



Private Yacht based Antarctic Peninsula Expeditions

December to February

Trip Notes

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Introduction

Antarctica is seen by many as the 'Last Frontier' for mountaineering objectives due to its remote location and difficulty of access. The Antarctic Peninsula is an exotic location with many opportunities for making first ascents, even on skis or a snowboard!!

Adventure Consultants leads Private Yacht based expeditions in the Antarctic Peninsula region focusing on either general mountaineering; with options to ice or rock climb (depending on conditions) and also to ski, snow shoe or snowboard.

The expeditions are usually run with the intention of making one or two first ascents in the region while exploring areas of interest.

Trip Overview

Our Antarctic journeys begin in Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, on the southern tip of Argentina. Ushuaia is a bustling port town and its 40,000 inhabitants are nestled between the cold mountains, and an even colder sea. 'Downtown' has plenty of shops including internet cafes, cafes, clothes shops, chemists and an array of good restaurants.

After gear checks and initial briefings, the group will load onto the yacht for the expedition. In 2006 we used the Evohe, a New Zealand based 82ft steel ketch. For the 2011 expedition we used the SV Santa Maria Australis (SMA). The SMA is a 66 foot aluminium ketch built in Gdansk, Poland. She was built in 1998 and refitted in 2004 to endure high latitude sailing conditions. It is a twin-engine yacht and she was designed to work in harsh conditions. A veteran



of Antarctic and Arctic sailing expeditions, the boat can accommodate 9 passengers in style.

Sailing the Drake Passage is an unforgettable and unique sailing experience in itself and a great way to start our expedition. The crossing usually takes four or five days, and once we're into the more sheltered waters of the Peninsula our first stop will most likely be Port Lockroy, for some instruction and/or re-capping of general mountaineering skills.

Crevasse rescue is high on the list and we will combine the groups experience into one standard technique. Our isolation means that we need to be completely self-reliant and we will always operate in a safe and slightly conservative manner to avoid any possibility of an accident.

Port Lockroy is a great place to then stretch the legs for a climb, snow shoe, ski or snowboard tour, getting our land legs back into motion after a few days at sea. We may visit the British Base there and if so, you can send a postcard home from the most southern post office on the planet.

Our itinerary for these trips are flexible, combining climbing time with exploring on the yacht, which in turn, depends mostly on weather and sea ice conditions. The yacht is fitted with the latest weather forecasting technology, satellite phone and e-mail facilities to monitor conditions and to keep in touch with home, if you so wish.



We plan to work our way down the coast towards the Lemaire Channel, climbing and skiing whatever we like the look of on the way. The opportunities are endless and have hardly had their surface scratched by mountaineers.

Another unique feature of these expeditions is that we are able to return to the yacht's heated saloon, hot showers (occasionally), warm beds and great food after the day's activities.

Our guides have an intimate knowledge of the various hidden gems in and around the Peninsula. Some of the peaks we may climb include Mt Shackleton, Mt Scott, Mt Francais, and literally hundreds of others. We will also seek out our own unclimbed peaks, as the boat will be on hand to transport us to whatever looks 'on'.

Most of the time we will be doing day trips from the boat, as staying overnight on shore can be quite time consuming, and requires logistically a huge effort to carry equipment. We are taking tents though as some mountains may require a night or two to climb and it allows us flexibility to explore further inland. Climbers, skiers and snowboarders can usually cover the same amount of terrain in a day with light packs so whether we camp may depend on conditions for access, weather and the group's general fitness.



We will continue further south as the trip progresses depending on sea ice conditions and weather. We may get as far south as Prospect Point which has an amazing array of unclimbed peaks and great ski touring. The sea ice will vary from season to season, and even day to day, so a major consideration as to what peaks we climb will depend on exactly where we can land a boat.

After exploring the endless climbing and skiing opportunities we will reluctantly have to move north up the Peninsula to the Paradise Harbour region to be in a position to cross the Drake Passage. The Drake is renowned for extreme weather so we need to allow some time to pick the best suitable time to cross back to South America. If the weather is not favourable in the Drake, it might still be good on the Peninsula so we'll just keep on climbing, skiing and snowboarding until the conditions are right.

The sail back across the Drake always presents an interesting challenge. The oceans are severe and unforgiving so you'll appreciate the experience of the crew. There is time to learn the ropes and help out with the sailing if you are well enough!

