

**ANTARCTICA, SOUTH GEORGIA  
& THE FALKLAND ISLANDS**  
*Aboard the M/S Clipper Adventurer*

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**“Glittering white, shining blue, raven black, in the light of the sun the land looks like a fairy tale. Pinnacle after pinnacle, peak after peak—crevassed, wild as any land on our globe, it lies, unseen and untrodden.”**

— Captain Roald Amundsen, 1911

*The Antarctic is a region of superlatives, and for many, represents the ultimate travel destination. Here, the visitor, a stranger in an ice-filled world of breathtaking beauty, comes face-to-face with some of the world’s most sensational wildlife spectacles, replete with penguins, albatrosses, skuas, seals, and whales. Soaring, snow-covered mountains, fantastically sculpted icebergs, and icy waterways present panoramic scenery of unsurpassed splendor. Captain Amundsen offered his description of Antarctica nearly a century ago, yet he understood then what is still true for travelers today; that nobody who goes to Antarctica returns unmoved, that the continent’s pristine wilderness and unbridled natural beauty are as timeless as the ancient snows that veil her.*

*In this remote and ageless environment, touched but not tainted by the hand of man, the legendary wildlife of Antarctica flourishes. During the austral (southern) summer, seals, whales, penguins, and other seabirds flock to the nurturing Southern Ocean to feed on huge schools of krill, the vital link in the Antarctic food chain. So special and unique is Antarctica that in 1959 the Antarctic Treaty was drafted to preserve the region for peaceful and scientific purposes only. Today, researchers from many nations work together, unlocking Antarctica’s remaining secrets.*

*VENT and Clipper Cruises are proud to present an opportunity for interested travelers, natural history enthusiasts, and birders to venture to the White Continent, a place that has enticed explorers into its waters for nearly centuries. For this remarkable voyage, we’ve assembled an itinerary that offers maximum opportunities for viewing the birds and mammals of the Antarctic Peninsula AND the two South Atlantic island outposts of South Georgia and the Falkland Islands. For birders and nature-oriented travelers this is essential as this is where most of the wildlife is found. Simply, this is the most comprehensive expedition to the Southern Ocean. This is truly a trip of a lifetime.*

*Over the course of this expedition you will witness some of the finest scenery on the planet, enjoy intimate encounters with wildlife that is totally unafraid, and experience the thrill of treading in places where few have gone before. Among the many highlights, we’ll cruise the Beagle Channel, surrounded on all sides by rocky headlands and snow-capped mountains, enjoying the thousands of seabirds that fill the sky and water around us. Penguins, albatrosses, giant-petrels, petrels, diving-petrels, shearwaters, and skuas are all typically encountered.*

*In the Falklands we'll visit a colony of Rockhopper Penguins and Black-browed Albatross; and tour Port Stanley, capital of the archipelago and learn about the Falklands War of more than 20 years ago. On majestic South Georgia we'll wander among hundreds of thousands of King Penguins, view nesting Wandering Albatross and see a colony of Macaroni Penguins. We'll take time to visit an old whaling station at the island capital of Grytviken.*

*In reaching the Antarctic Peninsula, we'll voyage through magnificent waterways, protected bays, and deepwater fjords. Traversing the Lemaire and Neumeyer channels provides scenes of extraordinary beauty, lined on all sides by towering, glacier-coated mountains. We'll see massive glaciers calving enormous chunks of ice into the sea, make numerous excursions to remote islands and hidden bays aboard Zodiac landing craft, and visit active scientific research stations.*

*During our time at sea we will have opportunities to observe a tremendous variety of birdlife. The pelagic birding in these southern waters is among the best in the world. In crossing the famed Drake Passage and the Polar Front (Antarctic Convergence), we should see as many as five species of albatross, including the huge Wandering and Royal albatrosses, as well as several species of prions, storm-petrels, petrels, diving-petrels, and shearwaters. When not searching for wildlife above decks, you'll attend lectures by expedition staff below decks, which brings you expertise on all facets of natural history and human exploration of Antarctica.*

*We'll travel aboard the M/S Clipper Adventurer, a handsome expedition vessel reminiscent of the days of the great ocean liners. The ship is one of the best expedition vessels in Antarctica waters, and features comfortable, all-outside cabins with lower beds, private bathroom facilities, and individual temperature controls. The window-lined dining room seats all passengers at leisurely single seatings. There's plenty of open deck space on the Boat and Sun decks, while an observation platform located forward below the Bridge is ideal for wildlife viewing. An ice-strengthened hull and stabilizers guarantee safety throughout your voyage. Finally, the Captain and his officers maintain an open bridge to give passengers an opportunity to observe and ask questions. An experienced cruise staff, physician, and onboard lecturers accompany all voyages.*

**December 15-16, Days 1-2: Travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina.** Participants should plan to arrive in Buenos Aires on the 16<sup>th</sup>. After clearing immigration and customs, you will be met and transferred to the Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel, where your room is available for immediate occupancy. Lunch is on your own and the afternoon is at leisure. This evening's dinner is included at a local restaurant followed by the Viejo Almacen Tango Show.

NIGHTS: On board commercial aircraft (December 15)

Buenos Aires Sheraton Hotel (December 16)

**December 17, Day 3: Buenos Aires.** Buenos Aires is regarded by many as the finest, most sophisticated city in Latin America. An obvious European influence permeates the city's parks, architecture, and culture. Sometimes called the "Paris of the South," Buenos Aires has long been an enticing destination for many travelers. For birders and other natural history enthusiasts, Buenos Aires is equally compelling. Several premium birding areas are accessed from the city center in 45 minutes or less.

We'll have the entire day to experience the best of the Argentine capital, combining a morning city tour with an afternoon birding outing.

The day begins with a tour of the city's major landmarks, viewing such famous sights as the **Plaza de Mayo**—a site and sculpture commemorating the first Argentine government; **Casa Rosada (Government House)**—seat of the executive branch of the Argentine government; **Cabildo**—town hall of colonial times; **City Hall and**

**Cathedral**—a mausoleum housing the Great Liberator, General Jose de San Martín; **San Telmo**—the city’s oldest district features a flea market, old mansions, and an antique market; **La Boca**—Italian immigrant neighborhood features colorful houses and sidewalk cafes; **La Recoleta Cemetery** – Neo-classical gates, Greek columns and marble mausoleums adorn the “national” cemetery, which hosts the gravesites of some of Argentina’s most important and famous people, including Eva Perón; **Palermo Park**—one of the most beautiful parts of the city features botanic and zoological gardens, in addition to **Congress Building and Square**; **9 de Julio Avenue**; and **Puerto Madero**.

We’ll return to the hotel for lunch, which is on your own. In the afternoon we’ll reconvene for a birding trip to either Costanera Sur or Ecologica Reserva de Vicente Lopez.

**Costanera Sur** is an enormous preserved wetland alongside a major metropolitan park. Waterfowl are the primary attraction as the majority of the waterfowl of southern South America occurs here, including Coscoroba Swan, Rosy-billed Pochard, Red Shoveler, and Silver Teal. Expansive mudflats hold Gray-hooded and Brown-hooded gulls, Snowy-crowned Tern, Collared Plover, South American Snipe and many others.

**Ecologica Reserva de Vicente Lopez**, a public park and preserve, offers swampy wetlands and open woodlands. Landbirds are abundant highlighted by Chimango Caracara, Picazuro Pigeon, Guira Cuckoo, Gilded Sapphire, Checkered and Green-barred Woodpeckers, and Sayaca Tanager.

We’ll return to the hotel in the late afternoon.

