



Basecamp Antarctica

Ushuaia – Ushuaia

25 February 2025 – 9 March 2025

On board *m/v Plancius*



M/v *Plancius* was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named "Hr. Ms. *Tydeman*". The vessel was completely rebuilt as a passenger vessel in 2009 and complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety Of Life At Sea). M/v *Plancius* is 89 m long, 14.5 m wide and has a maximum draft of 5 m, ice class 1D, 10,5 knots average cruising speed and has 3 Diesel- Electric engines.

Captain Evgeny Levakov (Russia)

and his international crew of 50 sailors

Chief Officer:	Martin Hansson	[Sweden]
Second Officer:	Don Buren	[Netherlands]
Third Officer:	Solina Duguay	[Canada]
Hotel Manager:	Albert Don	[Netherlands]
Ass. Hotel Manager:	Niels Schipper	[Netherlands]
Head Chef:	Khabir Moraes	[India]
Sous Chef:	Sachin Naiks	[India]
Ships doctor:	Jacob van Dijk	[Netherlands]
Expedition Leader:	Adam Burke	[UK]
Ass. Expedition Leader:	Steffi Liller	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	Jakub Malecki	[Poland]
Expedition Guide:	Koen Hoekemeijer	[Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Simon Davis	[UK]
Expedition Guide:	Elizabeth Robinson	[USA]
Expedition Guide:	Valeria Herrera	[Argentina]
Expedition Guide:	Brian Veltrop	[Netherlands]
Mountain Leader:	Owain Jones	[UK]
Mountain Guide:	David McKinley	[New Zealand]
Kayak Leader:	Alexis Bellezze	[Argentina]

WE WELCOME YOU ON BOARD!

Day 1 – Tuesday 25th February, Ushuaia, Embarkation Day

12h00 GPS Position: 54°48.6'S / 068°17.8'W

Wind: NW-4 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: 6°C

Today was the day! We all travelled from far away places and made our way to *the end of the world*; Ushuaia. Our adventure onboard M/V Plancius was about to begin, and we were all very excited to start our Basecamp expedition. Boarding wasn't starting until 16:00 so that gave us time to explore the shops in Ushuaia a bit more, enjoy a coffee with a piece of pie, or buy that last extra hat and pair of gloves. However, the cold rain and strong winds didn't invite to spend much time outside.



In the afternoon we made our way down to the port where we soon found the charming and gracious M/V Plancius. Among the large cruise ships, she looked rather small, but that only ignited our enthusiasm more.

Boarding was smooth and while walking up the gangway we were greeted by the friendly and excited expedition team.

Once we all had boarded it was time for a mandatory abandon ship drill. Chief Officer Martin introduced himself and then explained the procedure. When the alarm was sounded, we made our way to our muster stations and started putting on our bulky orange life jackets. Then the abandon ship order was given, and we all made our way to the lifeboats where Second Officer Don gave us some more information about the life boats. That also ended the drill and now it was time to relax, explore the ship a bit more and enjoy seeing the ropes being loosened for our departure.



At 18:30 captain Evgeny welcomed us on board with inspiring words and together we toasted with a glass of champagne or orange juice. Our expedition had now really started and there was no way back!



Expedition Leader Adam introduced himself and the expedition team and he explained to us what to expect in the coming days. It's a very experienced and passionate team and they we're all eager to start this journey with us. Hotel Manager Albert then informed us how things work on the ship and where everything can be found.

It was a lot of information to process, but at 19:30 dinner was announced. Time to relax and enjoy the delicious buffet.

After dinner the doctor had organised a *pill & patch* party for those of us who needed sea sickness medication. Some swells were expected so it was good to prepare the body for this.

While we sailed through the Beagle Channel on our way to Antarctica, the sun slowly set and so did our eyes. Time to sleep! Good night everyone!

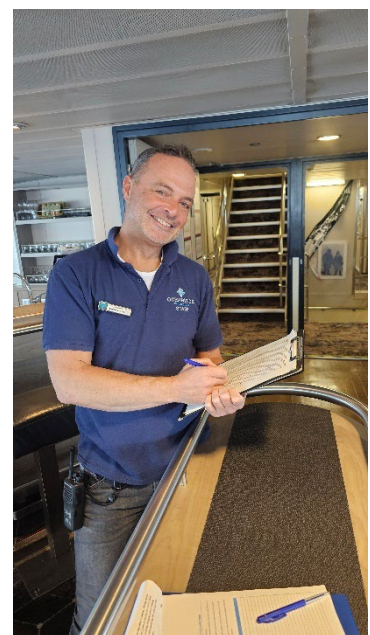
Day 2 – Wednesday 26th February, First day at the Drake Passage

12h00 GPS Position: 57°04.5'S / 065°20.9'W

Wind: W-4 • Sea: Moderate • Weather: Rain • Air temperature: 6°C

What a first night on the ship! We'd been warned that the ship would start rocking around midnight, and boy, did it ever! The waves hit, and sure enough, the ship started rolling. Some of us handled it better than others, which meant breakfast wasn't well attended.

After breakfast, our fearless expedition leader Adam, kicked off a series of must-attend briefings that had our full attention. They were fascinating and educational at the same time! We learned all about the rules of the Antarctic continent, the strict biosecurity measures that have been implemented to protect Antarctica's eco system against *foreign* diseases and invasive species. Perhaps the most thrilling was the zodiac safety briefing! These inflatable boats are crucial for exploring the wild, remote shores of Antarctica, where no ports exist.



Thankfully, Adam kept the briefings short and sweet, giving some of us time to recover from the night's rocky ride and relax a little longer.

In the afternoon, we got down to business, inspecting all our gear to make sure we weren't accidentally bringing any unwanted species into the pristine environment. After a thorough cleaning and inspection, we signed the declaration that officially allowed us to set foot in Antarctica!



Then, Koen, our expert photo guide, gave us a crash course on wildlife photography before the expedition staff wrapped up with a recap session. Adam gave us a sneak peek of the next day's plan, and we were treated to even more interesting and fascinating mini lectures from the staff.

That was day one done in the Drake! It felt like being back in school, but in the best way imaginable. The excitement of learning more about this untouched, awe-inspiring region we're about to explore was absolutely contagious!

Day 3 – Thursday 27th February, Second day at the Drake Passage

12h00 GPS Position: 61°30.2'S / 062°51.8'W

Wind: WNW-5 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: 1°C



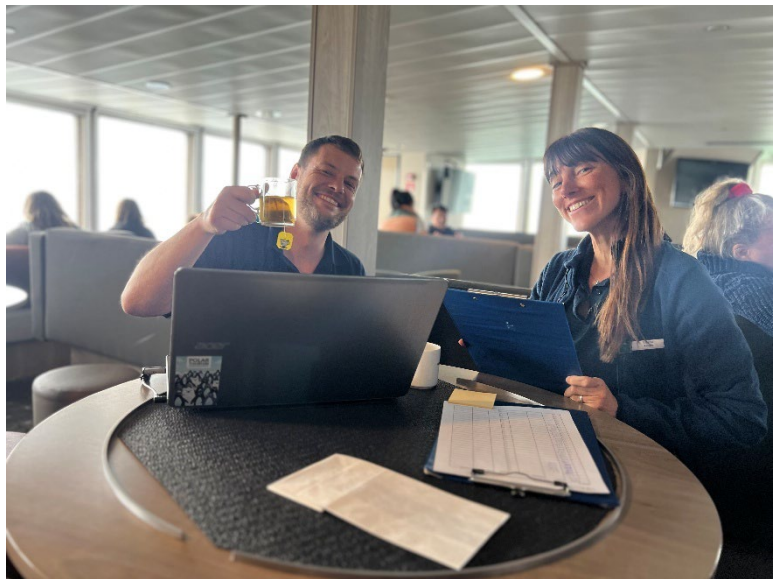
Day two in the Drake Passage was a smoother experience than yesterday. The swell and wind had calmed, and most guests were feeling the effects of the calmer seas; more energy, more excitement and a healthy appetite ;). After breakfast, the day's plan kicked off with preparations for our special Basecamp activities.

During this trip, we would get the opportunity to participate in six activities: shore landings, zodiac cruises and scenic ships cruises as our *standard* activities. And on top of that we could do mountaineering, kayaking, and camping as well. An action-packed trip and sleeping would probably be done once we arrived back home!

Before we were able to sign up for these activities, mandatory briefings needed to be attended to get important safety information.

For some of us, this would be our first time on a zodiac, and mountaineering, kayaking, or camping weren't a huge part of our daily routines back home either. So, these briefings are extra helpful to ensure everyone is safe and on the same page.

