



**CLIMB  
ANTARCTICA  
EXPEDITION 2019/2020  
TRIP NOTES**



## CLIMB ANTARCTICA

### Expedition Notes

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Climb Antarctica has been hailed as the continent's best kept secret, and presents mountaineers with the opportunity to climb in the world's most remote and pristine environment. During the southern summer of 2019/2020, Adventure Consultants will operate expeditions to climb in the Ellsworth Mountains in Antarctica.

Terrain is unlimited and varied, from technical ascents to easy snow climbs and ridge traverses that offer views over the Ronne Ice Shelf and Polar Plateau. This unique experience of climbing in Antarctica has only been undertaken by a handful of people and the opportunities for attempting new routes and first ascents are a real possibility.

Enjoy this exploration as an expedition in itself, or add-on to our Vinson Massif or South Pole expeditions to complete your Antarctic experience.

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#### Brief History

Union Glacier is located in the Heritage Range amongst the Ellsworth Mountains, 700 nautical miles from the South Pole. These mountains are the highest in Antarctica and includes the continent's highest Vinson Massif (4,892m/16,050ft). The mountains were discovered on November 23, 1935, by Lincoln Ellsworth on a trans-Antarctic flight, and he named them the Sentinel Range.



*Union Glacier. Photo Lydia Bradey*

The Canadian company Adventure Network International (ANI) opened up this area to private expeditions and operated regular flights to its summer camp at Patriot Hills from 1985. In 2003/2004 they withdrew their Antarctic operations and Antarctica Logistics & Expeditions (ALE) stepped in.

ALE is run by some of the same people that initially started ANI back in the 1980s and they now use a new camp at Union Glacier as their base to operate from in Antarctica.

The terrain and climbing in the area is varied with routes ranging from easy to technical levels. Under the leadership of experienced Antarctic guides, climbers of varying levels of experience can safely undertake the expedition.

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### **Access to the Mountains**

From Punta Arenas at the tip of Chile, we fly by Ilyushin 76 aircraft to the ALE base at Union Glacier. Here the aircraft makes a wheeled landing on a natural blue-ice runway.

Union Glacier Camp, situated at 80 degrees South is a small collection of tents. These have double walls to withstand Antarctic conditions, with a high-tech nylon covering and durable aluminium frame that opens up like a clam shell. They are tall enough to stand up in and incorporate a wooden floor to provide solid footing and insulation from the snow. Guests will also have access to the camp's dining tent where residents gather to share buffet-style meals.

Depending on our climbing objectives we will travel from Union Glacier into the nearby mountains where we will spend several nights camping.

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### **Level of Experience Required**

To join our Climb Antarctica Expedition you need to be physically fit and be capable of strenuous exercise for several days' duration. Expedition members can expect to be exerting themselves for about four-six hours per day and be capable of carrying a 25kg pack.

Because the climbing is varied and we can tailor the objectives to meet your experience level members, with modest mountaineering backgrounds can join this expedition so long as they have some overall cold camping experience, some basic mountaineering skills and are reasonably fit.

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### **Meeting Point**

The expedition members will gather at Punta Arenas in Chile. Regular daily flights on LAN Chile and Ladeco Airlines connect with Santiago and other points north. As the group gear must be weighed and loaded at least 1 day prior to departure to Union Glacier as well as attend the expedition briefing, you are advised to schedule your arrival in Punta Arenas accordingly. Thus, we



*Punta Arenas. Photo Mark Sedon*

recommend arriving on the scheduled **Arrival Day**.

## **Itinerary**

Trip 1: December 15 – 30, 2019

Trip 2: January 6 – 21, 2020

\*Other trip dates are available on request, please enquire with our office.

