Antarctic Peninsula

**Valid for departures before 31 December.**

# Introduction

Welcome to Sojourn real life experiences... we hope that you enjoy exploring the world as much as we do.

A once in a lifetime adventure to one of the most remote places on the planet. Retrace the path of the early explorers as you sail through the Southern Ocean on an icebreaker and set foot on the Great White Continent. Explore the Antarctic coastline on inflatable motorised boats and marvel at the prolific wildlife - penguins in their rookeries, seals sunbathing on ice floes and whales as they come to feed in the nutrient-rich waters. Be prepared - the pink skies at night and turquoise waters are truly breathtaking.

The M/V Polar Star is one of the world´s best expedition ice-class vessels on the seas today – of a size that combined with its ice capability and Zodiac landing craft, allows access to places that others can only sail past. Its large on-deck viewing areas and a panoramic observation lounge allow beautiful vistas and many opportunities for spotting wildlife.

# Itinerary

## **Day 1 Ushuaia**

Bienvenido a Ushuaia! Welcome to Ushuiaia.

Your boarding time is 1600 (4:00 PM). Please do not come to the ship before that time, as the staff and crew will be busy cleaning up after the last trip and preparing for your voyage. However, please do not arrive later than 1700 (5:00 PM), because the ship will depart at 1800 (6:00 PM).

Please contact us if you need assistance with extra accommodation or to book our Ushuaia Package, which includes:

* Arrival Transfer from Ushuaia airport
* 1 night accommodation at a 3-star hotel in Ushuaia
* Transfer hotel - M/V Polar Star on day 1 of your trip
* Transfer M/V Polar Star - Ushuaia airport or your hotel in Ushuaia on last day or your trip.

When you board M/V Polar Star please come directly to reception. Here you will be greeted and assigned your cabin. Staff will be on hand to show you to your cabin and help with your luggage. We ask that you give your passport and Medical Form to the Hotel Manager or Assistant at this time. We are required to comply with International Shipping Rules for the Ship Management to hold all passenger and crew passports in order to deal with various country officials along the way. We appreciate your cooperation on this matter.

We strongly recommend arriving in Ushuaia the day prior to embarkation to avoid any potential problems with delayed flights, lost luggage, etc.

Ushuaia, affectionately known as 'fin del mundo' (end of the world) due to its being the southernmost city of the world, has a lot to offer. A relatively small city of 42,000 people, it is easy to find your way around. Av. San Martin and the surrounding streets is where you will find most hotels and tourist services. Here you can stroll along and visit the shops, museums and restaurants. From Av. San Martin the streets start to run uphill. From the top of these streets you will have a good view of the Beagle Channel. Another option for visitors is a visit to Tierra del Fuego National Park, which is located 11km (7 miles) west of the city.

## **Days 2-3 At Sea**

Start the adventure by crossing the passage that bears the name of the 16th century English explorer, Sir Francis Drake. The Polar Star is at home in the waters of the Southern Ocean where the Antarctic Convergence sees a meeting of polar and equatorial water. This mixing pushes nutrient-rich waters to the surface attracting a variety of seabirds, whales and other species. While at sea, there is plenty of time to become acquainted with the ship and take part in lecture and information sessions to learn about the extraordinary human and natural history of the region.

## **Days 4-6 Antarctica**

Set foot on the Great White Continent! Antarctica is a land of superlatives. It is the coldest, windiest, driest, 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.

For three days, explore the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula with continental and island landings as well as Zodiac cruising. During this time in this untouched wilderness expect to see gentoo, Adlie and chinstrap penguins, possibly fur, Weddell, crabeater and leopard seals, as well as minke, humpback and other whale species. Visits are planned to sites such as Petermann Island, Port Lockroy, Paradise Bay, Pleneau Island, Neumeyer Channel, Lemaire Channel and Neko Harbour.

## **Day 7 South Shetland Islands**

Head north of the peninsula to the South Shetland Islands. Disembark on a number of the islands for some prime penguin spotting, whale watching and hopefully a visit to one of the science research stations. Weather permitting, stop at the collapsed volcanic cone of Deception Island for a chance to visit Whalers Bay and see the rusted remains of boilers and tanks that once processed and held the whale oil.

