

Patagonia Expedition Voyage Oct 28- Nov 5, 2023

Our Glorious AFS Itinerary

Oct 28 – Fly from USA to Buenos Aires Argentina. Air details to come in trip tips later as it's too early now. Flights from Miami are very affordable on LATAM.

Oct 29 – Welcome to Buenos Aires. (Land portion officially begins)

Welcome to B-A! Buenos Aires is the capital as well as the largest city of Argentina. This amazing city combines the energy of New York, the architectural feel of Paris, and the chaotic pace of a major Latin American city all rolled into one. It's definitely in a class of its own. We'll check into our hotel, the Kenton Palace which is located in the heart of B-A's celebrated historic San Telmo district where art and tango are celebrated!

Overnight at Hotel Kenton Palace. (1 night)

Oct 30 - Buenos Aires Tour – Flight to Ushuaia

After breakfast, we spend the morning exploring Buenos Aires, visiting its most important and scenic neighborhoods or barrios. Glamorous Recoleta is known for its architecture as well as its stunning cemetery; Palermo has its amazing parks and gardens, May Square and the Pink House, and the Metropolitan Cathedral; picturesque San Telmo was home to the porteño aristocracy until the end of the XIX century and where the renowned antiques market is held every Sunday; and of course La Boca and its Caminito Street where the colorful, Italian immigrants settled. The newest and trendiest barrio is Puerto Madero Area. Buenos Aires never disappoints as we take in emblematic buildings and palaces of unique architectural, historical, and cultural value.

In the afternoon, we hop our flight to Ushuaia which will take about 4 hours. Upon arrival in we will head to our seaside resort hotel for the evening. 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.

Overnight at Alto de Ushuaia (1 night) B

Oct 31 – Cruise begins!

Our morning free to relax at hotel or explore the surrounding area. Los Cauquenes sits on the shores of the Beagle Sound and offers spa services as well as access to nearby activities. If time permits, our guides can arrange optional tours to Tierra del Fuego, Andes Lakes tour or the historic "End of the World Train".

We will leave the hotel late afternoon and board our ship the Ventus Australis by 6:00 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 traverse the Beagle Channel and cross from Argentine into Chilean territorial waters. The lights of Ushuaia disappear as we turn into the narrow Murray Channel between Navarino and Hoste islands.

Overnight aboard the Ventus Australis (4 nights) B/D

Nov 1 – Cape Horn & Wulaia Bay

Welcome into a breathtaking land of extreme contrasts!

Time to visit deep into the real Patagonia, land of extreme contrasts. By early morning, the ship is cruising across Nassau Bay into the remote archipelago that includes Cape Horn National Park. Weather and sea conditions permitting, we go ashore on the windswept island that harbors legendary Cape Horn (Cabo de Hornos). Discovered in 1616 by a Dutch maritime expedition -- and named after the town of Hoorn in West Friesland -- Cape Horn is a sheer 1,394-foot-high rocky promontory overlooking the turbulent waters of the Drake Passage. For many years it was the only navigation route between the Pacific and Atlantic and was often referred to as the "End of the Earth."

The park was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2005. The Chilean navy maintains a permanent lighthouse on the island, staffed by a lightkeeper and his family, as well as the tiny Stella Maris Chapel and modern Cape Horn Monument. Sailing back across Nassau Bay, we will anchor at fabled Wulaia Bay, one of the few places in the archipelago where the human history is just as compelling as the natural environment. Originally the site of one of the region's largest Yámana aboriginal settlements, the bay was described by Charles Darwin and sketched by Captain FitzRoy in the 1830s during their voyages on the HMS Beagle. This area is also renowned for its mesmerizing beauty and dramatic geography. After a visit to the Australis-sponsored museum in the old radio station -- which is especially strong on the Yámana people and European missionaries in the area -- we have a choice of three hikes (of increasing degrees of difficulty) that ascend the heavily wooded mountain behind the bay.

On all of these walks, you will be strolling through an enchanted Magellan Forest of lengas, coigües, canelos, ferns, and other endemic fauna to reach a breathtaking panoramic viewpoint overlooking the bay. Before leaving Wulaia Bay, you may want to drop something into the wooden mail barrel inside the museum. Letters or postcards dropped here are then hand delivered by future travelers – an ancient mariner tradition revived by Australis.

Overnight aboard the Ventus Australis B/L/D

Nov 2 – Pia Glacier & Porter Glacier by Zodiacs

In the morning, we will navigate the northwest arm of the Beagle Channel to enter and disembark in Pia Fjord. We'll go ashore and take a short hike to a lookout from where we can get a great view of the Pia Glacier that extends from the top of the mountain range all the way down to the sea.

In the afternoon, we again board our Zodiac boats and sail between high rocky walls until we reach Porter Glacier. We will stop to observe its vibrant blue colors and listen to its sounds. If we are lucky, we may even witness some calving. We will stay here for a moment to discuss this incredible ice mass and take some photographs before returning on board.

Overnight aboard the Ventus Australis B/L/D

Nov 3 – Agostini Sound – Aguila Glacier & Condor Glacier

Early in the morning, we will sail through the Cockburn Channel and enter Agostini Sound. From there it is possible to see the glaciers that descend from the middle of the Darwin Mountain Range, some of which reach all the way to the water. We will disembark and go for an easy walk around a lagoon, which was formed by the melting of the Aguila Glacier. We will be able to go right in front of the glacier for some stunning views.

In the afternoon, we will approach the Condor Glacier via Zodiac -- and hopefully see some of the abundant Andean Condors who nest in the area.

Overnight aboard the Ventus Australis B/L/D

Nov 4 - Magdalena Island and Punta Arenas then fly to Santiago, Chile

After an overnight cruise that takes us back into the Strait of Magellan, we anchor off stunning Magdalena Island, which lies about halfway between Tierra del Fuego and the Chilean mainland. Crowned by a distinctive lighthouse, the island used to be an essential source of supplies for navigators and explorers and is inhabited by an immense colony of Magellanic penguins.

At the break of dawn, weather permitting, we go ashore and hike a path that leads through thousands of penguins to a small museum lodged inside the vintage 1902 lighthouse. Many other bird species are also found on the island.

After a short sail south along the strait, we will dock in the port of Punta Arenas at around 11:30 AM. We will then transfer to the Punta Arenas airport for our flight to Santiago. We'll overnight in beautiful and cosmopolitan Santiago. (Depending on our flight arrival and departure times which are not in the system yet, guides will advise on how to best explore this elegant capital city with its grand squares, cathedrals and museums if time permits.)

Overnight Hotel Santiago (1 night) B

Nov 5 – Santiago back to USA

Our morning is free until time for our airport transfer to catch our evening flights back to the U.S. B