Day 1	Meet in Punta Arenas, Chile
Day 2-3	Weighing & loading of gear and Expedition Briefing
Day 4	Fly to Union Glacier, Antarctica
Day 5 – 7	Expedition Preparations
Day 8 – 14	Climbing Expedition
Day 15	Depart for Punta Arenas
Day 16	Leave for home

**Please note: Flights to and from Antarctica are subject to weather. Delays can and often do occur therefore it is important to allow some flexibility with airline travel arrangements at the end of the expedition.**

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## **Detailed Itinerary**

### **Days 1-3**

We will arrange a specific time to come to your hotel and review your personal clothing and equipment. Please lay out all of the items on our Required Clothing and Equipment List in your hotel room so we can go through each item with you. We will help sort the items to pack in your checked luggage vs. your carry-on bag and what items to leave behind in Punta Arenas.

The evening before your Antarctic flight, you are required to attend an important safety briefing to be followed by cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. At the briefing, we will describe the flight dispatch process, update you on the current weather, and prepare you for arrival at Union Glacier. Please stay to enjoy pisco sours served over ancient Antarctic ice with your fellow travellers

### **Day 4: Fly to Antarctica**

We will call you at your hotel in the morning to advise you of current conditions in Antarctica. If the weather is suitable for our flight, we will pick you up at your hotel within the hour. Please meet us in the lobby with hotel bills paid, ready to board the bus. At the Punta Arenas airport, we board our chartered jet for the 4¼ hour flight to Antarctica. Our route crosses the Drake Passage, then follows the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula and the spine of the Ellsworth Mountains. We land on a naturally occurring blue-ice runway on Union Glacier where you will take your first steps on Antarctica. Climb aboard one of our specially-adapted vans for the 5 mi (8 km) shuttle to our main camp. Our friendly staff will provide a welcome tour of camp and show you to your tent.

\*Every effort will be made to keep to the scheduled flight date and we will depart as soon as weather and runway conditions permit. Please understand that delays are common in Antarctic travel. All flights are dependent on weather, aircraft serviceability, and local conditions. Our staff will stay in close contact with you and will provide you with regular flight updates.

### **Day 5 - 7: Expedition Preparations**

Your climbing team will spend the first few days at Union Glacier brushing up on skills and getting acclimated to the Antarctic conditions. You'll practice rope work, crevasse rescue, navigation, weather observations, and polar camping skills. During this period, you will also discuss and plan your objectives with your guide and pack your equipment to ready for departure. While based in Union Glacier Camp, you may also have time to join an excursion to one of the near-by scenic destinations such as the Drake Icefall or the beach at Rossman Cove.

### **Day 8 – 14: Climbing**

It's time to explore Antarctica as it should be, untracked and pristine. Peaks, ridges, and canyons await and your itinerary is up to you and your guide. Together you'll develop an expedition plan to match your skills and interests. You can do local day trips and return home to Union Glacier Camp each evening for dinner, or you can set out on a multi-day expedition to explore many of the valleys and peaks in the Heritage Range. Routes vary from technical ascents and easy snow climbs to magnificent ridge traverses with views over the Ronne Ice Shelf and Polar Plateau. Each experience is unique and the opportunities for exploration are endless. Only a handful of people have traversed this remote region and you may be the first person to attempt a new route and marvel at the view below. Once your climbing dreams are fulfilled, you'll return to Union Glacier Camp to enjoy a celebration meal and toast your achievements!



*Climbing in Antarctica. Photo Mark Sedon*

### **Day 15: Fly to Punta Arenas**

When weather and runway conditions permit, our intercontinental aircraft will arrive at Union Glacier to transport you back to Chile. Our staff will meet you at the airport and transfer you back to your hotel.

### **Day 16: Departure Day**

We recommend booking your flight home one week after your return Antarctic flight. If you purchase a full-fare ticket, most airlines will allow you to move your departure date. It is important to give yourself a buffer as delays are common in Antarctic travel. Our Punta Arenas

team can provide a list of local tour operators and excursions if you wish to explore Chile before you return home.