NIGHT: Buenos Aires Sheraton Hotel, Buenos Aires

**December 18, Day 4: Buenos Aires to Ushuaia; Tierra del Fuego National Park; embark the *Adventurer*; cruising the Beagle Channel.** This morning we’ll fly to Ushuaia, capital city of the southern-most Argentine province, Tierra del Fuego. With 65,000 inhabitants, Ushuaia is a thriving port city set amid spectacular surroundings on the southern coast of Tierra del Fuego. Ringed by snow-capped mountains and overlooking the Beagle Channel, Ushuaia provides an exciting and picturesque embarkation point for our voyage.

Depending on actual boarding time, our schedule will afford us several hours in Ushuaia, where we’ll take time to seek out some of the special birds of the area. Only minutes from the airport one may experience scenic coastline and protected bays. Many of South America’s most elegant waterfowl use the nearshore waters and coastal ponds for breeding during the summer season. We’ll watch for Upland Goose, Crested Duck, Yellow-billed Pintail, Speckled Teal and Chiloe Wigeon. Flightless and Flying steamer-ducks are two of the more sought-after species we’ll want to track down. Beyond waterfowl, we’re likely to encounter the beautiful Dolphin Gull, Brown-hooded Gull, and South American Tern.

Early this afternoon, we may take a short trip beyond the city limits to Tierra del Fuego National Park. At more than 130,000 acres, this national park sits along the international border with Chile and harbors some of the finest glacial scenery in South America. Alpine lakes, extensive beech forests, and rugged mountains characterize the landscape. The birding in the park is often very good. In our short time here we may find Black-faced Ibis, White-throated Caracara, Chilean Swallow, Thorn-tailed Rayadito, and Patagonian Sierra-Finch, among other Fuegian birds. The ultimate prize is the Magellanic Woodpecker, one of the largest and most beautiful woodpeckers in the world. Previous trips have encountered this species at several places in the park.

This afternoon, we’ll board the *M/S Clipper Adventurer* and begin our cruise, traveling east down the Beagle Channel. With a fresh perspective gained from being aboard the ship, we’ll find ourselves surrounded on all sides by dramatic mountain scenery, with many of the higher peaks still locked under retreating winter snow. Seabirds fill the air and water around us. Chilean Skuas and Dolphin Gulls are common while Magellanic Oystercatchers and Flightless Steamer-Ducks inhabit the rocky coastline. We’ll also encounter the first of many seabirds, watching especially for Magellanic Diving-Petrel.

NIGHTS: On board *Clipper Adventurer*

**December 19-20, Days 5-6: Cruising the Drake Passage.** Between the tips of South America and the Antarctic Peninsula, the Southern Ocean pinches in, forming the Drake Passage. Discovered by Sir Francis Drake in 1578, the Drake Passage is a region where circumpolar ocean currents concentrate and bring the waters of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans together. This area is justly famous, or infamous, to every type of traveler who has ever crossed it. And no trip to Antarctica would be complete (or possible!) without crossing “The Drake.” When on its best behavior the “Drake Lake” offers an effortless transit on smooth seas; but can add some excitement to the voyage when riled by strong westerly winds. Fortunately, the seas are at their calmest during the Antarctic summer and many crossings are easy.

During our journey we are sure to witness a wondrous abundance of wildlife. The pelagic birding in these sub-Antarctic and Antarctic waters is among the best in the world. We should see as many as five species of albatross, including the lovely Gray-headed and giant Royal and Wandering albatrosses. Among the thousands of other seabirds, we’re likely to see Northern and Southern giant-petrels, White-chinned Petrel, Black-bellied Storm-Petrel, and Antarctic Prion. One of the most beautiful birds to grace the Southern Ocean is the Cape Petrel. Painted a striking combination of black and white, these endearing little birds serve as constant companions through much of the crossing. At times they swirl around the ship, only feet above the ocean surface, while at other times they’ll take advantage of sudden updrafts and vault to eye level before peeling away.

These nutrient-rich waters also support an impressive mix of cetaceans. Past trips have recorded fin, sei, Antarctic minke, humpback, long-finned pilot, and killer whales. Several of the rarer “beaked-whale” species are observed on occasion.

Below decks you can attend daily lectures by ship staff on a variety of topics related to Antarctica. At some point we’ll cross the Polar Front, or Antarctic Convergence. Between 50° and 60° south, the Polar Front represents a critical interface in the ocean, where warmer sub-Antarctic water flowing south overrides colder Antarctic water flowing north. This overlap zone produces jarring changes in water temperature and salinity. Krill, the vital link in the Antarctic food chain, flourishes here and sustains the millions of birds and animals that call Antarctica home.

NIGHTS: On board *Clipper Adventurer*

**December 21-25, Days 7-11: Expedition cruising along the Antarctica Peninsula and South Shetland Islands.** The ice-covered islands, snow-veiled mountains, and picturesque waterways of the Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands form the most wondrous panoramic scenery on Earth. The peninsula is a narrow finger of land that projects north from the main continent toward South America and separates the Weddell from the Bellingshausen seas. The South Shetlands meanwhile, exist as a natural gateway to the peninsula when crossing the Polar Front (Antarctic Convergence). The next three days will be spent exploring the region, expedition cruising through numerous scenic straits and channels. Aboard the ship’s fleet of Zodiacs, we’ll cruise among ice floes, land at penguin rookeries, and visit with scientists at research stations. We’ll also be sure to make a continental landing on the peninsula in at least one place, allowing us to “claim” the seventh continent!

The onset of the Antarctic summer allows us to experience the deep rich colors of the sea and ice, the dramatic etchings of coastlines, and the sheer walls of towering icebergs. The pristine air lends an unusual quality to Antarctic light, so that colors are truer and landscapes sharper. We can clearly see snow-capped peaks on every horizon, often tinted rose-red or burnt orange by the late evening sun.

We’ll experience incredible wildlife encounters on a daily basis. Three species of “brushtail” penguins—Chinstrap, Adelie, and Gentoo—nest here and we hope to visit colonies of each. Moving south along the peninsula, South Polar Skuas replace the Browns and we may even have the opportunity to compare the two

side by side. We'll pay close attention to the ice floes, where leopard, crabeater, and Weddell seals haul out to rest. Whales often use these protected, food rich waters for feeding and we have good chances for encountering minke, killer and humpback whales.

Although the specific itinerary depends on sea and ice conditions, we'll have no shortage of places to explore! Some of the places we plan to visit include:

**Lemaire Channel** – The extravagant beauty of the Lemaire Channel makes it a popular, and essential, destination for many Antarctic voyages. Situated along the Antarctic Peninsula, the Lemaire offers a spectacular transit of a narrow icy waterway, with 3,000 foot peaks looming on either side. The high point of the trip is a spectacular four mile stretch, lined by sheer rock and ice, with Booth Island towering above. If the weather is clear the dramatic mountains are reflected beautifully in the water. Crabeater and leopard seals and Adelie Penguins are seen with frequency resting on ice floes. Though only an hour is required to cruise the length of the Lemaire, the whole experience is totally unforgettable.

**Petermann Island** – Lying beyond the southern end of the Lemaire, Petermann Island was named for German geographer August Petermann who led an expedition here in 1873-74. Largely snow-covered, Petermann hosts large colonies of Adelie Penguins and smaller numbers of Gentoo Penguins and Antarctic Shags. This marks the southern-most point for most expedition cruises.

