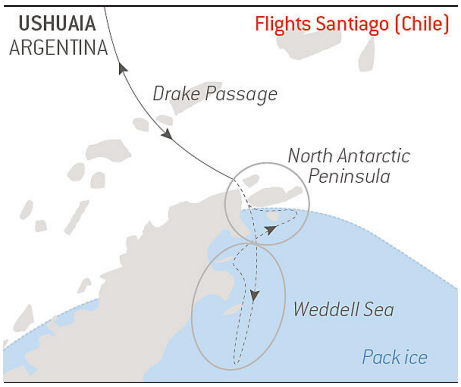
The Emperor Penguins of Weddell Sea

From **17/11/2023** to **29/11/2023**	Ship: ***LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT***	From **Ushuaia** to **Ushuaia**



With featured guest Nicolas Vincent, a deep ocean and underwater intervention expert. He is head of operations for the Endurance22 Expedition which located the wreck of Sir Ernest Shackleton's ship in the Weddell Seas.

The theatre of the greatest expeditions, a refuge for the rarest wildlife and an endless ice desert, the **Weddell Sea** promises you **intense emotions** during a **voyage of exploration** aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, an enveloping cocoon that is wide open onto the exterior polar setting. This place is home to **emperor penguins**, majestic birds endemic to the Antarctic, rarely observed and only in the most southern latitudes. **The ultimate quest and the promise of all-new, unforgettable encounters**.

From **Drake Passage**, as the wind blows and the waves crash against the stern of your ship, you will enter the southern seas, to **the extreme and captivating Weddell Sea**. **Ice floe** as far as the eye can see and **gigantic tabular icebergs** form the horizon of the **colonies of Adelie penguins** that populate this expanse. Contemplating these curious and quirky birds is a real privilege and the guarantee of an equally fascinating and touching show. Yet the ultimate challenge of this exploration is **the search for and the encounter with their majesties, the emperor penguins**. In this season, as the winter gradually makes way for the southern spring, you will perhaps witness a **magical show** - that of the largest penguins in the world waddling along the ice floe or the younger penguins learning to swim. It is rare to discover their elegance, so the encounter will be priceless.

During your exploration of the Weddell Sea, you will follow in the footsteps of the **great polar epics** like that of **Sir Ernest Shackleton**. Our **passionate naturalists** will also share the history of the gigantic tabular icebergs with you, including their birth in the heart of the **immense Larsen Ice Shelf**. The ice here boasts all possible shades and the white takes different forms in the surrounding reliefs. Let yourself be guided and set off on an adventure into the heart of incredible and unexpected nature. Your Captain and the expert naturalists **humbly** seize these opportunities to give you an experience that will remain unique.

It is a challenge and a privilege to sail upon the Weddell Sea; welcome to an extraordinary universe with compelling appeal.

Find out more about the world of *Le Commandant Charcot* here!

We are privileged guests in these extreme lands where we are at the mercy of weather and ice conditions. Our navigation will be determined by the type of ice we come across; as the fast ice must be preserved, we will take this factor into account from day to day in our itineraries. The sailing programme, outings, activities and observation of fauna cannot be guaranteed and are subject to weather and ice conditions. These experiences are unique and vary with each departure. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while respecting safety instructions and regulations imposed by the IAATO.



The information in this document is valid as of 28/03/2024

The Emperor Penguins of Weddell Sea

YOUR STOPOVERS :

USHUAIA

Embarkation 17/11/2023 from 16:00 to 17:00
Departure 17/11/2023 at 18:00

Capital of Argentina's **Tierra del Fuego** province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed "**El fin del mundo**" by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible...

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Arrival 18/11/2023
Departure 19/11/2023

Use your days spent in the **Drake Passage** to familiarise yourself with your ship and deepen your knowledge of the Antarctic. The Expedition Leader will first present the IAATO rules of conduct that must be observed during landings in the region and will explain everything you need to know about the zodiac outings. Lectures about the history and wildlife of the Antarctic will be an opportunity for you to learn more about this magical region, where every cruise is a **unique experience**. You will experience exceptional sailing moments on board and join the naturalist-guides on your ship's exterior decks to look out for albatrosses, cape petrels, and other seabirds flying over the Drake Passage.

NORTH ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

Arrival 20/11/2023
Departure 20/11/2023

Throughout your time in the **north of the Antarctic Peninsula**, you will find yourself in the heart of a spectacular decor in subtle shades of blue and white, surrounded by exceptional wildlife. You will sail through the **Antarctic Sound**, named after Swedish explorer Otto Nordenskjöld's ship, which was trapped by the ice during an important scientific expedition in 1902. The gateway to the Weddell Sea, this sound is filled with gigantic tabular icebergs and plates of sea ice drifting northward from the coastal areas of this vast sea. It is home to **Adelie penguins** and a great many **leopard seals**.

THE WEDDELL SEA EXPLORATION

Arrival 21/11/2023
Departure 26/11/2023

Impassable, extreme and captivating: this is the best way to describe the **Weddell Sea**, much of which is covered by a

layer of thick, densely packed ice. It is a challenge and a privilege to sail upon this sea. Polar exploration finds its full meaning here. Heading towards the South is a real quest, with the promise of highly-charged encounters with the continent's endemic fauna. This is the kingdom of the emperor penguin, the largest penguin in the world, renowned for its elegance. Unlike other penguins that live on the rocks, the emperor nests on the ice floe which it needs for its reproductive cycle. It is therefore on the ice floe that you will be able to observe it walking around with its characteristic gait. In this southern sea, where the ice changes and is transformed constantly, there is never any monotony. The new reliefs and new colours ensure never-ending wonderment. You will sail into the heart of the immaculate ice floe, which is dislocated or densely packed, into an alley of icebergs. Among them are immense blocks of ice, tabular icebergs, that drift and illuminate the ocean with their cerulean blue haloes. Aboard, on shore, on the ice, you will be as close as possible to the colonies of Adelie penguins, Weddell seals, Mink whales, orcas, snow petrels.... With a little luck, you will get a glimpse of a rare Ross seal with its silver pelage or of emperor penguins, waddling along the edge of the ice floe. A sight that is as fascinating as it is emotional.

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Arrival 27/11/2023
Departure 28/11/2023

If there is one place, one sea, one waterway dreaded by tourists, researchers and hardened seafarers alike, it is undoubtedly **Drake Passage**. Situated at the latitude of the infamous Furious Fifties winds, between Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands, it is **the shortest route to connect Antarctica to South America**. Seasoned navigators will tell you that you must earn your visit to the White Continent! As the Antarctic convergence zone where cold currents rising up from the South Pole meet warmer equatorial water masses, Drake Passage harbours a very diverse marine fauna. Don't forget to look to the sky to catch a glimpse of elegant albatross and **Cape petrels**, playfully floating about in the wind around your ship.

USHUAIA

Arrival 29/11/2023 early morning
Disembarkation 29/11/2023 at 08:00

Capital of Argentina's **Tierra del Fuego** province, Ushuaia is considered the gateway to the White Continent and the South Pole. Nicknamed "**El fin del mundo**" by the Argentinian people, this city at the end of the world nestles in the shelter of mountains surrounded by fertile plains that the wildlife seem to have chosen as the ultimate sanctuary. With its exceptional site, where the Andes plunge straight into the sea, Ushuaia is one of the most fascinating places on earth, its very name evocative of journeys to the unlikely and the inaccessible...