Rounding Cape Horn under sail ticks another box in every adventurer's wish-list. There is nothing like making landfall in the unique beech forests of Patagonia after weeks of just snow and ice, whilst debriefing with a few Pisco-sours at the 'Micalvi', the sunken ship which serves as a bar in Puerto Williams.

If we cross back early there may be time for an overnight hike from Puerto Williams which is exceptionally beautiful with dozens of lakes and a non-technical rock spire to climb.

The whole trip is an experience of a life time, and one of our most special explorative expeditions.



Sample Itinerary

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| Day 1 | Briefing in Ushuaia in evening. |
| 2 | Start loading the Yacht with all our gear. |
| 3 | Board Yacht with all our gear. Depart for Drake Passage, weather permitting. If the weather is not suitable stop at Port Williams, Chile for some hiking. |
| 4-6 | Sail across the Drake Passage to the Melchior Islands |
| 7 | Continue to Port Lockroy, instruction session and short climb or tour. |
| 8 | Ski tour up Mt Lopez (525m) on Doumer Island or other. |
| 9-15 | Head down the coast visiting climbing areas and generally explore and ski/snowboard, eventually working our way back north to Paradise Harbour. |

16-17	Be in position to sail back to South America. Ski tour in region or north around Danco and Ronge Islands.
18-21	Sail back to Port Williams. Debrief at the “Micalvi” Puerto Williams and/or go for overnight hike in mountains behind town.
22	Trip Ends in Ushuaia – depart for home.

Level of experience required

To climb on the Antarctic Peninsula you need to be physically fit, have an adventurous attitude, and be proficient in general mountaineering techniques.

Expedition members can expect to be exerting themselves for about six to twelve hours per day and be capable of carrying a 10 to 20 kg pack. Our climbing days are sometimes long, to make the most of good weather spells, although you can always take a day off climbing to relax on the yacht and watch the wild life.

The advantages of climbing with us

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to expedition climbing. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our climbers the best possible chance of a safe and enjoyable trip.

We employ strong and specialised expedition leaders and support staff, whom are some of the most pre-eminent in the industry. We pride ourselves on operating with small teams, the best back-up and support available. This includes nutritious and ample quantities of food, comfortable base camp facilities (the Yacht), reliable communications systems and the necessary medical back up.



Many of our expedition members come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions safe and successful.

The Expedition Fee

The cost of the expedition is ex Ushuaia, Argentina and depends on the desired length of the trip, number of people and the quality (and size) of the yacht desired.

Due to the forward planning and the popularity of the yacht, you need to plan and book very early for this trip.

The expedition fee *includes*:

- Adventure Consultants mountain guides
- All expedition organisational requirements
- Airport transfer in Ushuaia if arriving on scheduled flight
- All lodging, food and non bottled drinks ex Ushuaia
- Group climbing equipment, food, tents and fuel
- All yacht charter costs
- Dispatch page for family and friends to follow the progress of the expedition
- Access to our satellite phone and email facilities

The expedition fee *does not include*:

- Personal clothing and equipment
- Entry Visa for Argentina
- Personal travel insurance and travel cancellation insurance
- Rescue insurance and any rescue costs
- Any costs associated with early departure from the expedition
- International round trip travel costs into and out of Ushuaia, Argentina
- Hotel and meals in Ushuaia
- Spending on personal items such as gifts, alcohol etc
- Excess baggage charges and airport taxes
- Costs of satellite phone calls or data time
- Tips and Gratuities

Food

While on the yacht all meals will be supplied by the boat staff. This will be high quality cuisine served in the heated and very comfortable saloon.

While climbing on the Peninsula your guides will supply snacks and lunches supplemented by food, such as sandwiches, from the boat staff.

Equipment List

A full clothing and equipment checklist will be sent to all expedition members once their booking is confirmed. The expedition leader will be available prior to the trip to discuss individual equipment questions.

Medical Examination

Expedition members will be provided with a medical questionnaire and asked to visit their family physician and receive a full medical examination. This information will be sighted only by our medical adviser and the guides and is treated with full confidentiality.

Visas

Generally entry Visas are not required for travellers to Argentina staying less than three months but please check with your details according to your nationality.

How to join this expedition

If you require more information please contact us at:

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