The first briefing was from our mountaineering guides. They explained the various equipment needed such as harnesses and crampons whereas they also shared how to safely transit over potentially crevassed ridden landscapes. The second briefing was for our campers. Valeria and Brian presented the logistics of camping in Antarctica, both with infectious excitement in their voices.



They showed us the kit needed for camping and explained how we would be responsible for digging our own sleeping pit and setting up our sleeping bag. And then they really sold open air camping to us by telling us about falling asleep in the brisk Antarctic night temperatures under a sky full of stars.

The third and final briefing was with Alexis for those wanting to kayak. Alexis has extensive global kayak experience, and he also knows the iceberg and whale filled Antarctic waters well.

After a delicious lunch, it was time for the activity sign up. We were divided in four different groups and were called up to register our activity dates. Some of us weren't feeling too good, but still put in the effort to make it up to the lounge. Excitement was in the air and anticipation was growing as tomorrow we would see our first penguins and we would start with our cool activities!



After all the briefings, it was time for a lecture. Expedition guide Elizabeth gave the first wildlife presentation of the trip. She has been studying whales for the last 10 years and presented the basics of what is a whale or a dolphin, followed by snapshots of the various species we could see along our voyage. Now we got even more enthusiastic about the chances of seeing cetaceans and after the lecture, a lot of us went outside to start scanning the horizon.

In the evening, Expedition Leader Adam presented the plans for tomorrow; our first activity day. After hearing from Adam, Jakub gave a recap about ice and glaciers as we had spotted our first iceberg of the trip! Coincidentally, shortly after, we also could see land. Land Ahoy! Some of us went to bed early to be well rested for our first day ahead in Antarctica.

Day 4 – Friday 28th February, Danco Island & Orne Islands

12h00 GPS Position: 64°44.6'S / 062°38.1'W

Wind: NW-2 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Sunny • Air temperature: 8°C

We woke up early to breathtaking views of the Antarctic continent, we were there! The morning was nothing short of spectacular—calm waters, bright sunshine, and hardly a cloud in the sky. Excitement buzzed through the ship as we prepared for our first landing, eager to step onto Antarctic soil for the first time.



The first destination of the day was Danco Island, a pristine and picturesque location teeming with wildlife. The highlight of this visit was the groups of moulting juvenile Gentoo Penguins, who provided an unforgettable experience for all.

Many of these young penguins displayed a remarkable curiosity, waddling up to us, seemingly as intrigued by their human guests as the guests were by them. Against the backdrop of the beautiful weather, this close interaction with the wildlife made for a truly magical experience.



To cap off an already outstanding morning, the polar plunge added an element of excitement and camaraderie. Braving the frigid Antarctic waters, many of us took the plunge amidst cheers, shouts, and laughter, creating a moment of pure exhilaration and shared adventure.

After a quick turnaround, the expedition team prepared for the afternoon landing at Orne Islands. Here, the focus was once again on the region's charismatic wildlife. While Gentoo Penguins were abundant, a few Chinstrap Penguins were also spotted among the colonies, offering us the opportunity to observe another fascinating species in its natural habitat.



The second group of kayakers took to the water, relishing the continued perfect weather conditions. With the stunning Antarctic scenery as their backdrop, they had another incredible paddling session in the icy blue waters. Meanwhile, the first group of mountaineers set off from George's Point, scaling new heights and soaking in the breathtaking vistas from above. The unparalleled landscape of snow-capped peaks and icy fjords stretched as far as the eye could see, making the climb a truly memorable experience.



As MV Plancius made its way toward the evening's camping site at Damoy Point, passengers were treated to an extraordinary wildlife sighting.



A pod of 25 Type B large Orcas appeared near the ship, creating a truly unforgettable spectacle. Among them was a particularly impressive bull, boasting a massive dorsal fin that stood tall against the horizon. The pod put on a mesmerizing display, with their frequent surfacing and blows dramatically backlit by the golden glow of the evening sun. It was a rare and magical sight that left us in awe.

Upon arrival at Damoy Point, the team faced some logistical challenges. Shallow rocks in the bay and a thick, icy crust over the snow made it difficult to dig the traditional sleeping *graves* for the overnight campers. Despite these hurdles, the expedition crew persevered, ensuring that most of us made it ashore. Those who remained for the night were left filled with anticipation for their once-in-a-lifetime experience of sleeping under the Antarctic sky.

Brian and Valeria were waiting for us in our *home* for the night. We prepared our mattresses and sleeping bags, and although the wind was strong, we did find shelter behind the rocks. From time to time the silence was interrupted by faraway avalanches. In that moment we felt that the mountains were *alive*. The stars provided a mesmerizing *ceiling* and made this a night to never forget.

Day 5 – Saturday 1st March, Jougla Point & Paradise Bay

12h00 GPS Position: 64°49.3'S / 063°30.1'W

Wind: W-3 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: -1°C

Those of us who were out camping started off the morning being serenaded by the sound of calving glaciers, the chirping of terns and penguins, and a lovely good morning call from our camping guides, Valeria and Brian.

Damoy, known as the former *southernmost waiting room*, was a place where UK scientists awaited their plane ride en route to, or from the Rothera station back in the late 1970's. It is a stunning place for camping, located within picturesque glacial scenery, dramatic spiky mountains, scattered with examples of the intricate relationship between ice and rocks. The conditions had been challenging with negative temperatures and wind gusts, but also a stunning night sky full of stars.

Later in the morning we arrived at Port Lockroy, a former UK research station which today is managed and maintained by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT). It's a historic site with a museum, a souvenir shop and the world's southernmost post office.



Unfortunately, due to technical issues the shop and museum were closed, however three Port Lockroy employees were kind enough to visit Plancius instead. We had the opportunity to learn about the history of this special place and to purchase unique Antarctic souvenirs.

Port Lockroy, located on Goudier Island, was discovered by Jean

Baptiste Charcot in 1904 during the first French Antarctica expedition. It was named after the French politician who funded the expedition, and from 1911-1931 it offered a sheltered harbour for whaling ships. They needed fresh water to process the whales, and this meant they had to be located close to glaciers.

The main scientific work carried out was ionospheric research (study of the upper atmosphere which was used for high frequency radio), whereas other scientific research included the utilization of the environment and habitat preference for lichens, birds, and mammals. The base closed in 1962 and in 1995 the Antarctic Treaty designated it a Historical Site and Monument. In 2006, the UKAHT took over the site and to date carries out Gentoo penguin nesting research related to breeding success.

After their brief introduction most of us embarked the zodiacs to see Port Lockroy with our own eyes and then continued to Jougla Point just nearby. Jougla Point is a small rocky island with many Gentoo penguins and lots of whale bones.



During lunch time we repositioned towards the famous Paradise Bay. In the bay there are two research stations, one Chilean and one

Argentinian. The latter being Almirante Brown Station on Coughtrey Peninsula, home of the Argentine Antarctica Program and one of the oldest stations in Antarctica. Many researchers are stationed there throughout the summer and the research conducted here focuses on meteorological observatory, census of penguins, oceanographic studies and marine biology. In 1984, part of the main facility burned down in a fire and the station was rebuilt in 1995.

Our next activity was a zodiac cruise. As we travelled along Skontorp Cove in beautiful sunny weather, we witnessed majestic glacier margins shooting to the sky with crevassed ice pillars and cliffs, only waiting to collapse within days or hours to give birth to even more icebergs.



We saw seals resting on ice floes and whales feeding in the nutrient rich waters of Paradise Bay.

In some places, the shoreline was also covered with moss and lichen, one of our first signs of plant life in Antarctica.

Nearby Brown station, our guides even drove us to shore to set foot onto the continent for the first time at Punta Vidt. From the landing area many of us saw a

spectacular glacier calving, a reminder that glaciers are also *alive*. After witnessing all of that in just over two hours we fully understand why this place is called Paradise Bay!

That was another wonderful day in Antarctica!

Day 6 – Sunday 2nd March, Port Charcot & Pleneau Island

12h00 GPS Position: 65°05.2'S / 064°02.1'W

Wind: S-2 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: -2°C

We woke up early this morning, eager to witness our beautiful Plancius passing through the legendary Lemaire Channel. Many of us gathered on the bow and decks, mesmerized by the towering mountains on either side as the ship gracefully glided through the channel. The cloudy weather only added to the atmosphere, making the breathtaking scenery even more dramatic.



Once we emerged on the other side, we set course for our next landing site, Port Charcot. During the transit, we enjoyed a hearty breakfast in the restaurant, fuelling up for the adventure ahead.