**Anvers Island and the Neumeyer Channel** – Anvers Island is among the largest of the islands along the north Antarctic Peninsula, measuring some 37 miles wide. It is separated from the mainland by the wide Gerlache Strait. Though most visitors do not typically visit the island itself, the chief attraction is a cruise through the 17-mile long Neumeyer Channel. Like the Lemaire, the Neumeyer presents landscapes of overpowering beauty, characterized by snow-capped peaks and massive glaciers. Leopard seals haul out on ice floes and the rarer Antarctic Petrel is occasionally seen.

**Port Lockroy** – Established by the British in 1944 as a weather and reconnaissance station, Port Lockroy operated until 1962. The original building now represents the oldest British building on the Antarctic Peninsula. Now restored, it is listed under the Antarctic Treaty as a historic site and monument. It is open during the summer months, where it operates as a museum and visitor center. A post office allows visitors to send postcards or letters home via the Falkland Islands and the U.K.

**Palmer Station** – Established by Americans in 1964, Palmer Station sits at the southwest corner of Anvers Island. The facility is a center for active research, including a study monitoring the long-term effects of changing sea ice cover on Antarctic marine life. Well run, the station houses impressive saltwater tanks and aquariums. The gift shop is said to be the best in Antarctica.

**Paradise Harbor and Neko Harbor** – Situated along the peninsula's Danco Coast, these two harbors are an important and popular stop in Antarctica. The reason is that it offers visitors the chance to actually set foot on the Antarctic continent. Beyond that, the scenery here is extraordinary, with ice in the water and ancient, deeply cracked glaciers ringing the bays on all sides. The Chilean and Argentine bases, Gonzalez Videla and Almirante Brown, are here as well and receive many visitors. The snowfields surrounding Neko Harbor hold a colony of Gentoo Penguins and the rocky cliffs above Paradise Harbor host a colony of Antarctic Shags.

**Errera Channel and Cuverville Island** – The Errera is another of the Antarctic's dramatic passages, framed by the Arctowski Peninsula on one side and Ronge Island on the other. The five and a half mile voyage reveals 3,000 foot mountains looming over an icy channel that closes to 3,000 feet at its narrowest. Cuverville Island, at the north opening of the channel, holds a large colony of Gentoo Penguins, said to number 5,000 pairs. In the 1990s, the island was the study site of researchers trying to determine the effects of tourism on the health of penguin colonies.

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**South Shetland Islands** – When coming from South America or South Georgia, the South Shetlands provide a spectacular entrance to the Antarctic region. Rugged mountainous islands rise from the ocean like an impressive volcanic gateway, giving first time visitors a taste of what lies beyond. Massive tabular icebergs float freely in the inter-island waters and Bransfield Strait, and huge colonies of Chinstrap Penguins form during the Antarctic summer on the slopes of many of the islands. This sub-Antarctic archipelago covers a considerable distance from northeast to southwest, but our schedule includes zodiac landings at a number of locations.

**Elephant Island** – Elephant Island lies at the eastern terminus of the South Shetland group and is probably best known for its location where Shackleton's men overwintered as they awaited rescue. High, impenetrable, and locked in glaciers, Elephant is an island fortress. Yet it is also a place of incredible beauty and the site of thousands of breeding Chinstrap Penguins and Antarctic Shags. Sea conditions and heavy cloud-cover often prevent ships from landing here, but for those who make it, what awaits are huge, cracked glaciers, an ice-blue bay at Point Wild and thousands of nesting seabirds.

**King George Island** – Largest of the South Shetland Islands, King George is largely covered by glaciers. Admiralty Bay is the site of a Brazilian research base and remains ice-free year round

**Greenwich Island and Yankee Harbor** – Yankee Harbor is a protected bay on the south side of Greenwich Island and hosts large numbers of Gentoo Penguins and Snowy Sheathbills.

**Hannah Point, Livingston Island** – Though landing here can be difficult, this site is an excellent place to view a variety of nesting seabirds. Gentoo Penguins are joined by an occasional Macaroni Penguin; Kelp Gulls watch for an easy meal and giant-petrels and Antarctic shags are also present in numbers. The beaches on the back side of the point are desirable resting places for crabeater and Weddell seals.

**Deception Island** – Deception Island is quite unlike any other place we will visit on the cruise. Featuring a blown-out caldera in the middle of a still-active volcano, Deception offers visitors a chance to stroll on black gravel beaches and actually take a dip in geothermally heated waters. The island is accessed through a hole in one side known as Neptune's Bellows, so named for strong winds that whip across the entrance. A stop at Whaler's Bay provides time for a walk to Neptune's Window, which provides thrilling views of the sea and sometimes the Antarctic Peninsula beyond. Whaler's Bay possesses a colorful history of Norwegian whaling station turned into a base of British occupation in WWII. Volcanic activity since the 1960s has demolished nearly all of the remaining buildings and the bay is now the domain of Antarctic Terns, elephant seals, fur seals, and penguins.

**Bailey Head** – Known as a hard place to land a boat, Bailey Head offers an unforgettable traipse up a glaciated valley into the heart of a massive colony of Chinstrap Penguins. Hundreds of thousands of penguins live here during the Antarctic summer and form long black-and-white processions as they move back and forth from the sea to their nests. The spectacle is overwhelming as seemingly every patch of ground up to the surrounding ridgelines is occupied by Chinstraps in various stages of the breeding cycle.

NIGHTS: On board *Clipper Adventurer*

**December 26-27, Days 12-13: Cruising the Scotia Sea, from Antarctica to South Georgia.** Of the four ocean crossings we'll make on our expedition, the voyage through the Scotia Sea between the Antarctic Peninsula and South Georgia is often the most exhilarating. We'll take two days to cover almost 800 miles, during which time we'll head steadily northeast into the lower latitudes. Along the way we'll encounter the remains of winter pack ice and eventually re-cross the Polar Front (Antarctic Convergence).

Beyond Elephant Island we are likely to observe behemoth tabular icebergs, broken off the continental ice shelf and adrift. Bigger than life, some of these bergs tower hundreds of feet over the ocean and stretch for over a mile. In time the ice becomes more plentiful and larger until we find ourselves amid the massive remains of the disintegrating winter icepack. Icebergs of all shapes and sizes appear around the ship, from horizon to horizon.

Cutting through the slushy water, the sound of debris ice scraping against the ship's reinforced hull is unforgettable; the sight of giant chunks of ice floating like monuments will leave you mesmerized. In between you'll witness icebergs of all shapes and sizes. Some appear as massive squared off edifices while others show up as wave-sculpted masterpieces. The last ice we see is likely to be smaller bergs that have drifted with the currents north from the Weddell Sea.

Ice often becomes compressed as it ages. When this happens it loses its ability to reflect the full spectrum of colors that comprise white light and instead can only reflect blue. We'll observe blue ice, some of which gleams incredible cobalt under overcast skies.

Besides the dazzling ice spectacle, we'll once again be under the spell of Antarctic wildlife. We'll watch for the ghostly white Snow Petrel, a bird closely tied to the pack ice and whose presence is difficult to predict. Southern Fulmars and White-chinned Petrels arc through the ship's wake and near South Georgia, Blue Petrels appear, passing stealthily in front of the boat.

Approaching from the southwest, our first sight of land is South Georgia—rugged, mountainous, and ice-covered, yet undeniably beautiful.

NIGHTS: On board *Clipper Adventurer*

**December 28-30, Days 14-16: South Georgia Island.** Lying 870 miles east of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia rises from the Southern Ocean like a great alpine citadel. Treeless, mountainous, ice-clad, and alone at the edge of the submarine Scotia Ridge, this island outpost provides beautiful scenery in staggering proportions. Lofty, snow-covered peaks tower 9,000 feet above sea level; hilly, windswept moorlands characterize the lower slopes; and a magnificent coastline is scalloped with inlets and deepwater fjords, carved over eons by more than 150 glaciers.

