

Spirit of Antarctica

Aboard *Greg Mortimer* | 7 – 17 January 2025





Spirit of Antarctica

7 – 17 January 2025

Ushuaia

DAY 1 | Tuesday 7 January 2025

Latitude:
54° 51.8' S
Longitude:
68° 00.3' W
Course:
104°
Speed:
14.4 knots

Wind Speed:
13 knots NW
Barometer:
1020 hPa
Air Temp:
8°C

Today we are in the charming town of Ushuaia, 'the end of the world'. Some of us spent our morning leisurely exploring before making our way to the optional catamaran cruise in the afternoon. Many of us enjoyed sailing through the Beagle Channel towards the city's iconic Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse, where we observed local wildlife against panoramic views of the surrounding mountain range.

Upon our arrival at the wharf, members of the Expedition Team greeted us and accompanied us on foot along the pier to the ship. When we arrived at the *Greg Mortimer*, we met our Onboard Expedition Manager, Samantha, and

Expedition Photographer, Scott, who checked us off and took a memorable photo for the photo board.

Once on board, welcome refreshments awaited us in the Elephant Island Bar, then our hotel team helped us to navigate the decks to our cabins and settle us into our 'home away from home' for the next 11 days.

Together we total 121 Expeditioners from Australia (39), Canada (6), China (5), Germany (1), Netherlands (2), UK (14), USA (45), Israel (7), Japan (1), New Zealand (1), along with 83 crew from all around the globe.



Drake Passage

DAY 2 | Wednesday 8 January 2025

Latitude:
56° 26.6' S
Longitude:
65° 43.3' W

Course:
164°
Speed:
12 knots

Wind Speed:
18 knots NE
Barometer:
1016 hPa

Air Temp:
8°C

Since the seas were a bit rocky and the forecast for the following day looked more favourable, we decided to postpone the mandatory IAATO and biosecurity briefings until then. Instead, we were treated to a day of education. First off, Hannah presented her lecture on seabirds, which told us all about the very same species gliding past us.

Next, we learned about the Citizen Science program on board, along with the various projects we will conduct throughout the trip. It's a great opportunity to contribute to science and global research on climate, ecosystems, and beyond.

Even though there was a lot happening inside the ship, there was also a whole world unfolding outside. Seabirds

dipped and twisted among the rolling waves of the Southern Ocean. It was mesmerising, and I'm sure more than one of us envied the way those birds surfed the waters. We took the opportunity to step outside into the fresh air for an eBird survey, which was the first Citizen Science activity of the trip.

In the afternoon, Scott presented his lecture on smartphone photography tips, and we managed to learn new tricks for capturing landscapes and wildlife with our phones. Following Scott was a lecture from Kelsey about the human history of Antarctica, which summarised the different chapters of discovery and exploration that took place on the continent.



Drake Passage

DAY 3 | Thursday 9 January 2025

Latitude:
61° 06.4' S
Longitude:
63° 06.3' W

Course:
162°
Speed:
13.1 knots

Wind Speed:
13 knots SSE
Barometer:
1004 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

Our morning began with the mandatory IAATO briefing and biosecurity checks, essential steps to protect the fragile Antarctic environment. With that under our belts, the schedule offered plenty to pique our curiosity. Liam's lecture on light and photography, whimsically titled 'Freakin' Laser Beams' captivated those keen to explore the interplay of light and reflections. Meanwhile, Marcos dove into the fascinating geology of Antarctica, unravelling the continent's ancient secrets beneath the ice.

We also had the chance to contribute to science by participating in a Citizen Science cloud survey, helping researchers better understand atmospheric conditions in this remote region.

The late afternoon brought a new kind of excitement. In the distance, our first icebergs came into view, their towering forms shimmering in the soft evening light. As we passed through the Boyd Strait, the dramatic coastline of the South Shetland Islands came into view all around us — a thrilling preview of the icy wilderness that awaits us.

Our evening was capped with a wonderful talk by Grant and Bertrand from Oceanites, who shared insights from their penguin research. Their passion for studying these charismatic birds offered a glimpse into the resilience of life in such an extreme environment.





Danco Island & Neko Harbour

DAY 4 | Friday 10 January 2025

Latitude:
64° 36.0' S
Longitude:
62° 34.2' W

Course:
209°
Speed:
7 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots NE
Barometer:
1015 hPa

