



Antarctic Peninsula – Polar Circle Voyage

28th February – 11th March 2019

M/V Plancius



MV *Plancius* was named after the Dutch astronomer, cartographer, geologist and vicar Petrus Plancius (1552-1622). *Plancius* was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named *Hr. Ms. Tydeman*. The ship sailed for the Royal Dutch Navy until June 2004 when she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions and completely refit in 2007, being converted into a 114-passenger expedition vessel. *Plancius* is 89 m (267 feet) long, 14.5 m (43 feet) wide and has a maximum draft of 5 m, with an Ice Strength rating of 1D, top speed of 12+ knots and three diesel engines generating 1230 hp each.



Captain Artur Iakovlev

and his international crew

Including:

Chief Officer:	Francois Kwekkeboom	[Netherlands]
2nd Officer:	Matei Mocanu	[Romania]
3rd Officer:	Warren Villanueva	[Philippines]
Hotel Manager:	Michael Frauendorfer	[Austria]
Assist. Hotel Manager:	Alex Lyebiedyev	[Ukraine]
Head Chef:	Khabir Moraes	[India]
Sous Chef:	Ivan Yuriychuk	[Ukraine]
Ship's Physician:	Marijke de Raes	[Belgium]

and:

Expedition Leader:	Ali Liddle	[United Kingdom]
Assist. Expedition Leader:	Adam Turner	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Sara Jenner	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Joselyn Fenstermacher	[USA]
Expedition Guide	Martin Berg	[Sweden]
Expedition Guide:	Marijke de Boer	[Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Laura Mony	[Canada]
Expedition Guide:	Andrea Herbert	[Germany]
Kayak Guide:	Alexis Bellezze	[Argentina]
Dive Master:	Catherine Buckland	[UK]
Dive Guide:	Will Gilbertson	[UK]
Dive Guide:	Chris Booker	[UK]

Welcome you on board!

Day 1 – February 28th, 2019

Embarkation – Ushuaia, Argentina

GPS 08.00 Position: 54°53'S / 067°42'W

Wind: Light air **Sea State:** Port **Weather:** Rain **Air Temp:** +9°C **Sea Temp:** +10°C

So here we are at last in Tierra del Fuego, at the bottom of the world. Well, from Ushuaia we'll be going south...a long way south. But for today, we ambled about this lovely Patagonian city, savouring the local flavours and enjoying the sights. Ushuaia marks the end of the road in Argentine Tierra del Fuego, but also

the beginning – the beginning of a once-in-a-lifetime adventure.



During the summer this rapidly growing frontier town of 55,000 bustles with adventurous travellers. The duty-free port flourishes with tourism but also thrives on a sizeable crab fishery and a burgeoning electronics industry. Ushuaia (literally "*bay that penetrates to the*

west" in the indigenous Yaghan tongue) clearly benefits from its magnificent, yet remote, setting. The rugged spine of the South American Andes ends here, where two oceans meet. As could be expected from such an exposed setting, the weather has the habit of changing on a whim. However, temperatures during the long days of the austral summer are relatively mild, providing a final blanket of warmth before heading off on our adventures.

For many of us this is the start of a lifelong dream. The excitement comes in different forms for each person, but even the most experienced of us must feel genuine excitement departing on a journey to the Great White Continent. Accordingly, most passengers were promptly at the gangway at 16:00, ready to board the good ship MV *Plancius*, our home for this Antarctic adventure!

We were greeted at the gangway by members of our Expedition Team who directed us to reception where we met Hotel and Restaurant Managers, Michael and Alex. We were then checked into our cabins with the assistance of the fabulous hotel crew. A little while after boarding we departed the jetty of Ushuaia and entered the Beagle Channel with an escort of black browed albatross. Shortly thereafter we



gathered together in the lounge on deck five to meet First Officer Francois, who led us through the details of the required SOLAS (Safety Of Life At Sea) Safety and Lifeboat Drill, assisted by the crew and staff.

We were now prepared for our actual safety drill and on hearing the general alarm, we reconvened at the 'muster station' (the lounge) for the mandatory safety briefing and abandon ship drill, donning our huge orange life jackets that will keep us safe should the need arise.

After all the safety drills were taken care of we were invited once again to the lounge where Hotel Manager Michael gave us an overview of the ship, a floating hotel which will be our home for the next 11 days. We then met our Expedition Leader, Ali Liddle who gave us a brief introduction to our itinerary and helped set our expectations for this expedition trip... there's always a Plan A, but also B and C and...

whatever it takes to work with what weather Mother Nature gives us!



This was also a chance to meet our Captain, Artur Iakovlev and toast our voyage with a glass of Prosecco. At 19:30 we sampled the first of many delicious meals on board, prepared by Chef Khabir and his galley staff. This first evening on board was occupied with more exploration of the ship,

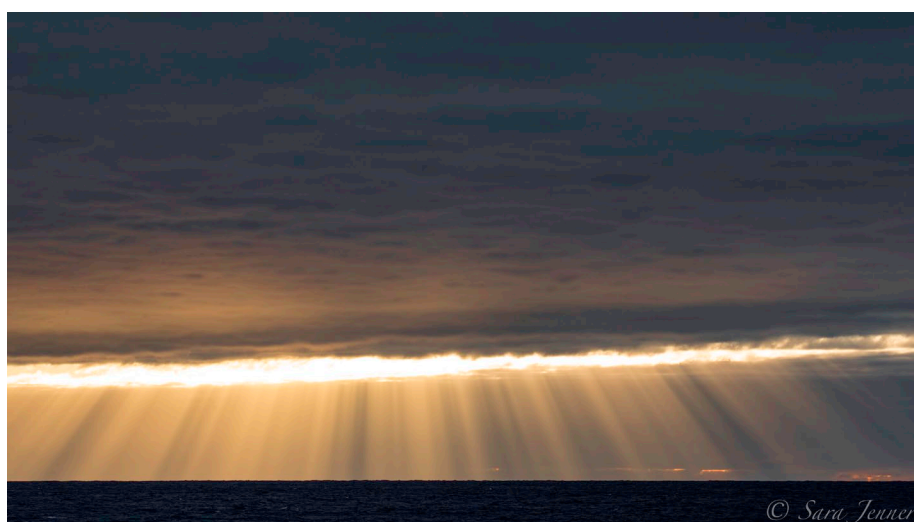
adjusting to her movements, and settling into our cabins. In the early hours of the morning we would be out into the open waters of the Drake Passage!

Day 2 – March 1st, 2019

At Sea to Antarctica – Drake's Passage

GPS 08.00 Position: 56°40.9'S / 065°34.6'W

Wind: NE 14 **Sea State:** Slight **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** +3°C **Sea Temp:** +5°C



A few of us were already up and enjoying the beautiful sunrise when Ali made the first wake-up call of the voyage, but for those of us still being gently rocked in our bunks it was time to get up and see what the sea day would bring.

It was an overcast morning and there was a gentle breeze of about 15 knots, but we were making good progress across Drakes Passage. After breakfast we were

called to the boot room on Deck 3 to collect our rubber boots ready for wet landings on shore. The staff were on hand to make sure that the system ran with the utmost efficiency, with boots of all sizes being passed along the line to ensure everyone got the correct size ready to go ashore in Antarctica.

At 10:30am, Catherine, Chris and Will gathered the scuba divers in the dining for a presentation about how diving operations would work during the voyage. At the same time Alexis met with the kayakers in the library and gave details of the kayaking programme; you could clearly feel his enthusiasm for paddling in polar waters.

With the initial activity briefings completed it was time for the first lecture of the day which was presented by Martin and about sea birds, which were not too numerous this morning because of the light winds. We learnt that species such as albatross and giant petrels are quite heavy birds which need a considerable amount of wind to take off and glide, therefore calm conditions are more likely to result in fewer bird sightings. Martin's lecture was very informative and created a lot of interest amongst keen birders and generalists alike as to what we might be able to see over the forthcoming sea days but most importantly how we might be able to protect them, as many species of sea birds are now severely threatened.



After lunch, many of us headed out on deck to enjoy the pleasant weather we were being blessed with whilst others took the opportunity to have a little siesta. At 3pm Laura gave a lecture about Ice in anticipation of seeing lots of different types over the forthcoming days, large tabular ones, most probably broken off from the Ross Ice Shelf to small bergs in a variety of shapes and colours. During this time the dive guides met with each of the divers on a one to one basis to check

and discuss equipment and storage needs.

Following afternoon tea and cake in the lounge Sara gave a lecture about penguins. She explained their cold-water adaptations and answered many of our initial questions about these charismatic little creatures, hopefully giving us more time to just sit and enjoy their funny and very endearing antics. The lecture was interrupted twice for whale sightings, the first for some feeding Antarctic minke and the second for a strap-toothed whale. The latter is a medium-sized beaked whale which is most commonly found in the Southern Ocean, North of the Antarctic convergence. Evidently this was quite an unusual sighting as it caused much excitement amongst the Expedition Team. For the keen birders in the group



there was the first sighting of a snow petrel to keep them enthused.

The final official event of the day was our first daily Recap & Briefing session. Ali explained the plan for tomorrow and showed some weather charts so we knew what to expect for our second day in the Drake. This was followed by Joselyn who gave a very interesting recap about the Antarctic convergence and how the different water masses meeting in the Southern Ocean create an important biological barrier around the continent, and then Sara tried to demonstrate the enormous wingspan of some of the sea birds we had been seeing with the help of a piece of string!

There was a lot of enthusiastic chatter as we descended to the Dining Room afterwards, as people shared their hopes and expectations for the forthcoming days with one another.

Day 3 – March 2nd, 2019

At Sea to Antarctica – Drake's Passage

GPS 08.00 Position: 61°16.1'S / 063°03.5'W

Wind: WNW 9 **Sea State:** Slight **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** +1°C **Sea Temp:** +2°C

We enjoyed another gentle night of rolling on the Drake Passage, this favourable weather meant we had made very good progress over night. Ali woke us with news of the weather and after breakfast we



attended the mandatory briefing about Zodiac operations so that we can be familiar with all the safety measures in place to get off the ship, on shore and back on the ship safely. Following this, Ali briefed us on IAATO (International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators) protocol and biosecurity, so that we will have minimal impact on the pristine environment of Antarctica. They explained how we should behave while in

Antarctica to ensure the protection and conservation of this incredible, but very fragile environment. It is important that we follow certain protocol to ensure that we leave no trace of our visit and take away nothing more than memories. In order to ensure we follow these protocols, we had to vacuum our outerwear, ensuring no seeds or plant material was hiding in our pockets and Velcro.