## **Days 8-9 At Sea**

Begin the return journey to Ushuaia. Continue learning all about Antarctica during informative lectures and keep your eyes open on the deck for some final whale sightings.

## **Day 10 Ushuaia**

Disembark in Ushuaia.

Our estimated disembarkation time is 8:30am but please note this is dependent upon weather/sea conditions as well as customs officials at the port of Ushuaia. If you are flying out of Ushuaia on the same day as disembarkation we strongly recommend booking flights after 12:00pm in case of any uncontrollable delays in our arrival to port.

Polar Star Expeditions is not responsible for any missed flights/transfers etc. due to unforeseen circumstances or delays.

## **Itinerary Disclaimer**

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. Please note: occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. Our brochure is usually released in November each year. As such the information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you print and review a final copy of your Trip Notes a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans. For the latest updated trip notes please visit our website: www.sojourntravel.com

# Culture Shock Rating

This is the least confronting of Sojourn's product range. English is the native language and the food, customs and access to services will be familiar to you.

# Physical Rating

These trips are a relaxing break. You don't have to worry about doing anything physically demanding unless you want to.

# Included Activities

This is a list of included activities on this trip. All other activities are optional and at your own expense. For a list of optional activities and sightseeing available on this trip, see the optional activities section below. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not be refunded.

* All shore landings
* Experienced expedition team
* On board lectures and presentations
* All port charges
* On board gratuities
* Complimentary rubber boot rental
* Custom designed expedition jacket

Got extra time before or after your Sojourn adventure? Maybe there is an URBAN ADVENTURE in one of the cities that you're visiting on your trip?

Sojourn's Urban Adventures are the city tour with a difference - there are more than 100 to choose from in over 30 cities around the world, with new trips added regularly. They are a great way to get under the skin of the city you're visiting, in just a few hours. To make a booking contact your local travel agent, Sojourn consultant or visit www.sojourntravel.com

# Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, participating in optional activities and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

# Tipping

All on board gratuities are included in the price of your trip.

# Important Notes

Local Partner: Please note this Sojourn trip is operated by our experienced local partners ***Polar Star Expeditions***.

Different booking conditions apply to all Antarctica trips, please follow this link for full details: http://www.Sojourntravel.com/polarstarterms.

# Group Size

Maximum of 100 travellers per group

# Accommodation

Cruise ship (9 nights)

# Meal Inclusions

All meals while on board

# Transport

Ship, Zodiac

# Group Leader

All Sojourn Antarctica trips are accompanied by an expedition leader and an expedition team.

The expedition leader is ably assisted by a group of naturalists, lecturers, guides and Zodiac drivers. Specialists on board are selected from disciplines such as ornithology, mammalogy, botany, marine biology, anthropology, archaeology, geology, volcanology and glaciology. They are selected by their speciality according to the focus of the expedition. On board, through lectures and presentations and onshore through guiding, they will ensure that you get the most out of every experience.

# Joining Point

Embarkation - hotel accommodation in Ushuaia not included

Argentina

## **Our Joining Point Hotel**

Your boarding time is at 1600 (4:00 PM). Ushuaia's port is right in town, on 510 Maipu Av. Access to the pier is via Lasserre st., opposite Hotel Albatross.

Please do not come to the ship before that time, as the staff and crew will be busy cleaning up after the last trip and preparing for your voyage. However, please do not arrive later than 1700 (5:00 PM), because the ship will depart at 1800 (6:00 PM). We strongly recommend arriving to Ushuaia the day prior to embarkation to avoid any potential problems with delayed flights, lost luggage, etc.

The night prior to embarking you have the option to meet Sojourn's local representative (Alicia) and perhaps some of your fellow travellers at a local restaurant for dinner (not included) from 18.30 (6.30pm)

If your embarkation day is on a Monday, this meeting will take place on Sunday at:

Gustino Restaurant - Albatros Hotels  
Av. Maipu 505

If your embarkation day is any day other than Monday, this meeting will take place the night prior to embarkation at:

Lola Restauant  
Calle Deloqui 1048.

## **Arrival Complications**

We don't expect any problems (and nor should you!) but if for any reason you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your trip leader.

If you have pre-booked an airport transfer (where available) and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions in the Trip

Notes. Should this occur, please apply to your travel agent for a refund of the transfer cost on your return.