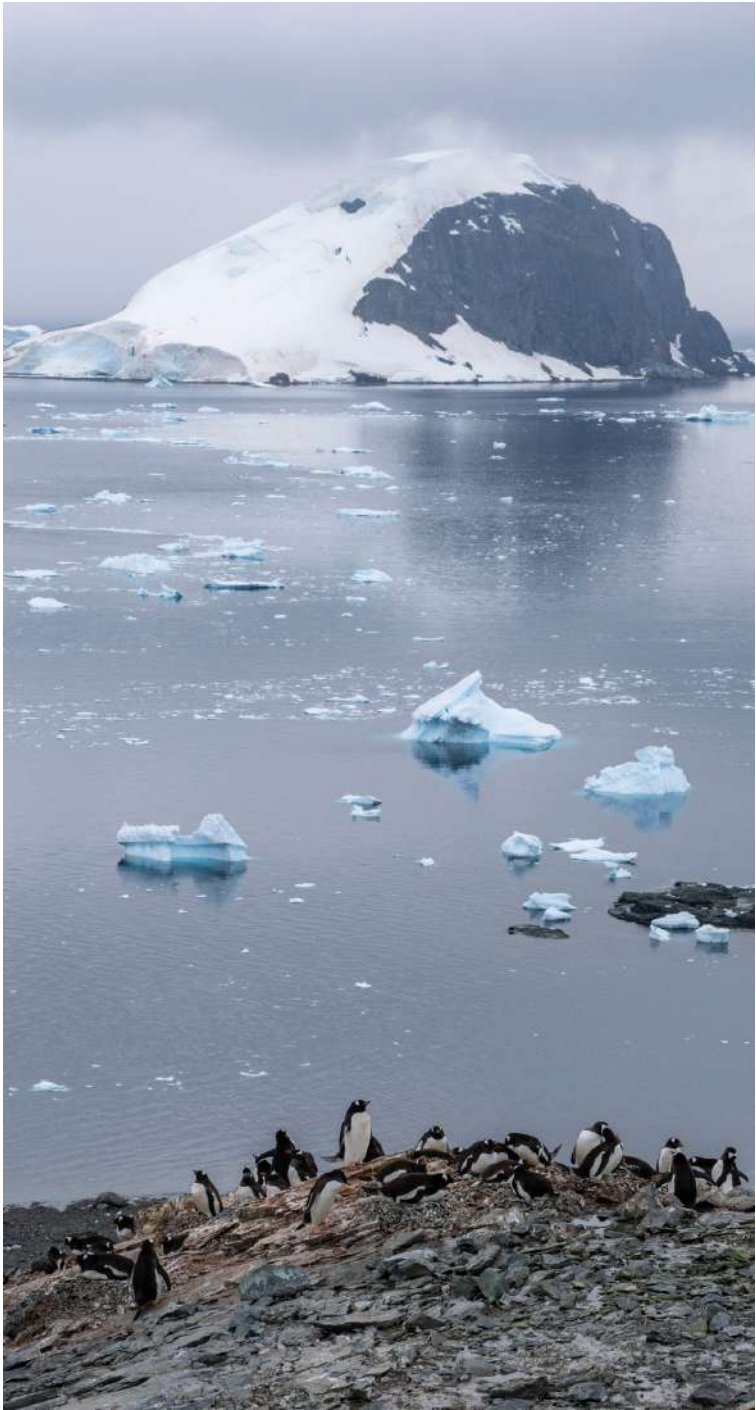
Air Temp:
0°C

Our first landing for the day was at the beautiful Danco Island in the Errera Channel, one of the most spectacular places in Antarctica, with the perfect combination of stunning views and plenty of wildlife.

We landed onto a beach among gentoo penguins going about their daily business. Some were shooting around in the shallows, while others were making the big hike back up the hill to their nests. Some of us stayed by the beach watching the penguins, while others took on the hike up the slope to soak in the amazing views. It truly is something unique to stand on an island surrounded by mountains, with glaciers coming down to sea level in all directions!

After a great morning, we headed around the corner to Neko Harbour, passing multiple humpback whales along the way. Then it was time to step on the mainland of the Antarctic continent. What a special moment for all, with many finally stepping foot on their seventh continent! The bay was loaded with ice, and we even witnessed a glacier calving, which produced some large waves that washed over the beach. The penguins here were once again the stars of the show, with this location also having penguin chicks. Only a few days to a week old, these tiny little chicks were so cute, sitting underneath their dedicated parents!





Goudier Island & Jougla Point

DAY 5 | Saturday 11 January 2025

Latitude:
64° 55.5' S
Longitude:
63° 37.2' W

Course:
297°
Speed:
5.5 knots

Wind Speed:
2 knots NE
Barometer:
1009 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

The British Antarctic Base 'A', known as Port Lockroy, situated on Goudier Island, includes the most southerly operational post office in the world. The team at Port Lockroy shared with us the history of the place, as well as their own stories of living on the tiny island surrounded by thousands of penguins.

While half of us were visiting the museum, shopping in the gift shop and sending some postcards, the other half were exploring the nearby Jougla Point. The place was filled with gentoo penguins and their freshly hatched chicks, whale bones, and the history of human presence in the area.

The afternoon was an exciting exploration of Access Point – a new location for the ship and for most of the E-Team members as well. The waves added a bit of excitement at the side gates as we were getting into the Zodiacs, but as soon as we got away from the ship we got to enjoy the gently rolling swell.

As we cruised through brash ice, between icebergs and along glacier faces, we got to see some leopard and crabeater seals casually taking naps on floating pieces of ice, as the waves were exploding on the coastline right behind them.







Port Charcot & Wordie House

DAY 6 | Sunday 12 January 2025

Latitude:
65° 09.5' S
Longitude:
64° 05.7' W

Course:
Variable
Speed:
4.8 knots

Wind Speed:
23 knots NNE
Barometer:
998 hPa

Air Temp:
1°C

This morning's outing took us to Port Charcot, a 2.75-kilometre bay on the northern shore of Booth Island – a Y-shaped island separated from the Antarctic Peninsula by the Lemaire Channel.

Apart from being a visually stunning location, Port Charcot is the place where the French Antarctic Expedition of 1903–1905 decided to winter. There is little evidence left of the expedition itself, but on landing we undertook a short walk up a hill, where we saw a cairn and a pillar with a plaque that displays the names of Charcot's expedition members.

It was a special feeling to look down into the bay and imagine Charcot's ship the *Français* at anchor, as the expedition team played games and held gramophone concerts for the penguins to help pass the winter!

After another fantastic buffet lunch, we re-embarked the Zodiacs for a cruise around the beautiful channels of Winter Island, named such by the British Graham Land Expedition of 1934–1937. They built a hut here in 1935 to winter in. The hut was destroyed by a tsunami, but the foundations were used by the Falklands Islands Dependencies Survey to establish another base in 1947.

The main hut was named 'Wordie House', after Sir James Wordie, who was a member of Shackleton's infamous Imperial Trans Antarctic Expedition. Today, the neighbouring Ukrainian scientific base, Vernadsky Station, manages the hut and graciously gave us the key to have a look inside Wordie House. We had a short landing on the rocks and ventured up to the hut.