After lunch, many of us headed out on deck to enjoy the ocean whilst other took the opportunity to have a little siesta. At 3pm Marijke gave a lecture about marine mammals of the Southern Ocean and how to identify them. As the afternoon progressed, we appropriately saw the first humpback whales



blowing and fluking around the ship, enjoying these nutrient rich waters.

After tea and cake Joselyn gave a lecture about the marine organisms under the sea surface. After this lecture, the South Shetland Islands were now clearly in sight, we cruised through Boyd Strait, Snow Island on our port side and Smith Island to our starboard.

At 6:30 we gathered in the lounge to hear about the plans for tomorrow from Ali followed by a short presentation about aliens from Andrea. After which we made our way down to dinner, full of excitement at what the following days would bring. Antarctica couldn't quite let us rest however, as an announcement came just before the dessert course that a pod of type-B Killer Whales had been spotted alongside and aft of the ship. The orca remained quite elusive, however, and despite the Captain slowing the ship and turning around to get a better look the pod kept feeding and traveling at a distance while the silhouette of Smith Island slowly disappeared in the fading light.



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Day 4 – March 3rd, 2019

Orne Island / Danco Island

GPS 08.00 Position: 64°39.79'S / 062°38.32'W

Wind: Variable **Sea State:** Calm **Weather:** Partly cloudy **Air Temp:** +1°C **Sea Temp:** n/a



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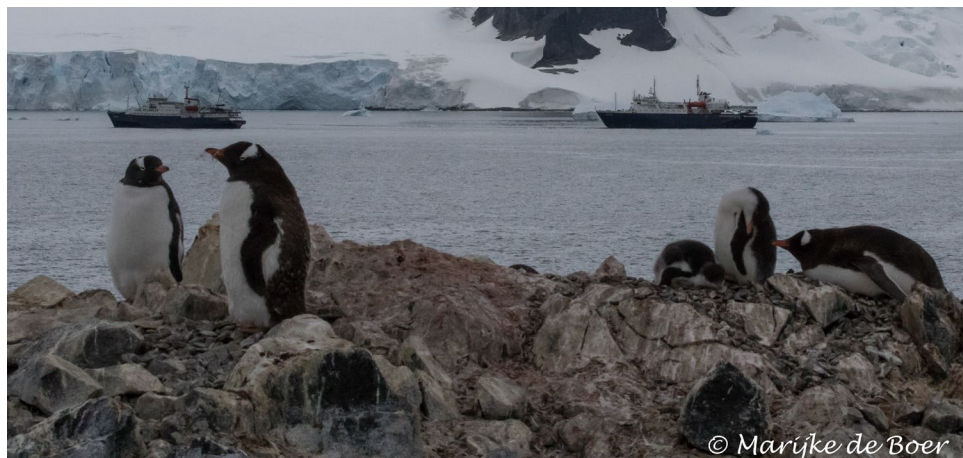
We finally reached the Peninsula, after an easy and calm Drake Passage. Ali woke us up around 6:45 am and we rushed to breakfast, excited to get into the zodiac in direction of

our first landing! Some of us were already awake, while the ship was taking us along the Gerlache Strait. We cruised without problems enjoying the occasional sight of humpback whales, the menacing icebergs and a nice sunrise illuminating the mountains in the background.

The Gerlache Strait is the strait that separates the Palmer Archipelago from the Antarctic Peninsula. The Belgica Expedition, (1897-1899) under command of Lt. Adrien de Gerlache, explored the strait in January and February 1898 and first named it for their expedition ship Belgica, then was later changed to honor the

commander himself. This strait is characterized by amazing views of the mountains in the peninsula as well as a variety of spectacular icebergs that drift cross its open waters.

At 7:45, we dropped the anchor at our morning landing site, Orne Island. Located at the northern end of



the Errera Chanel, the name was used by Norwegian whalers and, later, by the Scottish geologist David Ferguson. It was a bit cloudy, but we could feel the sun trying to break through the cloud. An added bit of entertainment was the sight of a second Oceanwide ship, the Ortelius; staff from both ships were obviously excited to see each other and quickly

buzzed by on zodiacs to wave hello and send regards on behalf of the crews to each other. Once shuttled to the beach, we were welcomed by Ali, who gave us few instructions for the landing. After dropping our life jacket in the white bag, we started walking further up the island's slopes.

There are several colonies of gentoo penguins and we caught our first glimpses of these adorable little creatures. There was a mix of molting adults and growing chicks who were walking around the colony trying to get back safely to their nest. After a short walk, we reached another part of the island where we found a small colony of chinstrap penguins and understood there can be quite a difference between the sights, sounds, and behavior of different species. Eventually a route was opened up around the top of the island, so we enjoyed a different perspective of the hilltop gentoos and got a great view back across to the pink-stained George's Point on Ronge Island. Also, there were a few fur seals lazing on the rocks. The kayak group was on their way back to the ship by now and we were able to give them a wave and see them enjoying the almost flat calm waters for their morning's paddle session.



The sun was shining through the cloud cover, the sea was calm, and we just decided to sit down and enjoy the amazing scenery that Antarctica had to offer. We watched all the animals interacting, especially the penguins and the skuas flying around, trying to catch their next meal. The time flew by and before we knew it, it was already time to return to the ship for lunch time. While waiting for the zodiac, some of us



had the chance to see some humpback whales diving just in front of the landing site.

During lunch, there was a bunch of humpback whales resting around the boat. We had close sighting of them from the different decks. Our destination for the afternoon, Danco Island, is one mile long and lies in the south part of the Errera Channel, just off the west coast of Graham Land. It was also charted during the Belgica Expedition, and named after Emile Danco, a Belgian geophysicist member of the Expedition who died onboard the Belgica over the winter. He was a very popular and admired scientist on board this expedition.



Landing on Danco Island was nice and smooth on a pebble beach, with some gentoo penguins molting on the beach. Trying not to disturb them, we walked around to get on the snow. For this landing, we were using snowshoes to get up the hill. Our snowshoe guide, Martin, lead the way smoothly. The majority of us



climbed up, all the way to the summit of the small mountain that rises up to 160 m above sea level (circa 525 feet). We enjoyed very nice calm weather, cloudy but flat and peaceful out on the water. From the top we enjoyed the spectacular scenery of the Errera Channel. This channel was named after Leo Errera, a professor at the University of Brussels who was one of the supporters of the Belgica Expedition. From the top we could appreciate the snowcapped mountains with imposing glaciers, showing an endless collection of crevasses, seracs, and

bergschunds. A parade of icebergs showed up below in the waters of the channel.



The guests who opted to stay next to the beach were also rewarded with a nice gentle walk along the beach to the remain of an old Antarctic Survey hut and a nice gentoo penguin colony. Certainly, these guests were not disappointed since they probably enjoyed a long and quiet moment in which they heard only the gentle splash of the waves, the distant call of gentoo penguins, or the murmur of the slight wind.

Before getting back to the ship, some of us decided to do the polar plunge... Another crazy idea! Those who were courageous enough started running towards the water and had a quick dip before running out. Nevertheless, it was with a smile on their faces that they hopped into the zodiac and went back on the Plancius.

Before getting back on board, we had the chance to sight leopard, Weddell, and crabeater seals lying on the ice, one next to the other. As the zodiacs cruised by, we were able to take a few pictures of these beautiful creatures. Like every day, today ended with the evening recap given by Ali and her team. Then, we headed down to dinner and enjoyed a really nice meal! Bon appetit!



Day 5 – March 4th, 2019

Petermann Island

GPS 08.00 Position: 64°10.2'S / 064°06.8'W

Wind: S 5 **Sea State:** Calm **Weather:** Rain/drizzle **Air Temp:** +2°C **Sea Temp:** -1°C



Our expedition leader Ali woke us up bright and early at 6:45am to witness the transit of the Lemaire Channel, a beautiful and narrow channel on our way to our first landing site of the day. The channel measures only 745 metres, not all of which is navigable because of rocks under the surface of the water. The icebergs were so close we could almost touch them! Our captain and his officers did a great job navigating through the maze of ice and managed to get us through safe and sound to the other side.

After the excitement, breakfast tasted all the better. We enjoyed it while sailing through all imaginable shades of blue, turquoise, and white. At 8:45 am, we were called to the gangway to get ready for Petermann Island.

Once there, we were greeted by very curious gentoos who brazenly ignored our red poles and approached to check out the visitors. The expedition bags were carefully scrutinized and tasted, and we all got some great photos of up-close and personal penguins while sitting or laying still. Our guides marked a pathway to Far Point, from where we enjoyed breath taking views over the Penola Strait and out towards the open ocean, in all directions the water peppered with icebergs. For those of us who stood and observed for a



while, we could see and hear bergs grinding up against each other, interrupted from time to time by the thunderous rumbling of invisible avalanches on the slopes across the channel. Spotting a beautiful tabular iceberg further down the Penola Strait, we could draw on some of the facts about them that Laura had presented the day before.

On the north-east side of the island, a small colony of bright-chested gentoo chicks were right next to moulting adult gentoos. The difference in energy level and apparent mood between them were very obvious! Further up the path marked for us by our guides, adolie penguins were busy looking a tad miserable while moulting. In other parts of the 1km-long island, some of us witnessed a skua picking up a gentoo chick, driving home the fact that the food web of nature doesn't exclude cute fluffy



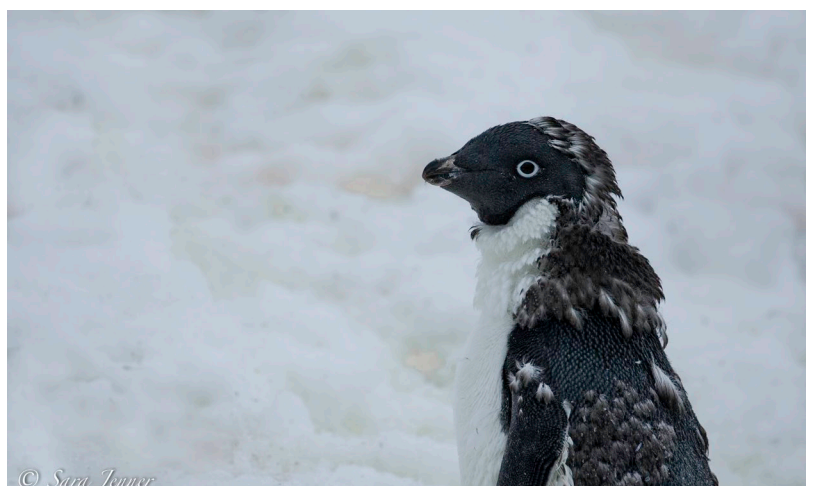
things.



