

The Ross Sea

From **2/16/2022**
to **3/12/2022**

Ship: **LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT**

From **Ushuaia**
to **Ushuaia**



Overnight in Santiago + flight Santiago/Ushuaia +
transfers + flight Ushuaia/Santiago

Sailing the **Ross Sea** means discovering one of the most extreme and conserved universes in the Antarctic.

Partially occupied by **the Ross Ice Shelf, the largest ice platform in Antarctica**, this immense bay located several hundred kilometres from the **South Pole**, is considered as **"the last ocean"**, the last intact marine ecosystem and the largest marine sanctuary since 2016.

Here, the cold is more intense, the wind more powerful, the ice more impressive, and the scenery more spectacular...

In the heart of this polar Garden of Eden, where the ice shelf turns into icebergs, **you will encounter prodigious fauna**, as well as **surrealist landscapes**, with infinite shades of blue and stunning reliefs. Antarctic petrels, Minke whales, orcas and seals are at home here, as are very large colonies of Adelie and emperor penguins.

We are privileged guests in these remote lands where we are at the mercy of weather, ice, tidal and current conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each PONANT cruise a unique experience. The Captain and the 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 IAATO.



The information in this document is valid as of 12/8/2020

The Ross Sea

YOUR STOPOVERS :

USHUAIA

Embarkation 2/16/2022 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 2/16/2022 at 18h00

Capital of Argentina's **Tierra del Fuego** province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed "**El fin del mundo**" by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible...

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Arrival 2/17/2022

Departure 2/18/2022

Use your days spent in the Drake Passage to familiarise yourself with your ship and deepen your knowledge of the Antarctic. The Expedition Leader will first present the IAATO rules of conduct that must be observed during landings in the region and will explain everything you need to know about the Zodiac[®] outings. Lectures about the history and wildlife of the Antarctic will be an opportunity for you to learn more about this magical region, where every cruise is a unique experience. From the ship's bridge, you will experience exceptional sailing moments before joining the naturalist-guides on your ship's exterior decks to look out for albatrosses, cape petrels, and other seabirds flying over the Drake Passage.

CROSSING THE ANTARCTIC CIRCLE

Arrival 2/19/2022

Departure 2/19/2022

Weather permitting, we'll cross the mythic line of the **Antarctic Polar Circle**, located along **66°33' south of the Equator**. This iconic area demarcates the point from which it is possible to view the midnight sun during the December solstice. Within this circle, the sun remains above the horizon for 24 consecutive hours at least once a year. Crossing this line, an experience known to few people, is sure to be an unforgettable highlight of your cruise through the polar regions.

EXPEDITION TO CHARCOT ISLAND

Arrival 2/20/2022

Departure 2/20/2022

When he discovered this island surrounded by sea ice in 1910 from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?* as he mapped Alexander Island, Jean-Baptiste Charcot had not be able to get less than 40 miles away from it. Situated in a zone that experiences frequent low-pressure systems and regular cloud cover, the island remains in many ways an enigma. It is entirely covered in ice and sheer cliffs, with the exception of the rocky outcrops extending over a dozen kilometres in the far north-west. The ice in the narrowest part of Wilkins Sound has been cracking in recent times, thus officially detaching this island from its neighbour, Alexander Island, lying 50 km away. Very few people have landed on this largely untouched island, whose waters attract numerous seabirds, such as petrels, Antarctic terns and skuas.

EXPEDITION TO PETER I ISLAND

Arrival 2/21/2022

Departure 2/21/2022

You will then head for the legendary Peter I Island. Located 450 km away from the Atlantic coast, it was discovered in 1821 by the Russian explorer Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen, who named it in honour of the Russian tsar Peter the Great. In 1909, Captain Charcot sighted it for the first time from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?*, but was unable to land there: *"In the parting mists, one or two miles away, an enormous black mass shrouded in clouds appears suddenly before us: it is Peter I Island."* Surrounded by pack ice and with about 95% of its surface covered by ice, this volcanic island, whose highest peak reaches 1,640 metres, is protected by ice cliffs some 40 metres tall, making any approach difficult.

BELLINGSHAUSEN SEA

Arrival 2/22/2022

Departure 2/23/2022

Stretching from the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula to the Amundsen Sea, the Bellingshausen Sea was named after the Russian admiral and explorer who has been attributed the first confirmed sighting of mainland Antarctica, in 1820. Its waters surround, among others, two of the largest islands in the Antarctic: Alexander Island and Thurston Island. You will sail amid ice floe, blocks of sea ice and majestic icebergs. The coastal areas along the Bellingshausen Sea are home to large colonies of emperor penguins. Depending on the season, you may get the chance to observe some of these creatures in the open sea.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT-CHARCOT

Arrival 2/24/2022

Departure 2/24/2022

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard *Le Commandant-Charcot*, the world's first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. *Le Commandant-Charcot* is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities

for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.