No refund is available on missed transfers or portions of your trip owing to a different flight arrival or delayed flight arrival. Any additional cost incurred in order to meet up with your group is at your own expense.

# Finishing Point

**Disembarkation - hotel accommodation in Ushuaia not included**

## **Finishing Point** Instructions

Our estimated disembarkation time is 8:30am but please note this is dependent upon weather/sea conditions as well as customs officials at the port of Ushuaia. If you are flying out of Ushuaia on the same day as disembarkation we strongly recommend booking flights after 12:00pm in case of any uncontrollable delays in our arrival to port. Polar Star Expeditions is not responsible for any missed flights/transfers etc. due to unforeseen circumstances or delays.

# Emergency Contact

If you experience any arrival complications (delayed flights, missing luggage, difficulties locating the Polar Star), please contact Nieves Isola (Sojourn's local representative) on:

- From abroad: +54 9 2901 43 19 29

- From Argentina (except Ushuaia) 02901 43 19 29

- From Ushuaia 43 19 29

In the case of a genuine crisis or emergency, please call:

- From abroad: +54 9 2901 40 17 31

- From Argentina (except Ushuaia) 02901 40 17 31

- From Ushuaia 40 17 31

# Emergency Funds

Please also make sure you have access to an additional USD$400, to be used when unforeseen incidents or circumstances outside our control (eg. a natural disaster, civil unrest or an outbreak of bird flu) necessitate a change to our planned route.

# Visas

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

Make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your return date. The visa requirements for your trip may vary depending on where you are travelling from and where you are going (ie in which order you are visiting countries).

### Chile Reciprocity Tax:

All passengers with passports from Australia, Canada, United States and Mexico must pay a reciprocity tax before entering Interpol control. The amounts are as follows:

* Australia - US$61
* Canada - US$132
* United States - US$131
* Mexico - US$23

This tax applies only to travellers entering Chile via its international airport in Santiago. This tax doesn't apply to those entering Chile by another form of transport.

### Argentina Reciprocity Tax:

The Argentine government has recently introduced a reciprocity tax which applies to Canadian, US and Australian citizens. The amounts are as follows:

* Australians - US$100 (multiple entry)
* Canadians - US$70 (single entry)
* Americans - US$131 (multiple entry - valid for 10 years)

This tax is payable in US$ or the ARS (Peso) equivalent. At the moment this tax is payable upon arrival at Ezeiza International Airport only, however this tax may apply from other entry ports at no notice.

# Laundry

Laundry service is available through your cabin services. Each cabin is supplied with laundry bags and forms. Bags will be collected every morning, with clean items returned within 48 hours. Dry cleaning is not available. The approximate rates on laundry items range from US$0.50 for socks to US$5.00 for a jacket (rates subject to change without prior notice).

# What to Take

What you need to bring will vary according to the trip style you have chosen, the countries you are visiting and when you are travelling. Generally speaking you should pack as lightly as possible. On the vast majority of our trips you are expected to carry your own luggage and although you will not be required to walk long distances with your luggage (max 30 minutes) we recommend keeping the weight under 10kg/22lb.

Most travellers carry their luggage in a backpack, although an overnight bag with a shoulder strap would suffice if you travel lightly. Smaller bags or backpacks with wheels are convenient although we recommend your bag has carry straps. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for daytrips.

# Local Dress

The dress aboard ship is casual and informal. Comfort is the prime factor. You may wish to include some slightly more dressy clothes for the Captain's receptions at the beginning and end of your voyage, but that is strictly up to you.

# Checklist

The following checklist is to be used as a guide only and is not intended to be a complete packing list. Any other items that you wish to pack are at your own discretion however you should attempt to comply with the suggested luggage weight limit.

There is no need to overpack if you select practical garments that can be worn in layers, including:

**Personal Medication:** It is essential that you bring your personal medication(s) with you on this trip. Remember to always pack it with you when you go ashore for daily excursions during this expedition.

**Jacket:** You will require a windproof, waterproof shell with good insulation. A Polar Star Expeditions Outer Shell Jacket is included in your cruise fare (please see below for more details). You will need to add your own layers underneath. If you choose to bring your own jacket it should have a roomy fit for layering and we recommend a bright colour.

