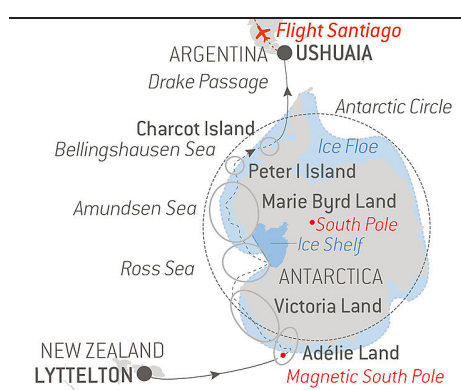


From Dumont d'Urville to Mawson: retracing Heroic Age expeditions

From **06/02/2024**
to **03/03/2024**

Ship: **LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT**

From **Lyttelton**
to **Ushuaia**



With featured guests Ian Dawson and Sue Flood, British Photo Ambassadors.

Curiosity, surpassing oneself, being open to the world. Humans have always looked toward what some would call the 'impossible elsewhere'. With **Le Commandant Charcot**, which is capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, we can dream even bigger and glimpse new horizons. This polar odyssey at the boundaries of the world follows the path of the first to discover Antarctica and sharpens our senses to let us see all the riches of a long journey marked by the nuances of the ice. In the incredible comfort of an exceptional ship, you will take the time to observe the world around you, the landscapes and the fauna whose radiant beauty makes them seem surreal. Set off on an **all-new half-circumnavigation of Antarctica** from the New Zealand shores to Ushuaia, the city at the end of the world.

Following in the wake of courageous pioneers, explore the southern seas, including **Ross Sea**, which is the world's largest marine protected area, a kingdom of prodigious wildlife. As a privileged witness, keep a watchful eye and take the time to observe the **Antarctic petrels, whales, orcas, seals and penguins** that are to be found here.

The attraction exerted by the **White Continent's** infinite territories and their mythical names will soon intensify further. **Adelie Land, Victoria Land, Marie Byrd Land**. The first will plunge you into the heart of the French polar adventure where **Paul-Émile Victor** founded the **Dumont d'Urville scientific station**, in honour of the eponymous explorer. The second, claimed by the Australians, is forever linked to the name of the **explorer Mawson**, who defied the winds in **Commonwealth Bay**, which may exceed 240 km/h (150 mph). As for the third, it is one of the planet's rare **Terra nullius** – a territory claimed by no State – whose remoteness and climate have certainly kept it well away from human conquests. Bordered by the Ross Sea to the west and the Amundsen Sea to the east, it will plunge you into a world where wild nature has raised its own cathedrals of ice. Set off on a **half-circumnavigation of Antarctica** from the

New Zealand shores to Ushuaia, the city at the end of the world.

Your great crossing **beyond the Antarctic Circle** will continue in the **Bellingshausen Sea** where the **Charcot and Peter I Islands** roll out their icy, almost inaccessible masses. *Le Commandant Charcot* will attempt to approach their shores, deemed impassable, before your arrival in the Tierra del Fuego.

Get insight into your destination with this video: **[Le Commandant Charcot in the Ross Sea.](#)**

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.



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YOUR STOPOVERS :

LYTTELTON

Embarkation 06/02/2024 from 16:00 to 17:00

Departure 06/02/2024 at 18:00

On the eastern coast of New Zealand's South Island, Lyttelton (or Te Whaka Rauipo in the Maori language) served, thanks to its proximity with Ross Island, as the **starting point for the British expeditions** in the mythical age of the South Pole explorations. It takes its name from George Lyttelton (1709-1773), aristocrat and colonial governor of South Carolina. In this colourful port town full of history, you'll be able to discover the **Time Ball**: constructed in 1876, it rang at 1.00 pm every day for 58 consecutive years to give Greenwich meridian time, enabling ship captains to set their chronometer and very precisely calculate their position.

AT SEA ABOARD LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT

Arrival 07/02/2024

Departure 10/02/2024

Spend exceptional moments sailing aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, the world's first luxury polar exploration vessel and the first PC2-class polar cruise ship capable of sailing into the very heart of the ice, on seas and oceans which the frozen conditions render inaccessible to ordinary ships. *Le Commandant Charcot* is fitted with oceanographic and scientific equipment selected by a committee of experts. Take advantage of the on-board lectures and opportunities for discussion with these specialists to learn more about the poles. Participate in furthering scientific research with PONANT and let us discover together what these fascinating destinations have yet to reveal to us.

MAGNETIC SOUTH POLE

Arrival 11/02/2024

Departure 11/02/2024

The convergence point for the field lines of the Earth's magnetic field, the **Magnetic South Pole** attracts the magnetic needle of the compass. While the Geographic South Pole is the Earth's southernmost fixed point, marking the intersection of the Globe's rotation axis with the Earth's surface, the Magnetic South Pole moves over time. In fact, it is linked to the Earth's magnetic field which originates in the Earth's outer core, which is made up of molten metal and is subject to convection movements. It was during the French Dumont d'Urville expedition to Antarctica, aboard the famous ships *L'Astrolabe* and *La Zélée*, that the hydrographer and engineer Vincendon-Dumoulin made the first calculation of the magnetic inclination that enabled him to localise this pole in 1838. Set off in search of the Magnetic South Pole, try to get closer to it and, if luck allows it, attempt to reach it!