We were all geared up and ready for the landing when Adam broke the unfortunate news; the landing was cancelled due to a massive buildup of ice at the site. But there was no need to worry, the expedition team already had an exciting Plan B in action: a zodiac cruise!



Gliding through the iceberg graveyard, we marvelled at the towering ice formations. Among the majestic icebergs, we spotted rafts of penguins, Weddell seals, and even the elusive Leopard seal! To top it all off, Minke and Humpback whales graced us with their presence, making this Plan B far beyond anything we could have imagined.



Before we knew it, it was time for lunch. Meanwhile, our expedition team went ashore to prepare our next landing. This time, we set foot on Pleneau Island which is located just southwest of the Lemaire Channel in the western reaches of the Antarctic Peninsula. Despite its modest size, the rocky surface is almost entirely buried under thick layers of snow and ice.

The island was named after the photographer of Jean-Baptiste Charcot's French polar expedition (1903–1905). Initially, Charcot believed it was part of neighbouring Hovgaard Island and named it Pleneau Point. However, a narrow channel separates the two.

We hiked up to a stunning viewpoint, where icebergs stretched as far as the eye could see. A scenic walk led us around the island, bringing us face-to-face with bustling colonies of Gentoo penguins.



Later in the afternoon, we gathered once again in the lounge for our daily recap. Adam presented the plans for tomorrow, Steffi gave an insightful talk on the life cycle of penguins, and Koen led one of his engaging photography workshops.

To cap off an incredible day, our intrepid campers set out into the darkish night for a once-in-a-lifetime experience, camping in the heart of Antarctica at

beautifully Hovgaard Island.

Brian and Valeria welcomed us to our *outdoor hotel* for the night. We began digging small snow shelters in case of wind, and then set up our bivy bags, mattresses, and sleeping bags. The experience became more magical with each passing minute. Laughter filled the air as we took pictures before falling asleep.



The silence was occasionally broken by the distant rumble of avalanches and calving glaciers. The blows of nearby whales added to the surreal ambiance, while above us, a canopy of stars formed the most magnificent roof we could ever have asked for.

Day 7 – Monday 3rd March, Pleneau Island & Damoy

12h00 GPS Position: 65°06.8'S / 064°03.6'W

Wind: S-1 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: 4°C



Early this morning, the campers were picked up after spending a magical night under the Antarctic stars. The clear sky made for a truly unforgettable experience.

At 07:15, us none campers were gently woken by EL Adam's soft yet cheerful wake-up call: "Good morning, good morning, good morning!"

After breakfast the day's adventure began. Those not participating in kayaking or mountaineering embarked on a thrilling Zodiac cruise around Pleneau Island. The sun was shining brightly, and the sky was a brilliant blue—perfect conditions for exploring.

As we cruised through brash ice, we were once again in awe with the stunning icebergs surrounding us. It is amazing how nature shapes these fantastic icebergs into pieces of abstract art. Another highlight was the sheer variety of wildlife we encountered this morning. Groups of playful penguins swam around our zodiacs, which was a delightful sight to witness. Then, we had an incredible encounter with a curious Leopard seal which approached our boat, coming in close for a better look. It was breathtaking seeing this large and powerful Antarctic predator underwater.

Just when we thought the morning couldn't get any better, we spotted humpback whales. Seeing these massive creatures up close was an awe-inspiring experience.



After the zodiac cruise, we sailed back through the majestic Lemaire Channel. With the sun out the views were breathtaking. The Lemaire Channel is nicknamed Kodak Gap as it has been widely photographed.

By 15:00, we arrived at our next destination—Damoy Point. This was the very place where our campers had spent their first night. Today, we had the chance to go ashore, visit the historic hut, and learn about the site's past, including its former airstrip used by early explorers. It was fascinating to imagine the history embedded in this remote location.

During our walk, we were treated to breathtaking views, with the towering peaks of the *Seven Sisters* visible in the distance.



At 18:00, we returned to our mothership, M/V Plancius, where we received a briefing on tomorrow's program. Then, at 19:00, we gathered in the dining room for another tasty dinner, while reflecting on an incredible day and eagerly looking forward to what tomorrow will bring.

Day 8 – Tuesday 4th March, Orne Harbour & Neko Harbour

12h00 GPS Position: 64°37.4'S / 062°32.2'W

Wind: Light Air • Sea: Calm • Weather: Fog • Air temperature: 2°C

Good morning, good morning, good morning! Another incredible day in Antarctica had begun, though initially, we could hardly see a thing. Our early risers maybe caught a fleeting glimpse of the sun over the glaciated mountains before the fog rolled in which shrouded everything in mystery. So where exactly were we? Welcome to Orne Harbour!

The plan was to set foot on the Antarctic continent once more, but while we approached it became clear that nature had other ideas. The landing site was difficult to approach due to ice and the steep climb up looked very icy and as such slippery and dangerous. However, the ship was surrounded by countless whales and rafts of penguins so in an instant, Adam made the call to do a zodiac cruise instead. As it turned out a brilliant choice!



At first, the thick fog kept us close to the ship. Penguins zipped through the glassy water, darting between the zodiacs being adorable, energetic, and endlessly entertaining. They scrambled up icebergs, some successfully, others not so much. But even their missteps were charming. And then, the whales—so many of them—graceful, curious, seemingly undisturbed by our presence. It felt like each zodiac had its own personal whale escort as they were swimming alongside us, playfully interacting with our small rubber boats, as if they were simply enjoying life.



As the fog lifted, we explored the vastness of Orne Harbour, but nothing topped the whales. Watching them flirt, frolic, and glide effortlessly through the water was pure magic. We felt privileged to witness such a moment. Could Antarctica possibly get any better than this?

Back on board, we enjoyed a fantastic lunch while we sailed towards our afternoon destination: Neko Harbour. Another chance to set foot on the Antarctic continent. Unfortunately, the fog had returned limiting our views of this beautiful glacier with its stunning surroundings. But the wind stayed calm, making for a smooth and safe landing, with a fun ride in slaloming through the brash ice.



At Neko we were greeted by Gentoo penguins and their adorable fluffy chicks! The little ones were everywhere fearless, curious, and constantly chasing after their parents, demanding more food. The adults obliged, but often had to escape into the water for a well-earned break. Beyond the penguins, the towering glacier at our landing site stole the show. Jakub, our onboard glaciologist, shared his passion for these icy giants while we eagerly watched, hoping to

witness a dramatic calving event. Small chunks of ice already tumbled into the sea so we were excited to see what was about to happen! The fog added a moody atmosphere, and though the mountaineers had a hazy view from the top, they embraced their adventure nonetheless.

As the day wound down, the hotel team had a surprise in store, a BBQ dinner on the back deck. Free drinks, a warm meal, and breathtaking Antarctic surroundings made for an unforgettable evening. But the real surprise? The night quickly transformed into a full-on party. As soon as dinner ended, the tables and benches were cleared away, and the back deck became a dance floor. DJ Prince set the mood, and before long, nearly everyone was on their feet. Dancing in the middle of Andvord Bay, surrounded by ice? Not exactly how we pictured our Antarctic adventure, but absolutely perfect.



Some turned in before midnight, but whispers of an all-night celebration suggest that for some of us the party lasted until sunrise.

What a day, and what a night ;).

Day 9 – Wednesday 5th March, Challenger Island & Foyl Harbour

12h00 GPS Position: 64°21.4'S / 061°35.1'W

Wind: Light Air • Sea: Calm • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: +5°C

The morning of March 5th was nothing short of an adventure! M/V Plancius had arrived at Challenger Island, located on the north side of Bluff Island. It was the first time any of the expedition team or officers had visited this location, so our zodiac cruise was going to be a real expedition! Leader Adam was eager to explore, and together with Chief Officer Martin, they devised a plan to navigate the largely uncharted waters of Murray Harbour and circumnavigate Challenger Island. The gamble paid off; the zodiac cruise was absolutely spectacular!

Despite the chilly morning, wildlife was everywhere. We spotted Antarctic fur seals, Weddell seals, Leopard seals, Chinstrap penguins, Snowy Sheathbills, Giant petrels, Antarctic terns, and more Humpback whales. Adding to the magic, the shallower waters were filled with massive, stranded icebergs. They looked fantastic in the morning light. The whole experience carried a true sense of exploration, and Challenger Island quickly became a new favorite.

