

12/1/15



## Betchart Expeditions INC.

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THE BEST OF MAN AND NATURE WORLDWIDE<sub>SM</sub>

### **IOWA STATE ANTARCTICA EXPEDITION**

DECEMBER 4 -17, 2016

#### **DAILY ITINERARY**

##### **DAY 1 DES MOINES TO BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA**

Sun Dec 4

5:50 am Depart Des Moines on Delta Airlines DL#1952 for Atlanta.  
9:01 Arrive Atlanta.  
11:07 Depart Atlanta on DL#2173 for Miami.  
1:32 pm Arrive Miami.  
5:40 Depart on Aerolineas Airlines AR#1305 for Buenos Aires EZE International Airport.

(Meals aloft)

##### **DAY 2 BUENOS AIRES TO USHUAIA**

Mon Dec 5

4:40 am Arrive Buenos Aires International Airport. (EZE).  
Check in for your flight to Ushuaia (also from EZE airport).  
9:10 Aerolineas Argentinas AR #1880 departs for Ushuaia.  
12:45 pm Arrive Ushuaia.  
Transfer to Ushuaia town.  
Check in your *Hostel (1 night)*.  
Afternoon for rest and leisure to explore Ushuaia.  
Dinner.

(D)

##### **DAY 3 TIERRA DEL FUEGO NATIONAL PARK**

Tues Dec 6

Breakfast.  
Take a packed lunch with you.  
8:00 am Depart on a day excursion into Tierra del Fuego National Park, with a local naturalist/guide.  
Late afternoon return to Ushuaia.  
Dinner.

(B,L,D)

##### **DAY 4 USHUAIA TO DEPART FOR ANTARCTICA**

Wed Dec 7

Breakfast.  
This morning for museum visits, exploration and last minute shopping in Ushuaia.  
Lunch on your own.

3:45 pm     Transfer to the ship, *M/V Ortelius*.  
4:00         Board the ship.  
               Meet your expedition leaders and lecture staff.  
6:00         Ship departs for the famous Beagle Channel and scenic MacKinlay Pass.  
               Dinner on board the ship. (B,D)

## **DAYS 5/6    DRAKE PASSAGE**

Thu/Fri Dec 8/9

Breakfast on board ship.  
Albatross and Cape Petrels accompany us 600 miles south across the Drake Passage toward Antarctica. It is named after the renowned explorer, Sir Frances Drake, who sailed these waters in 1578.  
The lecture staff will begin a series of presentations to prepare you for the adventures ahead.  
Lunch on board.  
There is an open bridge policy so you can join the ship's officers on the bridge and learn about navigation, and watch for whales and seabirds.

On Day 5, we will cross the Antarctic Convergence, the biological barrier where cold polar waters dive beneath the warmer oceans to the north. It marks the northern limit of many Antarctic seabirds. We may see Wandering Albatrosses, Grey Headed Albatrosses, Cape Petrels, Southern Fulmars, and other seabirds.

The first sightings of icebergs and snow-capped mountains indicate that we have reached the South Shetland Islands, a group of twenty islands and islets first sighted in February 1819 by Capt. William Smith of the brig *Williams*. With favorable conditions in the Drake Passage, our lecturers and naturalists will accompany you ashore as you experience your first encounter with the penguins and seals. (B,L,D)

## **DAYS 7/10 EXPLORING ANTARCTICA**

Sat/Tues Dec 10/13

We will sail directly to "High Antarctica," passing the Melchior islands and the Schollaert Channel between Brabant and Anvers Island.

On Cuverville, a small precipitous island, nestled between the mountain of the Antarctic Peninsula and Danco Island, we will find a large colony of Gentoo Penguins and breeding pairs of Brown Skuas.

If we land on Danco Island, we can observe Gentoo Penguins and possibly Weddell and Crabeater Seals.

In Neko Harbor, we will have the opportunity to set foot on the Antarctic Continent in a magnificent landscape of huge glaciers and enjoy the landscape during zodiac cruises.

When sailing to Paradise Bay, with its myriad of icebergs and glaciated alpine mountains, we will have the opportunity for a zodiac cruise in the inner parts of this amazing waterway. In this area, we have good chances to see Humpback Whales and Minke Whales.

After sailing through the Neumayer Channel, we hope to get the chance to visit the old British research station, museum and post office at Port Lockroy on Goudier Island. Close to Port

Lockroy, we may also be able to land at Jougla Point with Gentoo Penguins and Blue-eyed Shags.

We will sail through the spectacular Lemaire channel to Pleneau and Petermann Island where we can find Adelie Penguins and Blue-eyed Shags. In this area, there are good chances to encounter Humpback Whales and Minke Whales.

Further south we may visit the Ukranian Vernadsky Station, where we will receive a warm welcome from the station crew.

Sailing north through Neumayer Channel, we will arrive at the Melchior Islands with a very beautiful landscape with icebergs, where we may encounter Leopard Seals, Crabeater Seals, and whales.

Throughout our voyage, we will be surrounded by the fantastic glacial landscapes and mountains of Antarctica, and its seas, rich with wildlife. The Antarctic Peninsula's remarkable history will also provide you with a type of excitement often only associated with the early explorers. You will have plenty of time to explore its amazing scenery, a pristine wilderness of snow, ice, mountains and waterways and a wide variety of wildlife. Apart from Gentoo and Chinstrap Penguins and other seabirds, you are likely to encounter Weddell, crabeater, and leopard seals, as well as Minke whales, Humpbacks, and orcas at close range.

#### **DAYS 11/12 RETURN VOYAGE TO USHUAIA (DRAKE PASSAGE)**

Wed/Thurs Dec 14/15

Our lecture program will continue as we return across the Drake Passage to Ushuaia. We will again be followed by a great number of seabirds. This is a wonderful time to catch up on your notes about the trip.

(B,L,D)

#### **DAY 13 USHUAIA TO BUENOS AIRES & MIAMI**

Fri Dec 16

Breakfast on board the ship.

Please be certain to settle all ship board accounts before disembarking this morning.

Arrive in Ushuaia, and transfer into town.

Morning at leisure for shopping, coffee, or personal interests.

Early lunch in town on your own.

12 Noon Meet opposite the Albatross Hotel for the transfer to the airport.

Check in for AR#1853.

2:05 pm Flight departs for Buenos Aires (EZE) International Airport.

5:33 Arrive Buenos Aires.

9:00 Check in for AR#1302 for Miami (same airport).

11:15 AR#1302 departs for Miami.

(B, D aloft)

#### **DAY 14 MIAMI TO ATLANTA & DES MOINES**

Sat Dec 17

6:25 am Arrive Miami.

Go through customs and immigration.

11:30 Depart on DL#566 for Atlanta.

1:32 pm      Arrive Atlanta.  
2:54          Depart on DL#1532 for Des Moines.  
4:14          Arrive Des Moines.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This schedule is a guide only and is subject to change due to local circumstances or changes in flight schedules. Your Expedition Leader will keep you informed. The Captain has the final word during the voyage. The exact route and program will vary to take best advantage of local weather and ice conditions and opportunities to view wildlife. A Daily Program will be issued on board. Flexibility is the key to success.