South Georgia also hosts some of the world's most stupendous wildlife spectacles, with millions of penguins being its most obvious inhabitants. Tens of thousands more albatross, petrels, diving-petrels, Antarctic fur seals, and southern elephant seals roam the island's beaches and grassy slopes. The Antarctic Peninsula may garner more attention, but it cannot provide the overwhelming combination of beauty and wildlife found at South Georgia.

A colorful human history rounds out the experience of a visit here. For more than fifty years whaling stations on the island formed the hub of the South Atlantic whaling industry.

Formerly included in the Falkland Islands Dependencies, South Georgia was designated as a British Antarctic Territory following the end of the Falklands War. We will have three full days to explore different parts of the island and surrounding islets. We'll make zodiac excursions to a number of bays and beaches; spend time at some of the largest penguin colonies; and visit the territorial capital Grytviken, home to the silent remains and artifacts of an abandoned whaling station. We'll view the granite marker on the humble grave of the polar explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton. Among the many possible landing sites while at South Georgia are:

**Elsehul** – This bay at the northwest corner of the island is known for its nesting Gray-headed Albatross, in addition to huge numbers of Antarctic fur seals.

**Bay of Isles** – One of the best known sites on the northwest coast of South Georgia, the Bay of Isles offers access to broad gravelly beaches, beautiful mountain scenery and a huge abundance of wildlife. A zodiac landing at Salisbury Plain puts us in the close company of 100,000 pairs of King Penguins, most colorful and second largest of the penguins; Brown Skuas, Antarctic fur seals and southern elephant seals. Nearby Prion Islet is rat free and supports a healthy population of the endemic South Georgia Pipit and an endemic "South Georgia" race of Yellow-billed Pintail. A walk up into the small island's interior will likely produce close encounters with Wandering Albatross and Brown Skuas on nests.

**Hercules Bay** – A zodiac cruise of this small bay takes us up close to Macaroni Penguins and South Georgia (Blue-eyed) Shags.

**Stromness** – Situated within scenic Stromness Bay, this former Norwegian whaling station was abandoned in 1961. A stop here offers terrific mountain scenery; opportunities to visit a colony of Gentoo Penguins and to wander close to the abandoned whaling station.

**Grytviken** – Territorial capital of South Georgia, Grytviken is the site of South Georgia's first whaling station which was established by the Norwegians in 1905. Abandoned since the early 1960s, it is currently manned by only a few people, but still offers several fascinating sights, including a restored whaler's church, a post office and the small South Georgia Museum. In the nearby whaler's graveyard "The Boss," Sir Ernest Shackleton, rests in peace. Wildlife is abundant at Grytviken as well, with opportunities to view King Penguins, Antarctic Terns, and elephant seals.

**St. Andrews Bay** – St. Andrew's Bay, on the east coast of South Georgia, boasts an enormous colony of King Penguins rivaling that of Salisbury Plain. Approximately 100,000 pairs reside here during the Antarctic summer. A walk through the colony will bring us up close to birds of all stages of development, and also reveal Brown Skuas, Kelp Gulls, and Snowy Sheathbills. An added benefit of a landing at St. Andrews is sweeping vistas of the entire colony and the sea beyond.

**Royal Bay** – Site of the remains of a base built by German explorers, Royal Bay is home to a colony of 9,000 pairs of King Penguins, Gentoo Penguins, and South Georgia Shags.

**Gold Harbor** – Among the most famous of South Georgia's wildlife viewing areas, Gold Harbor offers excellent access to elephant seals, fur seals, and King Penguins for starters. Steep, tussock-covered hillsides are the preferred nesting site of Light-mantled Albatross and giant-petrels lounge on the beach. Besides the wildlife, majestic natural surroundings include glaciers, towering cliffs and a broad gravel beach.

**December 31-January 2, Days 17-19: Cruising the South Atlantic, from South Georgia to the Falkland Islands.** We'll enjoy these next two days at sea cruising the 870 mile distance to the Falkland Islands. As the crossing is lengthy, you'll have many opportunities to join your leaders on deck for a couple of hours of seawatching, or simply relax in comfort below decks. Expedition staff present lectures on the history, geology, and wildlife of the Falklands to prepare us for our arrival.

Seabirding is rewarding throughout these waters and sightings of spouting and breaching whales are anticipated. Among the numerous Black-browed Albatross, giant-petrels, Cape Petrels, and Slender-billed Prions, are smaller numbers of Royal and Wandering albatrosses, Common Diving-Petrel, Greater Shearwater, and Gray-backed Storm-Petrel.

One-hundred-fifty miles west of South Georgia, the lonely Shag Rocks rise out of the Atlantic Ocean. Time permitting, we'll cruise part way around them, observing the vast numbers of birds that congregate around hillside nesting colonies. South Georgia Shags and Antarctic Prions nest here by the thousands and the surrounding waters literally teem with thousands of other seabirds. The whole scene provides a truly incredible spectacle.

As South Georgia marks the northeastern-most point of our route, the oceanic waters in this corner of the Atlantic occasionally hold such rarer bird species as Sooty Albatross and Atlantic and Soft-plumaged petrels.

At some point we'll re-cross the Polar Front (Antarctic Convergence).

NIGHTS: On board *Clipper Adventurer*

**January 3-4, Days 20-21: The Falkland Islands.** Lying 300 miles off the coast of Argentina, the rainy, windswept cluster of islands known as the Falklands, occupy a remote corner of the South Atlantic. For many, the Falkland Islands are a historical oddity, the site of a short, but bitterly contested war between England and Argentina in 1982 over ownership of the islands. Today, the islands exist as a self-governing territory of the United Kingdom, with a population of 3,000, most of which resides in the territorial capital, Port Stanley (or just Stanley to locals).

The Falklands are in fact a wildlife-rich location, with many important colonies of breeding penguins, albatross, waterfowl, and landbirds. Several species of seals and dolphins that occur in the nearshore waters are not found in the colder waters to the south. The Falklands are not true sub-Antarctic islands, but they hold much wildlife not found in the Southern Ocean and serve as a popular stop between ocean crossings to and from South Georgia.

We will arrive in the Falklands early this morning and will have most of the next two days to explore at least two islands in the archipelago, in addition to Stanley. Sea conditions will determine which ones we actually land on, but among the likely candidates are:

**New Island** – A particularly scenic island on the western side of the archipelago offers great views of grassy hills, deeply indented coastline, and sweeping views of the sea. The feature activity is a hike to view a large mixed colony of Rockhopper Penguins, Black-browed Albatross, and Blue-eyed Shags. Open grassy areas hold Correndera Pipit, Grass (Sedge) Wren, and Long-tailed Meadowlark. Striated Caracaras patrol from the hilltops while Kelp Geese and Falkland Steamer-Ducks are found in the bays.

**Carcass Island** – Situated at the northwest corner of the island group, Carcass was named for a ship in the British Royal Navy. A two-mile walk along the coastline offers an intimate way to discover the natural world of the Falklands. Birdlife is diverse here and there are excellent chances for Magellanic and Gentoo penguins, Upland and Ruddy-headed geese, steamer-ducks, Striated Caracaras, Blackish Cinclodes, Cobb's Wren, Austral Thrush, and Black-throated Finch.

**West Point Island** – West Point also sits on the western side of the group and offers beautiful views of the South Atlantic Ocean and another colony of Rockhopper Penguins and Black-browed Albatross.

