarctic history, and preparing for the next day's outings. The rhythm of the day alternates activity and learning, designed to deepen both your visual impressions and scientific understanding.

## DAY 5: PETERMANN ISLAND & PLÉNEAU ISLAND OPPORTUNITIES (MARCH 17, 2026)

Today's potential highlights include landings at places like Petermann Island or Pléneau Island where dramatic scenery and abundant wildlife converge. On Petermann you may watch gentoo penguins tending chicks near historic survey markers; on Pléneau, Zodiac cruises often thread among tall bergs with curious seals and penguins nearby. Hikes on gentle slopes provide panoramic vistas of the surrounding icefields and nearby islands, while the guides point out glacial features and seabird behavior. Photography opportunities are exceptional, wide vistas, close wildlife interactions, and waves of light across ice surfaces. Throughout the day the Expedition Team emphasizes safe distance practices and environmental stewardship so you can experience these moments while minimizing your footprint on the land.

## DAY 6: PARADISE BAY & NEKO HARBOUR (MARCH 18, 2026)

Explore some of the Peninsula's most photogenic spots: the sheltered waters of Paradise Bay and the broad calving faces at Neko Harbour. Zodiac trips may take you into ice-choked bays where bergs drift like islands, and landings offer up-close perspectives on glacier termini, places where ice actively calves into the sea. Such locations are perfect for contemplative wildlife watching and for experiencing the sheer scale of Antarctic ice. If conditions allow, expect extended Zodiac safaris, interpretive walks on stable ground, and guided observation of marine mammals. The guides will discuss glacial processes and the role of Antarctic ecosystems in global systems, helping you situate what you're seeing in a broader environmental context.

## DAY 7: AT SEA / CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE (MARCH 19, 2026)

After days among islands and peninsulas, you begin the south-to-north transit across the Drake Passage toward Ushuaia. This crossing offers time to reflect, review your photos, and attend final lectures that summarize the expedition's highlights and scientific takeaways. The ship's naturalists use the transit to search for albatrosses and other pelagic seabirds; whale sightings remain possible, and the open ocean presents a different kind of wildlife spectacle. Relaxation and packing prep mix with a few final briefings on disembarkation procedures. Crew and guests often share stories during dinner, and the ship's onboard resources, lecture decks, observation areas, and lounges, provide comfortable places to savor the last hours at sea.

## DAY 8: AT SEA / APPROACH TO USHUAIA (MARCH 20, 2026)

This final day at sea focuses on winding down and preparing for your return to shore. The Expedition Team offers wrap-up sessions, photo reviews, and practical reminders about luggage and transfers. On deck, keep an eye out for late ocean-life sightings and seabird movement; many passengers enjoy a last, unhurried stretch of open-ocean watching. The ship's crew readies the vessel for arrival procedures while staff coordinate the logistics for disembarkation in Ushuaia. Use this time to organize your digital photos, back up memorable shots, and attend any final Q&A sessions with your naturalists so you leave with a clear record of species and locations visited.

## DAY 9: DISEMBARK & ARRIVE IN BUENOS AIRES (MARCH 21, 2026)

After breakfast aboard, you disembark in Ushuaia and proceed to your independently booked flight back to Buenos Aires. Upon arrival in the Argentine capital, an English-speaking guide will meet you and provide a smooth transfer to your hotel in Palermo Soho. This arrival allows time to transition from the polar silence back into urban life: stroll tree-lined streets, enjoy a relaxed dinner, or visit a local tango venue. The evening offers a gentle return to city comforts and a final chance to share expedition highlights with new friends while enjoying a comfortable city stay before your outbound flight. Overnight at Pleno Palermo Soho Hotel.

## DAY 10: DEPART TO HOME (MARCH 22, 2026)

On your final morning you'll enjoy breakfast at the hotel and have a comfortable transfer to Buenos Aires International Airport for your independently booked flight home or onward travel. Use any spare time to pick up last-minute souvenirs, savor one more Argentine coffee, or make notes about photographic locations and species you observed. As you depart, reflect on a compact but intense Antarctic experience that combined fast access by air with multiple landing days, expert-guided excursions, and immersive encounters with polar wildlife and landscapes.