**Waterproof/windproof pants:** Rain pants to wear over your regular pants are an important factor in keeping you dry and comfortable during an excursion or Zodiac cruise. We suggest nylon, Gore-Tex or similar fabrics - breathable fabrics protect you from wind and water without trapping excessive heat.

**Warm Trousers:** Ski pants or any sturdy trousers that can be layered between long underwear and rain pants; additionally, corduroys are a good choice.

**Long Underwear:** We recommend polypropylene or wool underwear.

**Sweaters:** Wool sweaters or polar fleece jackets of medium weights are recommended.

**Turtlenecks:** Turtlenecks are good for lounging around the ship or for layering during an excursion.

**Mittens & Gloves:** You must keep your hands as warm and dry as possible. Mittens are warmer than gloves, so use a thin polypropylene glove under a mitten for maximum warmth and efficiency. This will allow you to remove you mittens to operate your camera and still have protection from the cold. Plan to have two pairs of wool mittens in case one pair gets wet or lost.

**Cap:** You will need a warm (fleece or woollen) cap that covers your ears. A scarf is also recommended.

**Warm socks:** Using a thin pair of silk polypropylene, or cotton/wool socks under a pair of high, thick wool or fleece socks should provide sufficient insulation for your feet. There will be times that your feet will get wet, so bring several changes.

**Shoes:** Rubber boots for excursions are provided (please see details below). Also required is a pair of soft-soled comfortable shoes with a non-skid tread for on board. We recommend that these shoes have laces as opposed to a slip-on shoe.

**POLAR STAR MARITIME EXPEDITION OUTER SHELL PROGRAM:** We are pleased to offer our passengers a Maritime Expedition Outer Shell Jacket (included in your cruise cost). This shell is red and has been custom designed for only our passengers. It is unisex, windproof, breathable, highly water resistant (waterproof fabric, not seam sealed) and has a pack away hood. It is unlined as it has been specifically built to complement the layering system. It is worn loose fitting to accommodate layering. The construction also allows for wear in a variety of climates and temperatures plus we think it looks great! As part of your booking package you should have received a shell sizing chart and size request form (this may be part of your reservation form or a separate form) and must be completed and returned to Polar Star Expeditions so that we can have your shell waiting in your cabin upon arrival.

**RUBBER BOOT PROGRAM:** This item is a necessity in the Antarctic as there will be times that you may have to step from the Zodiac into several inches of water in order to reach the landing site and your boots will help keep your feet dry and comfortable. There may also be poor footing on rocks or ice and heavy, cumbersome boots will make it difficult to walk. The M/V Polar Star does have a good supply of rubber boots in a variety of sizes on board for passenger use and we are happy to fit you out on board, but please note that we cannot guarantee perfect fit. We recommend that passengers bring along a few different pairs of socks in varying weights to help adjust the fit if needed. If you prefer to bring your own boots they must be completely waterproof (seamless). They should reach knee length or higher (12-16 inches high) and have a strong ridged, non-skid sole. For maximum warmth, wear somewhat loose-fitting boots and two pairs of socks, and try out your boots before the program. Although rubber boots are the most economical and ideal footwear for Antarctic expeditions there are other options such as those made with neoprene. It is just very important that, besides being waterproof, they are completely seamless and have a good ridged sole.

OTHER USEFUL ITEMS:

* A sturdy, lightweight and waterproof daypack to bring your gear ashore.
* Walking stick for shore excursions.
* Sunglasses with UV filter.
* Lotion and suntan lotion to protect lips, hands and face from the reflected glare from water, snow and ice.
* Bathing suit for pre/post cruise hotels and (maybe) a polar plunge.
* Travel hair dryer - there are a limited supply on board but you may prefer to bring your own.
* Extra pair of prescription eyeglasses. Those who wear contact lenses should also bring glasses since salt and wind can irritate eyes.
* Prescription medicines and other remedies such as seasickness medication.
* Binoculars for spotting marine mammals and birds from deck.
* Zip lock plastic bags as an added protection when carrying camera, film, etc to shore.
* Disinfectant such as alcohol / cotton pads or alcohol wipes.
* Individual packets of tissue for day pack.
* Extra batteries for camera, etc.
* Small notebook and pen

# Money Exchange

Currency exchange rates often fluctuate. For the most up to date rates please refer to the following website: [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com).