Chiriguano & Spring Point

DAY 7 | Monday 13 January 2025

Latitude:
64° 35.1' S
Longitude:
62° 40.2' W
Course:
053°
Speed:
7 knots

Wind Speed:
18 knots SW
Barometer:
982 hPa
Air Temp:
4°C

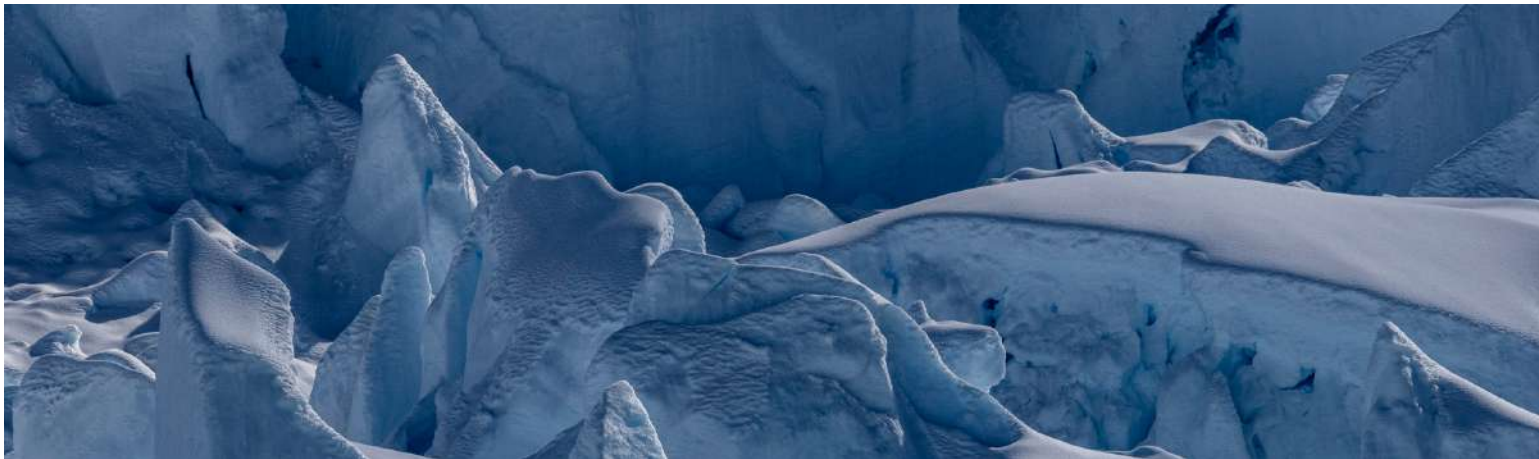
We woke to a chilly early morning breeze as the *Greg Mortimer* sailed into Chiriguano Bay. We dropped the Zodiacs and cruised off to explore the ice more closely, feeling the air grow even crisper as we approached the glacial formations. A few crabeater seals peeked out from floating debris, their watchful eyes catching ours as they rested on the ice.

Once back on board, we were greeted by Pat, who gave a brilliant lecture on marine mammal adaptations, leaving us all in awe of how these creatures survive in such extreme conditions. The ship repositioned over lunch, and we dropped anchor just outside Brialmont Cove.

We were soon greeted by humpback whales, their mighty spouts visible from a distance. Some were even seen to be sleeping, drifting lazily through the water, their bodies rising and falling with the gentle swells. It felt like we had entered a world untouched by time. As we neared Sprightly Island, kayakers, snorkellers, and cruisers alike spotted nesting chinstrap penguins, our first chance to see these little mountaineers on their nests.

Afterwards, our heads and hearts full of awe, we received the call to join our fearless expedition leader and assistant expedition leader for a quick summit of Spring Point.





Whalers Bay & South Shetlands

DAY 8 | Tuesday 14 January 2025

Latitude:
63° 05.1' S
Longitude:
60° 33.1' W

Course:
020°
Speed:
6.4 knots

Wind Speed:
3 knots NW
Barometer:
998 hPa

Air Temp:
4°C

Deception Island brings such a stark contrast to the rest of Antarctica. There's gravel and dirt under foot and, instead of ice and glaciers, rocks and mud are seen. When we got ashore, we were hit by the history in the form of large rusty whale oil vats, as well as the old runway and bunker used for the first flight in Antarctica. Walking through these remnants, the mind drifts to what it was like to live in this place back in the day. These people didn't have waterproof layers with merino base layers and Gore-Tex gloves. They were out there in thick, wet wool, dismantling whales in whatever conditions they needed to.

Once we all got a taste of the real Antarctica it was time to get off the shore and jump in the water. Doing the polar

plunge inside the caldera of an active volcano adds a certain amount of spiciness to the activity, though the water is still 'freezing', as many people attested to. A total of 56 people braved the cold waters of Antarctica and did something they probably regretted straight away.

After our crazy morning, it was back out to sea and on to Elephant Point. The site we wanted to land at is an exposed section of coastline and, even though we gave it a really good go, after scouting it out with a Zodiac (and everyone getting rather wet in the process) it was decided we would stay safe and dry on board for the afternoon. Luckily, we had Patrick to entertain us with a lecture about the seals of Antarctica.





Drake Passage

DAY 9 | Wednesday 15 January 2025

Latitude:
60° 50.0' S
Longitude:
62° 46.2' W
Course:
356°
Speed:
12.2 knots

Wind Speed:
15 knots NW
Barometer:
993 hPa
Air Temp:
4°C

The morning began with a captivating lecture by Kelsey, our historian. She recounted the daring story of Adrien de Gerlache and the *Belgica* expedition—a tale of teamwork, endurance, scientific discovery, and testing the limits of what is humanly possible.