As we enjoyed another delicious lunch, the bridge team navigated our little blue ship to our afternoon destination: Foyl Harbor. The ship was surrounded by rugged, snow-capped peaks and breathtaking glaciated landscapes, an awe-inspiring backdrop for what was to come. Located on the east side of Enterprise Island, Foyl Harbor is not only home to whale-rich waters and stunning scenery, but also the historic shipwreck of the Governoren.



Once one of the largest and most advanced whaling factory ships of its time, the Governoren was designed to catch and process whales directly on board, making whaling more efficient and economically viable. The ship was famous for producing over 22,000 gallons of whale oil, and after one of its most successful seasons, the crew decided to celebrate. Unfortunately, the party got out of hand.

While dancing below deck, someone probably knocked over a lamp, and within moments, the ship was ablaze. With barrels of whale oil fuelling the fire, it quickly became uncontrollable.



Fortunately, all 85 crew members escaped and watched from shore as their ship was consumed by flames.

During our zodiac cruise, we marvelled at the deep blue icebergs, towering glacial walls, and curious Humpback whales. We also spotted Weddell seals, Gentoo penguins, and Antarctic fur seals—a spectacular mix of wildlife in a truly breathtaking setting.

Then suddenly another zodiac approached with Albert and Niels, Chef Khabir, and Chief Engineer Daniel. What were they doing out here? Well, they came to bring us a warm and tasty surprise, hot chocolate with whipped cream, and a dash of rum. The perfect warm treat to enjoy amid the amazing Antarctic landscapes and blowing whales. What an unexpected delight!



After almost three hours out on the water we returned to the ship and with the sun setting over the Antarctic horizon, we ended the day with an unforgettable evening of ship's whale watching—a perfect ending to a truly incredible day.

Day 10 – Thursday 6th March, Hydrurga Rocks & Bransfield Strait

12h00 GPS Position: 64°08.7'S / 061°36.8'W

Wind: SW-2 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: +5°C

The final day of our Antarctic expedition aboard M/V Plancius was a fitting conclusion to an unforgettable journey, offering one last morning of exploration and wildlife encounters before beginning our voyage back to Ushuaia. Our final activity took place at Hydrurga Rocks, where passengers were divided into two groups, each given an hour and a half to experience both a landing and a zodiac cruise. The morning conditions were ideal, with mainly sunny skies and very light winds setting the stage for a spectacular farewell to the icy wilderness.



Onshore, the island was teeming with life, particularly young male Antarctic Fur Seals. These boisterous juveniles engaged in growling and posturing displays, likely practicing the dominance behaviours that would serve them in adulthood. While some of us cast nervous glances at the spirited interactions,

the seals posed no real threat to our group.

The rest of the island was dominated by moulting adult Chinstrap penguins. With the chicks having already departed for the open sea, the remaining penguins were in various stages of feather replacement. Those still undergoing the moulting process stood motionless, looking rather grumpy, while the ones that had finished were seen reaffirming their pair bonds. A particularly charming behaviour witnessed was the gifting of pebbles, a touching display of affection and preparation for the next breeding season.



Meanwhile, those participating in the zodiac cruise were treated to incredible marine wildlife encounters. Humpback whales made several approaches, once again offering us intimate glimpses of these majestic creatures. Adding to the excitement, a young Elephant Seal was spotted, our only sighting of the species throughout the entire expedition. The combination of close-up whale sightings and the Elephant Seal encounter made for a truly memorable final excursion in Antarctic waters. One boat was lucky enough to witness a big iceberg calving. During a few minutes of *Antarctic* silence, the iceberg had started to make some grumbling sounds and then suddenly a large block of ice broke off. What a spectacular experience!



With the conclusion of our morning adventure, we returned to M/V Plancius for lunch and then we began our journey northward. Due to bad weather the decision had been made to spend one more morning in Antarctica, but then set sail directly for Ushuaia. This marked the beginning of our two-day crossing of the formidable Drake Passage, providing ample time for reflection on the extraordinary experiences we had shared over the course of the voyage.

The afternoon was a tranquil one, with many passengers succumbing to post-adventure drowsiness as the ship gently rocked in a moderate 3-metre swell. For those who remained awake, the day's highlight was an engaging and passionate lecture delivered by Simon, who spoke at length about Albatrosses.



These magnificent seabirds, with their extraordinary wingspans and unparalleled gliding abilities, are among the most remarkable avian travellers of the Southern Ocean. The talk served as a fitting preview for the days ahead, as we anticipated the possibility of encountering these majestic birds during our passage across the Drake.

As M/V Plancius continued its steady course northward, a sense of accomplishment and quiet contemplation settled over the ship. The journey had been an action-packed odyssey through one of the most remote and awe-inspiring regions on Earth, filled with unforgettable wildlife encounters, breathtaking landscapes, and shared moments of wonder. Now, with the white continent fading behind us, we looked ahead to the open sea, the adventure of the crossing, and the memories that would stay with us long after our return to civilization.

Day 11 – Friday 7th March, First Day on the Drake Passage

12h00 GPS Position: 60°21.2'S / 063°33.3'W

Wind: W-3 • Sea: Moderate • Weather: Rain • Air temperature: 3°C

No wakeup call this morning, and although we enjoyed a bit of a sleep in, we also felt a bit melancholic that we had set sail towards Ushuaia after seven unforgettable days in Antarctica. The weather forecast hadn't been too bad, and the ship was rocking gently this morning. We were more or less in between weather systems and into the *greens* so nothing we couldn't handle.

Today a full lecture program was scheduled with a good variety of topics. Koen started the day with a presentation on Adobe Lightroom. This is a software program that enables us to get more out of our photos. You can compare it to developing your photos, but then with endless possibilities. With small adjustments related to contrast, exposure and colour, photos look immediately different and hopefully better ;).



Then it was Jakub's turn. He talked about the state and fate of glaciers and ice sheets. This wasn't a *good news* only presentation and the information Jakub shared made us think more deeply about the future of our planet.

During our expedition we encountered large numbers of humpback whales, and they all made us fall in love with them. Elizabeth shared with us her knowledge about these fantastic gentle giants in her humpback whale lecture.

Her passion was infectious, and we felt privileged to have experienced our incredibly close encounters with these intelligent, social and conscious giants of the oceans.

Brian closed the lecture program with information about wilderness survival. Brian shared interesting stories, and it was clear he feels very much at home out in the wilderness.

During the day the other guides were on the bridge looking for wildlife. Although it was a relatively quiet day, we did see several species of Albatross.



After dinner we spent time in the lounge, chatting and mingling, and maybe working on

the thousands of photos we took during our adventure. It was a relaxing day and after 7 intense and very busy days it was nice to relax a bit.

Day 12 – Saturday 8th March, Second Day on the Drake Passage

12h00 GPS Position: 56°06.4'S / 067°12.0'W

Wind: W-4 • Sea: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: 9°C

Good morning M/V Plancius! Our second full day of sailing on the Drake Passage towards Ushuaia. And again the weather was favourable as the swells weren't much bigger than yesterday and during the day the movement should even decrease. Perfect conditions for having a good breakfast in the restaurant this morning.

Today the expedition team had more lectures scheduled with a good variety of topics. During our 7 days in Antarctica the days were completely filled with activities and that didn't leave time for more extensive lectures. With more time on the *Drake* it was great to get more information about the guides' specialties and passions.

Steffi's lecture was titled "Why penguins don't wear socks" and with such a title our curiosity was immediately triggered so we made our way up to the lounge. It was a very interesting lecture, and it is amazing how animals manage to survive the harsh Antarctic conditions and keep themselves warm.

Next it was Adam who shared with us what it's like to overwinter in Antarctica as scientist. It was incredible to hear his personal story, and it was fantastic to see what Antarctica is like during the long cold winter.

Lunch was soon to be announced, but the expedition team had one more surprise for us. After looking at the maps and weather forecasts, it had been decided to sail the ship past the notorious area of Cape Horn. It's an area with strong unpredictable winds and very high waves and that makes rounding the Cape a challenging endeavour. More than 800 ships sank here and that gives you an idea about the dangers here. From our safe ship we experienced a change in weather as the wind increased significantly and the sea got a bit rougher. But it was worth it as we saw many bird species in large numbers and occasionally, we were able to spot dolphins. This *drive by* was a very nice gesture from the captain and his officers.

After lunch and for many of us a nap, it was Valeria's turn with a history lecture about the Race to the South pole. The *race* was between Scott and Amundsen who were both very eager to be the first to reach the South pole. Unfortunately, only one can be the winner and it was Amundsen who managed to be there first.