# RATES

**From \$13,000.00**  
per person



## Includes

- Led by highly experienced Expedition Leaders who bring deep regional knowledge and passion to every journey.
- Off-ship activities designed to fully immerse travelers in the polar environment, including Zodiac outings and wilderness adventures.
- Small-ship experience with fewer than 200 guests for a more intimate and comfortable expedition.
- Onboard spaces designed for relaxation, panoramic viewing, and premium dining.
- Meals crafted to accommodate a range of dietary preferences.
- Complimentary Wi-Fi, alcoholic beverages on all voyages, and an Official Quark Expeditions parka to take home.



## Not Includes

- International airfare.
- Visa expenses.
- Travel insurance
- Mandatory expedition gear.
- On-ship expenses.
- Adventure options.
- Trip extensions.

### Hotels:

**Punta Arenas:** Dreams Punta Arenas

**Buenos Aires:** Pleno Palermo Soho Hotel

### Cruises:

**Punta Arenas:** Ocean Explorer

# HIGHLIGHTS

- Rapid access to Antarctica via charter flight to King George Island, more time ashore, less time at sea.
- Multiple Zodiac excursions and shore landings on the Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands.
- Exceptional wildlife opportunities: penguin colonies, seals, and chances to see feeding whales.
- Expert-led lectures and guided interpretation that connect field observations to science and history.
- Comfortable city stays in Punta Arenas and Buenos Aires bookending the expedition.

# TRAVEL TIPS

- Bring layered clothing and plan for quick wardrobe changes: temperatures and wind can vary widely between ship decks and shore landings.
- Keep essential items (medication, passport, camera batteries) in your carry-on for the charter flight; luggage may have separate handling.
- Use waterproof cases or dry bags for electronics during Zodiac operations.
- Bring extra memory cards and spare batteries, cold drains battery power faster than usual.
- Carry a small daypack for shore landings with water, sunscreen, and a lightweight windproof layer.

# WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

Antarctic weather is highly changeable. Expect cold temperatures, wind, and rapidly shifting visibility. Pack thermal base layers, a warm insulated jacket, a waterproof outer shell, warm gloves, a hat, and UV-protective sunglasses. Even on relatively mild days, wind chill can make it feel much colder. In Punta Arenas and Buenos Aires, conditions are temperate compared with the ice — plan lighter layers for city time and protect against sun and wind during outdoor city walks.

## **Fitness Requirements**

Participants should have moderate mobility for Zodiac embarkations, short shore walks on uneven or rocky terrain, and boarding small craft. No advanced fitness is required, but being comfortable walking on uneven ground, climbing short slopes, and stepping in and out of Zodiacs will make shore visits easier and more enjoyable.

# FAQS

## **1. How does the flight-based itinerary differ from a ship-only crossing?**

The charter flight to King George Island replaces the two-day Drake Passage sea crossing outbound, which means you reach Antarctica faster and have more days available for on-site exploration. Sea crossings are still part of the return transit to Ushuaia on this itinerary.

## **2. What wildlife am I most likely to see?**

Expect to see gentoo and possibly chinstrap penguins, various seal species (e.g., fur and elephant seals), and baleen whales such as humpback and minke when conditions are favorable. Seabirds including albatrosses and petrels are common in open-water areas.

## **3. What should I bring for Zodiac excursions and shore landings?**

Bring warm, layered clothing; waterproof outerwear; sturdy camera gear in protective cases; sunglasses with UV protection; warm gloves; and a small daypack. Follow the Expedition Team's biosecurity guidelines to avoid transferring non-native material ashore.

# FAQS

## **4. Are there sea-sickness concerns on this itinerary?**

Because the outbound leg uses a charter flight, you'll avoid the initial sea crossing. However, the return crossing of the Drake Passage can be variable. If you're prone to sea sickness, consider preventive measures (medication or patches) and choose a mid-ship cabin if possible.

## **5. How flexible is the daily plan in Antarctica?**

Very flexible. Weather, wind, and ice conditions determine exact landing sites and timings. The Expedition Team adapts each day to maximize safety and wildlife opportunities while communicating plans in daily briefings.



LATIN TRAILS

*Dream, Discover, Live Ecuador*

[www.latintrails.com](http://www.latintrails.com)