Throughout the day, many of us took the opportunity to visit the bridge of the *Greg Mortimer*. The officers and crew welcomed us warmly, sharing insights about navigation and their experiences in polar waters.

Later, Samantha and Hannah inspired us with a presentation about Aurora Expeditions' exciting upcoming itineraries. The announcement of new adventures to the

Subantarctic Islands and Ross Sea aboard the soon-to-be-deployed *Douglas Mawson* sparked dreams of future voyages. After this burst of inspiration, we headed outside for some fresh air and Citizen Science, participating in a bird survey. The sight of seabirds effortlessly navigating the ocean's harsh conditions was a powerful reminder of nature's resilience and adaptability.

Following lunch, Pat, our marine biologist, delivered an engaging lecture on the fishing industries of the Southern Ocean.

A group of us gathered for a delightful wine and cheese tasting with Raj, followed by our daily recap and briefing.



Drake Passage

DAY 10 | Thursday 16 January 2025

Latitude:
56° 23.7' S
Longitude:
64° 39.5' W

Course:
342°
Speed:
11.8 knots

Wind Speed:
26 knots W
Barometer:
1006 hPa

Air Temp:
5°C

In the morning, Marcos delivered a lecture about the history of the Beagle Channel, which was followed by a briefing on disembarkation with Samantha. There's a reluctance in the air at the thought of leaving this vessel that has become our home, and the people around us who have become a family of sorts. We can all taste the bittersweetness of having had a remarkable voyage, and now having to figure out what life on the other side looks like.

Mixed emotions aside, the afternoon was punctuated by the most raucous of questions: just how big, in fact, is it? As Liz proclaimed, everyone was surprised as to how much of a good time it was. In fact, it might have been

too good of a time – there was a surprising number of margaritas going around, and I'm not sure as to whether anyone actually ever found out how big it is.

Then we enjoyed the Captain's farewell, where we were able to toast to the exceptional crew who navigated us through the icy seascapes of the Antarctic. Isabelle gave her final address in the lecture theatre, and we reflected on the days that have gone by and the experiences we have shared. Scott's voyage slideshow followed, which gave us an opportunity to remember all the small moments that have brought such richness to our voyage. We were spared some of the more graphic pictures from the polar plunge, but everything else was recounted in vivid detail!



Ushuaia

DAY 11 | Friday 17 December 2025

Latitude:
54° 52.0' S
Longitude:
67° 59.4' W

Wind Speed:
15 knots N
Barometer:
1010 hPa

Course:
287°
Speed:
11 knots

Air Temp:
7°C

Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard *Greg Mortimer* to Antarctica. We hope to see you on the high seas again some day!