In the afternoon, weather conditions worsened to just over 30 knots of wind, making the anticipated visit to Charcot Island impossible, so we made the decision to get a head start south towards the Polar Circle. This gave us the opportunity to dry our gear, enjoy the passage through icy waters full of wondrous formations, and listen to Adam's presentation about the use of dogs in

Antarctica. In stark contrast to the ponies used on early expeditions, dogs fared well in the cold conditions and loyally served the explorers of the Heroic Age as well as later-day research teams until the Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty outlawed them in the 1990s.

During our daily recap, humpback whales were tail slapping right next to the ship, stealing our attention away from Adam's short presentation on Charcot, Martin's penguin behaviour lecture, and Sara's description of Penguin Watch, a citizen science project that everybody visiting the Antarctic is invited to participate in. Then on it was to dinner, where we rehashed our exhilarating encounters with the inhabitants of Petermann Island while the ship calmly continued sailing us further south towards the Southern polar circle.

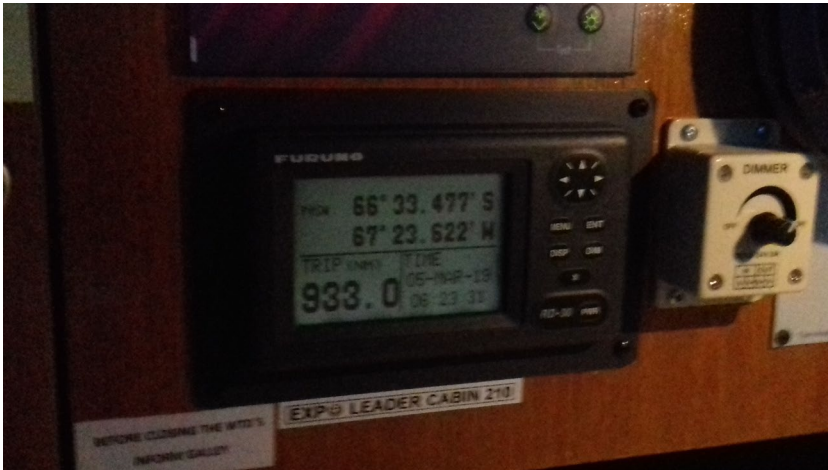


Day 6 – March 5th, 2019

South of the Circle, Crystal Sound

GPS 08.00 Position: 66°35.4'S / 067°17.7'W

Wind: N 6 **Sea State:** Calm **Weather:** Slight snow **Air Temp:** +1°C **Sea Temp:** -1°C



Just after 6 o'clock in the morning we passed the Antarctic Polar Circle: 66° 33' 47.5'S. This is the line of latitude past which the sun remains above or below the horizon for at least one full 24 hour period once per year. The Plancius continued to sail south passing rather large icebergs along the way and there was so much wildlife: Southern elephant seals, many crabeater seals, a few Antarctic minke whales, Southern fulmars, and snow petrels accompanied us well into Crystal Sound!

After breakfast Ali gave the exciting announcement that there would be a zodiac cruise starting at 08:45 and a second one at 10:00. Happy faces were beaming all around and warmly wrapped up in several layers of clothes we boarded the zodiacs. There was so much to see! Crabeater seals were hauled out on the ice floes and large blue icebergs loomed up from a hazy horizon as the zodiacs weaved their way through the ice and wildlife. The Plancius also made its way passing huge ice floes dotted with many crabeater seals to entertain those who stayed on board. The crabeater seal is the most numerous seal on the planet. Most crabeater seals routinely haul out onto the pack ice, but even then, only about 20% of them will be hauled-out at any one time in an area!



When we came back onboard the Plancius there was a hot surprise for us – hot chocolate with rum and cream. Sara soon rounded us all up to make a group photo behind the bridge. The Plancius then turned around and started heading back north as the ice conditions were too thick to continue further with any hope of making landings. Although the visibility was variable, we could see more huge ice floes and impressive icebergs along the return route north. The occasional humpback whales were fluking while we sailed by, bidding us farewell from our most southerly point.



In the afternoon, Adam gave a lecture in the lounge on the two famous Polar Explorers: Scott and Amundsen. At the end of the afternoon Michael announced that we were all invited for Happy Hour at the Bar – there we exchanged photographs and shared adventures whilst we were looking back on yet another great day.



During Recap, Ali prepared us for tomorrow's plans and Andrea talked about the ice babies – the first humans that were born in Sub-Antarctic waters and on the Antarctic continent. Marijke then followed with an overview on humpback whale migration and how she participated 20 years ago in setting up the Antarctic Humpback whale fluke catalogue. Jos then explained to us how easy it is to submit your own

whale fluke photographs to the website Happywhale.com.

Dinner was served in remarkable flat calm sea conditions. During the night, the Plancius continued sailing north on a gentle long rolling swell.



Day 7 – March 6th, 2019

Yalour Islands / Vernadsky Base + Wordie Hut

GPS 08.00 Position: 65°11.0'S / 064°17.3'W

Wind: SW 4 **Sea State:** Calm **Weather:** Fog banks **Air Temp:** 0°C **Sea Temp:** -1°C

It's day seven, and we once again wake up to a grey Antarctica. Large chunks of ice float by as we slowly cruised through the thick fog towards our morning destination, Yalour Island. Soon after breakfast the staff heads out to scout a landing site. It turns out to be a difficult task as the fog gets thicker. Thanks to GPS navigation, however, an appropriate landing site was established, and at nine thirty the first guests went ashore.



Because only 60 guests are allowed on the island at one time the morning activity had to be split between landing and a Zodiac cruise. Passengers ashore



opted for a short hike up the snowy slope towards the higher view point, passing by lovely adolie penguins who live on the island. Up on top the views were impressive, but not very far reaching because of the fog. Close at hand there was also a lot to see—a surprising variety of mosses and lichens have colonized the rocks and crevices here, showing the rare green side of Antarctica's biota.

Meanwhile down below on the water, the rest of the Plancius guests were cruising around the island where both Weddell and crabeater seals were hauled out on the ice floes. Of course, all of this was surrounded and enhanced by the constant presence of all manner of wave and sun shaped icebergs. After more than one hour both groups swapped places



and got to appreciate both activities and perspectives.



how life at the base would like in the mid-20th century. After a little over an hour the group swapped to Vernadsky Station, which is the oldest operational station in the Antarctic Peninsula with continuous meteorological records since 1947.

The station was transferred from British Antarctic Survey (UK) to Ukraine in 1996 (for the price of £1) and then renamed after the famous researcher Volodymyr Vernadsky. It is a nice and “old school” research station with its famous bar still providing a warm welcome to visitors. During the late afternoon, the ice around the island made navigation back to the ship difficult, but at seven pm we were all back onboard for a barbecue on deck to celebrate our successful voyage so far.



Day 8 – March 7th, 2019

Damoy Point / Neko Harbor

GPS 08.00 Position: 64°49.2'S / 065°32.4'W

Wind: E 7 **Sea State:** Calm **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** 1°C **Sea Temp:** -1°C

Another amazing day to be in Antarctica: a bit of fog covered the horizon, but the icebergs and the calm sea made up for it. Ali woke us up at 7:15 and we had almost arrived at our first landing site of the day, Damoy Point. After breakfast, around 8:45, we all gathered at the gangway to wait for our zodiac shuttle. Arrived ashore, there were two options for a hike. The longer hike was led by Martin, a loop heading across the island and up onto a long ridge and back down to an historic hut and penguin colonies. The option of a shorter hike simply went along the penguin colonies to the historic hut. We all put on snowshoes because of the steep and sometimes slippery slopes and left the landing site, past groups of gentoo standing watch on rocky outcrops. The long hikers eventually trekked up onto a ridge that at one time was used as a ‘ski-way’ by the British Antarctic Survey from the 1950’s to the 1980’s. BAS staff would arrive by ship and then be flown, by small twin otter planes with skis attached, further south to the British base Rothera. From the top of the ski-way there were stunning views all around. We could look down on Port Lockroy and with the

sun making the tops of the snowy peaks glow and glitter (before the fog rolled in!), it was really a lovely hike.



Most of us ended at the small blue building next to the shores of Dorian Bay. The Damoy Hut, at the bottom of the skiway hill, used to be the accommodation and refuge for passengers waiting to fly, especially if there was bad weather. This building is now maintained by the British Antarctic Heritage Trust as a small museum conserving the more modern exploration and research history of BAS.

Everyone was back at the landing site around 11h am because there was a bit

of navigation to our next landing site, Neko Harbour. It would be our first continental landing and we could feel the excitement of setting foot on the Antarctic Peninsula. Once we arrived at shore, there was a male Weddell seal gracefully napping on the ice. We walked around him, trying not to disturb his resting time. The team had already set up a walking route for us, marked by the familiar red poles, to help us navigate



through the numerous, deep-cut penguin highways. The route then took us on a tour through some gentoo colonies just off the beach and then had us work our way up a hill (that got more and more slippery) to a view point—which we shared with another gentoo colony; they certainly had one of the best front yard views imaginable! The icefalls back of the small bay were a most impressive backdrop, with massive chunks of hanging ice looking like they were ready to calve at any moment. While the day went on, there were more and more cracks heard from the glacier and a few calvings were observed off the front side. As more people arrived at the top gentoo colony, Adam and Alexis led the most intrepid hikers

up further, for an even more elevated view of our surroundings. Conditions were getting more and more slippery and so everyone was watching their footing on the way back down the hill.

Even if this landing was a bit shorter than usual, we had time to enjoy gentoo family drama, skuas on the hunt, and even a much-hoped for calving of a small piece of ice off the front of the glacier. The swell created was enough to throw some small waves crashing onshore but fortunately for us and the gentoo it was nothing like the tsunami-size waves that we had been warned were possible. Even the Weddell seal, that just woke up from his nap, did not seem bothered by it and slowly made his way to the water. We could have all spent much more time on shore watching all of the wildlife and ice dramatics but as usually we had a schedule to keep so we could fully enjoy our final landing excursion tomorrow morning. And so, finally made the move to don our lifejackets, walk down to the water's edge, and board the zodiacs for our return to the ship.



At 5:30, everyone was back on board and we set sail for our last landing of the trip, Half Moon Bay in the South Shetland Islands. Like every

evening, we finished the day with a cold drink served by Raquel and a recap where the staff shared some interesting facts about birds and Weddell seals—including their vocalizations that sounded like an alien space movie soundtrack! Ali showed us the forecast for our Drake passage. It will not be the nice smooth sail we had from Ushuaia. Some of us looked more excited than others. Oh well, we will see what the next few days brings.

Day 9 – March 8th, 2019

Half Moon Island

GPS 08.00 Position: 62°45.1'S / 059°53.6'W

Wind: WSW 5 **Sea State:** Moderate **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** 0°C **Sea Temp:** -1°C

Our wakeup call arrived at a leisurely 7:45am this morning – unheard of! Many of us had been up and (metaphorically) running much earlier already, excited about our upcoming visit to the South Shetland Islands.

