

Introducing a New AFS Antarctica Ultimate Voyage. **December 5 to 17, 2023**

Our Glorious AFS Itinerary

05 December - Depart USA to fly Miami overnight to Ushuaia. Air details to come in trip tips later as it's too early now. Everyone needs to fly in one or two days early pre-cruise.

06 December – Welcome to Ushuaia

Ushuaia is Argentina's most important city in Tierra del Fuego and southern most city in the world. It's easy to explore this small town on foot to many wonderful cafés and shops. You can arrange on own or we will present an optional two nights pre-cruise extension here with city tour, the End of the World Train and more in February.

Overnight at Altos De Ushuaia, Ushuaia (1 nights) B

07 December Cruise begins Embarkation!

Your cruise begins where the world drops off at Ushuaia, Argentina, the southernmost city on the planet. Leave your hotel late afternoon to board our ship MV Hondius by 5:00 PM and find our cabins. The captain and crew will welcome us aboard with a toast and introduction before our ship departs for one of the most remote corners of planet Earth. During the night, we sail the mountain-fringed Beagle Channel.

Overnight aboard the MV Hondius (10 nights) B/D

08 and 09 December. Path of the Polar Explorers

Over the next two days on the Drake Passage, you enjoy some of the same experiences encountered by the great polar explorers who first charted these regions: cool salt breezes, rolling seas, maybe even a fin whale spouting up sea spray. After passing the Antarctic Convergence – Antarctica's natural boundary, formed when north-flowing cold waters collide with warmer sub-Antarctic seas – you are in the circum-Antarctic upwelling zone. Not only does the marine life change, the avian life changes too. Wandering albatrosses, grey-headed albatrosses, black-browed albatrosses, light-mantled sooty albatrosses, cape pigeons, southern fulmars, Wilson's storm petrels, blue petrels, and Antarctic petrels are a few of the birds you might see..

Overnight aboard the MV Hondius (10 nights) B/L/D

10-13 December Enter the Antarctic

Gray stone peaks sketched with snow, towers of broken blue-white ice, and dramatically different wildlife below and above. You first pass the snow-capped Melchior Islands and Schollaert Channel, sailing between Brabant and Anvers Islands. Sites you may visit include:

Danco Island – Activities here may focus on the gentoo penguins nesting on the island, in addition to the Weddell and crabeater seals that can be found nearby.

Neko Harbour – An epic landscape of mammoth glaciers and endless wind-carved snow, Neko Harbour offers opportunities for a Zodiac cruise and landing that afford the closest views of the surrounding alpine peaks.

Paradise Bay – You may be able to take a Zodiac cruise in these sprawling, ice-flecked waters, where there's a good chance you'll encounter humpback and minke whales.

Port Lockroy – After sailing through the Neumayer Channel, you may get a chance to visit the former British research station – now a museum and post office – of Port Lockroy on Goudier Island. You may also be able to partake in activities around Jougla Point, meeting gentoo penguins and blue-eyed shags.

Overnight aboard the MV Hondius B/L/D

14 December Scenes of South Shetland

The volcanic islands of the South Shetlands are windswept and often cloaked in mist, but they do offer subtle pleasures: There's a wide variety of flora (mosses, lichens, flowering grasses) and no small amount of fauna (gentoo penguins, chinstrap penguins, southern giant petrels).

In Deception Island, the ship plunges through Neptune's Bellows and into the flooded caldera. Here you find an abandoned whaling station, and thousands of cape petrels – along with kelp gulls, brown and south polar skuas, and Antarctic terns. A good hike is a possibility in this fascinating and desolate volcanic landscape. As an alternative, you may be able to engage in activities near Half Moon Island. Here chinstrap penguins and Weddell seals often haul out onto the beach near Cámara Base, an Argentine scientific research station.

Overnight aboard the MV Hondius. B/L/D

15-16 December Familiar Seas, Familiar Friends

Your return voyage is far from lonely. While crossing the Drake, you're again greeted by the vast array of seabirds remembered from the passage south. But they seem a little more familiar to you now, and you to them. Enjoy lectures and activities with your crew.

Overnight aboard the MV Hondius B/L/D

17 December Disembark to Prepare for Home

Every adventure no matter how grand, must eventually come to an end. It's now time to disembark in Ushuaia, but with memories that will accompany you wherever your next adventure lies. Transfer to airport for our flights home. B