BBQ



Polar Plunge

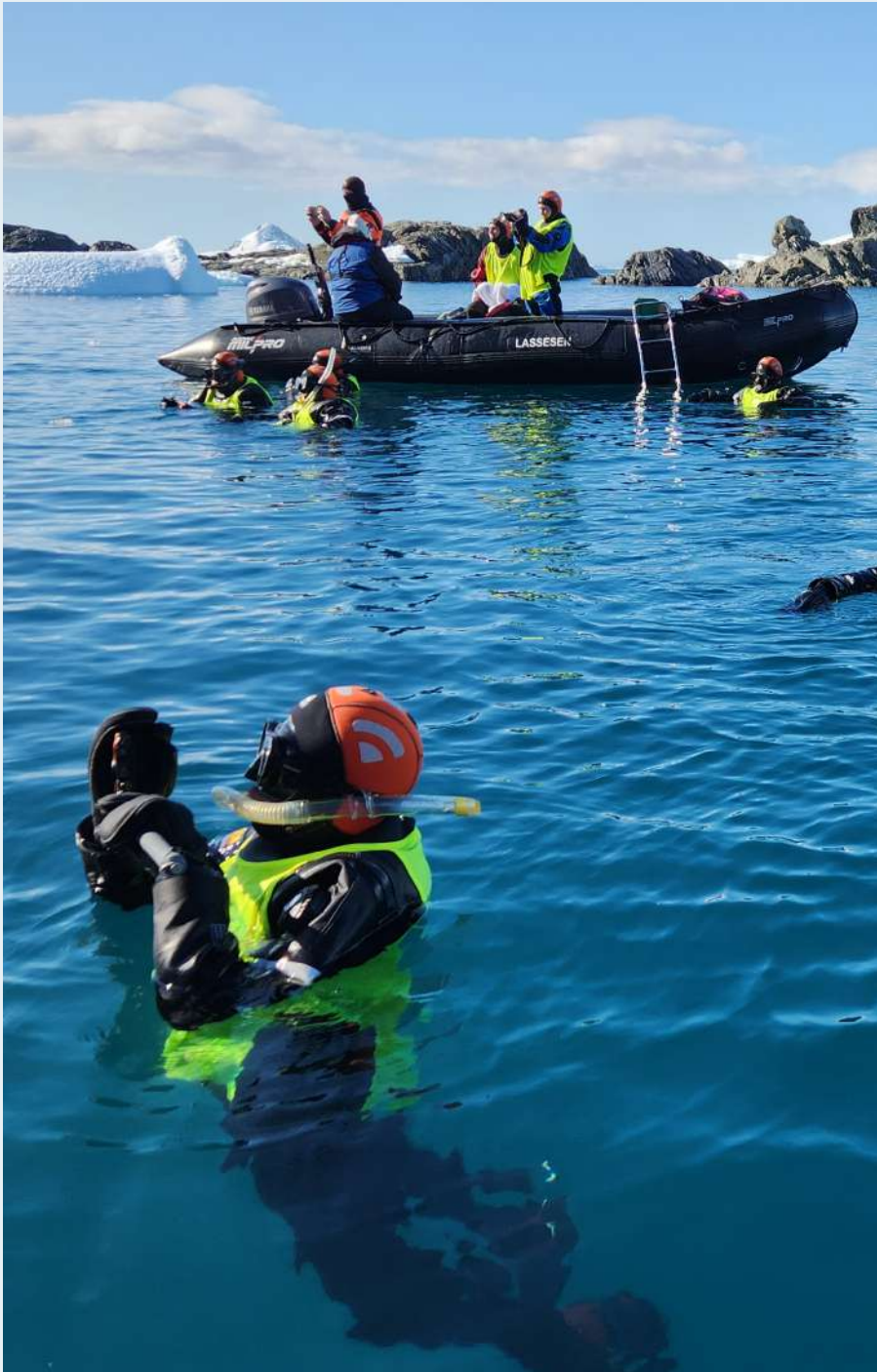












Snorkelling Log

Guides: Ania Baranek, Birgitta Mueck, Richard Devanney

10 January 2025, AM Danco Island

As it is our first day, this will be our try-out snorkel to test the gear and how it feels to be in these cold polar waters. This is also a great opportunity to check if we have layered up with enough clothes. Our chosen snorkel spot is close to the stony beach, not far from the landing site. All geared up, we slowly enter the water one by one from the Zodiacs to make sure we all feel comfortable in the water. Underwater we see plenty krill and suddenly there are several gentoo penguins swimming by. We also see salps, which are semi-transparent barrel-shaped zooplankton, and some of us even see a young elephant seal passing by! Happy and a little cold, we soon find ourselves back in the Zodiacs to head back to the ship for a warming cup of tea.

10 January 2025, PM Neko Harbour

Our guides dropped us off at the landing site and went for a quick reccy, while we enjoyed our time with gentoo penguins – they are quite entertaining to watch, especially when they toddle on their 'penguin highways'! Once we returned to our snorkel boats, we were pleased to find out that we would go snorkelling just around the corner from the landing site, with plenty of gentoos hopping into the water. It was our second time in the water, and we could test our swimming skills, play around with small bergy bits and enjoy the sight of penguins diving and propelling skilfully all around us; a few snorkellers managed to get a good footage of that. We're very happy with our snorkelling experiences today, and it's only day one of our Antarctic adventures!



Number of Snorkellers: 14

Total Outings: 6

Snorkellers:

Andrew Whittenburg

Maria Whittenburg

Charles Davis

Anastasia Davis

Benjamin (Ben) Wright

Philip Wright

Tomoki (Luke) Shirai

Paul Lawrence (Larry)
Jackson

Colleen Jackson

Angus Jackson

Sarah Jackson

Nicholas (Nick) Jackson

Daphne (Michele) Cutler

Nicholas (Nick) Cutler

11 January 2025, AM Port Lockroy & Jougla Point

We had a short look around Port Lockroy before getting picked up and taken to land at Jougla Point around the corner.

Before long, the snorkel Zodiacs picked us up to take us to the snorkel site, which was in a more sheltered location from the wind, only a few minutes' drive away.

We could tell that we're getting that little bit more efficient at getting kitted up with each outing, and we were soon in the water. There weren't any penguins in the water this time, but we saw some sea stars, sea urchins, a lot of krill, and one of us saw a sea angel and a crab. The sea angels are particularly rare to see!

Time goes quickly in sub-zero waters, and we were soon on our way back to the ship to warm up and share the footage we took.

12 January 2025, Booth Island, Port Charcot

At first, it was very windy, when we were getting into our zodiacs, and to be honest, we didn't think we could snorkel at all. Our guides did a thorough scouting around the area, and the only safe place to snorkel, sheltered from the winds, was a small bay, just next to the landing site. At first, it didn't look like anything special, but soon it turned out to be one of the best snorkel spots on this voyage so far! Great water visibility, plenty of starfish, some white nemertean worms on the ocean floor, and playful penguins hopping into the water. And, after our snorkel session, we were treated to a beautiful Zodiac cruise among some huge, towering icebergs, each one displaying different shapes and colours, like in a true winter wonderland. Sun came out, and the light put on a show. A truly magical morning!

13 January 2025, AM Chiriguano Bay

It was a little bit windy as we loaded into the Zodiacs in our drysuits. The intention was to do a Zodiac cruise and see if we could find somewhere to snorkel. It's a large bay with a very thick layer of ice and snow on most of the rocks, so we couldn't get too close to land in case of any calvings.

On the other side of the bay we found a rock that offered good shelter from the prevailing wind, and so we geared up and after a short briefing we entered the water.

Compared to other sites there wasn't a huge amount going on in the water. No penguins, but the water was the clearest yet and there was a lot of krill. We even saw a small fish! After around 20 minutes we started to feel cold and climbed back on board the Zodiac for the short journey back to the ship. This snorkel was an unexpected bonus.

13 January 2025, PM Sprightly Island

We headed towards Sprightly Island, a small, rocky islet inhabited by chinstrap penguins. We snorkel next to a higher cliff, where a smaller iceberg quickly becomes an attraction and a perfect photo object. The next highlight of the snorkel is a young elephant seal resting next from the water. We carefully keep our distance to the animal while watching it from the water line. The young seal seems to have a good rest and is not minding us at all where we are lying in the water. Time flies when you have fun and so it is time to wrap it all up. The sun still smiles big at us as we head back to the ship and so are we; what an marvellous afternoon!





Paddling Log

Guides: Liz MacNeil, Tim Vanhoutteghem, Rob Barth, Erin Scott, Anula Jochym

10 January 2025, AM: Danco Island 2.2km

After two days on the Drake Passage, we were super excited waking up around Danco Island, ready for our first Antarctic paddle adventure! We left with our Zodiac from the ship, and found some sheltered, glassy water between big icebergs on the west side of the island. After launching into our sit-on-top kayaks, we explored paddling between stunning icebergs, and had our first brash ice paddling. We kayaked closer to the shoreline, checking out all the cute gentoo penguins of Danco, before heading out further into the Errera Channel.