At 9:15am, we arrived in the bay in which lies nestled Half Moon Island, our last Antarctic landing on this trip. Out by the gangway, we could feel that temperatures were lower than they had been in the past few days, and the wind did its bit on top of it. Nevertheless, after a breezy Zodiac ride to the raised cobbled beach, we were excited to explore the volcanic geology and unusual-looking rock formations of this island. A wooden dory, picturesque and in surprisingly intact condition, lay to the left of our landing area.



We were able to observe several smaller colonies of molting chinstrap penguins, most of whom stood near-motionless, enduring the changing of the feathers in the usual stoic-seeming way. A few chicks would from time to time bring some movement into the groups by loudly demanding to be fed, either to be indulged by an adult purging up small amounts of food, or to be turned away unsuccessfully. Molted feathers whirled around in the wind gusts like sorry-looking snowflakes!

Our expedition team marked two routes for us, one leading over a little rocky pass down to the beach and to a chinstrap colony. We were able to observe numerous adolescent fur seals jousting playfully in the surf or simply resting on the cobbles. We were taught to raise our arms, make ourselves big, and not flee if and when any of the animals pretended to charge at us intruders. Some of us had the opportunity to demonstrate our knowledge, much to the fascination and glee of bystanders - "better you than me, mate!"



Our guides opened a walk to the north-

western side of Half Moon Island which led us through plenty of resting, jostling, photogenic fur seals. At the end of this stretch, we could see the Argentine summer-only research station of Camara Base consisting of several buildings and the big, distinguishable pale blue and white national flag on the roof.



The scientists had already left for the season, but what did remain were four elephant seals resting in the surf. Still without their fully developed snouts, these juvenile males were enjoying a companionable snooze by the beach.

With a heart that was both heavy to be leaving and glad to

have been there, we boarded our Zodiacs back to the ship and to lunch. Our last landing of this trip had brought us close to wildlife, vegetation, and Antarctic extremes once again.



In the afternoon, Laura gave an introduction to Antarctic geology, which tied in with what we had seen during this landing. This was followed by Jos, who complemented this theme with a lecture about lichens and mosses, including an image of a mushroom she had spotted by chance during a previous landing! Some of us recognized the pictures of Antarctic hair grass which we had spotted on Half Moon Island. The educational part of the afternoon was followed by the Plancius Pub Quiz: 45 questions of various levels of difficulty about all things Antarctic! Team Crabeater Seals took the cake (and Friends With Pebbles won best team name!), but in reality we all felt like winners—realizing how much we had learned, absorbed, retained, and discovered during the past action-filled and eye-opening voyage.

We ended this day with dinner and reminiscing about all things seen, smelled (penguins, anyone?) heard, and felt during the last twelve hours.

Day 10 – March 9th, 2019

At Sea to Ushuaia

GPS 08.00 Position: 59°29.5'S / 060°06.5'W

Wind: W 29 **Sea State:** Rough **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** +3°C **Sea Temp:** +1°C

A day at sea.

After an early night of slight rolling, the Plancius changed course at around 03:00am and most of us were woken up by a more feisty rolling motion. The Plancius rocked back and forth as the call for breakfast came but this morning it came a little later. Another day on the open seas! Fin whales were accompanying us briefly but then it became a little quiet on the wildlife front. The occasional soft-plumaged petrels and



black-browed albatrosses flew by but that was about it despite the good wind. Most of us managed to make it to the dining room for breakfast and soon we adjusted to the rolling motion of the Drake.

At 09:30 Martin taught us all about a rather important key species in the food chain and Antarctic ecosystem – Krill, which is on the menu of many Antarctic fauna, ranging

from the largest whales to the smallest of the birds. After this lecture we were greeted by some enthusiastic and rather speedy hourglass dolphins – they came to bow-ride and we could see their striking black and white flank patterns as they jumped clear from the water!

Ali then gave a talk on 'Ice Maidens' – the women of Antarctic exploration. She spoke about some of the women behind the men, including the wives of Sir Ernest Shackleton and Sir Robert Scott and how much they influenced the lives of these famous polar explorers. It was certainly a different look at this region of the world.

After lunch, Catherine spoke about diving in Antarctica – it was quite fascinating to find out what lies beneath this beautiful sea and what our diving team had been seeing during our trip – from small fish to playful seals! At 4:30pm Joselyn gave a presentation on how it is to live on an Antarctic Station – she has spent a few years working at the McMurdo Station (Ross Sea) and also at the South Pole Station. We were all fascinated by stories of life at the Pole with Jos showing great footage of her hydroponic gardens, growing greens for consumption through the winter. There were also entertaining stories of the busy social life on base with creative and imaginative ways of helping the long winter night pass by.



During Recap, Alexis gave us a presentation about all the kayaking adventures experienced during the trip, including close-up photos of leopard seals and stunning ice formations. Ali & Michael then came in with info and details about the next day and about disembarkation in Ushuaia; not the funniest part, but all good things and all good cruises must come to an end. Dinner was served and we all went to bed whilst the Drake was shaking us gently (and sometimes firmly) back and forth in our cosy cabins.



Day 11 – March 10th, 2019

At Sea to Ushuaia

GPS 08.00 Position: 55°59.0'S / 064°15.8'W

Wind: WNW 4-5 **Sea State:** Moderate **Weather:** Drizzle **Air Temp:** +6°C **Sea Temp:** +6°C

Well, it was a rough night rocking and rolling on the Plancius but even still breakfast was a cheery scene and the morning lecture by Adam about Shackleton's story of endurance was well attended. It was also a good morning for birds, what with the sustained winds, and several species were sighted.



© Marijke de Boer

Keen lecture-goers continued on with Sara's grim but necessarily informative talk about whaling; more than one person went away from the talk in disbelief of how many whales were harvested from the Southern Ocean over such a short period of time, often for what feels like now to be trivial uses such as margarine. It is wonderful that some species such as humpbacks seem to be making somewhat of a recovery in numbers but it is hard to imagine what the southern waters could have been like on our trip if

the whaling industry had not been so successful. Throughout the morning the waters seemed to calm a bit and as lunch began the sun came out and the swell lessened... and land was on the horizon! Though Cape

Horn was out of sight to our west, the islands of Tierra del Fuego were a welcome sight. After a fine lunch in a lovely calm dining room ambiance, the afternoon promised more interesting lectures. Andrea spoke to us about Ushuaia and the variety of economic drivers as well as cultural opinions about life and work there.



In the mix were Michael's calls to reception so that final bills could be paid (and deals made about how many advance drinks to buy!) in preparation for disembarkation tomorrow morning. The skies had turned blue and the sun was out, and enjoying the light breeze and balmy air of the outer decks also brought lucky sightings of Peale's dolphins alongside the ship, as well as numerous birds

including Southern royal and wandering albatross as well as white-chinned petrels.

The final reminder that there were no more landings in sight was the call to return our muck boots, but the upside was that Captain's Cocktails was the next event on the program (free drinks! And ooh, canapes!). We toasted Captain Artur, the crew and staff, and each other for creating and sharing such an excellent trip together. We enjoyed our final evening on deck in the stunning weather, both before and after dinner—our final evening meal together and as usual it was an amazing spread. Last drinks were shared in the bar and when we



finally retired after packing and organizing ourselves for the morning, we rested well in the calm waters of the Beagle Channel, dreaming of the special times we shared and experienced over the past 11 days.

Day 12 – March 11th, 2019

Disembarkation - Ushuaia

After picking up the pilot at 8pm last eve, and a leisurely sail into port, we arrived at the pier around 1am in order to avoid the forecasted rising winds. In store for us this morning was a dry landing onto the dock—and a different kind of journey ahead-- involving planes, trains, and automobiles instead of ships, zodiacs, and kayaks. The last 10 days have taken us on a remarkable adventure to Antarctica and allowed us a glimpse of life in this remote and sometimes inhospitable place. We will all have different memories of our trip but whatever the memories, whether it was the gentoo penguins at Danco or Petermann, or the sight of zodiacs surrounded by ice and fog, they are memories that will stay with us for the rest of our lives.

Total distance sailed on our voyage:

2218 Nautical Miles

Furthest South:

66°33.48' S / 067°23.62' W

Your Expedition Team!

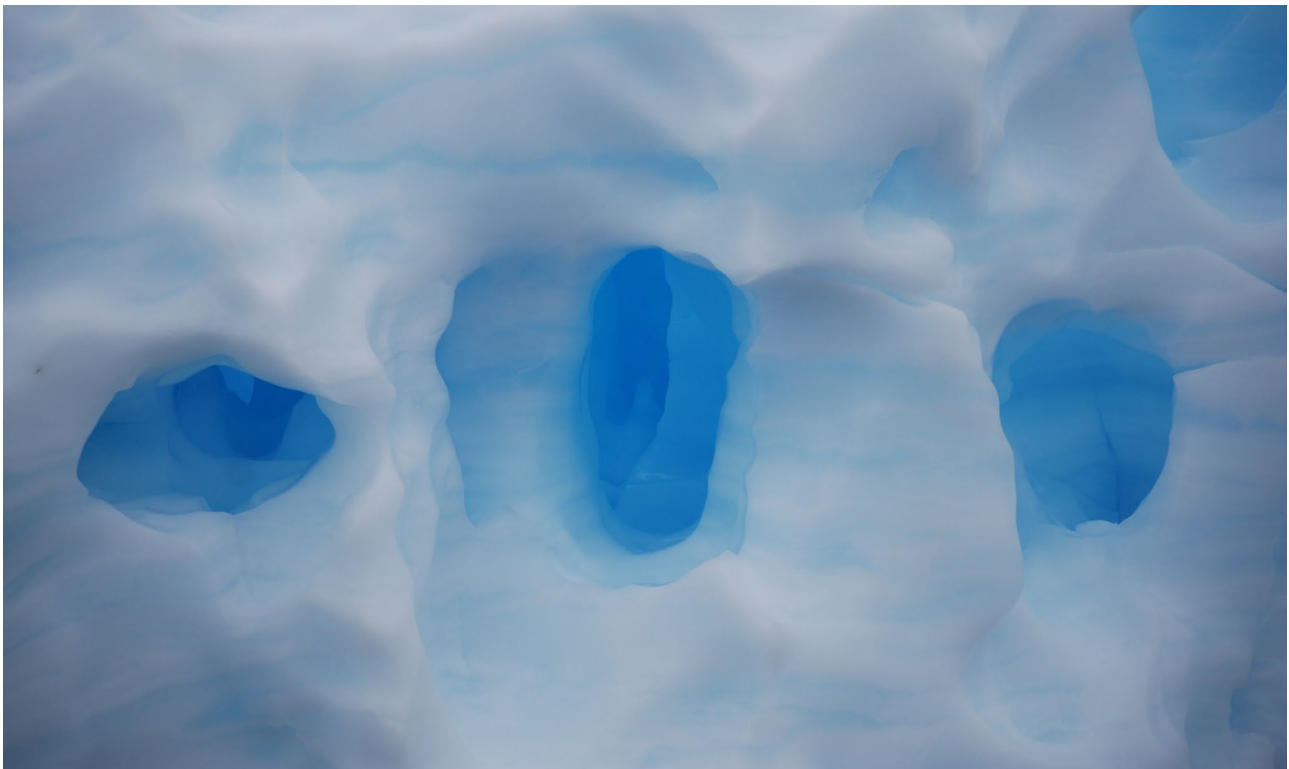


**On behalf of everyone on board we thank you for travelling with us
and wish you a safe journey home.**



ANTARCTIC PENINSULA (PLA29)
Kayaking Log
28th FEBRUARY - 11th MARCH 2019

Kayak Guide – Alexis Bellezze (AR)



Participants:

Claus	Stefanie	Heeten	Nicholas
Oleg	Todd	Jennifer	Peter
Katie	Danielle	Michael	Brittany
Melanie	Paul		

ORNE ISLAND

03 MARCH 2019 (AM)

The kayakers' first opportunity to get onto the water came about during the expedition's first landing on the Antarctic Peninsula at Orne Island. It was a full zodiac of all 12 kayakers plus Alexis Bellezze (guide) and Ferdinand (zodiac crew driver).