In the afternoon Alexis shared with us some of his Argentinian cultural heritage, a workshop on Maté! It was very entertaining to learn more about Argentina's favourite drink.



Then it was time to *dress up* for captain's cocktail. The expedition team were also wearing something a bit fancier than their daily uniforms, and this added to the festive atmosphere in the lounge. We drank champagne and the captain spoke thankful and inspirational words. Then it was Adam's turn to say his

thank you's before we were shown the slide show. The slide show was made by Jakub and Brian with photo and video contributions from the entire expedition team. The slide show was great with funny moments, but also moments that made us tear up. It had been a wonderful trip and the slide show is a great souvenir and memory to bring home with us.

Then we had our final diner on board, and it was yet another delicious meal. The dining room was buzzing, and we enjoyed our last night the fullest. Albert then took the microphone to thank his entire hotel crew who did such a magnificent job both in front as well as behind the scenes. What a great team he has!

In the meantime, we had entered the Beagle Channel and the pilot was now in charge of getting us to Ushuaia where we would arrive around midnight. Good night everyone!

Day 13 – Sunday 9th March, Disembarkation Day Ushuaia

08h00 GPS Position: 54°48.6'S / 068°17.8'W

Wind: N-5 • Sea: Moderate • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: 8°C

This morning Adam woke us up one last time with his soft and soothing voice. We will surely miss him waking us up. We opened our eyes and realised the ship was no longer moving and when we looked outside we saw we had arrived back in Ushuaia. We made our way to the breakfast restaurant once more and while eating we already started saying our goodbyes to the lovely stewards who had been so good and friendly to us. In the meantime the expedition team had carried out our luggage and then *unfortunately* Albert announced the ship had been cleared by the authorities and that the buses to the airport had arrived.

We said goodbye to our fellow passengers who had become our friends and with whom we had shared this unforgettable adventure. The expedition team was there as well and we were sad to have to say goodbye to them too. But with firm hugs and big smiles we parted ways while we looked back to our beautiful Plancius one more time. Our expedition had been amazing and we would never forget this great adventure!

Total distance sailed on our voyage: 1740nm
Southernmost position: 65°06.8'S / 064°03.6'W

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, the Captain, Crew and Expedition staff we would like to thank you for a wonderful time, it has been a pleasure sailing with you.



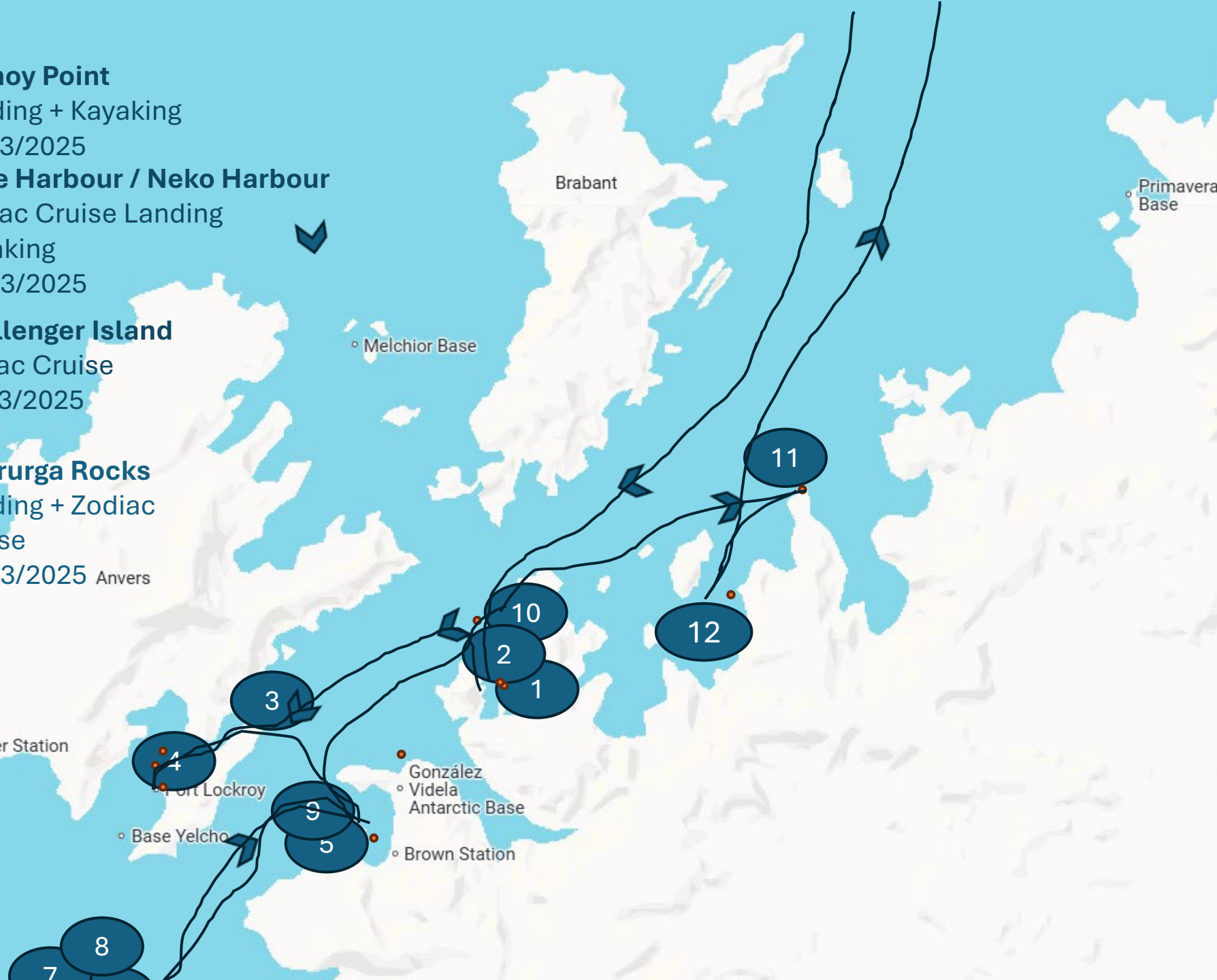
- 
- A map showing a maritime route in the Southern Ocean. The route is marked by a black line starting from the Antarctic Peninsula and heading north towards the sub-Antarctic islands. The map includes landmasses in white and green, and the ocean in light blue. A list of 16 numbered points along the route is provided on the left. The route starts near the Antarctic Peninsula, passes through the Drake Passage, and continues north towards the sub-Antarctic islands.
1. Danco Island / Errera Channel
 2. Orne Island
 3. Damoy Point
 4. Jougla Point / Port Lockroy
 5. Paradise Bay
 6. Pleneau
 7. Hovgaard
 8. Pleneau Island
 9. Hovgaard
 10. Damoy Point
 11. Pleneau Island
 12. Orne Harbour
 13. Neko Harbour
 14. Challenger Island
 15. Foyn Harbour
 16. Hydrurga Rocks

Total Distance Travelled:

- 1791 nM
- 3315 km
- 2060 miles

- 1 **Danco Island**
Landing + Kayaking
28/02/25
- 2 **Orne Island**
Landing + Kayaking
28/22/2025
- 3 **Damoy Point**
Camping
28/02/2025
- 4 **Jougla Point**
Landing + Kayaking
01/03/2025
- 5 **Paradise Bay**
Zodiac Cruise + Kayaking
01/03/2025
- 6 **Port Charcot**
Zodiac Cruise + Kayaking
02/03/2025
- 7 **Pleneau**
Zodiac Cruise + Kayaking
02/03/2025
- 8 **Pleneau + Hovgaard**
Zodiac Cruise +
Mountaneering + Kayaking
03/03/2025

- 9 **Damoy Point**
Landing + Kayaking
03/03/2025
- 10 **Orne Harbour / Neko Harbour**
Zodiac Cruise Landing
Kayaking
04/03/2025
- 11 **Challenger Island**
Zodiac Cruise
05/03/2025
- 12 **Hydrurga Rocks**
Landing + Zodiac
Cruise
06/03/2025