**Sea Lion Island** – Southernmost of the Falklands, Sea Lion is renowned among photographers as a great place to see an abundance of wildlife. In addition to a large diversity of birds, South American Sea Lions and Southern Elephant Seals are regularly seen on the beaches. Southern Giant-Petrels are easily seen here as well.

**Saunders Island** – Located northwest of the large West Island, Saunders is one of the Falklands' more dramatic islands. Mountains and open plains combine for appealing visual scenery while colonies of Gentoo, Magellanic, and Rockhopper penguins and Black-browed Albatross are highlights. A small colony of King Penguins exists here as well.

**Port Stanley** – Capital of the Falklands Territory and located on East Falkland, Stanley is the main center of population in the islands. The amount of time we spend here will depend on the cruise schedule, but possible activities include visits to the Falkland Islands Museum or a guided tour with a local historian. An example of the rich history of Stanley lies in the fact that approximately twenty shipwrecks can be seen at various points along the seven mile harbor front. Stanley was also at the center of the Falklands War of 1982 and the preserved battlefields are readily seen outside the town. Two-banded Plovers and Rufous-chested Dotterels are occasionally seen by roadside ponds outside of town.

### **Notable Birds of the Falkland Islands**

Upland Goose

Rufous-chested Dotterel

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Kelp Goose	Blackish Oystercatcher
Ruddy-headed Goose	Magellanic Oystercatcher
Flying Steamer-Duck	South American Snipe
Falkland Flightless Steamer-Duck	Brown Skua
Crested Duck	Dolphin Gull
Speckled Teal	South American Tern
Silver Teal	Blackish Cinclodes
Gentoo Penguin	Dark-faced Ground Tyrant
Magellanic Penguin	Cobb's Wren
Rockhopper Penguin	Sedge (Grass) Wren
Black-browed Albatross	Austral Thrush
Rock Shag	Correndera Pipit
Blue-eyed Cormorant	Black-throated Finch
Variable (Red-backed) Hawk	Long-tailed Meadowlark
Striated Caracara	Black-chinned Siskin
Two-banded Plover	

**Notable Mammals of the Falklands**

Peale's Dolphin  
Commerson's Dolphin  
South American sea lion  
South American fur seal

**January 5, Day 22: Disembark the *Adventurer* in Port Stanley, Falkland Islands; flight to Santiago, Chile.**

After breakfast, we'll disembark the *Adventurer* in Port Stanley and transfer to the airport in time for our flight to Santiago, Chile. Upon arrival in Santiago, we'll transfer to the Sheraton Santiago Hotel.

NIGHT: Sheraton Santiago Hotel, Santiago

**January 6, Day 23: Santiago city tour or birding in the Andes; departing flights home.** Set in the shadow of the majestic Andes, Santiago is a European-flavored blend of colonial and modern architecture, reflected in its many churches, museums, theatres, and parks. Today you may choose from one of two optional activities; a city tour of Santiago, or a field trip into the mountains above the city to observe some of the special birds of the central Chilean Andes.

**Option 1: Santiago City Tour** – Enjoy a half-day sight-seeing tour of Santiago—the economic, political, and cultural capital of Chile. A sampling of some of the places you'll visit includes the beautiful horse-racing track Club Hipico; the Pre-Columbian Art Museum; and the summit of San Cristobal Hill, where an enormous statue of the Virgin Mary overlooks the city.

**Option 2: Andes Birding** - Our destination is Los Farellones ski area, situated at about 7,000 feet in a scenic valley surrounded by towering mountains. We'll make several stops in different habitats as we work our way up the mountain. The birding is generally outstanding and one may build an impressive list in just a few hours. The lower slopes are an excellent first stop, where Chilean Flicker, Giant Hummingbird, and Chilean Mockingbird are found. Rocky, brush-covered slopes host the elusive Crag Chilia, as well as Chile's most spectacular tapaculo, the Moustached Turca. Rocky outcrops are the favored habitat of Great Shrike-Tyrant and several species of ground-tyrants, two types of peculiar ground dwelling flycatchers. Below the ski area we'll enjoy world class views of the surrounding mountains and valleys. Situated far above Santiago, the crystal clear air is exhilarating, but not cold. At this altitude we'll scan the skies for Andean Condors and Aplomado Falcons, while areas of low vegetation may hold Rufous-tailed Plantcutter and several species of sierra finches.

This evening we will transfer to the airport for return flights to the United States, departing Santiago late this evening.

The city tour is included in your tour fee. Persons choosing to bird in the Andes will be charged an additional \$150.

NIGHT: On board commercial aircraft

**January 7, Day 24: Arrive home.** International flights departing Santiago on the night of January 6<sup>th</sup>, or in the early hours of January 7<sup>th</sup>, arrive home or in another airport for your transfer to connecting flights.

**Antarctica programs are designed as expeditions which require a degree of flexibility and spontaneity. Every effort will be made to follow the published itinerary, but please note that they are offered subject to change at the discretion of the ship's captain, based on sea, weather, and ice conditions.**

**TOUR SIZE:** This Antarctica expedition will be limited in size to 122 passengers, of which VENT will have a maximum of 60 passengers.

**TOUR LEADERS: Greg Lasley and Denver Holt.**

**Greg Lasley** has a deep interest in birds and wildlife that has led him to all areas of the continental United States, Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Venezuela, Chile, and Antarctica. He has actively birded Texas for nearly 30 years, and has made significant contributions to the knowledge of that state's bird life as the Texas Regional Co-Editor for *North American Birds* (formerly *American Birds*), and as the Secretary of the Texas Bird Records Committee of the Texas Ornithological Society. He is especially interested in bird distribution and habitats. He is also a nationally published wildlife photographer. His photographs have appeared in magazines such as *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Birder's World*, *American Birds*, *National Wildlife*, *Texas Highways*, *Texas Parks and Wildlife*, and *Wildlife Conservation*. Greg is known for his enthusiasm for birds and his eagerness to share them with others. He is a knowledgeable and patient teacher with a good sense of humor and a thoroughgoing competence.

**Denver Holt** is a wildlife researcher with many interests. In particular, his research focuses on owls and their ecology. He has been researching owls since 1978, and has published numerous papers in both scientific and natural history journals. He is founder and president of the Owl Research Institute in Missoula, Montana, and has conducted owl-related research in the U.S., Mexico, Panama, and Costa Rica. Within the U.S. he has worked in Alaska, Massachusetts, and Montana. Among other research, Denver has worked on gulls, terns, raptors, and small mammals. He is an avid and inquisitive outdoors person with other interests that include insects, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, plant identification, and geology.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** Cabin prices quoted are per person based on double occupancy. All staterooms are outside cabins with two lower beds and private shower and toilet. Cabins will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Those single travelers who wish to share their cabin room will be guaranteed the double occupancy fare, whether or not a cabin-mate is available.