10 January 2025, PM: Neko Harbour 1km

What a day to paddle around and interact with ice! Neko Harbour is a stunning bay with epic mountain and glacier views. We started the trip by watching a huge calving from the very active glacier to the left of the landing sight. Then, following the waves, we made our way into the brash to explore what Neko had to offer. As we navigated our way through the ice, there were a few bumps, but everyone made it through to check out the stunning iceberg formations with wildlife scattered throughout. We battled our way through a little longer to find an iceberg that was covered in a layer of glacial gravel, and it was time to find a clear patch in the ice so we could go ashore to tick off the continental landing!



Number of Paddlers: 8

Total Paddle Outings: 5

Total Distance Paddled:
12.2 km

Paddlers:

Linda Doak

Debra Parker

Rohan Tepper

Garry Watts

Dessi Temperley

Jeroen Drost

Annemarie Boehmer

Yujing Lu

11 January 2025, PM: Access Point 4km

Our visit to Access Point was a true exploration – the ship has never visited this corner of Anvers Island. Throughout the afternoon we were repositioning as the conditions changed quite a bit from piercing cold wind and overcast to a true Antarctic summer day: sunshine and a bright, vast landscape. There is no time to waste – all suited up, we get into our Zodiac to find a good spot! As soon as we got away from the ship we got to enjoy the gently rolling swell. As we cruised through brash ice, between icebergs and along glacier faces, we got to see some leopard and crabeater seals - casually taking naps on floating pieces of ice, as the waves were exploding on the coastline right behind them. Without a doubt the afternoon outing left us buzzing and also possibly sunburned.

12 January 2025, PM: Argentine Islands 3km

We enjoyed a spectacularly sunny afternoon at the Argentine Islands with only a light wind. These islands made for excellent paddling, as we had the chance to weave around the little skerries and plenty of large icebergs. We began in a channel beside Uruguay Island, and headed southwest towards Galindez Island, passing by the Ukrainian Vernadsky station. We then rounded Winter Island, with the intention of passing through Skua Creek to reach the historic Wordie Hut; however, we encountered a rather remarkable amount of sea ice that was replete with around 10 crabeater seals, sunning themselves on the floes! Encountering this obstacle, we hopped back on the Zodiac, and Anula drove us through to the hut by another channel. We pushed through more sea ice, which was much more feasible to do with an engine!

13 January 2025, PM: Sprightly Island/Spring Point 2km

As the ship made its way through the ice line, it was amazing how much the water calmed down on our approach to Sprightly Island! The sun was shining, the ice was sparkling, and whales were in the distance awaiting our arrival. As we launched, we didn't have to go far... a small humpback was feeding around us and we just sat mesmerised by its beauty. Making our way along Sprightly Island, we watched the chinstraps as we navigated through the channel, opening up to a beautiful view of the glacial continent. After a group shot and rare sighting of an elephant seal, we weaved our way through the brash ice. As the afternoon was coming to an end, no-one wanted to get off the water... what a magical paddle!





Kayaking Log

Kayak Guides: Liz MacNeil, Tim Vanhoutteghem, Rob Barth, Erin Scott, Anula Jochym

10 January 2025, AM: Danco Island 3.2km

Our first paddle of the trip, and our first excursion in Antarctica! We were greeted by calm conditions at Danco Island, which allowed us to explore the north and east sides of the island in glassy waters. We started to feel comfortable in our new boats, and among the ice. Antarctic terns and Wilson's storm petrels flew overhead. Penguins surrounded us in the water: porpoising, rafting up, and squawking to each other as they fed on krill. The waters must have been productive, because we also saw Weddell seals hauled out on the rocks, and a humpback whale swam by at the end of our paddle!

10 January 2025, PM: Neko Harbour 6km

There is no better way to start a kayak outing than with a good calving of a glacier front, a few hundred metres away from us! Paddling through the thick brash (which proved to be much more of a workout than initially seemed) in the endless soup of crackling and melting ice was a one-of-a-kind experience. As the clouds slowly parted, the outline of the peaks around us started to show and the bay kept expanding with every passing minute. It was one of those days that the destination didn't matter anymore – we were fully immersed in the journey itself. As our time on the water drew closer to the end, we spared a few moments to take it all in: we closed our eyes and sat in silence, feeling and listening to what Antarctica had to share.

Number of Kayakers: 19

Total Paddle Outings: 7

Total Distance Paddled: 32.7 km

Kayakers:

Melos Sulicich

Jen Mackenzie

Wyndham Johnstone

Rosie Johnstone

Debi Feinman

Peggy Feinman

Barb Shudeltd

Sara Romando

Mark Renner

Linda Bytof

Steve Shi

Tia Zheng

Helen Weston

Matthew Weston

Clare Walton

Neil Walton

Juene Rader

Dan O'Connell

Katie O'Connell

11 January 2025, AM: Port Lockroy 1.2km

After getting a chance to explore Port Lockroy on land and to mail off our postcards, we embarked on a blustery paddle. The conditions were a little choppy to start off with, and we looked for shelter in the Boogie and Woogie islands, prior to paddling into the glaciated bay of Weinke Island. The bay was giving refuge to a number of sailboats, and the conditions subsided somewhat, and we finished in calmer waters. Gentoo penguins abounded, both on land and in the sea, and we ended our paddle in a beautiful amphitheatre of ice.