Species list: Breeding birds of Antarctica														
English	Scientific	25-feb	26-feb	27-feb	28-feb	1-mrt	2-mrt	3-mrt	4-mrt	5-mrt	6-mrt	7-mrt	8-mrt	9-mrt
Emperor Penguin	<i>Aptenodytes forsteri</i>													
Adelie Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis adeliae</i>						X							
Gentoo Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis papua papua</i>				X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Chinstrap Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis antarctica</i>			X	X			X	X		X			
Magellenic Penguin	<i>Sphenisicus magellanicus</i>													
Macaroni Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysolophus</i>													
Antarctic Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialoides</i>			X										
Cape Petrel (Pintado)	<i>Daption capensis</i>			X										
Wandering Albatross	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>		X										X	
Black-browed Albatross	<i>Diomedea melanophris</i>	X	X	X							X	X	X	
Grey-Headed Albatross	<i>Diomedea chrysostoma</i>			X							X	X	X	
Southern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>		X										X	
Light Mantled Albatross	<i>Phoebetria palpebrata</i>		X	X										
Blue Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>			X										
White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>		X	X									X	
Antarctic Prion	<i>Pachytila desolata</i>			X										
Soft-plumaged Petrel	<i>Pterodroma mollis</i>		X	X								X	X	
Kerguelen Petrel	<i>Aphrodroma brevirostris</i>													
Antarctic Petrel	<i>Thalassoica antarctica</i>			X										
Snow Petrel	<i>Pagodroma nivea</i>			X			X			X				
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Fuegian Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanites chilensis</i>													
Black-bellied Storm-Petrel	<i>Fregetta tropica</i>		X	X								X		
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>	X	X	X								X	X	
Common Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>			X										
Imperial Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax atriceps</i>	X											X	X
Antarctic Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax bransfieldensis</i>				X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Pale-faced Sheathbill	<i>Chionis alba</i>					X	X		X	X	X			

[illegible]

Adam Burke – Expedition Leader



Adam has always had a love of the outdoors and adventure, from an early age he dreamt of visiting exotic places and immersing himself in other cultures.

This love of the outdoors led him to work teaching adventurous activities and for over fifteen years this pursuit has given him the opportunity to live and work all over the globe. He has taught sailing in Australia, paddle sports on Europe's rivers and led expeditions in Africa.

After spending five years teaching white water safety & rescue and boat handling techniques to the fire brigade, he moved

on to providing marine science support in Antarctica. He has spent over five years living between the Antarctic continent and the island of South Georgia, including overwintering twice.

Whilst providing science support he spent his time in Antarctica managing boating operations and helming RIBs for diving operations. This covered understanding environmental changes and its effects, wildlife monitoring and counting as well as water sampling for a long-term data collection.

Adam enjoys travelling with his partner who shares the same values and love of the outdoors. This has taken them from deserts to rain forests and ultramarathons in the mountains.

Stefanie Liller – Asst. Exp. Leader



Steffi Liller was born in Offenbach, Germany in 1978. After completing her apprenticeship as a biology lab technician at the Paul-Ehrlich Institute in Langen, Germany, she earned a degree in Biology and Meteorology at the Universities of Darmstadt and Freiburg in Germany. Alongside her studies and her love of nature, Stefanie developed an interest in and a passion for skydiving. This eventually changed from being a hobby to her profession. While working at drop-zones and indoor skydiving facilities throughout central Europe, Stefanie enjoyed sharing her passion for the sport with other people.

A large part of her career was spent as a coach. It was always very important to her to make her own skills available to people curious and interested, and to look after their safety and lasting enjoyment in the sport. Starting in 2011 she managed several indoor skydiving facilities in Germany and Austria. In addition to her professional career, Stefanie is an avid world-traveller by foot or public transport. While exploring various landscapes and communities on all seven continents, she enjoys sharing her experiences and unique moments with others. Since 2017 Stefanie has been working as an independent coach in skydiving and indoor skydiving and guide or lector on several vessels in remote areas. Stefanie has chosen Vienna, Austria as her home base, and lives there in between trips.

Jakub Małecki – Expedition Guide



Jakub was born in Poland in 1985. As a kid, he dreamed of becoming an astronaut, but later his focus shifted towards astronomy. Eventually, he obtained a masters and doctoral degree in Earth Sciences and became a glaciologist. As he puts it, researching remote, glacier-covered regions is almost like landing on another planet, so the childhood dream has partly come true.

Since 2007 Jakub has been studying glaciers across the world, either directly or remotely, i.e., using satellite or aerial images. His main interest is

how glaciers respond to changing climate in different environmental settings. Most of his glaciology work Jakub carries out on Svalbard, the arctic archipelago located midway between Norway and the north pole, where he fell in love with ice. Since then, Jakub joins expeditions to remote regions on an every-year basis.

Jakub considers public education by the science community at least as important as delivering new knowledge, so he is a keen glaciology communicator, book author and a frequent guest to the Polish media outlets and science festivals where he comments on polar and mountain affairs. Apart from glaciology, Jakub is a huge enthusiast of planetary sciences and space exploration and tries to play the ukulele.

Koen Hoekemeijer – Exp. Guide



Koen Hoekemeijer was born in 1974 in The Netherlands. When it comes to nature and wildlife Koen was quite a late bloomer as he had always been more into nightlife and sunny beaches. But that all changed when he discovered his passion for wildlife and photography in 2009 in Costa Rica. It was during this trip that Koen saw his first humpback whales and he fell in love with them instantly. Not only did it make him eager to see more and different types of whales in locations all over the world, but he also wanted to learn to take better photos of these amazing creatures. And with the love for whales

and photography, came a broader passion for all sorts of wildlife.

Since that memorable vacation in 2009, Koen has been travelling the planet to see and photograph the world's most beautiful places. Usually from boats, jeeps or simply face down in the mud, but since 2016 also underwater. Snorkeling in the presence of whales and orcas is bringing Koen pure happiness.

Among his favourite animals are whales, orcas, penguins, tigers and jaguars. But in between safaris, he also likes to do street photography and capture life and portraits of people all over the world.

Koen believes that travelling does not only enrich your life, it also makes you more humble, more appreciative and it provides new levels of perspective and understanding. Koen has won the prestigious WWF Frans Lanting Photo contest, and in 2020 he won the Ellen Fitzgibbon Memorial Photography competition. It's Koen's dream to one day have a Vizsla dog and own a small cabin somewhere in northern Norway surrounded by snow and trees ;).

Simon Davies – Expedition Guide



Simon is a life-long birder and naturalist and after achieving a Masters degree in Ecology focusing on seabirds he has undertaken a broad range of wildlife related contracts around the world.

His career has predominantly been focused on birds (with the only notable 'blip' coming during a year researching Meerkats in South Africa) during which his focus has ranged from research to conservation to guiding and much in between. Most recently he has been working in Scotland and Sweden studying both breeding birds and migratory species through

ringing/banding, a wide range of surveys and other tracking methods.

He is an experienced guide, having led bird and wildlife tours in Australia and many tours, walks and talks in his native UK, enthusiastic about sharing the wide range of seabirds in the colonies he loves.

Among the recent studies he has participated in has included putting geolocators on Black Guillemots in Scotland to find out where they are foraging, fixing satellite transmitters on migratory wading birds in Australia to track their movements as they move up and down the East Asia flyway and affixing geolocators on Great Reed Warblers in Sweden to work out migratory routes.

A large part of his recent work has also been training others in bird ringing/banding and surveying, hopefully inspiring others to a career in research or conservation.

The vast majority of his spare time is also spent birding and wildlife watching and he has undertaken many trips around the world including Australia, Europe, India, Venezuela and the USA, always chasing the next bird!

Elizabeth Robinson – Exp. Guide



Elizabeth was born and raised in Minnesota, a state in the middle north of the United States. Minnesota is known for having over 10,000 lakes and nature around every corner; something she took full advantage of growing up. Before the age of eighteen, Elizabeth travelled to all fifty US states, and became a Junior Park Ranger at over thirty National Parks.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mammalogy, accompanied by additional degrees in Psychology, English Writing and Environmental Studies. Her undergraduate research focused on

African elephants and squirrels. Recently, she graduated from the University of Bristol (UK) with a Master of Science degree in Global Wildlife Health and Conservation. Her dissertation focused on cetacean conservation and understanding how policy is integrated within conservation efforts.

Elizabeth has lived and studied whales in many places such as Hawaii, British Columbia, Alaska, Norway, and the UK. She has previously worked as an orca kayak guide, a snorkel guide in Hawaii, a wildlife documentary co-producer, and a marine mammal researcher. She has spent the last eight years studying species such as orcas, humpback whales, right whales, porpoises, and pinnipeds. She is passionate about cetacean conservation, specifically endangered species. Elizabeth is very proud to have recently received her United States Coast Guard 100-ton Master Captains license and sailboat endorsement! She currently calls both the US and the UK home and is happiest at sea.

Valeria Sainz Herrera – Exp. guide



Valeria Sainz Herrera is an Argentine photographer. She grew up in Buenos Aires, capital of Argentina. Throughout the years she has found that one of her greatest passions is to travel to the wildest and remotest places around the world. So, traveling as much as she could, she found in the photography, a profession that gives her the freedom to know and live in different locations.