Category 1	(Located A-Deck)	<b>\$11,815</b>
Category 2	(Located on A-Deck)	<b>\$12,575</b>
Category 3	(Located on Main Deck)	<b>\$13,515</b>
Category 4	(Located on Main Deck)	<b>\$14,635</b>
Category 5	(Located on Promenade Deck)	<b>\$15,820</b>
Deluxe	(Located on Promenade and Boat Decks)	<b>\$17,460</b>
Suites	(Located on Boat Deck)	<b>\$19,265</b>
Owner's Suite	(Located on the Boat Deck)	<b>\$19,780</b>

Single Occupancy (Based on Category 2)

**\$17,910**

**Price includes** two pre-cruise nights at the Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center, and one post-cruise night at the Sheraton Santiago Hotel, including breakfast, city tours, and all taxes and service charges; afternoon Buenos Aires birding trip on December 17<sup>th</sup>; air transportation from Buenos Aires to Ushuaia on December 18<sup>th</sup>, and from Port Stanley to Santiago on January 5<sup>th</sup>; eighteen nights aboard the *Clipper Adventurer*, in outside staterooms with lower beds, individual temperature controls, and private bathroom facilities; all meals during the cruise, beginning with dinner on December 18<sup>th</sup>, and ending with breakfast on January 5<sup>th</sup>, served at single leisurely seatings and prepared to order by chefs trained at some of the most prestigious culinary institutes in America; all shore-side exploration and Zodiac excursions, as per the itinerary; all onboard gratuities for Clipper crew; all port charges; services of a VENT leader with a minimum of 8 VENT registrations; all transfers between airports, hotels, and ship; experienced expedition leader, scientists, naturalists, geologists, historians, and other experts on board throughout the voyage to enhance your understanding and enjoyment of this natural world; services of Clipper's hospitality staff, including cruise director and hotel manager on board and hospitality desks at hotels; Captain's welcome aboard and farewell receptions and dinners; physician on board throughout the voyage; special expedition parka in your size for Zodiac landings, exploring, and on-deck viewing (the parka is yours to take home after the cruise).

**Not included** in the cruise price is air transportation from the passenger's home to Buenos Aires and return from Santiago; meals other than those previously noted; excess baggage charges; gratuities to Lecturers, Expedition Leaders and Cruise Director; a one-time \$100 Chilean entrance fee which must be paid in USD (\$55 for Canadians) upon arrival in Santiago (subject to change without notice); international and domestic departure taxes; passport or visa fees (if applicable); beverages, wines, liquors, or refreshments additional to meals provided; personal and baggage insurance; accommodations, meals, and transfers prior to joining/after leaving the group; and all items of a personal nature.

**Because of the agility required for cruises on board an expeditionary vessel, travelers with disabilities, heart and/or respiratory problems, or other significant physical limitations or conditions are advised not to participate in expeditionary cruises. Please be advised that medical conditions that are discovered at any time during or prior to boarding and which, in the sole and reviewable opinion of the Captain, may jeopardize the health or safety of the Passenger or any other individual, will be grounds to deny the Passenger permission to board the ship at the point of embarkation, and/or to require the Passenger to leave the ship and terminate his or her continued participation in the cruise. By forwarding the deposit for this cruise, the Passenger certifies that he or she is in good physical health and capable of performing normal activities on this expedition.**

**TOUR REGISTRATION:** To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$1000** per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit by check, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. The VENT registration form should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

**CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS:** All cancellations, for any reason, must be received in writing and will be subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee, \$150 of which may be applied toward a future Clipper Cruise Line trip within two years from date of issue. Cancellations from 119 days to 60 days prior to departure are subject to a 50 percent (50%) cancellation fee of total trip cost per tour participant; cancellations occurring within 59 days of departure or nonappearance will result in forfeiture of the entire cost of the trip. Any refunds will be reduced by applicable airline cancellation penalties. No refunds will be made in the event of "no shows" or cancellations made on the day of sailing. **We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance and/or travel insurance to protect yourself.**

**TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE:** Application forms for optional coverage for baggage, illness, and trip cancellation can be obtained through the VENT office. We **strongly recommend** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness. Check with your insurance agent regarding coverage you may presently have via other insurance policies that may cover illness during your trip. **Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available, however, stipulations apply, usually requiring the purchase of the insurance soon after registering. Contact the VENT office prior to registration for details.**

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.**

Due to the nature of the expedition, weather conditions or government regulations may require changes to be made to the itinerary and/or the cancellation of certain shore excursions. Every attempt will be made to adhere to the itinerary described, within the limits of safety and time. In the event of changes, passengers have no right to any refund or other compensation. Expedition fees are based on group participation. Should you choose not to take part in any activity or make use of services provided, no refund will be made.

**AIR INFORMATION:** Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of VENT. Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to assist you in making air arrangements. Airline tickets carry restrictions due to the airfare used. You may find that your ticket cannot be reissued or exchanged for another air carrier or routing. Cancellation penalties and change fees may be assessed for any changes to the ticket. These charges are solely your responsibility. First and business class travel is available on some flights. **All requests for travel assistance (air tickets, additional hotels, etc.) must be received no later than 60 days prior to departure date. Within 60 days, arrangements must be made on your own.**

### **CONDITIONS:**

**The Ship** – The Clipper *Adventurer* features 61 comfortable, all-outside cabins, with lower beds, private bathroom facilities, and individual temperature controls. There are two lounges—the Main Lounge and Bar on Promenade Deck, seating 130 passengers, and the Clipper Club, also on Promenade Deck, seating 45 passengers. There’s also a library/card room, a small workout room, a gift shop, and a hair salon. An email service is available for passenger use on board, but is dependent on satellite signal. Unique to the Clipper *Adventurer* is a spacious, covered promenade with a beautiful wooden deck (varnished Oregon pine) where passengers can view the seascapes. There’s also plenty of open deck space on the Boat and Sun decks, while an observation platform located forward below the Bridge is ideal for wildlife viewing.

**Dining** – The window-lined dining room comfortably seats all passengers at leisurely single seatings for all meals, with tables unassigned. The chefs can prepare food according to special dietary needs, provided the ship receives sufficient notification. Please advise of any special needs at the time of registration.

**While on Land** – Walking conditions on land are generally not difficult, yet it is important to pay close attention to footing and walking conditions. The diversity of topography in Antarctica guarantees that you’ll experience a variety of terrain, from soft sand, to coarse gravel, to stepping around large boulders. Walks to penguin rookeries frequently involve treks of varying length through shallow snow and ice. In the Falklands, most walking is over fairly even ground, but tall grasses are often slick with recent rain. Conditions on South Georgia are similar to Antarctica. Should your expedition involve a hike up Prion Island, you should expect to ascend a moderately steep hill in partially wet, muddy conditions. As always, participation in all activities is optional.

**While at Sea** - While cruising at sea you’ll have options to join your leaders on the viewing decks for sea watching, or remain below decks and relax in the library, the passenger lounge, or your stateroom. The sea is generally at its calmest during the austral summer, but rough conditions may develop at any time. Heavy winds

## *Antarctica; South Georgia & the Falkland Islands, page 14*

regularly affect the latitudes around 40° and 50° south. Many summertime crossings of the Drake Passage are uneventful, but passengers should be prepared for the possibility of a rough transit.

**CLIMATE & WEATHER:** All expedition cruises to Antarctica take place during the austral summer, from November – March. In this timeframe, we can expect beautiful, sunny days, but conditions can change without warning in the higher latitudes, and overcast skies, poor visibility and precipitation do occur. November/December departures coincide with the onset of the summer season and tend to be a little colder, with a greater likelihood of experiencing snowfall. The February/March period means warmer daytime temperatures, more prolonged periods of sunshine, and whatever precipitation there is, occurs in the form of rain. All temperatures are listed in Fahrenheit (°F).

Temperatures at the Antarctic Peninsula are likely to be the coolest of the trip, averaging in the low to upper 30s. Sunny days and intermittent overcast are expected. Visibility should be good most days, but low clouds can obscure viewing conditions.

Lying considerably farther north, the Falkland Islands are likely to be 10-20 degrees warmer than at the peninsula, but you should be prepared for cool conditions. Wind and rain are aspects of life in this archipelago, making moderate temperatures feel colder. Temperatures in the Falklands range from the upper 30s to mid 50s, but average in the low to mid 40s in December and January.