The standard currency on board the M/V Polar Star is US Dollars. Upon boarding the ship, an account will automatically be opened for you. This account is used for all charges relating to telephone/fax/email communications, laundry, postage, bar (alcohol, bottled water and soda) and gift shop. Please see below for details on these items. At the end of the cruise, you will receive an invoice of your accumulated charges. This invoice must be paid prior to disembarkation and payments can be made by Visa, Mastercard, traveller's cheques or US cash. Personal cheques are not accepted.

If you prefer to have a separate account from your cabin-mate please notify the hotel manager.

# Departure Tax

Please allow US$18 for international airport departure tax.

# Keeping in Touch - communication while on the road

If you need to be contacted while travelling we recommend email. Email cafes are generally available throughout the regions we visit, although it is possible you may be without email contact for several days on some itineraries. If someone wishes to contact you in an emergency while you are on one of our trips we recommend that they contact your local booking agent, or refer to our emergency contact details. We don't recommend that family and friends try to contact you through hotels, as they are subject to change and the reception staff may not speak English.

# Issues On Your Trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader/local partner may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction - if this is the case please ask the leader if you may speak to their direct manager.

You may also choose to provide details in your online feedback which we ask you to complete within 30 days of the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

# Health

All Sojourn travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in the group travel experience. If in the opinion of our group leader or company representative any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, Sojourn reserves the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund. We therefore ask that you read the itinerary in these trip notes thoroughly and then realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Please consult with your doctor if you have any doubts.

All passengers will be required to complete a Health Information Form upon boarding. If a passenger experiences any symptoms at that time including diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, abdominal cramps, headache or myalgia (muscle aches) they must inform the on-board doctor immediately and follow his/her recommendations.

# Safety

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. Please refer to our website's Safety page for links to major travel advisories and updates on safety issues affecting our trips: www.Sojourntravel.com/safety.

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of our hotels have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Your leader will accompany you on all included activities however during your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your group leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your Sojourn itinerary, and Sojourn makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

For more details on the type of conditions and safety standards you can expect on your trip, please refer to Sojourn's operational safety policy at www.Sojourntravel.com/safety.

We recommend that you take a moment to read through this information before travelling, and would appreciate any feedback on how well it is being implemented in the field.

As a ship registered for international voyages, the M/V Polar Star must comply with a variety of regulations, codes and industry standards. This regime of requirements ensures that internationally accepted standards for safety and environmental protection are developed, implemented and monitored within the company management system onshore and on board the ship. The ship adheres to regulations set by IMO (International Maritime Organisation) including ISM Code (Safety Management System), ISPS Code (for ship and port security), SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) and MARPOL (Maritime Pollution Prevention), the flag state and the classification society on an accredited system. In addition, as the M/V Polar Star spends considerable time in the Antarctic waters, Polar Star Expeditions is a full member of IAATO (International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators) and a founding member of AECO (Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators).

# Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips. We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation for USD 50,000. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

The Policy Provider, Policy Number and 24-hour emergency contact number must be provided through the Medical Form completed at the time of booking confirmation

If you have credit card insurance you will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number and emergency contact telephone number rather than the Bank's name and credit card details. Please contact your bank for these details.

Please go to www.Sojourntravel.com/insurance.php for links to various travel insurance providers.

# Your Fellow Travellers

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part.

Please note that due to privacy reasons we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip prior to departure.

Age restrictions apply to this trip: minimum age 5

# Single Travellers

Our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a compulsory single supplement. Single travellers share with people of the same gender for the duration of the trip, in accommodation ranging from twin to multi-share. Please note some of our itineraries have accommodation booked on a mixed gender share basis - where applicable this will be specified in our Trip Notes. On a selection of our Comfort and Original style trips you have the option to pay a single supplement to ensure that you will have your own room (where available). Please refer to the important notes if this trip has a single supplement and any accommodation on the trip that the single supplement will not apply to. Please note that this only applies to accommodation during the tour, pre- and post-trip accommodation will be booked on a single room basis.

# Responsible Travel

We believe strongly in low impact or rather positive impact tourism. Broadly speaking this means that we try to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects. Please refer to our website at www.Sojourntravel.com/responsibletravel for further details and suggestions on how you can be a responsible traveller.