Nowadays she spends her life between “the poles”, working as a guide for Oceanwide Expeditions, and during the rest of the year you could find her in a beautiful island names Ilhabela in Brazil,

working in tourism area.

Living in different countries allows her to learn and practice many activities that she enjoys, especially in natural environments, like rock climbing and skiing in the Argentinian Patagonian Andes or camping and hiking in the central region of Argentina and, in Brazil, she learned other kinds of sports like scuba diving, kayaking and sailing.

She is also particularly interested in the history of the expeditions that discovered and mapped some of the places we are about to visit. This gives her the chance to share fascinating stories on board.

The Antarctic and The Arctic were always a dream of her, and now are part of her life.

Brian Veltrop – Expedition Guide



This is Brian, he is 31 years young and lives in the Netherlands.

Brian is a true nature lover. He has been in nature since he was little and has really found his passion for it in recent years.

In recent years, Brian has completed various courses in the outdoor world. In 2021 he started the training as a hike & survival instructor, hike & backpacking guide, international wilderness guide lvl 1. He trained for this in the Netherlands, France and Canada. He also followed the training of BICO, Baby it's cold outside and

Mountain 101 (University of Alberta, Canada).

After completing these courses, he entered the specialization and completed the training as a wilderness guide lvl 2 and the winter travel & survival lvl 3 in Winter Canada.

As an examination for this, he had to endure a 48 hour solo in -30 (Celsius).

Furthermore, Brian is very passionate about identifying Flora & Fauna. He likes to look for animal tracks & signs and talk about them.

In addition to Oceanwide Expeditions, Brian works at two Dutch companies as a survival instructor and wilderness guide. These offer wilderness trips to Scandinavian countries, France, Poland, Canada and Spain. And is a member of the Wilderness Guide Association and Interpretive Guide Association.

Owain Jones – Mountain Leader



Owain is a fully certified IFMGA Mountain Guide and full member of the British Association of Mountain Guides.

Owain started climbing and mountaineering with his father at the age of nine and the passion continues to this day. He has led several mountaineering expeditions and glacial treks in the Indian and Nepalese Himalaya. On ski he has led remote first ascents in East Greenland.

His experience as a mountain guide in the European Alps, on foot and ski, spans many seasons and includes more than fifty successful summits of Mont Blanc with his clients.

Rock climbing and ice climbing are his foremost passions, and he has made several first ascents across these disciplines in the United Kingdom. Owain takes great pride in helping others fully experience the mountain environment; not just leading but using every available opportunity to share his knowledge and top tips!

In addition to his work as a Mountain Guide, Owain is a professionally qualified youth worker and safety consultant for outdoor educational activities with young people in the United Kingdom.

David McKinley – Mountain Guide



Dave McKinley is an IFMGA Climbing and Ski Guide with 25 years of professional experience.

He lives in the small town of Twizel, just south of Aoraki/Mt Cook with his wife, 3 kids (when they're home) and 4 dogs and spends much of the year sharing adventures in the NZ Southern Alps with guests. Either mountaineering or Heliskiing/touring.

Dave has worked and climbed in NZ, Europe, Alaska, Nepal, Tibet and South America including ascents of Everest, Lhotse, Manaslu, Denali (which with his

last name of McKinley originates his nickname of "Narly") and Aconcagua amongst many others. He is passionate about sharing his experience and joy in exploring the more remote parts of our world with people and, having a previous life as a chef, he has a belief that guiding is a part of the "hospitality" industry at its heart. Dave has also been involved in the Search and Rescue aspect of the outdoors environment, and in particular with the use and deployment of dogs in Avalanche and wilderness/Open Area searching. Dave is a guide with a strong skill-set and an even stronger desire to enable and assist others to engage and learn from our natural and wild spaces.

Alexis Bellezze – Kayak Guide



Alexis Bellezze was born in San Luis, Argentina in 1973. He spent his childhood in the center of the country, in a rural area, then moved to the city of Mendoza close to the Central Andes and studied in the Army High School where he fell in love with the mountains and the outdoors. Then moved to Cordoba where he spent 3 years in the Air Force Academy. After that he moved to Italy where he worked and finished a paragliding course, then returned to Argentina to finish his studies as a Veterinarian. In 2006, he did a Residency in the ICU Service of the Large Animal Hospital of the Royal

“Dick” Veterinary College in Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2006 and 2008 he did an internship as a veterinarian surgeon at Milano, Italy. Then he moved to Villa La Angostura, an isolated village in the middle of the Patagonian Lake District where he works as a veterinarian surgeon and runs a kayak company in the Nahuel Huapi National Park.

Since 2018 he has been working as a Polar Kayak Guide and Expedition Guide. He has guided in the Antarctic Peninsula many times, reaching the Antarctic Polar Circle, Svalbard, circumnavigated Spitzbergen, East coast of Greenland and many rivers and lakes in Patagonia. During the last years he travelled the south and north of Chile and Argentina as a Wilderness First Responder instructor working in different environments like the jungle, the Patagonian mountain range, the windy Patagonian estepa and the desert of Atacama. Since 2014 Alexis is the owner and Director of endurance kayak & mountain expeditions based in Patagonia Argentina, offering multiple days kayak trips in this pristine area.

Alexis is divorced, has 3 children and lives in Patagonia Argentina. He likes to cook for them with fire in the wilderness and go camping when is possible.

He speaks fluently Spanish, Italian and English.

Jacob van Dijk – Ships doctor



Jacob (39) studied medicine in Nijmegen (the Netherlands) from 2003-2010, where he obtained his masters diploma. After his study he joined the military as a pilot and flew in the Royal Netherlands Air Force for a period of 13 years.

During his time in the military he sparked an interest in the subject of wilderness medicine. With this he could combine two of his big hobbies, being in the outdoors and medicine.

He is currently instructor of diverse Wilderness Life Support Courses and the Jungle Medicine Course. He is

Fellow on the Academy of Wilderness Medicine and he holds the Diploma in Mountain Medicine and the Diploma in Dive and Marine Medicine. Via different courses and trainings he always attempts to continue to learn about the newest medical advances in the field.

In the past few years Jacob has been doctor at sports events and ships doctor on board of several ships, which has seen him sail across the Atlantic.

Jacob is currently training to be military anaesthesiologist for The Netherlands Armed Forces in the University Medical Hospital of Utrecht and continues to be interested in combining travel, medicine and the outdoors in his current and future jobs.

He married in the past year to his beautiful and amazing wife Emily, with whom he lives in Ede, the Netherlands. Together they enjoy the outdoors and sports via running, bike packing, sailing and diving.

- 1600 **Welcome on board!** Your luggage should be in your cabin when you arrive. Please check carefully to see if you are missing any luggage and if there is luggage in your cabin that does not belong to you then please let one of the staff know. Please feel free to explore the ship.
Tea and coffee are available in the Lounge on Deck 5.
- >1700 **Mandatory Safety and Lifeboat Instruction** in the Lounge. **ALL PASSENGERS** are required to participate in this very important instruction.
- 1800 Departure from the pier.
- 1845 Please join us in the Lounge for an **introduction to the ship** from your Hotel Manager Albert.
This will be followed by **Captain's Cocktails**, a chance to meet your Captain, Evgeny Levakov and then you will meet with your Expedition Leader Adam Burke. He will explain the plans for the coming days, and it will be a chance to meet with your Expedition Team.
- 1930 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant on Deck 3 behind the reception desk.
Enjoy your meal.

Tonight we will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents. Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. Thank you.

- 0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0930 **Zodiac, IAATO and Biosecurity Briefing.** During our seadays we have to take part in some mandatory briefing for our visit to Antarctica. Join Adam in the lounge for these obligatory briefings.
- 1130 **Boots.** We will hand out the boots you will use throughout the trip. We will call you by deck. The Bootroom is on deck 3 forward.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1430 **Biosecurity.** Followed by the briefing on biosecurity in the morning, we will call you by deck to bring all your outer gear, boots, tripods and walking poles you plan to use during your time of the trip. We will inspect them with you and take care we are not bringing any invasive species or diseases to the places we would like to visit.
- 1700 **Photography.** Our Photo guide Koen will offer a series of short Photo lectures throughout the trip. Please join him in the lounge for “10 tips for Wildlife Photography”
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

We will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents. Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. Thank you.

0745 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.

0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.