We had the best weather conditions, and we were able to do a nice trip around the bay and had a nice contact with a group of four beautiful Humpback Whales. They were swimming around us, moving away and coming again to interact with us. We followed them from a very close distance, we enjoyed the views of the fluke and the fin and we felt the energy of these peaceful sea mammals. We paddled more than an hour and a half in a complete silence having fun with the icebergs and learning how it is to do kayaking in this environment.





DANCO ISLAND

03 February 2019 (PM)

Beautiful Antarctic weather conditions. Second chance to appreciate the beautiful landscape of one of the most visited places, Danco Island. Hundreds of gentoo penguins around the landing area.

We paddled in a complete quiet bay, looking for icebergs. Everything was in motion. A lot of brash ice, growlers, and bergy bits. Many different ice shapes around us. We were cruising through the ice garden till we finally got to an iceberg with a group of crabeater seals. We were very close to them. They didn't realize our presence and so it was a special moment to take beautiful pictures and see the seals from different spots. Kayakers started to feel more comfortable with the paddling techniques, the gear, and the physical situation of being inside the cockpit.





PETERMANN ISLAND

04 February 2019 (AM)

Definitely the group had a fantastic kayaking experience this morning. We were paddling for 45 minutes till we managed to be close to a tabular iceberg. Was a technical paddle, dealing with a lot of ice, penguins jumping around as, ice floes moving with different speeds, currents around big icebergs, and all with the ship far away from us drifting. Beautiful.

The weather was cold and windy. We faced that and we did it well. We felt the cold and finally we decided to come back to the ship.

Wonderful.



ANTARCTIC POLAR CIRCLE

05 March 2019 (AM)

First time for all of us on the extreme south - the Antarctic Polar Circle. Foggy morning. No wind. Tabular icebergs and a lot of growler icebergs around. The place was quiet and we experienced the vacuum sensation to be far away from the land of the southern continent. Everything was calm. The ocean let us paddle very easy, no waves, just a breeze that was increasing after 40 minutes of paddling. We saw a lot of crabeater seals over the ice and finally we headed to a big castle iceberg which to our surprise was full of snow petrels that came to fly over us in circles.

Our turning back to the ship was just in time. The fog was dense and we almost couldn't see the ship from 150 meters of distance.





VERNADSKY BASE

06 March 2019 (PM)

Cold afternoon. We decided to head to Vernadsky Base through a dense drift of ice that almost closed the entrance of the channel that connects with the base buildings. It was a wonderful experience. Different. We managed to open a path just paddling between many of the ice bits; we were all together in a row and it was fun to do it.

Vernadsky Base from a kayak looks fantastic. And we felt proud that we did it. We continued our trip till Wordie Hut by kayak and it was a surprise for the people who were visiting the place by zodiac to see us there.

After the kayak trip we came back to the ship, changed our clothes, and were able to visit the base by zodiac. This time we realized the size of our adventure—it was difficult for the zodiac to make it because of the ice.





DAMOY POINT

07 March 2019 (AM)

Everybody was ready that morning. Was cold. But all of us were looking for a whale. Everybody was checking the ocean for that. We decided to start our trip at Port Lockroy but a young leopard seal came to us and she was super curious about us. She was close to the zodiacs and to the kayaks, jumping around, from both sides... so we decided to change the area for safety. We moved away to Damoy Point.



When we were ready, and in kayaks on the ocean to start our trip, our crew zodiac driver Gaby alerted us about an adult leopard seal on the area swimming fast in our direction, so



Alexis called all kayakers to move away from the area paddling in a different direction, looking for open ocean. Gaby intercepted the leopard seal and provided excellent distraction with the zodiac until the seal got bored and stopped chasing us.

A tense situation but we managed very well. We continued our trip till we were in front of Damoy Point and we visited the gentoo penguin colony in the area close to the historical hut. After this we visited Neko Harbour (no kayaking in favor of a continental landing!) and then we tried to do some kayaking at Half Moon Island, one of the

South Shetland Islands. But the wind conditions were extremely dangerous to continue so we went ashore instead to enjoy the last landing of the expedition.



I hope you have enjoyed this trip and remember, you are Antarctic Ambassadors now. And more important, you know now that it's our major responsibility be eco-friendly with our planet. It depends on us.

Thank you to let me share this amazing experience with all of you. Keep in touch!

Best wishes,

Alexis (OEX Kayak guide)



Ali Liddle — Expedition Leader



English

Originally from the UK, Ali spent 15 years living in the Falkland Islands where she worked as a Primary school teacher both teaching out in 'camp' and at the school in Stanley. Latterly, she was employed as Education Officer for Falklands Conservation and shared her time between classroom teaching and conservation. In 1997, she spent 9 months living on South Georgia where she ran the Post Office and took every opportunity to hike, ski and explore the surrounding peaks and coastline.

She has published three books to date: *Plants of the Falkland Islands* and two art and craft books for children using penguins and albatross as the inspiration. Ali is a keen runner, having

completed three marathons in the Falkland Islands and two in the UK, and she also enjoys cycling, hiking and camping. Ali has been working on Antarctic and Arctic expedition cruises with Oceanwide for more years than she cares to remember and works on all of the Oceanwide vessels at some point during the year. She has recently relocated from Northumberland to the Isle of Skye where she is renovating a cottage and enjoying the hiking opportunities of the island.

Her particular interest is natural history and the wildlife, and she enjoys sharing her knowledge of and passion for the polar regions.

Adam Turner, FRGS — Assistant Expedition Leader



Adam was brought up in countryside of Essex, England. He began sailing at the age of 9 and began working on the local river aged 12 before leaving school. By 16 he had a small fishing boat and was working on boatyards and taking tourists to see the local seal colonies as well as helping out on the local lifeboat.

Adam then joined HM Forces and was posted to Northern Ireland and in the UK, he also served in Kenya as a boat operator. In 2002 Adam joined the Police and spent several years on a specialist unit working across the UK with his search dog Charley.

Since being a young lad Adam had dreamt of working in the Antarctic like his Uncle had done in the late 1980's, in 2014 Adam left the Police and worked as Boating Officer for British Antarctic Survey at King Edward Point, South Georgia where he spent just over a year. Adam studied at Middlesex University and gives lectures on history, in 2017 he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, he now works as guide and Consultant. Adam holds a commercial masters certificate and instructs in several marine disciplines, he enjoys diving, climbing, kayaking and outdoor activities.

Sara Jenner- Expedition Guide



For as long as Sara could remember she has had a passion for travel and searching for the wildest and most remote places on earth. Back in the UK when she was only 10, she remembers trading in her favourite pink bicycle for the money to start her travel fund. Every birthday and every Christmas she added a little more in the kitty and finally, at 18 she realised her dream of diving at the Great Barrier Reef! At that point the travel addiction was born!

Sara is a keen wildlife photographer and when she is not wrapped up warm in the polar regions she enjoys working as a photographic guide in Botswana, on the beautiful Chobe River and Okavango Delta, so really has a life of two halves.

Sara's love of wildlife and the great outdoors has taken her to all seven continents and she has travelled extensively in the polar regions including the Antarctic Peninsula, Falklands, Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland, Baffin Island and Canadian High Arctic. Returning to the UK, Sara used this knowledge to work in the travel industry as a polar specialist for several years, until the travel bug hit again, and Sara decided to swap life on the land for a life at sea and joined the Oceanwide Expedition Team in 2016.

Joselyn Fenstermacher – Expedition Guide



As an undergraduate, Joselyn studied behavioral ecology and conservation biology, going abroad to Ecuador and Tanzania completing hands-on, research-based semester courses studying the local flora, fauna, and conservation attitudes.

She has worked all over the United States including Alaska and Hawaii, and with all manner of critters including fish, brown bears, desert tortoises, and endangered birds. Over the past many years she has also been working in Antarctica, beginning with several seasons supporting the scientific research at two U.S. science bases (McMurdo and South Pole). More recently she has served as guide and education coordinator on expedition voyages to the Falklands, South Georgia, and the Antarctic Peninsula as well as in the Indian Ocean and around the UK and Scandinavia.

When back in the U.S. Joselyn spends most of her time in the Big Bend region of far western Texas where she has fallen in love with the Chihuahuan Desert. She works seasonally for the National Park Service as a bio-technician and interpretive Park Ranger, and completed her Master of Science botanical research there on Big Bend flora in 2007. Since then, she has continued investigating a small group of relatively unknown cacti, becoming a recognized regional expert.

Joselyn is passionate about learning more about the world around her, and sharing that passion with others- hoping to inspire a broader appreciation for, and understanding of, the fascinating world we live in.

Martin Berg – Expedition Guide



Martin's passion for birds and mammals has brought him all over the globe in his search for rare species. He has always been drawn to adventures and has participated in numerous expeditions into the Amazon rainforest, the Arctic, Caucasus, and the Himalayas to study rare and endangered bird species. He has also spent several seasons studying seabirds on islands in the North Atlantic Ocean and around New Zealand and as well as conducted at-sea surveys on seabirds and marine mammals in waters around Antarctica.

Martin has studied biology at Lund University in Sweden and marine biology at Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre in Canada and is currently doing his PhD at Stockholm University where he is investigating what impact overfishing has on seabird survival and population dynamics. Martin is skilled in bird and mammal identification, and while almost always focused with his binoculars, busy finding birds and whales, he always welcomes a good chat about ecology and conservation.

Marijke de Boer — Expedition Guide



Marijke grew up in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany. In the early-90s, she worked over a number of summers as a volunteer field biologist specialising in sea turtle conservation in Greece. This was a magnificent experience and formed the inspiration for switching her Academic career towards Marine Biology.

She is fascinated by cetaceans, and has worked with Minke whales in Scotland, Killer whales, Blue whales and Belugas in Canada, Bottlenose whales in the Arctic Labrador Sea, Risso's dolphins in the Irish Sea and Sperm whales off the Azores. She has also participated in various ocean-crossing surveys, namely the Davis Strait, Indian Ocean, South China Sea, Southern Ocean and Antarctica. These

surveys formed the core foundation of her detailed in-depth experience with marine mammals.

She completed a MSc in Marine Ecology (University of Utrecht) and a PhD (Marine Mammal Ecology) at the University of Wageningen focusing on the abundance and distribution of cetaceans using (low-cost) seagoing vessels ('Platforms of Opportunity').

Nowadays her research focuses on marine fauna within the Wider Caribbean Region, West Africa and Cornwall (UK). Marijke has produced a wide selection of scientific publications and presented numerous papers to various international conferences and committees.

Whilst she very much enjoys the academic side of her career, her first love is sharing her knowledge in the field. She has worked as a wildlife guide during multiple oceanic expeditions and is happy to 'escape the office'. She currently lives in the Netherlands and England and speaks Dutch, English and German. The ocean is very special to her – *'after more than 20 years of sailing the seven seas, it never fails to educate, surprise and enthrall me'*.

Laura Mony – Expedition guide

The ocean had always been part of Laura's life. She started spending time on sailboats when she was a baby and she sailed around the world crossing several oceans when she was between 12 and 14 years old.



That trip increased her passion for the ocean because she discovered its vastness and its importance on the earth's dynamic. Laura had the chance to start traveling very young and has been all over the world alone, with a backpack, with family or friends. These trips gave her the opportunity to develop an open mind and an intellectual curiosity about the climate phenomena that govern our planet.

Born in France, she grew up in the French part of Canada where she did her bachelor's degree in Geological Engineering. During her bachelor's degree, she became fascinated by the polar regions and wanted to continue her studies in that field. That is why, at the end of her degree, she left Canada for Tasmania, Australia, to do her Master in

Marine and Antarctic Science. During that degree she deeply studied this fascinating continent with a specialization in geophysics and glaciology.

Andrea Herbert – Expedition Guide



Andrea was born in Germany but now lives in New Zealand. A socio-cultural anthropologist with a South American regional focus (Peru, Argentina), she holds a PhD in Anthropology and Antarctic Studies. A Postgraduate Certificate of Antarctic Studies (2017) brought her to the Ross Sea region and the New Zealand Antarctic Station (Scott Base). Andrea works in the Antarctic sector, currently as an editor for the Antarctic Environments Portal.

Alexis Bellezze— Kayak Guide



Alexis previously served in the Army and Air Force and is a qualified veterinarian surgeon, with an expertise in Farming, Equine and Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation.

However, his love of wilderness and adventure took him to train as a kayak guide in Patagonia. He is also a qualified paraglider pilot, trekking guide and a Wilderness First Responder Instructor. He has extensive experience guiding tourists, mountaineers and kayakers, in the form of creating and delivering corporate development days, solo trips, expeditions and educational programmes.

He loves nothing more than being in the outdoors, especially if there is a chance to camp or see wildlife, but most importantly relishes the chance to share this with likeminded people.

Catherine Buckland – Dive Team Leader



Catherine Buckland is a Commercial Diver and diving instructor and spends the summer months of her time working in the UK doing this.

For the rest of the year she freelances working on a variety of different jobs. Able to teach a wide range of marine based qualifications and a diver medic has meant she can put these skills

into use in different roles but generally based in a marine environment.

Jobs have included safety diving for underwater filming, in a support role as medic and diver for (an almost) record breaking dive and quite recently working with a Japanese film company to support them in order to broadcast live in 4K definition for a world first from Antarctica

WILL GILBERTSON – DIVE GUIDE



Will has always been driven towards exploring the outdoors and there is plenty of scope for this in his native Scotland. The underwater world in particular has always fascinated him and he first started diving in 2005 on moving to Aberdeen to study Zoology at University. Since then, he has dived extensively around the coast of Scotland and has been involved in instructing with the Aberdeen University Sub Aqua club and driving

small boats to access the many wreck and scenic dives around the Scottish coast.

After finding the Scottish waters not quite cold enough, Will travelled to Iceland to dive the hydrothermal chimneys and continental rifts, before first joining Oceanwide for a voyage to Antarctica on board Ortelius in 2015 and the Arctic the following year in Greenland and Spitsbergen.

Will still lives in Aberdeen and after graduating from University, he spent 2 years researching the ecological effects of invertebrates and microbes in marine sediments for a Masters of Philosophy. After a few years delivering training to offshore personnel in marine search operations, sea survival and helicopter escape, Will returned to a more scientific role; he currently works for a craft brewery as a microbiologist.

Chris Booker - Dive Guide



Chris was born on the Island of Anglesey in the United Kingdom and grew up with a fascination for all things connected with the sea.

Chris is a Marine Biologist who has spent over 20 years working in various aspects of the Marine Industry... from biological surveys of coral reefs in the Caribbean to diving inspections of oil rigs as an offshore commercial diver in the North Sea and most parts in between including several trips to the Antarctic.

During this time he has also provided logistical support to various expeditions and marine biological surveys.

He is a commercial diving supervisor, and is also qualified as an instructor of both commercial and recreational diving, powerboating, sea survival and first aid and also an Offshore Dive Medic Technician.

Chris lived and travelled extensively throughout South and Central America for 8 years and is also fluent in Spanish.



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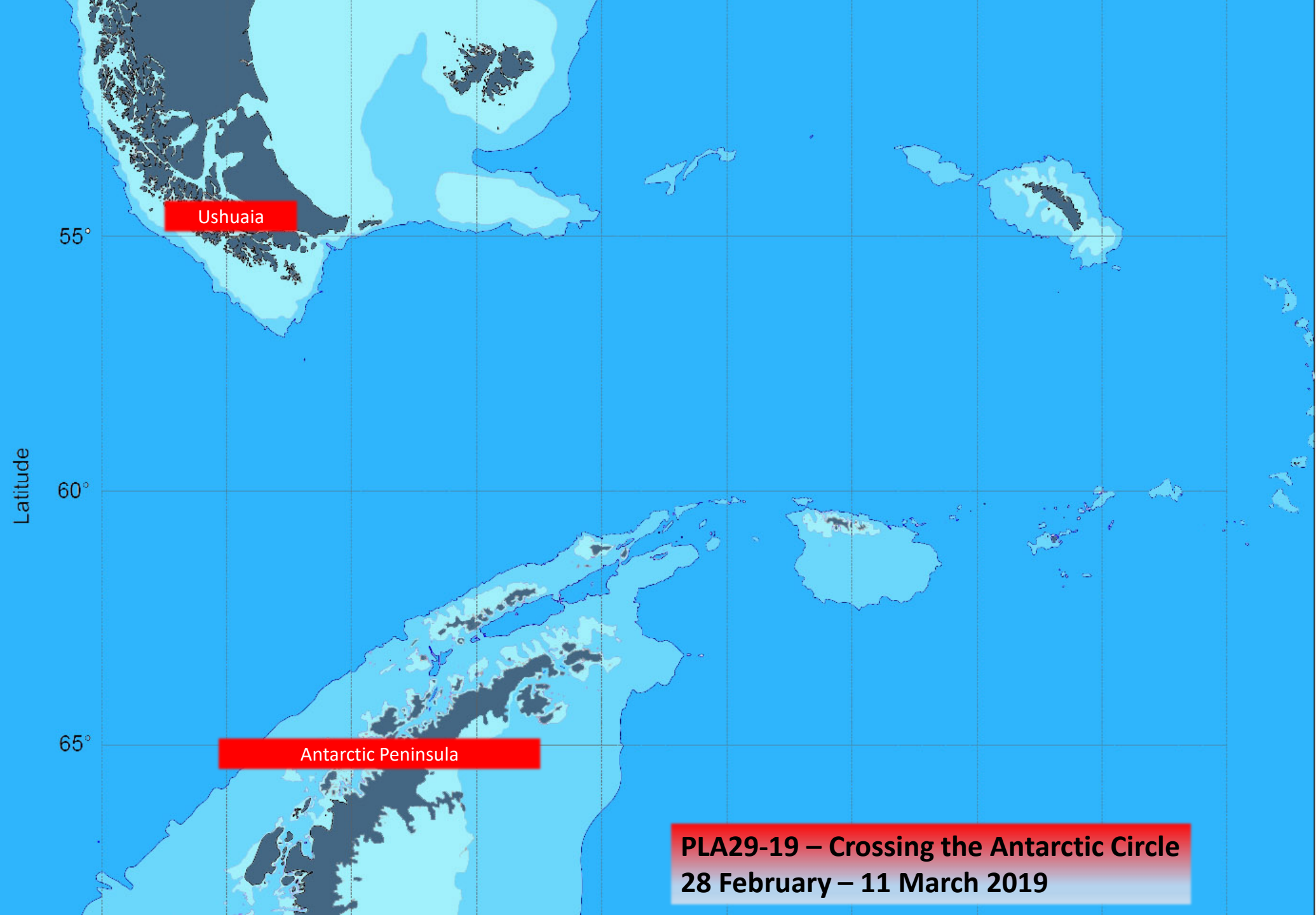
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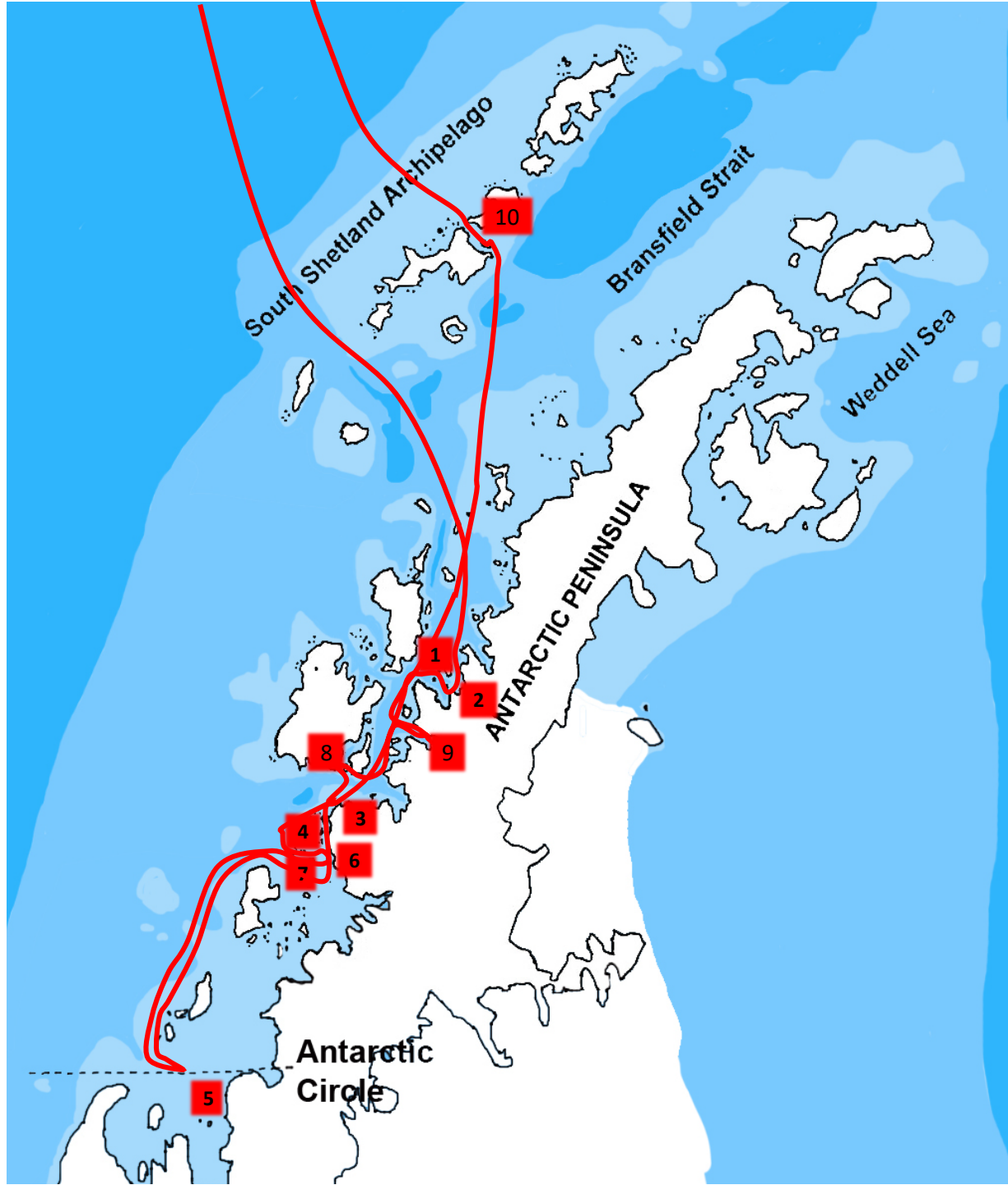
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The size of your photo should be between 2MB and 8MB. Our lucky winners will be contacted by e-mail and Facebook by 30 April 2019. The photography contest runs from 01 November 2018 until 31 March 2019.

Read the terms and conditions of the contest on www.oceanwide-expeditions.com/page/contest-terms



PLA29-19 – Crossing the Antarctic Circle
28 February – 11 March 2019



1. Orne Island
2. Danco Island
3. Lemaire Channel
4. Petermann Island
5. Crystal Sound (66° 36.115'S)
6. Yalours
7. Vernadsky Station
8. Damoy Point
9. Neko Harbour
10. Half Moon Island

Species list: Birds and marine mammals of the Antarctic region

		28-feb	1-mrt	2-mrt	3-mrt	4-mrt	5-mrt	6-mrt	7-mrt	8-mrt	9-mrt	10-mrt	
English	Latin												
Emperor Penguin	<i>Aptenodytes forsteri</i>												
Adelie Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis adeliae</i>					X		X					
Gentoo Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis papua papua</i>				X	X		X	X	X			
Chinstrap Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis antarctica</i>			X	X					X			
Magellanic Penguin	<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>	X											
Southern Rockhopper Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysolophus</i>		X										
Wandering Albatross	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>											X	
Northern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea sanfordi</i>												
Southern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>											X	
Black-browed Albatross	<i>Diomedea melanophris</i>	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X	
Grey-Headed Albatross	<i>Diomedea chrysostoma</i>		X	X		X	X				X	X	
Light Mantled Albatross	<i>Phoebastria palpebrata</i>		X										
Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>			X							X	X	
Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Antarctic Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>			X			X						
Cape Petrel (Pintado)	<i>Daption capensis</i>			X						X	X	X	
Antarctic Petrel	<i>Thalassoica antarctica</i>												
Snow Petrel	<i>Pagodroma nivea</i>		X	X		X	X	X					
Soft Plumaged Petrel	<i>Pterodroma mollis</i>										X		
Blue Petrel	<i>Halobaena caerulea</i>			X									
White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>											X	
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>											X	
Great Shearwater	<i>Puffinus gravis</i>											X	
Antarctic Prion	<i>Pachyptila desolata</i>		X	X							X		
Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>												
Slender-billed Prion	<i>Pachyptila belcheri</i>		X										
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Black-bellied Storm-Petrel	<i>Fregetta tropica</i>		X	X							X	X	
		28-feb	1-mrt	2-mrt	3-mrt	4-mrt	5-mrt	6-mrt	7-mrt	8-mrt	9-mrt	10-mrt	
Grey-backed Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanites nereis</i>												
Common Diving-Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides (urinatrix) berard</i>												
Imperial (Blue Eyed) Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax atriceps</i>	X										X	
Antarctic Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax bransfieldensis</i>				X	X		X	X	X			

[illegible]



Captain Artur Iakovlev

Chief Officer:	Francois Kwekkeboom	[Netherlands]
2nd Officer:	Matei Mocanu	[Romania]
3rd Officer:	Warren Villanueva	[Philippines]
Hotel Manager:	Michael Frauendorfer	[Austria]
Assist. Hotel Manager:	Alex Lyebiedyev	[Ukraine]
Head Chef:	Khabir Moraes	[India]
Sous Chef:	Ivan Yuriychuk	[Ukraine]
Ship's Physician:	Marijke de Raes	[Belgium]

AND

Expedition Leader:	Ali Liddle	[United Kingdom]
Assist. Expedition Leader:	Adam Turner	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Sara Jenner	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Joselyn Fenstermacher	[USA]
Expedition Guide	Martin Berg	[Sweden]
Expedition Guide:	Marijke de Boer	[Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Laura Mony	[Canada]
Expedition Guide:	Andrea Herbert	[Germany]
Kayak Guide:	Alexis Bellezze	[Argentina]
Dive Master:	Catherine Buckland	[UK]
Dive Guide:	Will Gilbertson	[UK]
Dive Guide:	Chris Booker	[UK]

Welcome you on board!



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Thursday 28th February 2019

Welcome on board!

Your luggage should already be in your cabin. Please check that you are not missing any luggage and if there is luggage in your cabin that does NOT belong to you or your cabin mate please tell a member of staff or crew. Feel free to explore the ship. Tea and coffee is always available in the Lounge on Deck 5

~1715 We would like to invite you to the **Lounge** (Deck 5) for a welcome from Expedition Leader **Ali Liddle** and an introduction to the ship by Hotel Manager **Michael Frauendorfer**.

This will be followed by **Mandatory Safety and Lifeboat Briefing** in the Lounge. **ALL** passengers **must** attend this very important safety briefing.

Lifeboat Drill.

After the briefing we will complete the **Lifeboat Drill** but the timing of this will depend on our departure from the pier so please listen for alarms and announcements and make your way to the Muster Station, the Lounge, on Deck 5.

The Bridge and Bridge wings will be closed this evening.

~1900 **Captains Cocktails!** Captain **Artur Iakovlev** invites you to join him for a welcome drink in the Lounge. You will also meet the Expedition Team and hear more about our voyage to the Polar Circle

1930 **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room located on Deck 3 (behind reception). Bon appétit!

If you think you may require sea sickness medication then please take it at this time! Dr Marijke will be available in the lounge after dinner if you require any additional medication or advice.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Friday 1st March 2019

- 0730 Your first Wake Up call from your Expedition Leader, Ali. Good Morning!
- 0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0930 **Rubber Boots!** At this time, we would like to give out your rubber boots, which you will need for every landing in Antarctica. We will do this by deck so please listen for announcements over the PA system. The Boot Room is situated on Deck 3.
- 1030 **Divers.** Please meet Catherine and the team in the Dining Room for a meeting about your dive trips during this voyage.
Kayakers. Please meet Alexis in the Library for information about Kayaking.
- 1100 **Seabirds.** The Drake Passage is a great place to see Southern Ocean seabirds. If you would like to find out more about the species we might see and how they are adapted to life at sea then please join **Martin in the Lounge** for his presentation.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 **Ice.** We are travelling to the frozen continent of Antarctica and will see plenty of ice on our voyage. If you would like to find out more about Antarctic ice then please join **Laura in the Lounge**.
- 1500 – 1630 Divers. Your Dive Guides** will be available in the Dining Room and Deck 4 Forward to check weights and regulators. Please make sure you do this during the allocated time slot.
- 1630 **Penguins.** We hope to see a number of different penguin species during our time in Antarctica, Gentoo and Chinstrap penguins. If you would like to find out more about these iconic little birds then please join **Sara in the Lounge**.
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap**. This is where we look back upon our day and towards future plans.
- 1900 Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Saturday 2nd March 2019

- 0730 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0930 **Zodiac Briefing.** This is a mandatory briefing for all passengers who wish to go ashore during this voyage. It will outline our Zodiac operations on board Plancius. This will be followed by a mandatory IAATO briefing which outlines the guidelines regarding our expedition to Antarctica. **Please join Ali in the Lounge.**
- ~1015 The briefings will be followed by Bio-security procedures on board which will involve vacuuming your outer clothing, particularly Velcro fastenings as well as camera bags and back packs. You then need to sign a bio-security declaration. We will call you to the Lounge by Deck number/cabin number so please listen for announcements.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- Bio security procedures will continue in the Lounge. Don't forget to sign with the staff!
- 1500 **Southern Ocean Whales.** We hope to see plenty of whales during our voyage in Antarctica, maybe Fin whales and certainly some Humpback whales. If you would like to find out more about the species we might see then please join **Marijke in the Lounge** for her presentation.
- 1630 **What Lies Beneath?** Ever wondered how the marine ecosystem of Antarctica works? The large species, such as whales and seals rely on the presence of the smaller critters. Please join **Jos in the Lounge** to find out more.
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap**. This is where we look back upon our day and explain plans for tomorrow. There may also be stories from staff.
- 1900 Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Sunday 3rd March 2019

- 0645 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0700 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0800 Divers.** Please come to Deck 4 Forward to prepare your dive equipment
- ~0840 **Orne Island.** For our first landing we would like to take you ashore on Orne Island. This small island is home to Gentoo penguins and Chinstrap penguins. You can walk around the colonies on the island and visit the penguins but please follow the red markers and remain on the tracks. Please give penguins the right of way as they travel too and from the colony.
- Kayaking Group:** Please listen for announcements for your meeting time and place.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- ~1430 **Danco Island.** We hope to be able to take you ashore at Danco Island, which is home to large colonies of Gentoo penguins. On shore we would like to offer you the chance to take a snow shoe hike to the top of the island. Martin will be your lead guide so please follow his route carefully as you will pass close by to penguin colonies and there are known crevasses on the top of the island.
If you do not want to hike then enjoy the penguins at a lower level.
We may offer you a chance for a Polar Plunge, an opportunity to swim in the waters of Antarctica! We'll bring the towels, you bring the insanity!!
- Divers and Kayaking Group:** Please listen for announcements for your meeting time and place.
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap**. This is where we look back upon our day and explain plans for tomorrow. There may also be stories from staff.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Monday 4th March 2019

0645 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!

At this time, we hope to transit through the **Lemaire Channel**, a beautiful, narrow channel to reach our planned destination of Petermann Island but this will depend on the ice conditions we find there. Enjoy the views from the deck and please listen for any announcements regarding our progress.

0730 Breakfast Buffet is served in the Dining Room for one hour.

~0900 **Petermann Island.** After breakfast we plan to go ashore on Petermann Island. On shore we will find Gentoo penguins but also a small colony of Adélie penguins as well. Staff will mark the route to the penguins with red poles and maybe a longer walk along the island ridge. Please stay on these marked trails as there are known crevasses and snow overhangs at the edge of the island.

1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.

~1415 **Port Charcot.** Our afternoon location is in Port Charcot on Booth Island. This was the place where Jean Baptiste Charcot brought an expedition in 1903. On shore we will take you to the Gentoo penguin colonies and where we can sometimes find Chinstrap and Adélie penguins as well. There will also be an opportunity to hike to the top of the island where there are stunning views over the surrounding area.

After the landing we will start to sail further south. The navigation should take us past many icebergs and it will take us all night to reach the area of the Polar Circle.

1845 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for our daily re-cap.

1915 Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Tuesday 5th March 2019

Expedition Day South!

We aim to cross the Polar Circle at around 0600 but this will depend on our speed through the night. Before this, according to the ice chart we also expect to encounter more ice so our speed is likely to be reduced for safe navigation.

I may wake you early if it is looking like a magical morning!

Sunrise is approximately 0530

0715 Official, planned Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!

0730 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.

Our plans for the morning will depend upon the ice conditions we find in Crystal Sound.

Plan A is to try to get further south and land at Detaille Island but if we find a lot of ice blocking our navigation and slowing our progress then we will take the Zodiacs out for a Polar Circle cruise amongst the icebergs instead.

Please listen for announcements over the PA system.

1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.

Expedition Afternoon!

Again, our plans for the afternoon will depend on the ice conditions we find in Crystal Sound during the morning and if we manage to navigate as far as Detaille Island. Please listen for updates from Ali.

1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap**. This is where we look back upon our day and explain plans for tomorrow. There may also be stories from staff.

1900 **Dinner** is served. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Wednesday 6th March 2019

- 0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0730 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0900 **Yalour Islands.** These are a series of low-lying islands where there are a number of Adélie penguin colonies as well as some Gentoo penguins. The main island is not big so we will take half of you ashore first and take the rest of you out in the Zodiacs to cruise the channels and see what we can find in the area. It is sometimes good for whales around the islands.
You do not need to come in groups. We will take the first 4 boats to shore and the next 4 boats will go cruising and then we will swap on shore.
Divers and Kayakers please listen for announcements.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- 1430 **Vernadsky Station and Wordie House.**
Today Vernadsky station is a Ukrainian base although it used to be owned by the British and known as Faraday Base. It was sold to Ukraine in 1996 for £1 as the cost of dismantling the base would have been too great. You may send a postcard from the base and I will give you further information about currency and passport stamps at lunch time.
Wordie House, on Winter Island is an historic hut formerly known as Base 'F'. We will take a step back in time when we go to visit this old British Antarctic Survey base. The area around is very scenic and we will offer a short Zodiac cruise to get there and an easy walk to a low summit viewpoint.
You do not need to come in groups. We will take the first 4 boats to shore to the station and the next 4 boats will go to Wordie House and then we will swap over.
Divers and Kayakers please listen for announcements. We will try to arrange a visit to the station at the end of your activity.
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap**. This is where we look back upon our day and explain plans for tomorrow. There may also be stories from staff.
- 1900 **Special Antarctic Dinner** is served. Please dress warmly!! Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Thursday 7th March 2019

- 0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0730 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- ~0830 **Damoy Point.** We hope to be able to take you ashore at Damoy Point where there are plenty of Gentoo penguins and a historic hut. On shore we would like to offer you a snow shoe hike to the top of the ski way, which used to be used by ski planes flying scientists to the interior of Antarctica. If you do not want a long hike then take some snow shoes anyway and enjoy a walk by the penguin colonies.
Divers and Kayakers, please listen for announcements!
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 **Neko Harbour.** This will be your continental landing! This morning we hope to take you ashore on the continent of Antarctica. From the landing site we will offer a walk past the Gentoo penguin colonies and their penguin highways to reach a viewpoint over the glacier. Please give the penguins the right of way on the way up and down and share the viewpoint space with your fellow passengers.
Divers and Kayakers, please listen for announcements!
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap.** This is where we look back upon our day and explain plans for tomorrow. There may also be stories from staff.
- 1900 Dinner is served. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Friday 8th March 2019

0745 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!

0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.

~0930 **Half Moon Island.** For your final landing in Antarctica we hope to be able to take you ashore at Half Moon Island where there are colonies of Chinstrap penguins on the rocky island summits and some beautiful glaciers on the nearby Livingston Island. We will walk you over to the colonies on the other side of the island where we sometimes find Weddell seals lying on the beach. Please follow the marked route and give penguins right of way at the penguin highways.

Divers and Kayakers, please listen for announcements!

1300 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.

1530 **Rocks and Lichens!** One can't survive without the other so if you would like to find out more about both then please join **Jos and Laura** in the Lounge for a joint presentation about the Geology of Antarctica and about Lichens and Plants of Antarctica.

1700 **Plancius Pub Quiz!** Have you been listening to the lectures and to the information given by guides on shore? Well, we'll test your Antarctica knowledge with a pub quiz in the bar! You need to get into teams of 4 – 6, give yourselves a creative team name and join the staff in the bar for some quiz questions. A prize will be given to the winning team!

1845 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap.**

1900 Dinner is served. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Saturday 9th March 2019

There will be NO wake-up call this morning but Michael will wake you for breakfast!

0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.

0930 **Krill.** As we know, Krill is one of the key species in the food chain and ecosystem of Antarctica. If you would like to find out more about these little pink critters and the role they play then please join **Martin in the Lounge.**

1115 **Ice Maidens, Women in Antarctica.** We often hear of the male explorers who made their mark on the continent of Antarctica during the golden age of exploration but who were the women behind the men and which women have made their own mark? Join **Ali in the Lounge** to find out.

1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.

1500 **Diving in Antarctica; What our divers saw...** During this voyage we have had 17 hardy souls braving the icy waters of Antarctica with the support of the Dive Team. If you would like to find out more about how diving in Antarctica has developed over the years, how our diving operations run on board Plancius and what our divers have seen during this trip then please join **Catherine, Chris and Will in the Lounge.**

1630 **Life at the South Pole.** Jos has been lucky enough to work at the South Pole and McMurdo Station for the US Antarctic Programme, spending both summers and winters on the continent. Please join **Jos in the Lounge** to hear about her time on base.

1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for the **Daily Recap.** This is where we look back upon our day and explain plans for tomorrow.

1900 Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Sunday 10th March 2019

- 0745 Wake up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
Divers: Please collect all of your Dive gear from the Boot Room before 0930. Thank you very much!
- 0930 **Sir Ernest Shackleton; A story of Endurance.** During the Golden Age of Exploration there were many explorers embarking on expeditions to Antarctica. Sir Ernest Shackleton was one of them on his ship, the Endurance. Please join **Adam in the Lounge** for a presentation about this expedition.
Divers: If you would like to have your log booked stamped with the Plancius stamp then please meet Catherine and the team in the Lounge after Adam's presentation.
- 1115 **The History of Whaling in the Southern Ocean.** We have been lucky enough to see plenty of Humpback whales during our voyage as well as some Minke whales and Fin whales but they were almost hunted to extinction during the late 19th and early 20th century. If you would like to find out more about the whaling industry then please join **Sara in the Lounge**.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
After Lunch Michael will call you by Deck to settle your accounts at Reception. Please listen for announcements
- 1500 **Ushuaia; Antarctic Gateway Port.** We started and will finish our Polar Circle expedition in the southern city of Ushuaia. If you would like to know about the city and how it developed as the gateway to Antarctica at the end of the world, fin del Mundo, then please join **Andrea in the Lounge**.
- 1630 **Rubber Boots!** We would like to collect your boots at this time. We will call you by deck so please listen for announcements.
- 1815 **Captain's Cocktails.** Please join us in the Lounge for a celebratory drink to toast the success of our Antarctic voyage. Ali will also outline plans for disembarkation in Ushuaia.
- 1900 **Farewell Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.



DAILY PROGRAM

Polar Circle, Antarctica!

Monday 11th March 2019

0700 Your final Wake-up call on Plancius from Ali.

As you leave for breakfast please place your large **check-in luggage** outside your cabin door and return your cards, key rings and card holders to Reception. You may leave your hand luggage in your room but please place it on the floor so the hotel staff can start to change the bed linen.

0730 Breakfast Buffet is served in the Dining Room for one hour.

Your luggage will be moved from the Ship to the pier. Please ensure you collect it from the pier prior to leaving!

~0830 All passengers leave the ship. Please make sure you have all your belongings

- If you are catching the airport bus: please collect your luggage and place it on the bus.
- If you have an afternoon flight: You can have your luggage stored. Please bring it to the luggage truck on the pier and it will be taken to **Avenida Maipú 1226**. This building is located past the service station and approximately 350 m to the left as you leave the pier, opposite the casino. ***You will need to pick up your luggage before 1400.***
- If you are staying in Ushuaia: You are free to leave the pier on foot with your luggage by the customs control entrance. Taxis can be found opposite the entrance to the pier.

On behalf of all the Staff and Crew on board Plancius we thank you for travelling with us. We wish you a safe and easy journey home.