11 January 2025, PM: Access Point 6.1 km

Trying to dodge some windy weather and find shelter, our Expedition Leader decided to explore the coastline of Access Point. This was a new paddling area for us, and what a kayak gem it was this afternoon! Some soft swell running through the ocean, starting with no wind, big mountain views in the backdrop, big, beautiful icebergs, some brash ice pieces, and surprisingly, many seals! We started paddling closer to the shoreline, where we had a good look at some crabeater seals on a piece of ice. Kayaking around, we found a few more ice floes with leopard seals. Watching this apex predator taking a nap on an iceberg from our kayaks was truly impressive. After our wildlife encounters we paddled more southwestward in the open ocean, passing by some huge icebergs, and whales.

12 January, 2025, PM: Argentine Islands 4.4km

The Argentine Islands are a favourite place to kayak: a small island group comprising many low rocky islands, with great channels and lots of nooks and crannies. The paddle started with a gentle cruise through some rock channels and a very extensive iceberg graveyard. With consistent wind and current, there was little chance of resting but we wound our way among the icebergs, seeing crabeater seals and a crazy variety of shapes and patterns. As we made our way through the islands, we rounded the corner to see Vernadsky Station, a Ukrainian research base. Paddling past this was an interesting insight into life in Antarctica as a scientist. Once we rounded the corner, we found our way blocked by sea ice - *no bueno!*

13 January, 2025, PM: Sprightly Island/Spring Point 5km

Sprightly Island was a fun little exploration for our kayak team – we split in two expedition pods and took on the circumnavigation of the island. Erin and her gang went clockwise as Anula with her mob went anti-clockwise. The sheer dome-shaped rock really contrasted against the glacier-bound coastline of the peninsula. The conditions could not be more perfect – gentle swell moving the glassy waters to and from the island, cool and still air, sun and blue skies above us. When we turned the corner we entered a small iceberg graveyard - we weaved in between the bergy bits and growlers to the other side of the island. Luckily for us, we witnessed one of the icebergs rolling right behind us, as we headed towards the real stars of the place – chinstrap penguins and the guest appearance of a young elephant seal.

14 January 2025, PM: Bailey Head to Whalers Bay 6.8kms

We had an exciting plan for today: paddling from Bailey Head on the outside west coast of Deception Island, to Whalers Bay on the inside of the caldera. This is a trip that is only possible to do with calm conditions but we were blessed with them today! We left in our Zodiac out to Bailey Head, where we launched literally surrounded by chinstrap penguins all around in the water and on land. We paddled by the colony (38,825 chinstraps last counted in 2018). Then we paddled out and around the impressive sea stacks, finding a safe route between breaking swell waves and tidal currents. We used the wind that was building up to paddle downwind, making our way towards the beautiful black volcanic beach underneath Neptune's Window. The paddling was physical but rewarding, and we found a fine balance between paddling close to shore to avoid the countercurrent with windwave action against it, but paddling not too close to the rocks to avoid breaking waves. After a look upon the beach, we paddled in between the sea stack just west of this. Definitely one of our most physical, but also rewarding kayak experiences.