Activity Briefings. If you would like to take part in one of the additional activities like Mountaineering, Kayaking or Camping, please join the Activity guides in the lounge. These briefings are mandatory, if you would like to join the activity.

0930 **Mountaineering.** Please meet your Mountain Guides Owain and David in the lounge.

1030 **Camping.** Please come and join Valeria and Brian in the lounge for your camping briefing.

1130 **Kayaking.** Please meet your Kayakguide Alexis in the lounge.

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

In the afternoon we will offer the mandatory briefing and biosecurity for those who missed it. Time depends on sea conditions, please listen to announcements.

1430 **Activity Sign ups.** If you would like to take part in one of the additional activities during the trip. We will call you by groups that are posted on the entrance of the lounge on the wall.

1700 **Cetaceans** Along our Voyage. Elizabeth will talk about the whales we expect to see. Please join her in the lounge.

1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.

1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

We will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents. Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. Thank you.

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0815** **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly ***dressed up and ready to go*** on deck 3 forward outside on starboard side.
- 0845** **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 0900** **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a landing at Danco Island. We hopefully get the chance to walk to the top of this hill and enjoy amazing views onto the Errera Channel. You will also see your first gentoo penguins nesting along the hill.
At the end of the landing, we will offer the polar plunge. Bring the courage and we will bring the towels.
- 1230** **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1315** **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly ***dressed up and ready to go*** on deck 3 forward outside on starboard side.
- 1345** **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 1400** **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a landing at Orne Island. You will get the chance to see gentoos penguins and also chinstrap penguins call this place home. The views over the Gerlache Strait and Ronge Island are beautiful.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.
- 2000 Camper be ready for the night. **Please listen to the announcements!**

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0845 Presentation by the Port Lockroy Staff about the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust. We will call you by groups for the visit to the shop, to avoid having it to crowded.
- +/-0900 **Kayakers**, you will visit the shop last, please and meet Alexis at the bootroom to pick up your equipment.
- 0915 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** You will have the chance to visit Jougla where we have a nice gentoo penguins and shags colony. On the ship we will off the Port Lockroy Shop with souvenirs and the post office. When you are a “**whale**” or a “**seal**” you will first do the landing. “**mighty krill**” and “**penguins**” visit the shop on board first. We will switch after half of the time. Please listen to announcements.
- +/-1030 We will swap the groups. Listen to announcements.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1515 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 1530 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a Zodiac cruise around Paradise Harbour. The Bay has the name for a reason. The area is beautiful and we hope to be able to spot a lot of marine wildlife.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.
- 2000 There might be an option for camping tonight. Stay tuned.

Antarctica – Base Camp

Port Charcot & Salpêtrière Bay

Sunday 2nd March 2025

- 0645 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0700 We will pass the Lemaire Channel, also known as the Kodak gap.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0815 **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly ***dressed up and ready to go*** on deck 3 forward outside on starboard side.
- 0845 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 0900 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a landing at Port Charcot. We hope to give you the chance to walk up to the top of the little peninsula and enjoy the views about the surroundings islands and icebergs.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1315 **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly ***dressed up and ready to go*** on deck 3 forward outside on starboard side.
- 1345 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 1400 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a Zodiac Cruise around Pleneau Island and Salpêtrière Bay. The ice in the area is amazing and the wildlife mostly numerous.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.
- 2000 Camper be ready for the night. **Please listen to the announcements!**

Antarctica – Base Camp

Pleneau Island & Damoy Point

Monday 3rd March 2025

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0815 **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly ***dressed up and ready to go*** on deck 3 forward outside on starboard side.
- 0845 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 0900 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a Zodiac Cruise around Pleneau Island. Let's search for wildlife.
- +/- 1200 We will pass north through the Lemaire Channel.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1445 **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly ***dressed up and ready to go*** on deck 3 forward outside on starboard side.
- 1515 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 1530 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a landing at Damoy Point. You will get a chance to walk along the hill and the gentoo colonies. The views are amazing. We will also give you the chance to visit the historic hut.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

Antarctica – Base Camp

Orne Harbour & Neko Harbour

Tuesday 4th March 2025

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0845 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 0900 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a landing at Orne Harbour. The views are spectacular and you get another chance to see some chinstraps penguins.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1345 **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly on deck 3, dressed and ready to go.
- 1415 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 1430 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a landing at Neko Harbour. Neko Harbour is your second continental landing. The view on the neighbouring glacier is great and the penguins will entertain you as well.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 Be ready for a **special dinner**, dress warm and listen to the announcements.

Antarctica – Base Camp

Challenger Island & Foyn Harbour

Wednesday 5th March 2025

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0845 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 0900 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a Zodiac Cruise at Challenger Island. Expedition morning, we have never visited this place
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1345 **Mountaineers**, please meet Owain and Narly on deck 3, dressed and ready to go.
- 1415 **Kayakers**, please meet Alexis at the bootroom.
- 1430 **Everyone not joining an extra activity.** Please join the Expedition Team for a Zodiac Cruise around Foyn Harbour. We will get the opportunity to see a shipwreck from the whaling period and we hope to find many whales that recovered well from this period and enjoy the waters of Antarctica.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

Antarctica – Base Camp

Hydruga Rocks & Heading north

Thursday 6th March 2025

- 0715 Wake up call from your Expedition Leader Adam.
- 0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0900 Please join the Expedition Team for a landing and a zodiac cruise around Hydruga Rocks. We hope to find some more chinstrap penguins and more wildlife around the small islets.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1530 We will head north towards Ushuaia and will cross the Drake Passage again. Simon will talk more about **Albatrosses**, the iconic seabirds, we hope to see numerous. Please join him in the lounge.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

Tonight, we will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents.

Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. Thank you.

Antarctica – Base Camp

Drake Passage, heading north

Friday 7th March 2025

There will be no wake up call, but you will get called for breakfast anyway.

- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0930 **Photography.** We took many pictures during the trip. If you would like to know more about post-processing your memories, join Koen in the lounge.
- 1100 **On thin Ice.** Join Jakub in the lounge to learn more about glaciers in the past, the presence and the future.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 We all enjoyed the **humpback whales**, we saw throughout the trip. Join Elizabeth in the lounge to learn more about these charismatic marine mammals.
- 1700 We spent seven incredible days in Antarctica. When you got in love with the cold environment, join Brian in the lounge and he will tell you more about **travelling in winter**.
- 1830 **Recap** Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for recap and learn of our plans for tomorrow.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

We will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents. Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. Thank you.

Antarctica – Base Camp

Drake Passage, heading north

Saturday 8th of March 2025

There will be no wake up call, but you will get called for breakfast anyway.

- 0800 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.
- 0930 If you like to find out **why penguins do not wear socks**, join Steffi in the lounge and she will tell you more about the adaptation that the animals developed to be able to survive in the cold waters of Antarctica.
- 1100 **Science in Antarctica.** Adam worked in South Georgia and Antarctica supporting science. Join him in the lounge for some stories about his work south.
- 1230 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room.
- 1500 The exploration of Antarctica tells many great stories. Join Valeria in the lounge to learn more about **the Race to the Southpole**.
- 1630 **Maté.** Join Alexis in the lounge if you would like to learn more about the tea you see regular in Argentina.
- 1815 **Captain's Cocktails.** Please join the Expedition team and Captain Evgeny Levakov in the Lounge to toast our successful voyage.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the Restaurant. Enjoy your meal.

We will be sailing in open water and expect the ship to move. Please make sure that all your valuables (cameras, computers, etc.) are properly stowed in your cabin to avoid accidents. Always use the railings and handholds when moving around on the ship, especially in rough seas. Always one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself. Thank you.

0700 Your final wake up call from Adam! Good Morning everyone, Good Morning!

Before breakfast at 0730 please could you put your large check in luggage outside your cabin so that we can get it onto the pier for you. If you are taking a bus from the ship straight to the airport, please make sure your luggage has a **orange label on it.**

If you do not fly out in the morning, you can leave your luggage in the luggage storage until 14:00.

If you have other arrangements to stay in Ushuaia you can take your luggage and walk to the port entrance where you will find a taxi.

Please identify your luggage on the pier and make sure it goes to the airport bus, the luggage storage or you take it with you!!!!

Keep your hand luggage in your cabin or take it to the Lounge.

0730 **Breakfast buffet** will be available in the Dining Room for 1 hour.

0830/0900 It is time to leave the Little Blue Ship, Plancius. Please make sure you have all your belongings with you and that you have taken your key card holder back to Reception.

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, the Captain, Crew and Expedition staff would like to thank you for travelling with us and wish you a very safe journey home.