The weather at South Georgia changes frequently and is difficult to predict. Overall, you should expect conditions that average between those in the Falklands and the peninsula. Temperatures range from the mid 30s to mid 40s and precipitation occurs in the form of light rain and snow showers. Prolonged periods of sunshine are regular in the summer months, but periods of bad weather are possible.

Buenos Aires, Argentina is very warm in the austral summer. Temperatures range into the mid 80s during the day and drop into the 60s at night. Sunny and dry conditions are expected.

Santiago, Chile is also warm and dry during the summer. Temperatures range into the low 80s during the day and 60s at night. In the Andes above the city, temperatures range from the upper 50s to middle 70s under sunny skies.

Ushuaia, Argentina lies at the tip of South America, with weather affected by the city's proximity to the sea and mountains. Temperatures range from the upper 30s to low 50s, but can feel much colder on a windy day. Persistent wind is regularly encountered around the city itself, but nearby Tierra del Fuego National Park is more sheltered by high mountains.

While cruising at sea, a steady wind-chill can dramatically affect even moderate temperatures.

**BAGGAGE:** The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, essential toiletries, medications, a change of clothing, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag.

**CLOTHING:** Antarctic expeditions are casual environments. Comfortable and practical clothing is recommended while on board the ship and ashore, for daytime and evening wear. For the Captain's Welcome Aboard and Farewell dinners a Smart Casual attire is appropriate. For women this includes casual dresses or slacks/blouses ensembles; for men, khakis/slacks and open-collared shirts. Men may choose to wear a sports jacket for such occasions. A list of essential items includes:

- **Waterproof Rainpants – REQUIRED** for protection against precipitation, ocean spray in zodiac landing craft and wet landings. Your rainpants should fit comfortably over your regular pants. Some types feature a zipper on the outside of the lower pantleg, enabling you to pull your pants on and off without removing shoes or boots.
- **Warm, waterproof gloves and mittens – REQUIRED** for almost every circumstance. Thin glove liners are a good choice when trying to use your fingers for taking pictures or using binoculars.
- **Warm Socks** – Thin cotton or polypropylene socks are a good choice, in combination with a few pairs of wool socks. It is important to have clean, dry socks through the duration of the voyage. Pack accordingly.
- **Regular Pants** – Denim, cotton, corduroy, or wool pants are acceptable in dry conditions, such as when birding from the ship's decks; and for evening recaps, social hours, and dinners.
- **Hats, scarfs and gaitors – REQUIRED.** You will need a cotton, knit, or wool pull down cap at the least, while a warm scarf or gaitor come in handy when exposed in windy conditions.
- **Long Underwear - STRONGLY RECOMMENDED.** Silk or other lightweight material is sufficient for most people. Those who are easily chilled might consider a heavier material, such as wool.
- **T-shirts (long- and short-sleeved)** – Simple cotton shirts for wearing under warmer outerwear.
- **Turtlenecks and flannels** – More warm weather clothing for wearing under parkas, fleeces, and sweaters.
- **Warm Sweaters or Polar fleece** – Offers excellent insulation against cold temperatures.

**FOOTWEAR: IT IS MANDATORY** that you bring a pair of pull-on rubber, waterproof, knee-high boots with strong rubber-ridged, nonskid soles that fit comfortably. With wet landings, you will be stepping from the zodiac into icy water that may be up to 10" deep. You should expect to walk over icy, uneven ground between the shore and the various penguin colonies you'll visit. Do not bring heavy, "clunky" boots or boots with poor traction, as you need the right footwear that will keep you warm, yet agile. Make sure that your boots fit comfortably over thicker socks as well. Waterproof lightweight boot coverings that can be worn over hiking boots or shoes, such as NEOS Performance Overshoe, are also recommended. Some places to find boots with these specifications include Cabela's, REI, L.L. Bean, Defender Industries, and Rocky Boots.

When on board the ship, comfortable walking shoes, or deck shoes are sufficient.

**PARKAS:** You will receive a complimentary expedition parka, with hood, for your cruise to Antarctica. These parkas are made of quality material and are designed to keep you insulated against cold temperatures and precipitation. Some companies prefer that you submit your order weeks or months before the cruise departs, while others simply distribute the parkas at the time of boarding. **Please read your pre-departure material carefully, as it will provide information for obtaining the parka.**

**LAUNDRY SERVICE:** Laundry service is provided by the ship staff for an extra charge. Check with the staff upon embarkation for turnaround time.

**EQUIPMENT:** One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your Antarctic expedition:

- **Backpack** – Good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment during all landings and excursions
- **Ziplock bags** – Excellent for keeping small items or any items of value dry; bring several different sizes
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Travel alarm clock**
- **Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection**
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions**
- **Personal toiletries**
- **Cameras, lenses, film, memory cards, and extra batteries**

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- **Collapsible walking stick**
- **Tissue packs**
- **Binoculars** – We strongly recommend good binoculars of at least 7 x 35, 8 x 42, 10 x 40, or 10 x 42 magnification. We recommend that you do NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. Trying to find a bird in your binoculars using minis is like trying to read a book through a keyhole. You will be very frustrated, and even if you do manage to get the bird in your binoculars before it flies, you will have a poor view. You will find that 7 x 35 or 8 x 42 binoculars are compact and light enough.

**Spotting Scopes** - Since most wildlife viewing will take place on a moving ship or zodiac, or among the birds and animals at very close range, you do not need to bring a spotting scope. Your tour leaders will have one available for group use on the occasions where it is necessary to have one.

### **PASSPORTS AND DOCUMENTS:**

#### ***PASSPORTS***

A valid passport is required. Please check the expiration date on your passport. **If it is not valid for at least six months after your trip return date, you will need to get it renewed.** You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps.

If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date. Allow four to six weeks to obtain a passport. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, most post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit [www.state.gov/travel/](http://www.state.gov/travel/) for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.**

On board ship, it is customary for the purser to hold all passports for clearance with Customs and Immigration authorities. Your passport will be collected prior to or upon embarkation, and returned upon disembarkation.

Depending on the cruise route, you may have opportunities to have your passport stamped in the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, and on the Antarctic Peninsula. The Cruise Director will keep all passengers informed when such options become available.

#### ***VISAS***

Visas are not required for U.S. and Canadian citizens for entry into Argentina, the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, or Antarctica. Note that a "reciprocity" fee applies to all U.S. and Canadian citizens entering Chile, and that a one-time payment of \$100.00 must be paid in USD. For Canadians the fee is \$55 USD. Also note that this fee is subject to change without notice.

Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. citizens may vary; please check with the consulates or embassies of Chile and Argentina.

**CURRENCY & MONEY MATTERS:** Your trip to Antarctica includes most necessary expenses, including all meals aboard the ship. You will want to bring enough cash to cover such extra expenses as taxi rides, gifts, laundry, gratuities, meals on your own before and after the cruise, and personal items. U.S. travelers checks are also recommended for meeting expenses during the cruise. Small denominations of cash are best as the places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills or travelers checks. In Ushuaia and Stanley, change is returned in local currency. Shipboard accounts can be paid with most major credit cards. Visa and Mastercard

are universally accepted. Please inquire for further details regarding the use of Diners Club and American Express.

The cruise program includes time in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Santiago, Chile, for the purpose of convening before jumping off for Ushuaia. Outside what is offered in the cruise program, our time in these places is limited. For this reason, the need for local currency is almost non-existent. In both cities, major credit cards are accepted at bigger hotels and restaurants and U.S. dollars are widely accepted by taxi drivers, shops, stores, and restaurants. If you choose to spend cash, expect to receive your change in local currency.