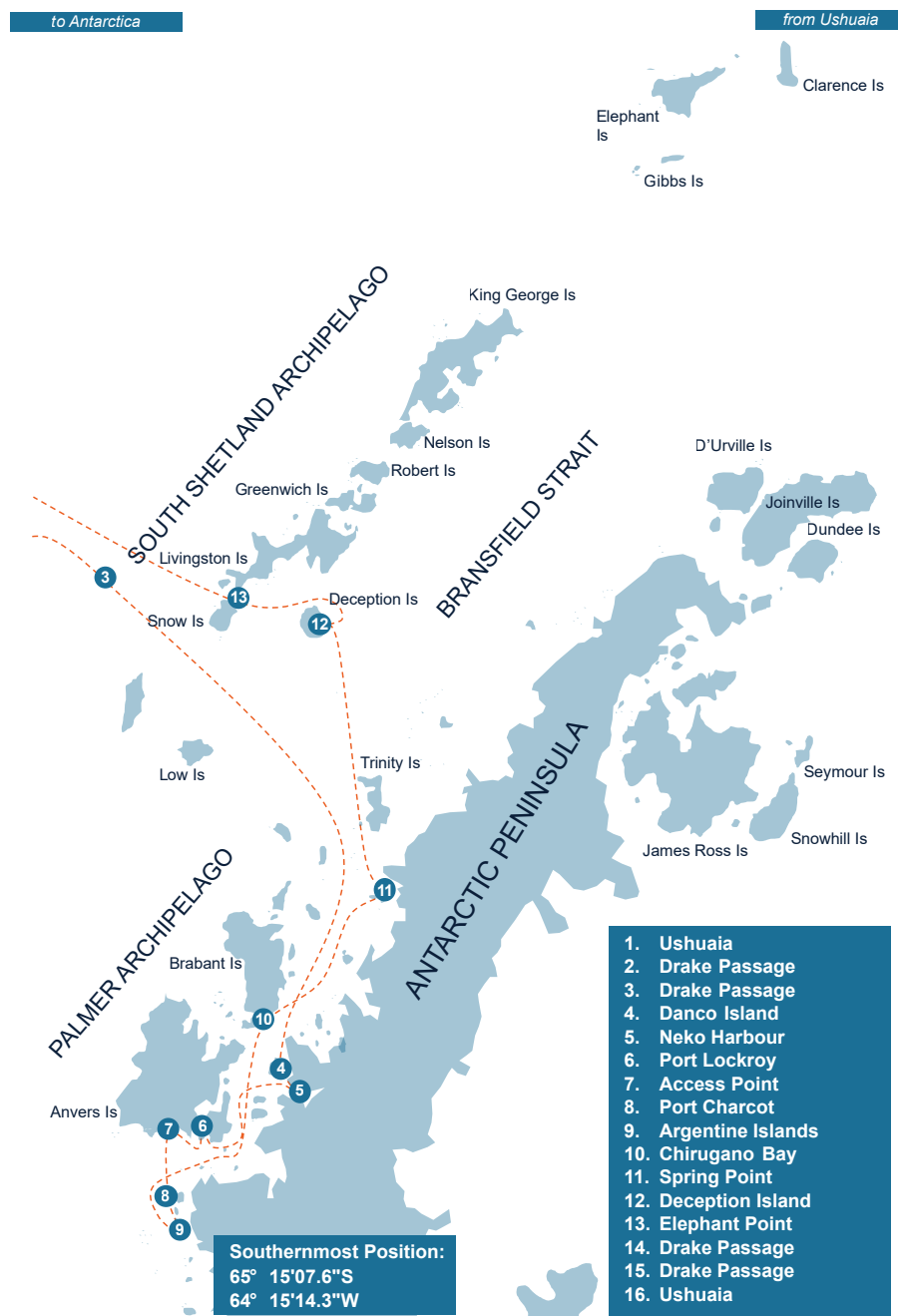




Map

Spirit of Antarctica

07 – 17 January 2025





Our Expeditioners

Christopher Baguley	Judy Deng	Kali Hayden	Nitay Lavi	Andrew Pierson	Sarah Thompson
Edward Barnes	Linda Doak	Julie Hayden	Tom Lawrence	Gregory Powers	Steve Thompson
Caroline Barnes	Jeroen Drost	Laura Hills	Elsa Lawrence	Wendy Powers	Kathleen Tiller
Suzanne Blair	David Fagan	Grant Humphries	Noga Lipschitz	Juene Rader	Richard Tiller
Pam Blank	Vicky Fagan	Theresa Ingerl	Yitzhak Lipschitz	Mark Renner	Jane Walker
Annemarie Boehmer	Peggy Feinman	Angus Jackson	Wenqin Liu	Julie Roff	Randy Walker
Hollis Brown	Debi Feinman	Nick Jackson	Yujing Lu	Sara Romando	Neil Walton
Crosby Brown	Sarah Findley	Sarah Jackson	Jen Mackenzie	Hazel Scott	Clare Walton
Thatcher Brown	Jason Fox	Larry Jackson	Sawyer Meckley	Per Scott	Garry Watts
Jenny Brown	Chad Gallaher	Colleen Jackson	Riley Meckley	Diwen Shi	Matthew Weston
Steve Bunnell	Debbie Goodwin	Paul Jackson	Christine Meckley	Luke Shirai	Helen Weston
Jo Bunting	Ian Gordon	Amanda Jackson	Thomas Meckley	Barb Shufeldt	Andrew Whittenburg
Linda Bytof	Angela Gordon	Rosie Johnstone	Julie Minns	Michael Smith	Maria Whittenburg
Bertrand Charry	Hanoch Greenberg	Wyndham Johnstone	Dan O'Connell	Sundip Sonpal	Jury Wowk
Michele Cutler	Linda Guiliano	Ben Judge	Katie O'Connell	Janet Sonpal	Nors Wowk
Nicholas Cutler	Lev Havryliv	Drake Karelak	Dan O'Connell	Melos Sulicich	Phillip Wright
Pippa Daniell	Victoria Havryliv	Albert Karelak-Castro	Debra Parker	Rodney Swan	Benjamin Wright
Anastasia Davis	Wessen Hayden	Marty Krasney	Jenny Pelisek	Jonathan Sykes	Chloe Wu
Charles Davis	Kygan Hayden	Menahem Lavi	Kirsten Petersen	Dessi Temperley	Tia Zheng
Jane Dempster	Cedric Hayden	Rachel Lavi	Sherilyn Phillips	Rohan Tepper	Yossi Zuri

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Isabelle Howells

Assistant Expedition Leader: Nicole Genoud

Onboard Expedition Manager: Samantha Deer

Fleet Manager: Justine Bornholdt

Ornithologist/Naturalist: Hannah Cowley

Geologist & Citizen Science Coordinator: Marcos Goldin

Historian: Kelsey Camacho

Expedition First Responder: Morgane Ruiz

Photography Guide: Scott Portelli

Marine Biologist: Pat Horgan

Expedition Guide: Liam Hopkinson

Zodiac Master: Saul Davidson

Onboard Expedition Assistant: Ari Benzo Ciria

Lead Kayak Guide: Liz MacNeil

Senior Kayak Guide: Tim Vanhoutteghem

Kayak Guide: Rob Barth

Kayak Guide: Anula Jochym

Kayak Guide: Erin Scott

Lead Snorkel Guide: Ania Baranek

Snorkel Guide: Richard Devanney

Snorkel Guide: Birgitta Mueck

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Oleg Kapko

Chief Officer: Andrey Zakalashnyuk

Safety Officer: Sergii Voina

Bosun: Marvin Linga

Deck Cadet: Joao Varlos De Souza Lima Filho

Ship Doctor: Javier Martinez Rodriguez

Ship Doctor: Nicolas Diaz Rodriguez

Chief Engineer: Dimitar Vasilev

First Engineer: Denys Odrynsky

Hotel Director: Alex Barkar

F&B Manager: Rajesh Murao

Chief Purser: Pia Blanca

Executive Chef: Edgar Mangalinao

Sous Chef: Edgar Agnelo Xavier Pereira

Head Waiter: Neelam (James) Lopes

Hotel Controller: Christopher Santos

IT Officer: Ihor Yesmienieiev

Receptionist: Jaica Puyod

Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez

Head Stateroom: Roniel Garcia

Spa Manager: Venila Vythilingum

Able Seaman: Angelo San Antonio

Able Seaman: Roberto Ixtan Mejia

Able Seaman: Nikola Georgiev

Able Seaman: Noel Refugia

Able Seaman: Joel Noble

Able Seaman: Roberth Herman Presida Enitencio

Photography thanks to:

Scott Portelli

Special Activity guides





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