

# PLANCIUS 31 BASECAMP MOUNTAINEERING TRIPLOG

11<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> DANCO ISLAND

In the morning we made a counterclockwise climb to the top of Danco Island. Our team has planned for an ascent of Cuverville Island however strong winds prevented us from making our Zodiac landing. On arrival at the summit we then beat a hasty retreat having been requested by our Captain to return to the ship to escape incoming storms!



Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Mountain Storms

Throughout Sunday the fierce weather system prevented us from attempting any mountaineering objectives. Mountaineering in Antarctica requires judgement and caution and today it was clear to all of us that we would have to be patient and wait for better weather.

## Monday 13<sup>th</sup> NEKO HARBOUR (AM)

A great morning climbing the icy slopes behind Neko Harbour. This ascent provides our climbing teams with a great feeling of just being, “out there” way above the bay, our basecamp ship MV Plancius looking tiny in the distance!



## CONESA POINT (PM)

Our intrepid team experienced heavy snow fall and what mountaineers refer to as “whiteout” conditions when the horizon becomes indistinct and plays tricks on our sense of direction and location. When this happens it becomes very difficult to retrace our steps or see crevasses (hidden slots in the snowfield that can form huge drops into the abyss!). That’s why we always rope up on glaciers but in these conditions the sensible option is to know when to turn back.



CONESA POINT

## 14<sup>th</sup> March DAMOY ICE CLIMBING (AM)

A great morning learning how to climb steep ice using our crampons to “front-point” our way upwards using two ice axes. Placing our ice axes alternately requires skill and precision as does the correct angle and placement of our feet.



## JABET PEAK (PM)

In the afternoon we enjoyed an ascent of the slopes of Jabet Peak. The storms of the past few days presented us with a degree of avalanche risk so we chose to ascend a less exposed ridge line and not to continue to our initial objective at a high col.



JABET PEAK and our climbing team.



## 15<sup>th</sup> March HOOVGARD ISLAND (AM and PM)

We had both our morning and afternoon teams ascend this fine peak. In the afternoon the winds picked up and gave us a bumpy ride back to Plancius!



## 16<sup>th</sup> March PORTAL POINT (AM)

A trip into the glaciers behind Portal Point. We crossed a stunning narrow neck of glacier affording the team fine views of Plancius and the rest of the expedition team. We encountered a huge crevasse across which we could not safely pass. The whole team took turns to peer in to the dark confines of the crevasse and gain an insightful understanding in to “gut feeling” mountaineering decisions about when to retreat. A decision that the Mountain Guides must continually assess.



PORTAL POINT ASCENT

FOYNE HARBOUR (PM)

A beautiful afternoon with no wind, sun and finally a safe line through crevasses that have so often proved problematical throughout the week! It felt quite spiritual moving through the undisturbed sunlit snow!



## FOYNE HARBOUR ASCENT

17<sup>th</sup> March DECEPTION ISLAND, SOUTH SHETLAND

A trip to a magnificent viewpoint behind Whaler's Bay.





WHALER'S BAY DECEPTION ISLAND



SUMMIT VIEW