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## Hotels

Adventure Consultants can book your hotel in Punta Arenas or you can take care of this yourself. Please advise us at the time of booking.

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## Visa Requirements

Expedition members must secure their own visa for multiple-entry into Chile. While Chile claims part of the Antarctic Continent as its sovereignty, it requires that we check through immigration when leaving for and returning from Antarctica; thus a multi-entry visa is required.

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## Team Membership

On the Climb Antarctica expedition there is usually a 1:1 guide to climber ratio, however should you have a group or climbing partner with similar objectives and experience then we may operate at a higher ratio, depending on the technical difficulty of your objectives. You will find the Mountain Guides companionable and strong expedition leaders with considerable power and willingness to see you achieve your goals.

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## The Expedition Fee

The cost of the expedition **ex Punta Arenas in Chile** is **US\$30,950**.

This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Flights to and from Union Glacier in Antarctica
- All group climbing equipment
- All expedition organisational requirements
- Tents and food while in Antarctica
- Mountain guides
- Transport of 23kg of personal equipment

The expedition fee does **not include** the following:

- Air travel to and from Punta Arenas, Chile
- Hotel accommodation and meals in Punta Arenas
- Chilean visa and airport fees

- Personal insurance – Full travel, medical and rescue insurance is required as well as personal trip cancellation insurance. Medical evacuation insurance cover of US\$150,000 is required
  - Personal clothing and equipment
  - Additional flights in Antarctica
  - Excess baggage transportation charges of US\$77 per kg for any baggage exceeding the personal equipment weight limit
  - Expenses incurred due to delay
  - Cost of satellite telephone calls whilst on expedition
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### **Deposit**

A **non-refundable deposit of US\$5,000** is payable to secure a place on the expedition.

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### **Balance**

The balance is payable **120 days** before the trip departure date.

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### **Payments**

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:

**Bank of New Zealand  
Offshore Branch  
1 Willis Street  
Wellington  
New Zealand**

for the account of **Adventure Consultants Limited**

Account #                   **1000-594771-0000**  
Account Type:           **US Dollars**  
Swift Address:           **BKNZ22**

Note: All bank transfer charges are for the **remitters account**.

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard or Amex) plus a 3% credit card fee.

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### **Cancellation and Refund Policy**

An expedition member may cancel their participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 120 days of the departure date incur the loss of the deposit payment.
  - Cancellations between 119-90 days of the departure date incur 50% of the balance payment.
  - For cancellation made within 89 days of the departure date there will be no refunds.
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### **Trip Cancellation Insurance**

Team members should take out private cancellation insurance if they wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons. This is called trip cancellation insurance and can be obtained through your normal travel agent. You will also need to procure rescue insurance.

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### **Equipment List**

A full clothing and equipment checklist will be sent to all expedition members, once their booking is confirmed. Our Equipment Co-ordinator will be available prior to the trip to provide advice and discuss individual equipment questions.

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### **Medical Examination**

Expedition members will be provided with pre-trip medical advice and a medical questionnaire and asked to visit their family physician and receive a full medical examination. This information will be sighted only by the expedition leader and our medical adviser and treated with full confidentiality.

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### **Documentation & Photographs**

Expedition members will be requested to provide 2 passport photographs and a copy of their climbing résumé.

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### **The Advantages of Climbing with Us**

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to high altitude 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 success.

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, 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.

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### How to Join This Expedition

If you would like to join the expedition complete an online [Expedition Application Form](#) and forward along with your climbing résumé and the deposit.

If you require more information please contact us at:

**Adventure Consultants Ltd**  
PO Box 739, 20 Brownston St  
Wanaka, 9343  
New Zealand

Ph + 64 3 443 8711 Fax + 64 3 443 8733

Email [info@adventure.co.nz](mailto:info@adventure.co.nz)  
Website [www.adventureconsultants.com](http://www.adventureconsultants.com)



*Adventure Consultants – is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.*

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