SIPLE ISLAND

Arrival 2/25/2022

Departure 2/25/2022

This island is dominated by Mount Siple, a dormant, potentially active shield volcano rising to an altitude of 3,000 metres. Entirely covered in a thick layer of ice, the gentle slopes of this cone are said to have been climbed, but no proof has yet been found of this feat. For now, it is thus considered Antarctica's highest unclimbed peak. At the foot of this icy giant, you could have the good fortune of being welcomed by a colony of Adelie penguins and of admiring the magnificent Thurston Glacier.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT-CHARCOT

Arrival 2/26/2022

Departure 2/26/2022

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard *Le Commandant-Charcot*, the world's first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. *Le Commandant-Charcot* is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.

RUPPERT COAST

Arrival 2/27/2022

Departure 2/27/2022

This quasi-unexplored coast along Marie Byrd Land is one of the only territories in the world to have never been claimed by any country, making it a *terra nullius*. It was the American colonel Jacob Ruppert who made the first aerial reconnaissance flight along this coast, during the second Byrd Antarctic Expedition (1933-1935). A Soviet research station was established there in 1980, before being officially abandoned in 1990.

CAPE COLBECK

Arrival 2/28/2022

Departure 2/28/2022

This ice-covered cape, which forms the northwestern extremity of Marie Byrd Land, was discovered in January 1902 by the British National Antarctic Expedition. It was named in honour of Captain William Colbeck, one of the first explorers to have overwintered in Antarctica, during the *Southern Cross* expedition of 1899. This majestic cape delimits

the western portion of the vast bay that contains the Ross Sea, the world's largest marine protected area.

THE ROSS SEA

Arrival 3/1/2022

Departure 3/1/2022

"The last ocean" is what scientists from all around the world call this deep bay that runs along the edge of Antarctica between Marie Byrd Land and Victoria Land. Since 2016, the world's largest marine protected area has been keeping this last marine ecosystem intact. The theatre of the most impressive expeditions, it was discovered by James Clark Ross between 1839 and 1843. It was then that he discovered the enormous ice barrier formed by a gigantic ice shelf extending out to the open sea and from which titanic icebergs are calved. One third of the world's Adelie penguin population lives in the area where this barrier breaks into icebergs. The currents maintain polynyas there, vast areas of persistent open water surrounded by sea ice. These give the penguins access to food. You may also get the chance to spot Ross seals, one of the rarest protected species in the Antarctic.

THE ROSS ICE SHELF

Arrival 3/2/2022

Departure 3/2/2022

The southern half of the Ross Sea is dominated by the largest ice shelf in the world, with a surface area equivalent to that of France. You will be awestruck by the majesty of this ice barrier which, far from being smooth and uniform, is ridged with caves, deep caverns, ledges, bays and promontories in infinite shades of blue carved out of it by the elements. Its vertiginous walls can reach up to 100 metres above sea level and some of them are several hundred metres deep. According to Sir Ernest Shackleton, some of the cavities could have contained *Le Nimrod*, his ship during the expedition he led to the South Pole between 1907 and 1909.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT-CHARCOT

Arrival 3/3/2022

Departure 3/3/2022

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RUPPERT COAST

Arrival 3/4/2022

Departure 3/4/2022

This quasi-unexplored coast along Marie Byrd Land is one of the only territories in the world to have never been claimed by any country, making it a *terra nullius*. It was the American colonel Jacob Ruppert who made the first aerial reconnaissance flight along this coast, during the second Byrd Antarctic Expedition (1933-1935). A Soviet research station was established there in 1980, before being officially abandoned in 1990.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT-CHARCOT

Arrival 3/5/2022

Departure 3/5/2022

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BURKE ISLAND

Arrival 3/6/2022

Departure 3/6/2022

EXPEDITION TO PETER I ISLAND

Arrival 3/7/2022

Departure 3/8/2022

You will then head for the legendary Peter I Island. Located 450 km away from the Atlantic coast, it was discovered in 1821 by the Russian explorer Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen, who named it in honour of the Russian tsar Peter the Great. In 1909, Captain Charcot sighted it for the first time from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?*, but was unable to land there: "*In the parting mists, one or two miles away, an enormous black mass shrouded in clouds appears suddenly before us: it is Peter I Island.*" Surrounded by pack ice and with about 95% of its surface covered by ice, this volcanic island, whose highest peak reaches 1,640 metres, is protected by ice cliffs some 40 metres tall, making any approach difficult.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT-CHARCOT

Arrival 3/9/2022

Departure 3/9/2022

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard *Le Commandant-Charcot*, the world's first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. *Le Commandant-Charcot* is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Arrival 3/10/2022

Departure 3/11/2022

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 up from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, Drake Passage harbours 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.

USHUAIA

Arrival 3/12/2022 early morning

Disembarkation 3/12/2022 at 07h00

Capital of Argentina's **Tierra del Fuego** province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed "**El fin del mundo**" by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible...