



OCEANWIDE

EXPEDITIONS

Antarctic Basecamp

18 December – 28 December 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 Evgeny Levakov

and your international crew of 45

Chief Officer:	Francois Kwekkeboom	[Netherlands]
Second Officer:	Yaroslav Pyetukhov	[Ukrain]
Third Officer:	Nino Cizmic	[Croatia]
Chief Engineer:	Sebastian Alexandru	[Romania]
Hotel Manager:	Zsuzsanna Varga	[Hungary]
Asst. Hotel Manager:	Ana Sirbu Gomez	[Romania]
Chef:	Charlotte Broekhuizen	[Netherlands]
Sous Chef:	Ferenc Beranyay	[Hungary]
Ship's Physician:	Alexandra Taylor	[UK]

and

Expedition Leader:	Ali Liddle	[UK]
Asst. Expedition Leader:	Daniel Höhne	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	Jerry Zhao	[China]
Expedition Guide:	Marie Manceau	[France]
Snowshoe Guide:	Owen Mesdag	[US]
Kayaking Guide:	Alexis Bellezze	[Argentina]
Camping Guide:	Rustyn Mesdag	[US/Chile]
Camping Guide:	Jochem Braakhekke	[Netherlands]
Moutaineering Guide:	Mal Haskins	[New Zealand]
Moutaineering Guide:	Trevor Streat	[New Zealand]
Photography Guide	Werner Kruse	[South Africa]

Day 1 - Wednesday December 18, 2019

Embarkation – Ushuaia, Argentina

8h00 GPS Position: Ushuaia Port



We spent days dreaming about our voyage to come, hours shopping, reading, preparing logistics, excitedly chatting with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours about our atypical trip choice, then spent hours, days, traveling by planes, cars, buses... Finally, we got our first glimpse of Plancius. She awaited us quietly amongst other expedition ships –smallest, but fiercest. Her bright blue hull contrasted with the grey waters of the Beagle channel, and we proudly boarded the ship, greeted by a warm “welcome onboard!” of crewmembers that took care of our luggage and showed us the way to our cabins.



We readily started exploring the ship, striding along corridors and decks, excited like kids discovering a new playground. We rapidly found our way to the restaurant, the reception, the bridge, or the observatory lounge. We gathered in the latter for a mandatory security briefing given by our chief officer, **François**. Plancius negotiated a tricky exit of the pier and a U-turn. As she started to head down the Beagle channel, we complied to the drill, necessary simulation of the ship's evacuation in case of an emergency. We then enjoyed a brief presentation of life



onboard by our hotel manager **Zsuzsanna**, and were introduced to the ship's captain, **Evgeny Levakov**, a tall Russian man who has been sailing polar regions for the past 25 years, and the expedition team. Our expedition leader **Ali** is from the UK. Before working onboard expedition ships, she used to be a



schoolteacher and member of the conservation department in the Falkland Islands for 15 years! **Daniel**, from Germany, is Ali's assistant. Mainly based in Iceland, Daniel spends most of his time working as a naturalist guide all over the world. The rest of the team is composed of **Jochem**, glaciologist from the Netherlands, **Marie**, French researcher in developmental and evolutionary biology, **Jerry** from China, former international travel consultant gone rogue to become international travel guide, **Werner**, wild life photographer extraordinaire from South Africa, **Rustyn**, from the US but based in Patagonia where he runs a guide service, **Owen**, snowshoe designer and product manager from the US, **Trevor** and **Mal**, both highly experienced mountaineering guides from New Zealand, and **Alexis**, kayaking guide, who settled in a small mountain village in Argentina with the beautiful name of Villa La Angostura. What an international team! All its members are "bipolar": these passionate fellows, badly infected by the infamous polar virus, spend most of their time hopping from one pole to the other!

We are also informed that despite weather forecast announcing a rather smooth Drake passage, **Alexandra**, the ship's doctor, will stick around after dinner to distribute sea sickness pills. Debates ensues: to take medicine, or not to take medicine? That is the question.

Day 2 – Thursday December 19, 2019

At Sea towards the Antarctica Peninsula

12h00 GPS Position: 57° 23.2'S / 065° 12.5' W

Wind: W Sea State: Moderate Weather: Overcast Air Temp: 10°C Sea Temp: 6°C Visibility: Good

Drake lake or Drake shake...?

We woke up to calm seas and beautiful weather. The keen ones of us were already up and around when Ali made the first wake-up call of the voyage, but for those of us still being gently rocked in our beds it was time to get up and see what the day would bring. Smooth sailing gave us the opportunity to find our sea legs as the Drake was luckily not living up to its reputation for our first day onboard. After breakfast we strolled around deck and enjoyed the fresh air outside. A few Cape Petrels, Fulmars and Giant Petrels were gliding around the ship. Birds habitually follow ships at sea looking for food brought up to the surface by the wake, but also to enjoy the uplift created by our passing ship.



Cape Petrel



At 11:00am we were invited to the lounge for the mountaineering briefing hosted by Mal and Trevor. They gave a thorough explanation of the equipment we will need and use and the type of terrain and skill level needed for different landings. The excitement of a basecamp in Antarctica started to fill the room.

Lunch was served at 12:30 and we had some time to make a few new friends onboard before the next briefing. At 14:30 the Camping, Kayaking and Snowshoe briefings were held in the lounge. There certainly was a lot of interest in all the activities. Alexis gave a kayak demonstration and how we should react to different wildlife encounters on water. That was followed by Owen who briefed us on the snowshoe activities. Owen explained how snowshoes work and that he was part of the design team for the snowshoes we use onboard. Finally, one of the activities most guests are excited about

and at the same time a little bit nervous... Camping. Rustyn, demonstrated all the gear we would use and created big excitement for a night under the polar sky. Who would not want to wake up on Christmas morning in Antarctica, snuggled in a bivy bag surrounded by pristine snow?

Recap of the day was hosted by Ali before we headed for another delicious dinner. Gentle rocking of the ship made for a peaceful sleep in the middle of the Drake.

Day 3 – Friday December 20, 2019

At Sea towards the Antarctica Peninsula

12h00 GPS Position: 62° 04.2'S / 062° 34.7' W

Wind: NE **Sea State:** Slight **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** 4°C **Sea Temp:** 1°C **Visibility:** Good

A second full day at sea – it made our seemingly smaller and smaller planet, suddenly appear gigantic. The Drake however, was suspiciously friendly to us and many passengers were out and about. As a matter of fact, there was also enough to do this day! With mandatory IAATO briefings and the vacuuming of all our outer clothing and gear, we filled the complete morning.

The afternoon flew by as well, with an icy lecture presented by Jochem and a photography workshop with Werner behind the camera, excuse me, microphone. His instructions led many to ask heaps of questions and the guide team struggled to get him up in the office again, away from the crowds.



Humpback whales



By this time though, land was in sight! Smith Island, an impressively mountainous and glaciated island in the South Shetland group, moved by on our starboard side.

After this initial encounter with the Antarctic landscape, we steamed on with spectacular islands passing by on both sides of our Plancius. An aperitive for the continental approach and it was with slight arousal that most passengers hit the sack rather early today, for their Antarctic adventure was now truly about to start.

Day 4 – Saturday December 21, 2019

Cuverville Island – Neko Harbour

12h00 GPS Position: 64° 40.4'S / 062° 38.2' W

Wind: W Sea State: Slight Weather: Clear Sky Air Temp: 4°C Sea Temp: 1°C Visibility: Good



Today we arrived in the Antarctic peninsula, and enjoyed the first day of all activities. We were woken up by Ali. Our plan was to visit a place called Orne Harbour, but as we sailed towards this landing site, we encountered 30 consistent knots of wind. This is over operational limits, so we had to change plans. After discussion between Ali and the captain, we finally attempted landing on a small island called **Cuverville Island**. It displays Gentoo penguin colonies on both sides of the landing beach. As we stepped into the zodiacs and got closer to shore, we could observe a few small icebergs and swimming Gentoo penguins. On shore, the ice had melted into small water pools, that made it difficult for some of the passengers to walk to the penguin colonies at the lower level. It however did not stop anyone from seeing these cute birds in their natural habitat. After everyone was on shore, Ali led a track up the hill so we could enjoy the scenery from a higher view point.



Gentoo penguin



Weddell seal



In the afternoon, the wind was still not on our side, and we also had to change the plan for the afternoon. Again after a discussion between Ali and the captain considering all possibilities, we finally set sail towards **Neko Harbour**, for a continental landing. As we arrived on shore, two Weddell seals laid in the snow, resting. Thanks to all passengers following the wildlife guidelines, the seals were very relaxed and not bothered at all. As we moved along towards higher grounds, we saw more Gentoo penguin colonies separated by

penguin highways. Expeditions staff were placed at strategic locations, such as runway lights, making sure penguins had the right of ways. There were more than just penguin colonies at Neko Harbour. Following the track uphill beyond the colonies, we could make our way to a view point. Looking down, the view was spectacular, overlooking an impressive glacier front dropping in the ocean. The glacier at Neko Harbour is very active, and we often heard the sound of big pieces of ice calved off, creating big waves washing the shore. Everyone found time and place at the view point to enjoy this amazing scenery.



MOUNTAINEERING

Morning: Georges Point



After a series of changes to PLAN A, (which gave a hint of the weather to come) the Mountaineers made a landing at Georges Point. Our Team had their first experience of snow shoes on a short hike up the glacier to the point where we roped up and started our way up towards the short Col at the base Mt Adams.



This col is gained by a short steep hike up a slope and then across a well bridged crevasse before amazing views were revealed! Of course, part of the amazing views was of the increasing winds coming down the Gerlache Straight – so after a short rest we again made our way back down to the shore. The outgoing tide had made our journey back to Plancius a bit more difficult but with the willing help of our mountaineering team we were once again back onboard. Our first morning ashore on Georges Point was definitely an adventure!

Afternoon: Neko Harbour



The increasing winds on the morning of the 21st meant that our first major plan change occurred when we shifted to Neko Harbour for the afternoons shore activities. Neko provides a long gentle rise to a high view point over the ocean below. Plancius started to look like a small toy ship and the passengers on the beach more like Penguins themselves as we got higher and higher.

The mountaineering team had listened to their briefings well and were moving like professionals across and up the glacier – keeping the rope

just tight enough to hold a crevasse fall if one occurred. After reaching our high point some 350m above sea level and with slightly sore legs, we began to head back down to the shore. The enormous glacier to our right with wide open crevasses provided a dramatic backdrop to the images we took.

Our guides choose a safe route for us to get back to the lookout over the glacier where after a short rest we were able to take off the rope and our snowshoes and make

faster time back down to the shore, where true to form the Mountaineers were the last to get back to Plancius (Mountaineers are also the first passenger team to get off Plancius)



CAMPING -- Kerr Point



After the first day there was a lot of anticipation for our first night camping at Kerr Point. After scouting a prime spot earlier in the afternoon the weather could not have been more in our favour. We arrived at around 20.30 and immediately started working as a team to transform this remote camp spot into our home for the night. Weddel seals were spread out over the beach line in the snow on two side of us, and Gentoo penguins walked the rocks between them.

While we set up camp the wind picked up rapidly and blue three yellow sleeping kit dry bags into the water, as well as a bivy sack with a sleeping bag inside! It took some time, but Rustyn and Jochem were able to fish the equipment out of the waster, and luckily had extra equipment to replace the newly soaked gear.

After everyone was finished building there wind walls, everyone gathered to build a Christmas tree made of snow. Rustyn had brought some lights and after an hour of efforts, we had ourselves a wonderful little Christmas tree with lights and a glowing snow top, thanks to a pocket flashlight. Although it was the longest day of the year and it never got dark, the tree was visible thought the camp and gave us all a wonderful sense of Christmas.



Everyone crawled into our bivys for the night and tried to get some sleep, but the glaciers that surrounded us were quite active all

through the night and made for an eventful nights sleep. We woke up the following morning at 05.00am, and the zodiacs arrived exactly on time at 05.30am. It had dropped to -2C that night, but hot coffee waited for us on Ortelius. It was a great night out.

Day 5 – Sunday December 22, 2019

Port Lockroy – Damoy Point

12h00 GPS Position: 64° 49.6'S / 063° 30.3' W

Wind: NNW Sea State: Smooth Weather: Cloudy Air Temp: 4°C Sea Temp: 1°C Visibility: Good

For some of us, Ali's wake-up call was the second of the day, because the first was on shore, given by our camping guide Rustyn! Campers looked tired but happy this morning at breakfast, their stories getting others excited about their upcoming nights out!



Today's activities were all planned around Anvers and Wienke Islands, which are separated by the Neumayer Chanel. For the morning, Plancius anchored a few hundred meters away from **Port Lockroy**. One member of the staff working there during four summer months came onboard to give a short introduction of the site history as well as how to behave onshore. Port Lockroy is former

research base of the British Antarctic Survey, so-called "Base A", it owes its name to a French politician who helped fund its building, and shall thus be pronounced "Lokrowa", and not "Lokroye"! Nowadays, the station is composed of three black buildings: a storage facility, the living quarters of the four people working at base, and a small museum, also comprising a shop.

The latter, in which we are allowed to entered after having carefully brushed our boots, is a cute, black-painted wooden house with red and windows, sitting right above several gentoo penguin nests! In a few of these, much to our delight, tiny, wobbling chick heads would appear under adult's bellies. The staff at Port Lockroy told us most were born just a few days before! Here, just like anywhere, skuas and kelp gulls try and steal eggs while snowy sheathbills scavenge whatever they can find. But according to the results of a recent study, penguins nesting at Port Lockroy have better breeding success and chick survival rates because the passing of tourists decreases predation.



Snowy sheathbill and Gentoo penguins nesting



After observing penguins, we indulged in much needed souvenir shopping in the small shop, and of course, sent postcards from the tiny red mail box at the entrance of the house; the Southern most of the world!

In the afternoon, we landed at [Damoy Point](#), stunning site located just on the other side of the bay. There, we geared up using snowshoes and set for a long but easy walk along gentle slopes under magnificent, ever changing cloud patterns.

Much like at Port Lockroy, Gentoo penguins were nesting here and there atop bare rocks. Just like we reached a viewpoint overlooking Port Lockroy, the sun finally made an appearance, and decided to stick with us for the rest of the day. In the evening, the ship was thus strolling by enormous icebergs and snow-capped mountains lit by the yellow-blue light that can only be seen at such latitudes.

Today again, Antarctica has been her nervous, changing, but rewarding and ever beautiful self.



MOUNTAINEERING

Morning and Afternoon: Jabet

Jabet Peak is one of the more technical ascents we make on the Basecamp trip and requires a small team of



experienced climbers – well versed in the use of crampons and pitched climbing. It is normally a 6 – 7 hour climb getting the small team + guides to a height of 550m above the surrounding sea. Unfortunately, the weather again did not play ball with the mountaineers, an un-forecasted storm with driving snow arriving just as we disembarked from the ship.

The guides got us ashore at the base of a small ice cliff – the journey today would have seen us start in one location and then re-join the ship in the afternoon from a different location. Once we'd reached the top of the ice face our guides decided that the weather was deteriorating too rapidly and with a

snowpack that made it difficult to get safe anchors, we retreated back to the ship to see what the weather would bring later in the day.

In the afternoon we again ventured out - although with only a short window of opportunity we ended up relocating to steep ice cliff where we again enjoyed a series of climbs – Trevor (Guide) suggested that we made things harder for ourselves by only using 1 ice tool and then a few hardy souls even tried to climb using footwork alone – Trevor went 1 better by trying to climb without crampons – this had limited success!

At the end of the day mountaineering success or failure is often dictated by the weather and the ability for a mountain team to get out and enjoy themselves with a flexible attitude is key. Overall a highly Adventurous day was had at Jabet Peak.



CAMPING -- Leith Cove

For the camping night on Leith Cove we could not have asked for better weather. The sky only had some high light clouds and there was no wind. All zodiacs delivered the campers ashore at 21.30pm directly followed by Rustyn's briefing about our and equipment and the area. The campsite was amazing - a small



island directly surrounded by high glacier walls on three sides and a view of the bay directly in front. Half of us started putting together our bivy bags and sleeping kits, while the other half used the shovels to start digging our sleeping areas out for the night. After the work was done everyone stayed awake for quite a while and absorbed the grandeur and breath-taking views that surrounded us.

After hearing about the previous camping nights Christmas tree, we were determined to build one ourselves. Everyone put in a big effort to build a Christmas tree in the middle of camp.

Everyone took turns taking photos with our beautiful tree.

As everyone settled into their bivys we could hear the blow of whales nearby but could not spot them. It was however nice to know they were out there with us. In the morning the entire team was in good spirits and broke down camp quickly and efficiently to go back to the ship, but the wind had picked up and was blowing fiercely. Loading into the zodiacs was challenging and the ice was blowing in fast. Everyone embarked the zodiacs quickly and made it back to the ship for some hot coffee by 05.30am. It was a night no one would ever forget.



Day 6 – Monday December 23, 2019

Danco Island – Paradise Bay

12h00 GPS Position: 64° 43.4'S / 062° 35.2' W

Wind: NNW Sea State: Calm Weather: Snow Air Temp: 6°C Sea Temp: 1°C Visibility: Good



This morning we landed on an island called **Danco Island**, the snow on the beach was gone because we are in this time of the season, but on the higher level, the snow was still relatively deep and soft. The Expedition leader Ali offered everyone to use snowshoes to hike up to the view point on top of the hill. This would be the second time for all passengers to use snowshoes. On the way to the top, we had to pass a few penguin

highways, the expedition guides again became the travel lights to make sure the gentoo penguins had the right of the way. Although we had been to several Gentoo penguin colonies the last few landings, people were still enjoying watching these cute penguins walking and falling in or out of the highways. Most of the people made to the top and enjoyed the time of serenity by simply sat down on the snow. There were more excitements yet to come, this morning Ali offered a chance for those who were brave enough to jump into the water that was almost at freezing point, a polar plunge. At the end of the landing, before people went back to the ship, the brave ones stood next to the water and walked into the freezing cold water, some even spent time swimming a little. The swimmers were sent back to the ship first to recover from the cold water.





In the afternoon, our options for activities were limited by the wind conditions again. Luckily, we found sheltered water inside **Paradise Bay** near Stoney point. we carried out a zodiac cruise in this area. We cruised around the beautiful irregular shaped icebergs, saw them in different colors. It was not just the icebergs that made this zodiac cruise interesting. It was lives in the water, Jelly fish, krill, even humpback whales. Just as expedition guides dropped

zodiac into water, there were some humpback whales feeding not far away from the ship. These whales have a very special feeding technique called bubble net feeding. They dive down to the bottom of the school of krill and blow air bubbles to trap krill. They then open their mouths wide and swim towards to the trapped krill, close their mouths, use their tongues to put all the water out while their baleens filters krill inside. We were split into two groups which was better for both the whales and for us!



MOUNTAINEERING

Morning: Danco

Our 3rd Morning ashore was held on the low slopes of Danco Island where our guides quickly climbed a short steep section of ice about 300m away from the main landing of Danco Island to set up 3 different tope ropes.

These ropes were set up with increasing difficulty and everybody soon got to get into the 'swing' of things learning how to:

- Efficiently hold our ice tools in different configurations as the ice got steeper
- Make our crampons work best by getting the sharp front points into the ice with our Heels down
- Feel confident and relaxed enough to lean back on the rope and be lowered back to the start of the climb.



The third rope set up took us up a short vertical section of ice – for those of us who felt up to the challenge, we made short work of this pitch, although our arms did feel quite 'pumped' from holding ourselves to the ice!

We even got the chance to get back to the main landing area and take part in the POLAR PLUNGE before once again returning to Plancius and getting warm and dry.

CAMPING -- Stoney Point

After a few days in Antarctica there was a lot of relief that our first night camping at Stoney Point would not be cancelled - good weather granted us another night at camp! The weather was a bit grey, but there was no wind to worry about, so camping was to go through as planned. We arrived at around 21.30 and immediately had a briefing regarding our location, our camp set up, and what to expect during the night. It started to snow lightly, but we had the right equipment we had confidence that it would be a good night

out. Everyone teamed up into small groups, helping to dig our protection walls, transforming this remote camp spot into our home for the night. The ship sailed out of site and left us in complete silence. Knowing we were to wake up the following morning on Christmas Eve, everyone was in agreement that a Christmas Tree was in order. The entire team was very enthusiastic and built a very large tree of snow. Rustyn and



Owen both has Christmas lights with them which covered the entire tree beautifully.



We all crawled into our bivys for the short night and tried to get some sleep. We tried to get some sleep before our 05.30am zodiac pick up. The temperature dropped low that night but everyone stayed warm and cosy in the double sleeping bags. We were woken up by Rustyn and Owen at 5.00am, although most of us were already awake enjoying the great morning light. By 5.15am the zodiacs were there to pick us up and bring us back to the ship but two Weddell seals had come ashore during the night and were resting directly on our path to our landing site. The team had to take a trek with all our gear around the seals in order to get to the zodiacs. A bit more

work, but having the seals with us in the morning was worth it. It had been a windless night and a beautiful morning - a great way to wake up on Christmas Eve.

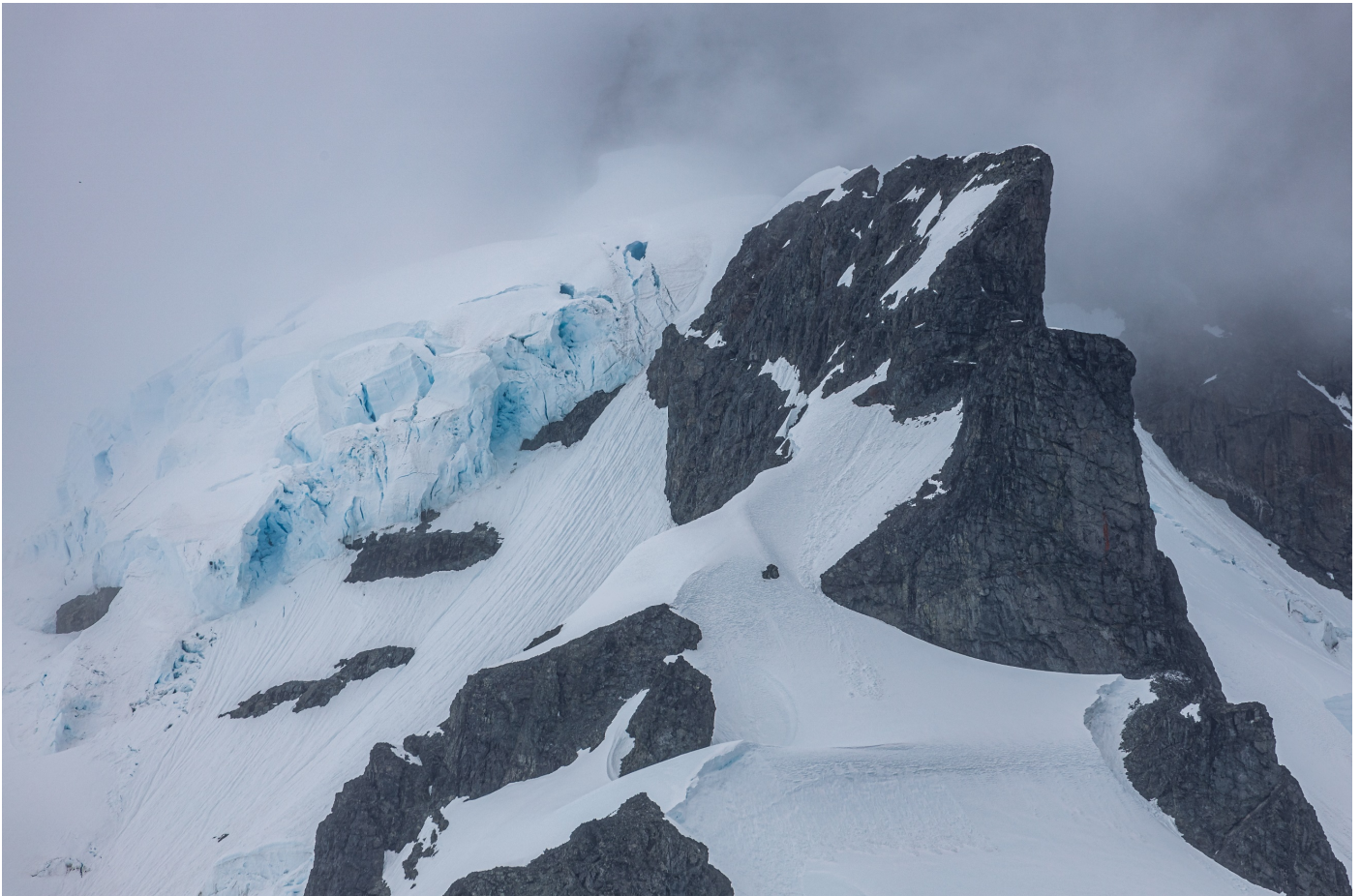
Day 7 – Tuesday December 24, 2019

Orne Island – Wilhelmina Bay

12h00 GPS Position: 64° 39.9'S / 062° 39.2' W

Wind: Calm **Sea State:** Calm **Weather:** Overcast **Air Temp:** 2°C **Sea Temp:** 1°C **Visibility:** Good

We cannot really call it an exception anymore... Today was another day where plan A could quickly be thrown into the bin. Reason? Wind. Too much wind. With its direction in mind, Ali and our Captain had to come up with a plan B. Or C. And D. We ended up executing what can probably be called plan X - **Orne Island**. A rocky coast that resulted in another slippery bow landing, but with the experience of Damoy Point and Port Lockroy in their sea legs, all passengers passed with flying colours.



Chinstrap penguins

On the Island there was a staggering amount of three penguin species to be discovered. Naturally, there was several nesting domains for the (to us)



Adelie penguin

well-known Gentoo Penguin, but also the Chinstrap penguins found their safe haven on Orne. The icing on the cake though, was a, seemingly lost, Adelie Penguin, which wandered along our tracks, giving all passengers the opportunity to capture it on their light-sensitive SD-cards.

For the afternoon, the initial plan was Orne Harbour. “Too much wind in the bay, so maybe we can do a landing on the other side?” Guess what... The alternative landing spot was completely blocked by a gigantic iceberg!

“Well then, let’s check out [Wilhelmina Bay!](#)” It turned out to be a marvellous choice of destination. In fact, Wilhelmina’s waters were so calm that they allowed for a Zodiac cruise for all passengers. The magic scenery

of the impressive surrounding mountains was almost forgotten at sight of a first feeding humpback whale. And it wasn't alone. At least 3 pairs of humpback whales were feeding close to the surface, using bubble nets to confuse, trap and eat the krill. All passengers got a unique chance to be so close to these humongous marine mammals, that gave an absolute show. What spectacle!



Diminished by the memories of those magic creatures, we did however also find beautiful icebergs in between them, as well as impressive loud crackling noises – the result of millions of tiny exploding air bubbles in the brash ice floating around our Zodiacs. An ice-cold prelude to Christmas Eve, which was well celebrated in the lounge later that day.

Improvisation, expedition, satisfaction!



MOUTAINEERING

Morning: Georges Point

Cancelled due to wind, waves and dangerous landings

Afternoon: Orne Harbour

Cancelled due to 30 knots wind, weather, white out and ice blocking the landing.

CAMPING -- Kerr Point

We arrived at Kerr Point for our fourth night of camping at 21.00pm. The weather was calm and cold. We



had some clouds, but nothing that seemed threatening. We arrived at shore with Weddell Seals spread out around our camp, but our path to our camp was well away for their area, but it was nice being able to watch them through the evening. Everyone built up their wind walls with much creativity and efficiency. It was impressive to see what people came up with using only snow blocks. And if that wasn't enough, everyone gathered for the building of the Christmas tree. We had not only brought out lights, but also a star for the top that we 'borrowed' from the Christmas decoration that were all over the ship. Spontaneously during the

building of the tree, the groups broke out in song, singing Christmas carols in true top style. It was a true Christmas moment for everyone. As quickly as it had started, everyone quietly slipped into their bivy sacks for the night and enjoyed the final moments of this Christmas Eve, in this pristine environment, before falling asleep for the night.

As we woke in the morning, we saw that one of the Weddell Seals had come directly into camp and was inspecting the campers over their wind walls as they slept. As we stood to pack our sleeping kits, the seal stayed to watch, but somehow knew it was Christmas day and just enjoyed the early morning with us with what seemed to be a smile on his face. It was a great addition to our morning.

Our zodiac pick up was on shore at 05.45am to take us back to the ship - and back to a well-deserved hot breakfast. Everyone agreed that it was one of the most memorable Christmas morning ever.



Day 8 – Wednesday December 25, 2019

Ketley Point – Foyen Harbour

12h00 GPS Position: 64° 42.2'S / 062° 46.7' W

Wind: NNE Sea State: Smooth Weather: Snow Air Temp: 1°C Sea Temp: 1°C Visibility: Moderate

The morning started, well, not easy again. We were chasing the weather again because it was quite windy this morning. Ali was up on the bridge early to check the conditions and to find a place for our planned activities that day. After the wakeup call and a nice long breakfast, the decision was made. The first landing of the day. **Ketley Point**. Outside we had about 20 knots of wind and the Expedition team landed us on some



nice shaped but exposed rocks with a lot of Gentoo Penguins around.

We had the first boats landed and Jochem started to guide a walk up the hill. We followed and the higher we got the better was the view around. It turned out a lovely morning and we enjoyed the whole scenery. Everybody was a bit tired this morning after the Christmas day but we were all very happy.

As we reached our highest point, the mountaineers started to walk up even more and higher on a

mountain. Too much for the most of us and we stayed on a point with a great view. The Kayakers started their tour around Ketley Point and we could see them close to the shore line. On the radios we could hear some messages how happy these guys were.

A perfect morning. Even better for a special couple. They just got married and were really happy. Ali did a special wedding ceremony for them on land, Werner took photos for them



in their wedding dresses. It looked so nice. And we all witnessed the marriage on a special place in Antarctica. We all went back to the landing site and the Expedition Team had a lot to do to bring us back to Plancius safely because it was low tide and a lot of swell. Not easy for the team.

After the landing we had a good warm lunch and the ship's crew lifted the Anker to make Plancius ready to sail to **Foyn Harbour**. Our afternoon destination. The plan was to go on a Zodiac cruise. The Mountaineers planned to go ice climbing close the wreck of the Governoren and the Kayakers had really good conditions for a long and nice paddling session.

The rest of us jumped into the Zodiacs short after lunch and went out for a cruise to the Governoren. A shipwreck of 1915 that was grounded here in a little bay called Foyn Harbour after a fire on board.



The drivers were able to take us around the wreck in very shallow waters. We thus had a good view from all around. Surrounded by glaciers we had really nice scenery and enjoyed the calm and sheltered waters between the islands.

We saw beautiful shaped Icebergs in deep blue, Antarctic Terns nesting and some of the Zodiac drivers switched off the engines for an Antarctic silent moment. It was beautiful. After almost 3 hours we went back to the ship with a lot of impressions of this day, happy to

experience Antarctica in various ways and the possibilities to join so many activities.

The way back to Plancius was pretty long because the ship was not on Anker but drifting. The wind picked up in the afternoon and it was a bit a bumpy ride back to the ship. But we enjoyed it a lot. The Mountaineers came back last and they had a smile in their faces. Everybody had a good and long day full of individual moments.



During recap Ali told us about the next day and the Staff gave us some stories. We went to dinner and sneaked into the beds happy but very tired... What a day...

MOUNTAINEERING

Morning: Ketley Point



the Gerlache Strait filled with Icebergs. The peaks high above us were beginning to become occluded with drifting cloud. Our guides Mal and Trev took us on a circular journey above a series of crevasses, gave us a short but informative lecture on how the glaciers move and why the crevasses were where they are before the cloud arrived and we travelled for a while in a 'whiteout'. From our high point we journeyed quickly back to shore where after a bit of equipment packing, we had an adventurous Zodiac boarding before again returning to our floating home away home, Plancius.

With snow storms threatening but holding back around the North of Ronge Island we made our landing at Ketley Point, donned our snowshoes (of which we were all experts at doing now) and began our walk up towards the start of the glacier. We all negotiated a short narrow section well above one of the Penguin colonies, walked past a large Lichen covered cliff and up to a short col where we could look out to the SW towards where Plancius was sitting. Roping up from here we hiked up the (surprisingly longer than it looked) slope where we could look back down to see



Afternoon: Foyen Harbour

After travelling north to Foyen Harbour, the next Mountaineering team had an adventure of a different kind.



Ice climbing again but this time we hiked to the top of the cliff first and then had to be lowered to the bottom before climbing back up. Before we could do this however, we needed to actually get off the shore and onto the top. The guides worked hard to get a good safe path for us up and off the beach - the deep soft snow made for good footsteps but we needed to be careful to 'tread lightly' to avoid collapsing the steps under us and going up to our waists! From the top of the ice cliff we could see a few seals swimming below us as well as the sea kayaking team as they got close to us. Breaching Humpback whales set an amazing backdrop as we got to grips with being lowered

down the cliff – the conditions of the cliff could hardly be called ice – more like melting ice cream! Again, our guides were able to talk us through how to use our equipment in a way that allowed us to make efficient use of the slope and to get us safely back to the top. Of course, being on the ocean meant that we also had to deal with rising tides. Our return to our zodiac pick up point saw us almost stepping back down into water where only 2 hours before there was a rocky beach. Back to Plancius again - this time in anticipation of a visit from Santa during the anticipated Christmas dinner!

Day 9 – Thursday December 26, 2019

Yankee Harbour – Half Moon Bay

12h00 GPS Position: 62° 31.2'S / 059° 48.7' W

Wind: ENE Sea State: Smooth Weather: Overcast Air Temp: 4°C Sea Temp: 3°C Visibility: Good

Many of us woke up tired: not only the numerous activities, from kayaking to mountaineering, but also the permanent puzzlement this amazingly beautiful region provokes starts to show, and at breakfast, a few passengers, watching the surrounding fog and rain, decided to stay onboard for and rest. But as the adage says: “Never try to predict what Antarctica may bring”. A saying that reflected reality again, today, as rain, wind and fog brought some of the best fauna observations of our voyage.

After a long zodiac transit, we landed this morning at [Yankee Harbour](#), a long strip of round, humid stones covered in lichen and penguin faeces.

Not very exciting? ... Think again. On the far right hand side of the landing, several Weddell seals surprised walkers, immobile and well camouflaged in their spotted fur, and one humpback whale put on a fantastic show as it was feeding a few meters away from shore: breaching and showing her fluke, she strolled right passed the group of kayakers. On the left-hand side of the landing, a group of young elephant seals was basking on the sand, their parents long gone: these wieners take their time to build up the courage necessary for their first trip at sea. But despite apparent



Elephant seals



relaxed attitudes, they face one of the most dangerous times of their lives: either they decide to go for it, or they will die, starving to death. This is the harsh destiny faced by juveniles of most species in Antarctica, including Gentoo penguins, of which a small colony was to be found further up the beach. Most nests bare one or two young chicks, and amused, we watched their wobbling heads and listened to their high-pitched songs as they begged for food. Much like elephant seals, young Gentoo penguins must grow fast as in a few weeks, they will have to go at sea to survive.

After a quick lunch, we boarded zodiacs for our last landing: a short stop in [Half Moon Bay](#), a small island so called because of its “croissant” shape. Three red huts with Argentinian flags flanked the beach. This small



research station would be inhabited later in the season; for now, it is empty. A short steep path took us past the remains of a water boat, formerly used by whalers to bring fresh water back from glaciers and icebergs.

It leads to a small chinstrap penguin colony. These angry looking fellows jumped from one rock to another, making their way up from the ocean to their nests. A few of them contained tiny, grey fluffy balls barely visible under bellies (sometimes not quite as clean as basic hygiene rules would require): the chicks were just born!



Back onboard, it was time to start making our way up towards Ushuaia, and Ali warned us: the Drake would not be as nice as on our way down! Most of us chose to take seasickness pills, and went to bed half-worried, half-excited. The

Drake Passage, after all, is famous for its nasty waters, and experiencing those is also part of the trip!

MOUNTAINEERING

Morning: Yankee Harbour



Weather rules all – 100% in the mountaineering world. Our Guides had planned to take us up a short but spectacular rocky ridge but low cloud and snow storms meant that the terrain would not have been suitable for us to use.

Instead we hiked along the beach past the toe of the ridge and around and onto the foot of the nearby glacier. The snow storm had increased and although we knew that the glacier was nearby, we couldn't see very far onto it at all. We then climbed up a short way on the side of the hill – using the rocky terrain like a handrail to allow us to gain a small knoll. Here we

were led through a short 'Quiet Time', allowing us to reflect on the differences between our normal lives and the journey we had experienced so far. The guides weren't done with us yet though, after hiking back down and towards the main landing we stopped at the suitable snow slope and started to learn how to cut steps and to self-arrest. Self-arresting is one of the main skills needed to keep mountaineers safe, it allows us to stop sliding in the event of a slip that could end in a nasty run out The human train we made after brought all of us back to being about 8-12 years of age and the laughter and smiles were a great way to end the last mountaineering excursion on the Antarctic Peninsula!



Day 10 – Friday December 27, 2019

At sea towards Ushuaia

12h00 GPS Position: 59° 17.2'S / 062° 41.8' W

Wind: NNW **Sea State:** Moderate / Rough **Weather:** Clear Sky **Air Temp:** 9°C **Sea Temp:** 10°C **Visibility:** Good

The morning of the 27th had quite a subdued atmosphere on board, as people perused their photos and quietly chattered and reflected over what an incredible trip they had had and how lucky we had been with weather and sightings. The wildlife, glaciers, weather and personal experiences were only really just starting to filter through as our reflection on what we had just seen and done finally hit home.

We were given a number of updates about the expected weather on our transit north – it seemed that whilst the weather was not going to be the “Drake Lake” we had experienced on the way down – the full “ Drake Shake” would not reach us until we were all mostly asleep late in the evening.



The first lecture of the day was given by Rustyn, which was an in-depth discourse on the formation and evolution of the Antarctic Treaty. It was amazing to see just how the various aspects of the geopolitical world we live in have managed to come together to preserve, maintain and expand on this treaty – the only international treaty to either never be broken or have member countries leave it. The formation and organization of IAATO was also introduced in this lecture – what can be a normally dry and academic presentation was brought to life by Rustyn’s individual presentation style.



As we sailed north, we were again joined by the Antarctic birds – using the ship for a bit of added soaring advantage as they cruise the seas between the southern tip of South America and the Antarctic Peninsula. In some cases, it was almost like they were waving the ship goodbye.

As the seas began to slightly rise Ali gave us a presentation about Seals – their habits, behaviours, differences and everything that we don’t get to see about their lives underwater and away from the shore.

Our Lunch was again a seated service as the ship's movement was not going to allow us to move

from the Buffet to our seats with confidence. By now our mostly experienced stomachs allowed us to look with ease out of the dining Lounges window as the ship rolled and pitched her way North.

The afternoons Lecture was delivered by Marie, “Colors of Antarctica”. This lecture was delivered in simple English – translated from French of course - and was all about how different species of animals adapted their colouration to allow them to survive in Antarctica’s unique and harsh environment. The day concluded with the usual daily recap and plans for the tomorrow from Ali, and concluded with a very interesting presentation from Jochem about his personal passion and project to involve the public in the classification and identification of the Cryosphere – RECOGN.ICE !

Day 11 – Saturday December 28, 2019

At sea towards Ushuaia

12h00 GPS Position: 55° 24.0'S / 066° 08.9' W

Wind: NE **Sea State:** Smooth **Weather:** Partly cloudy **Air Temp:** 12°C **Sea Temp:** 9°C

Visibility: Good

We woke to our second day on the Drake with sunshine. The 17 kts winds were still giving the boat a bit a roll but, during breakfast and by mid-morning the winds reduced down to 10 kts and it was smooth and pleasant and passengers were able to easily move around the ship, where they were all busy sharing photos.

After breakfast some of the Passenger Doctors presented their final presentations to each other in the dining room. In the lounge Jerry did his presentation on the Golden Age of Exploration, where passengers were able to learn more about the expeditions of Scott and Amundsen and their race to the South pole. Then also in the lounge after a small break we were given a virtual tour of our ship 'Plancius' by Daniel where passengers got to learn about the history and workings of the ship that brought them to Antarctica and back.

Lunch was served as we entered an angry Beagle Chanel in which the wind blew at times at more than 40 kts! Alexis gave a presentation on the people of Tierra del Fuego as well as gave a demonstration on the traditional drink of Mate. In the afternoon all available staff members worked together to return all gear to their right full places, ready for the next voyage across the Drake.



Before dinner and our last recap of the voyage, we did a champagne toast with the captain in the lounge to celebrate a great voyage. Werner created a slide show with video to

show everyone a day to day reminder of the amazing sights and animals we had seen while visiting the Antarctic Peninsula. After dinner Szuzsanna introduced all the hard working hotel staff that were behind the scenes making all the wonderful meals and ensuring all were passengers were taken care of.

Day 12 – Sunday December 29, 2019

Ushuaia- Disembarkation

8h00 GPS Position: Ushuaia Port.

Today we were woken by the last wake-up call from our Expedition Leader Ali and got ready to disembark in Ushuaia. The last 11 days have taken us on an eye-opening journey to the frozen continent and allowed us a short glimpse into an environment that most will never see. We all had slightly different experiences but whatever the memories, whether it was our first-time onboard zodiacs, hiking in rubber boots, seeing massive ice cliffs or making new friends, they are memories that will stay with us for the rest of our lives.

KAYAKING



As is common at the beginning of a kayak trip, many passengers worry about timings, clothing, the perfect spot, how many layers they have to wear, if it is cold outside, or if it's going to be wet during the kayaking experience... Many questions and nothing better than to put all your gear on and find it out by yourself.



of the Antarctic Peninsula.

The next days will belong for us for ever. We were able to paddle in different places like Orne Islands, Orne Harbour, Cuverville island, De Ronge Island, Neko Harbour, Enterprise island and the Governor Wreck and the South Shetland Islands. We paddled immersed in an ocean full of growlers of ice that came from the calving glaciers of one of the most beautiful scenarios of the Antarctic landscape.

After a safety briefing, we explained how everything works, including clothing and operation procedures, we finally set six groups of 14 people plus a guide, Alexis, that will operate during the morning and afternoon of the next days. This Antarctic Basecamp was for all of us and this time we visited different areas less exposed to the wind in the middle





We saw antarctic terns, humpback wales, crabeater seal, Weddell seals, leopard seals, cormorans, sheathbills around the huts and penguin colonies; Gentoo, Adelie and chinstrap penguins from a special spot, our quiet kayak. Kayaking means freedom of operation, silence, being closer to the water, the environment. It offers a unique perspective and the opportunity to understand from the bottom of the

glaciers and cliffs the real scale of Antarctica's mountains and surroundings.

Word from Alexis: It was a pleasure for me, as your guide, to have the chance to introduce you to this part of the world who belong to all of us, and depend on us, our actions and their consequences. From now, think about keep this pristine continent as it is. That could be the best way to behave knowing that is HOME and its fragile and need of an eco-friendly action from humans every day.



Enjoy Life. Respect others. Leave no trace. Come back home with a good message to your friends and family... nature rules the world.

Total distance sailed on our voyage:

Nautical miles: **1853**

Kilometres: **3373**



On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Evgeny Levakov, Expedition Leader Ali Liddle and all the crew and staff, we thank you for travelling with us and wish you a safe journey home.



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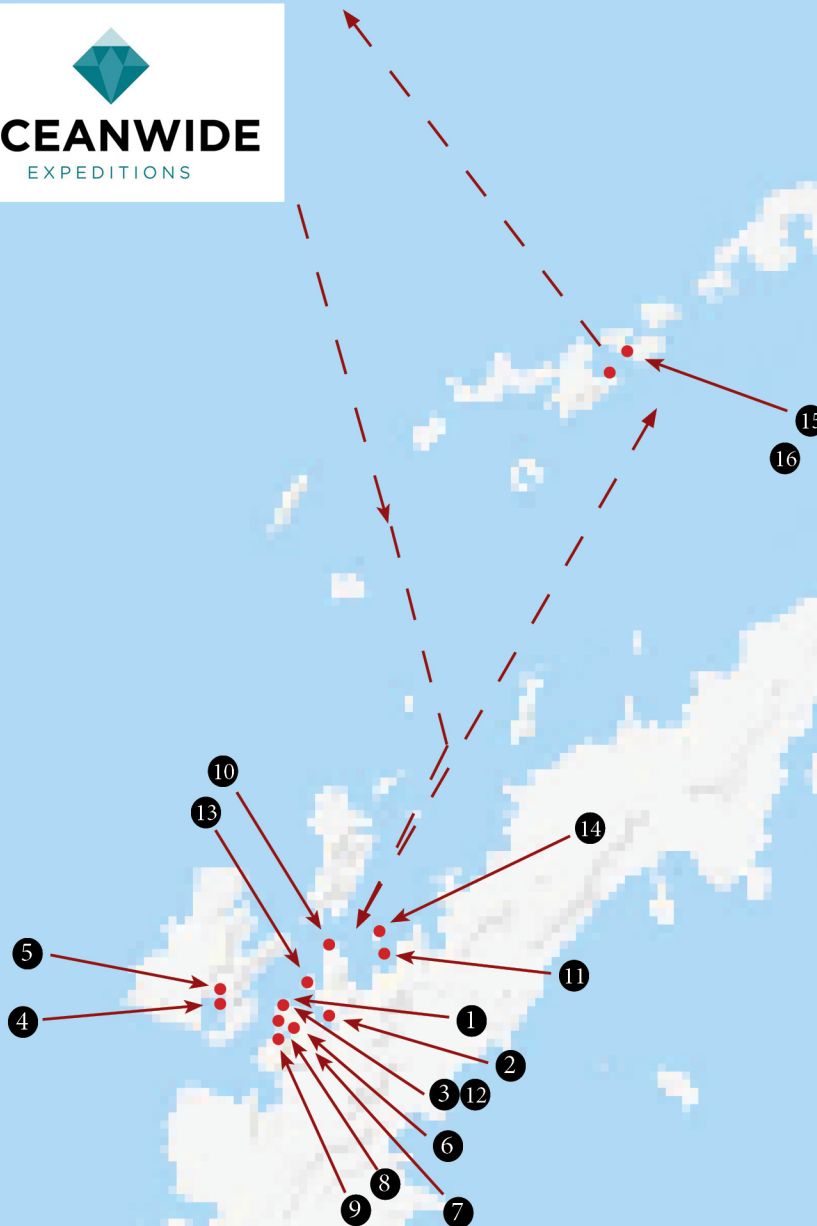
The size of your photo should be between 2MB and 8MB. Our lucky winners will be contacted by e-mail and Facebook by 02 June 2020. The photography contest runs from 03 November 2019 until 02 May 2020.

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

Antarctic Peninsula Voyage

M/V PLANCIUS

18.12.2019 to 29.12.2019



- ① Cuverville Island
- ② Neko Harbour
- ③ Camping Kerr Point
- ④ Port Lockroy
- ⑤ Damoy Island
- ⑥ Leith Cove Camping
- ⑦ Danco Island (Polar Plunge)
- ⑧ Paradise Harbour
- ⑨ Stoney Point Camping
- ⑩ Orne Island
- ⑪ Wilhelmina Bay
- ⑫ Kerr Point Camping
- ⑬ Ketley Point
- ⑭ Foyr Harbour
- ⑮ Yankee Harbour
- ⑯ Half Moon Island

Ali Liddle - Expedition Leader



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.

Daniel Höhne -

Assistant Expedition Leader



A well photographed picture is more than just looking at it again and again. It is emotional and unforgettable passion and a story behind.

Most of the past years it was more my hobby to get outside and take nature photos. But today it is my profession and beside working as a fulltime guide I work also for newspapers and magazines.

Taking people hand by hand outside and show them what to see and what outside can be felt is one of the greatest things for me to do. It is even more important and necessary to understand our ecosystems and for that reason I try

to take people out in the wilderness. To understand why things in nature happen and what our part as humans is in different environments. We only can protect what we really know and love.

I studied Geography and Geology in the south of Germany, Tübingen. Since then I was fascinated by the power and sensibility of our white and cold ecosystems. Combined with nature photography I am self-employed within different kinds of guiding nature and photography journeys.

My hot spots are Iceland, Svalbard, Greenland, Antarctica and Germany. Most of my time I spend in Iceland for exploring and working in unique places and feel the strength of the old Viking land.

Jerry Zhao - Expedition Guide



Jerry has been in love with nature and wild life and traveling all his life. Soon after completing his degree in Business Administration at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Jerry began a career in the travel industry. Jerry first started as an international travel consultant and tour leader and led exclusive small high-end guests throughout Europe.

He then became partner in an international traveling consulting firm and focused on route planning and employee training. Searching for more adventure, He travelled around the world to collect all the skills that

he needed and joined Oceanwide Expeditions as Expeditions Guides in 2015. He has set foot on all seven continent and four oceans. He has travelled to the North Pole, Spitsbergen, and Antarctic regions several times along the way he has studied the geography, wildlife and Environment of the Polar regions. He loves nature, wild life, and he loves to share all that he knows to everyone who comes across.

Marie Manceau – Expedition guide



After a PhD in genetics and embryology in Marseille, in the south of France, Marie moved to Boston in the United States to study at Harvard University the adaptation of small mammals to arid environments such as great plains of Nebraska or deserts of New Mexico.

Marie leads a CNRS research team at the Biology Institute of the Collège de France (Paris) that focuses on uncovering embryonic development in extreme conditions, in particular in Australian songbirds and penguins.

Her interest for the latter and taste for wild regions brought her to visit Antarctica for the first time onboard Plancius in 2013. Ever since, Marie is infected by the polar bug. Her research projects on penguins involve collaborations with the Paul-Emile Victor French Polar Institute (for which she is part of the scientific advisory board) and the Government of the Falkland Islands (where members of her team regularly perform field work). Marie joins expedition teams in Antarctica and the arctic (Spitzbergen, Greenland) to share, a few weeks per year, her knowledge of the incredible adaptive biology of polar animals.

Owen Mesdag - Field Guild



Owen has been drawn to adventure, travel, and being in the outdoors his entire life. His passion for trekking, mountaineering, rock climbing, skiing, etc. has led him into a career in Product Development where he has worked in the outdoor industry for over 20 years. Working on developing & designing product for all things Camping and Adventure travel related.

In his most recent years having worked on several Research and Development projects on water treatment technologies, Owen has become very passionate about Global Health and providing these recourses to those in need. His commitment has taken him to places like Guatemala and remote villages in Western Nepal to implement these systems to communities with the greatest needs.

Known for being a great storyteller, Owen loves to share tales from his many adventures, ranging from getting caught in whiteouts on Mt. Rainier, chasing solar eclipses, to overlanding in his old Land Rover, his stories never disappoint.

Owen is one of 5 kids and is a native to the Pacific Northwest calling Seattle Washington his home and shares his love for the outdoors with his wife and 6-year old son - who also shares Owen's sense for adventure.

Alexis Bellezze - Kayak Guide



A Polar and Patagonia kayak expedition guide with expertise in wilderness adventure, long haul travel and mountaineering in the Nahuel Huapi National Park, Limay River and Lake District.

Professional background in the Army and Air Force, a degree in Veterinary Medicine (Domestic, Farming, Equine and also Wildlife Rescue and Rehab, Trauma and soft tissues surgeon) which compliments his outdoor expedition work as a Paraglider pilot, Trekking guide, CPR and Wilderness First Responder senior instructor in Argentina and Chile

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.

Rustyn Mesdag - Expedition Guide



Rustyn was born in Seattle, Washington where grew up in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest.

He quickly discovered his love for snow and ice which led to climbing and then travelling abroad. After working as an alpine guide in the United States, in 2004 he relocated to Patagonia where he started a guide service outside of Torres del Paine National Park.

For 15 years he has been leading climbers, travellers and trekkers through the most extreme terrains of Southern Chile.

Aside from the guide service, he operates an equipment rental centre, backpackers' hostel and conducts daily lectures to eager Patagonian backpackers looking for tips and pointers about trekking in the wild. He also moonlighted as a travel writer, focusing on Southern Chile, and for many years he published an English-speaking travellers newspaper in Patagonia and this led to his first trip to Antarctica - writing about his experiences there.

Always looking for the next adventure, Rustyn now finds himself working for Oceanwide Expeditions and helping others explore this incredible region. When Rustyn isn't travelling or working in the outdoors, his other passion is his love for old motorcycles and long rides through Southern Chile and Argentina.

Rustyn is fluent in English, Dutch and Spanish and is more than happy to sit and spend time discussing world travels, alpine climbing and the in's & out's of cold weather equipment management

Jochem Braakhekke - Expedition Guide



Being born in one of the more mountainous regions of the Netherlands, with hills up to impressive heights of almost 100 m a.s.l., young Jochem was naturally attracted to alpine environments and the extreme importance of ice ages.

As a 2-year-old, still covered in baby seal blubber, he got introduced to hut life in the Austrian Alps. The black and white pictures exhibited in those huts, depicting huge glacier tongues and impressive ice-falls with noble men wearing hats posing on them, left a lasting impression. What in the world has happened to those glaciers since

then!

It wasn't until two decades later, that Jochem got reinjected with the glaciology virus; during his Bachelor's in Earth Sciences at the University of Amsterdam, Jochem spend a semester in Longyearbyen, studying Arctic and Marine Geology. In order to be a little bit closer to the tiny remnants of the Last Ice Age, he moved to Switzerland and continued studying geology and glaciology at the ETH Zürich.

Jochem is particularly interested in the interplay between glaciers and bedrock, the so-called field of Glacial Geology. He has extensive knowledge about the past ice ages and the related tools and clues presented to us by the current landscape; silent witnesses of the incredible power of ice.

In contrary to popular believe, glaciology is not a dying field: the cryosphere is a big box of discoveries yet to be made and it is Jochem's goal to get as many people involved in unboxing those.



Mal Haskins

New Zealand

IFMGA / NZMGA

Mountain and Ski Guide



I've been calling the mountains and high ranges of the world my home now for the last 20 years. I really enjoying sharing my passion and enjoyment being outdoors with others so guiding was a natural progression for me. I work in various parts of the world in both summer and winter conditions taking people mountaineering and skiing and call Wanaka, New Zealand my home.

Over the years I've had a number of very memorable expeditions and have had the opportunity to summit a few of our 8000m Peaks, Lhotse (8516m) and Manaslu (8156m).

I had the chanceto come down to work and experience the Antarctic Peninsula a few years ago and have been coming down each season now for the past 3 years.

I find all mountain ranges around the world special but with Antarctica there is extra magic – the wildlife, amazing glaciers, weather and the people you meet on these journeys – it's an experience you can't match anywhere else in the world.

I'm looking forward to sharing my joy of the mountains with you in this special place.

Trev Streat



**New Zealand
IFMGA / NZMGA
Mountain and Ski Guide**



Trev is a veteran New Zealand Mountain Guide. Internationally qualified by the I.F.M.G.A. he has been guiding since 1989.

Along with many years climbing and skiing in The New Zealand mountains he has also clocked up more than 20 winters heliski guiding in the Indian Himalayas, Greenland and Turkey.

This is Trev's second visit to the Antarctic peninsula and he is very much looking forward to exploring this amazing region along with the guests and crew of Plancius

Werner Kruse - Photography Guide



Werner Kruse is a well-travelled and experienced Editor, Cameraman and Photographer. Werner has worked on international productions in Los Angeles, travel documentaries for Princess Cruises and Wildlife & Expedition Documentaries in Africa.

After graduating high school, he studied photography at Port Elizabeth Technikon while working as freelance photographer for the regional newspaper, Die Burger. From there he gained experience as assistant to well renowned Fashion/Advertising &

Documentary photographer, Johan Wilke.

In 2004 he expanded his career working as Cameraman and Editor in Cape Town, South Africa. His passion for editing took him to Los Angeles where he did an Avid Certified Professional film-editing course at Video Symphony in Burbank.

After his studies he started working all over the world making travel documentaries for Princess Cruises. He explored places such as Petra, Machu Picchu, Great Barrier and Rapa Nui, Spitsbergen, Iceland and his favourite, the Hawaiian and Tahitian Islands. Currently based in Cape Town, South Africa, working on TV shows, documentaries, commercials and corporate productions as well as frequent travels abroad for various video and photo assignments.

Werner is extremely passionate about wildlife, nature and the ocean, supports environmental and wildlife causes and believe in conservation. He has travelled to 112 countries and love to capture every moment.

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 are always available in the Lounge on Deck 5

~1715 **Mandatory Safety and Lifeboat Drill** in the Lounge. **ALL** passengers **must** attend this very important safety briefing.

~1800 Approximate sailing time. As we leave Ushuaia, we recommend that you enjoy the views from the outside decks.

The Bridge and Bridge wings will be closed this evening.

~ 1815 **Lifeboat drill.** Please listen for alarms and announcements and make your way to the Muster Station, the Lounge, on Deck 5.

~1845 After our departure, 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 **Zsuzsanna Varga**. Afterwards Captain **Evgeny Levakov** invites you to join him for a welcome drink in the Lounge, where you will also meet the Expedition Team.

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 Nick will be available in the lounge after dinner if you require any additional medication or advice.

Tonight, at around midnight we will be in open waters. Please secure your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) in your cabin, keep at least one hand free to hold on to the ship and be careful with the heavy doors.



DAILY PROGRAM

Antarctic Peninsula Basecamp!

Monday 18th February 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.

During the morning we will be sailing South in the Drake Passage. Take some time to get your 'sea legs' and enjoy the seabirds that will follow us on our voyage.

1030 **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 about Seabirds.

1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.

1430 **Basecamp Activity Briefings.** Please join your Expedition Team in the Lounge for more information about the activities available to you on this Basecamp voyage. This will include information about Mountaineering, Kayaking, Camping, Snowshoe Hiking and Photography Workshops.
After the briefings there will be a chance to meet with the guides for further information.

If the weather conditions are good we would like to give you your Rubber Boots this afternoon. We will call you by Deck so please listen for announcements over the PA system. Bring a pair of socks with you!

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.

- 0730 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0900 **Rubber Boots.** We will give out your rubber boots from the boot room which is on Deck 3 forward. We will do this by deck so please listen for announcements. Please bring your socks!
- 1000 **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.**
- ~1100 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.
- 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 Jochem **in the Lounge.**
- 1630 **Photography Workshop.** If you would like to find out more about Photography and the workshops we will offer on shore then please join **Werner 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 explain plans for tomorrow. There may also be stories from staff.
- 1900 Dinner is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.

Please be ready for changes in PLAN A!

- 0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0730 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0845 **Orne Island.** For our 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 to and from the colony.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- ~1430 **Orne Harbour.** This we hope to take you ashore in Orne Harbour where we will take you on a short walk to the Chinstrap penguin colonies on the ridge. The slope is quite steep so please take care as you walk. This is a continental landing so enjoy your visit to the Antarctic continent!
- 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 **Buffet Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.
- 2015 Campers please be ready at the gangway to go ashore for your night of camping!

0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!

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

TBA **Port Lockroy.** This was known as Base A by the British Antarctic Survey and is now a small museum with a Post Office and gift shop. There are also hundreds of Gentoo penguins around the buildings so please take care where you are walking. Due to the island and buildings being small we will split you into 3 groups for the morning.

Please check the notice board at Reception to find your group and timings. Thank you!

You will all go on shore at Port Lockroy and take a Zodiac cruise during the morning.

At the shop and Post Office they take Credit/Debit cards, Euro, Dollars and Pounds sterling.

Mountaineering Group: Please be ready at the gangway at 0900

Kayaking Group: Alexis will call you to the Boot Room to collect your kit. Please listen for announcements.

1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.

~1430 **Damoy Point.** We hope to take you ashore at Damoy Point where there are lots of Gentoo penguins around the point as well as some fantastic Antarctic scenery. We will offer you the chance to enjoy the penguins and also take a guided **Snowshoe walk** up to the top of the ridge which was once used as a runway for planes taking scientists further into Antarctica. There is a small historic hut. Please check with the guides before going in.

1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for our daily re-cap.

1900 Buffet dinner is available for 1 hour. Bon appétit.

2015 Campers please be ready at the gangway to go ashore for your night of camping!



Basecamp Antarctica

Danco Island and Expedition Afternoon

Monday 23rd December 2019

0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!

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

0900 **Danco Island.** This island is home to large colonies of Gentoo penguins so we hope to be able to take you ashore to spend time with these Antarctic residents. If conditions allow, we will also offer a snow shoe hike to the top of the island. Please follow the marked route and give penguins right of way at their Highways.

At the end of the landing we will offer the chance to do a 'Polar Plunge', an Antarctic swim. We'll bring the towels, you bring the insanity!

1230 **Buffet Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.

EXPEDITION AFTERNOON IN ANTARCTICA!

Please come with a sense of adventure and exploration!
Please listen for announcements over the PA for information!

1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for our daily re-cap.

1900 Buffet dinner is available for 1 hour. Bon appétit.

2015 Campers please be ready at the gangway to go ashore for your night of camping!

Please be ready for changes in PLAN A!

- 0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0730 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0845 **Orne Island.** For our 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 to and from the colony.
- 1230 Lunch is served in the Dining Room.
- ~1430 **Orne Harbour.** This we hope to take you ashore in Orne Harbour where we will take you on a short walk to the Chinstrap penguin colonies on the ridge. The slope is quite steep so please take care as you walk. This is a continental landing so enjoy your visit to the Antarctic continent!
- 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 **Buffet Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Bon appétit.
- 2015 Campers please be ready at the gangway to go ashore for your night of camping!



**Happy Christmas from all the Staff and
Crew on Plancius!**



- 0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!
- 0730 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0900 **Ketley Point.** We hope to be able to take you ashore at Ketley Point on Ronge Island. There are colonies of Gentoo penguins and a chance to walk to a low view point.
Mountaineers and Kayakers please listen for announcements about your activities.
- 1230 **Buffet Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 **Foyn Harbour.** Here we will go out in the zodiacs for a cruise around the islands and a ship wreck called the Governoren. There are sometimes Humpback whales in the area so let's see what we can find.
Mountaineers and Kayakers please listen for announcements about your activities.
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for our daily re-cap.
- 1900 **Special Christmas Dinner is served!** Bon appétit.

0715 Wake Up call from Ali. Good Morning!

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

0900 **Yankee Harbour.** This is a narrow shingle beach where we find Gentoo penguins and often Elephant seals and Weddell seals. As always, respect the distance from wildlife and enjoy your time on shore.
Mountaineers and Kayakers, please listen for announcements.

1230 **Buffet Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.

1400 **Robert Point.** For our final landing in Antarctica we hope to go ashore at Robert Point where we will find more penguins and seals and hope to offer a walk to the viewpoint over the bay.
Mountaineers, please listen for announcements.

After we are all back on board we will start to sail into the Drake Passage. Please secure your cabins and valuables.

If you would like seasick medication then meet Dr Alex in the lounge!

1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for our daily re-cap.

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

There will be **no wake up** call this morning but Zsuzsanna will wake you for breakfast anyway!

- 0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0930 **Antarctic Treaty.** This Treaty oversees legislation in Antarctica. If you would like to find out more about this and how it effects international relations in Antarctica then please join Rustyn in the Lounge.
- 1100 **Seals.** We have seen a number of different seal species in Antarctica. If you would like to find out more then please join Ali in the Lounge.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 **Colours of Antarctica.** If you think that Antarctica is just black and white then think again! Join Marie in the Lounge for her presentation.
- 1630 **Afternoon Documentary. BBC Frozen Planet.** This award winning documentary shows life in the polar regions of the Arctic and Antarctica.
- 1830 Please join Ali and the Expedition team in the Lounge for our daily re-cap.
- 1900 **Dinner is served!** Bon appétit.

- 0745 Wake up call from Ali. Good morning everyone, good morning!
- 0800 Breakfast is served in the Dining Room for one hour.
- 0930 **The Race to the Poles.** The beginning of the 20th century was known as the Golden Age of Exploration. Please join Jerry in the Lounge to find out more about the expeditions of Scott and Amundsen in their race to be first to reach the South Pole.
- 1100 **Plancius: Behind the Scenes.** If you would like to find out more about our little blue ship, Plancius then please join Daniel in the Lounge for a look behind the scenes.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 **Yamana: The people of Tierra del Fuego.** As we approach the Beagle Channel please join Alexis to find out more about the people who made the land of fire their home. After the presentation he will give a Mate workshop and allow you to sample the traditional Argentinean drink.
- 1700 **Rubber Boots.** At this time, we invite you to the boot room to return your rubber boots. We will call you by deck.
- 1815 **Captains Cocktails.** Please join the Expedition Team and Captain Evgeny in the Lounge to toast our successful expedition to Antarctica.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served. Bon appétit.

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 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. ***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, easy journey home and a Peaceful New Year.