Should you extend your vacation in either Santiago or Buenos Aires beyond what is offered in the cruise program you'll want to consider obtaining local currency. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Chile is the Chilean peso (Ch\$). 100 centavos = 1 peso. The official currency of Argentina is the Argentine peso (\$). 100 centavos = 1 peso.

As of March 2, 2007, the conversion rate is:

1 US dollar = 539 Chilean pesos

1 US dollar = 3 Argentine pesos

**TIME:** Chile, Argentina, and the Falkland Islands are all three hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST), and South Georgia is 4 hours ahead of EST. Antarctic Standard Time is the same as Greenwich Mean Time, which places it 5 hours ahead of EST, however, many people stationed in Antarctica adopt the time zone of their home territory.

**MEDICAL SERVICES:** A qualified physician is in attendance at all times, but must be made aware of any potential medical problems that might arise because of any medical condition, disability, or illness of any passenger on board. **Please return your medical information form in a timely manner.**

No sophisticated medical facilities are available in Antarctica. Passengers who are not fit for an expedition cruise, including those with physical disabilities that affect mobility and balance, heart or immune deficiencies, or other conditions associated with poor health, are advised not to join the cruise. A serious health emergency in Antarctica may result in an air evacuation, which will come at considerable expense to you. **Comprehensive optional insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation, is available and highly recommended. This coverage is available through your trip cancellation policy, if purchased through VENT. Please consult your insurance agent or existing policy, if in effect, for the terms and limitations of your existing coverage. Refer to the section on Trip Cancellation Insurance.**

**HEALTH:** As of this writing (March 2007), no major shots or inoculations are required for entry into any of the countries on this itinerary. As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and consider inoculations against Hepatitis types A and B.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the expedition safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

**Motion Sickness** – Travelers should anticipate rough water at some point in the voyage. Although the Drake Passage is known for its turbulent seas, passengers may experience challenging sea conditions on any of the crossings. Even people who have never been motion sick may find themselves at risk in the Southern Ocean. Many ships visiting Antarctica carry a supply of anti-motion sickness medication for general availability to passengers. We recommend that you consult your physician on an appropriate medication.

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**Sun Exposure** – The sun’s ultraviolet rays are more dangerous in Antarctica than most other places in the world. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers’ Information Line (877) FYI-TRIP. You can check the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html) (click on travel health).

**ELECTRICITY:** Power on board the *Adventurer* is 220V, with the recessed outlets of the round, two-pronged European type. If you plan to use American standard 110V equipment with the flat-pronged plugs, you will need to bring an all purpose transformer to convert the current for 110V use, in addition to a round European-type adapter plug.

**SUGGESTED READING:** Our website, [www.ventbird.com](http://www.ventbird.com), offers an affiliated online store that carries a wide variety of items for birding and nature lovers including over 6,000 books. A portion of the sales from the store benefits the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. You might also want to visit such other online stores as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and for those out-of-print and hard-to-find titles, [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) or [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com), which specializes in ornithology books.

Antarctica is a subject widely written about. A great many books and magazine articles have been written over the past century addressing its magnificent wildlife and rich human history. Although a person could research the topic indefinitely, the following list highlights some of the best material available about Antarctica that will prepare any traveler for a trip to the White Continent.

### **Birds and Reference:**

**Jaramillo, Alvaro. *The Birds of Chile*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.**

This is the best book available for this tour; it is a modern easy-to-use, pocket-size field guide covering all of Chile’s birdlife, including southernmost Tierra del Fuego. Most importantly, the guide also includes **ALL** of the species the tour could possibly encounter in the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, Antarctica, and the Southern Ocean. The book is available through ABA Sales ([www.abasales.com](http://www.abasales.com)) and Amazon.com.

**Couvre, Enrique and Claudio Vidal. *Birds of Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego & Antarctic Peninsula*. Printed in Chile, by Fantastico Sur, 2003.**

A recent photographic guide to the birds of the region; a quality reference guide which serves as a useful companion to *Birds of Chile*.

**Narosky, Tito and Dario Yzurieta. *The Birds of Argentina & Uruguay*.**

This book will be highly useful during the brief time spent around Buenos Aires at the beginning of the tour, but not after. The book is available through Amazon.com. The first edition, and a more recent Gold edition, are available. Your tour leaders will have a copy if you decide not to purchase your own.

**Shirhai, Hadoram. *The Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002.**

A beautifully constructed book offering species accounts, with photographs, maps, and illustrations, of all the “birds and marine mammals of the Antarctic Continent and the Southern Ocean.” Highly recommended.

**Natural History:**

**Campbell, David G.** *The Crystal Desert*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, Paperback reprint, 2002.

**From the Publisher:**

THE CRYSTAL DESERT: SUMMERS IN ANTARCTICA is the story of life's tenacity on the coldest of Earth's continents. It tells of the explorers who discovered Antarctica, of the whalers and sealers who despoiled it, and of the scientists who are deciphering its mysteries. In beautiful, lucid prose, David G. Campbell chronicles the desperately short summers on the Antarctic Peninsula. He presents a fascinating portrait of the evolution of life in Antarctica and also of the evolution of the continent itself.

**Mathews, Eleanor, and Ellie Mathews.** *Ambassador to the Penguins*. Boston: Godine, David R., 2003.

This is the remarkable story of the young naturalist Robert Cushman Murphy's year aboard one of the last Yankee whale ships on an expedition to the Antarctic. Over the course of the 1912 journey, Murphy wrote detailed accounts of his encounters with the incredible wildlife of the Antarctic region, and of the actions of his fellow shipmates. Murphy's love for the natural world is evident in his writings, later published as *Logbook for Grace*, which is named for the young wife he left behind for the sake of adventure.

**Safina, Carl.** *The Eye of the Albatross*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2003.

This is a beautifully written account of Amelia, a Laysan Albatross from the Hawaiian Islands. More than just a story about a bird, Safina interweaves science and natural history with a genuine knack for storytelling to create a powerful account of marine life in the Pacific.

**Human History:**

**Lansing, Alfred.** *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*. New York: Carroll and Graff, 1995.

First published in 1959, this is the incredible story of the 1914-1917 expedition of the ship, *Endurance*. Featuring polar explorer Ernest Shackleton, this is one of the greatest adventure stories of all time and an essential read for this tour.

**Other notable historical novels:**

**Amundsen, Roald E. and A.G. Chater (translator).** *The South Pole: An account of the Norwegian Antarctic Expedition in the Fram, 1910-1912*. New York: New York University Press, 2001.

Considered by many the greatest polar explorer of all, Captain Roald Amundsen provides a personal account of his successful expedition to reach the South Pole. First published in 1912.

**Cherry-Garrard, Apsley,** *The Worst Journey in the World*. New York: Carroll & Graff, 2003.

First published in 1922, this is an excellent account of Robert Falcon Scott's 1910-1913 expedition to the South Pole, including the unforgettable story of the three members (including the author) who battled the odds to collect Emperor Penguin eggs at Cape Crozier.

**Fienes, Ranulph.** *Race to the Pole: Tragedy, Heroism, and Scott's Antarctic Quest*. New York: Hyperion, 2004.

This is a new and highly regarded historical account of Scott's quest to reach the South Pole before his rival Amundsen. Highly recommended.

**TIPPING:** Gratuities are not expected on board the *Adventurer* as they are included in the cost of your trip. These tips are generally distributed to zodiac drivers and the service staff (housekeeping, dining room, maintenance workers, and deck crew), and NOT the Cruise Director, Expedition Leader, and lecturers. If you feel that the service you received during the cruise exceeded your expectations so that you wish to give an additional gratuity, please leave the amount in your stateroom or deposit it in the wooden box at the reception desk for general distribution among the entire crew.

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