ADÉLIE LAND

Arrival 12/02/2024

Departure 12/02/2024

Adelie Land covers around 400,000 km² (around 250,000 square miles) of the White Continent between the 136th and 142nd meridians longitude East. These lands claimed by France in Antarctica are home, on Petrel Island, to **Dumont-d'Urville station**, which is named after the eponymous French explorer who investigated the region in 1840. Here, the few resident scientists share the Antarctic desert with Adelie penguins, seals and orcas, as well as emperor penguins during the winter. The extreme climate of this land at the edge of the world, characterised by its very low temperatures and its violent winds or blizzards, make it difficult to access its shores, which are protected by thick ice floe. Be among the rare people to discover this unique place where you will be captivated by the polar silence and the ice reflecting the rays of the sun as you experience the Southern Continent's powerful fragility.

VICTORIA LAND

Arrival 13/02/2024

Departure 14/02/2024

Reach the inaccessible by **exploring extreme Victoria Land**. You will discover part of the **history of the Australian polar expeditions**: in **Commonwealth Bay**, slip into the shoes of the legendary **Douglas Mawson**, who created his main base in 1911 in Cape Denison, where there are still remnants of his wooden cabin. Welcome to the country of blizzards, these violent winds filled with snow flakes. Among the natural marvels of this territory, you will note the glacial tongue of the impressive Mertz Glacier whose wall of ice is cut with immense crevasses. The grandiose sight of absolute nature. Marking the border with Marie Byrd Land, the Transantarctic Mountains, extending the Andes, offer this Eden of ice some mountainous landscapes.

THE ROSS SEA

Arrival 15/02/2024

Departure 18/02/2024

'The last ocean' is what scientists from all around the world call this deep bay that runs along the edge of Antarctica between **Marie Byrd Land** and **Victoria Land**. Since 2016, **the world's largest marine protected area** has been keeping this last marine ecosystem intact. The theatre of the most impressive expeditions, it was discovered by **James Clark Ross** between 1839 and 1843. It was then that he discovered the enormous ice barrier formed by a gigantic ice shelf extending out to the open sea and from which titanic icebergs are calved. At a later stage, it was **Ernest Shackleton** and **Robert Falcon Scott** who explored the region and installed their base camp on **Ross Island**, at the foot of **Mount Erebus**. Weather and ice conditions permitting, perhaps you will be able to discover one of these two emblematic sites. Among the possible ports of call, **Cape Adare**, at the far north of the Borchgrevink Coast, is home to one of the world's largest Adelie penguin colonies. One third of the world's population of these penguins lives in the area where this barrier breaks into icebergs. The currents maintain polynyas there, vast areas of persistent open water surrounded by sea ice. These give the penguins access to food.

CROSSING THE INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE

Arrival 18/02/2024

Departure 18/02/2024

Your itinerary enables you to cross **the International Date Line**. This imaginary line across the Earth's surface approximately follows the 180th meridian in the Pacific Ocean. Because of the roundness of the Earth and the necessity of having reference time meridians, we have to change dates when we cross this line. So if your ship is travelling west, you will need to add a day to the expected date; conversely, if travelling east, you will take away a day. This paradox, already noted by Magellan's crews during his circumnavigation, serves as dramatic motivation in several novels, including Jules Verne's famous *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

MARIE BYRD LAND EXPLORATION

Arrival 19/02/2024

Departure 24/02/2024

Marie Byrd Land is one of the most remote territories of our planet's most inaccessible continent. It is a real privilege to just be able to contemplate its shores! Between the **Ross Sea** and its large shelf to the east and **Bellingshausen Sea** to the west, the frozen coastlines of these lands are bordered by the **Amundsen Sea**, partially covered by a thick ice floe. Stretching over more than a million km² (over 620,000 square miles) in Western Antarctica, its ground is also isolated from the rest of the continent by the Transantarctic Mountains. It is certainly this geographic remoteness and its harsh climate that have made it one of our planet's rare ***Terra nullius***, a territory claimed by no State. In 1929, Marie Byrd Land got its name from Admiral Richard E. Byrd, in honour of his wife, following his expedition to the region. The exploration of its ice-sculpted landscapes will plunge you into the infinite Antarctic desert, where penguins, seals, whales and orcas are the only living souls. Depending on the time and weather conditions, your exploration of the region will take you towards a string of islands which, although little-known, remain fascinating: Siple Island and its eponymous mount, resulting from an old volcano and Clark Island.

AMUNDSEN SEA

Arrival 25/02/2024

Departure 25/02/2024

The great Norwegian explorer **Roald Amundsen** – famous as one of the first five men to reach the **geographic South Pole** – gave his name to this **southern sea** in 1929, following an expedition in its waters. Almost entirely frozen by a thick ice floe, **Amundsen Sea** stretches along Marie Byrd Land in Antarctica, between Bellingshausen Sea to the west and the Ross Sea to the east. The monumental icebergs are all that break the monotony of the infinite ice floe here: let yourself be immersed in a feeling of tranquillity before this vastness. These privileged moments sailing in the Amundsen Sea are opportunities to make the most of the original equipment and spaces on ***Le Commandant Charcot***. Find yourself in this refined cocoon. Nourish yourself with the knowledge of the scientists and expert naturalists, who provide unique support during your polar cruise. Or simply contemplate the fascinating and captivating decor from the ship's exterior decks.

EXPEDITION TO PETER I ISLAND

Arrival 26/02/2024

Departure 26/02/2024

You will then head for the legendary **Peter I Island**. Located 450 km away from the Atlantic coast, it was discovered in 1821 by the Russian explorer Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen, who named it in honour of the Russian tsar Peter the Great. In 1909, Captain Charcot sighted it for the first time from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?*, but was unable to land there: *"In the parting mists, one or two miles away, an enormous black mass shrouded in clouds appears suddenly before us: it is Peter I Island."* **Surrounded by pack ice and with about 95% of its surface covered by ice**, this volcanic island, whose highest peak reaches 1,640 metres, is protected by ice cliffs some 40 metres tall, making any approach difficult.

BELLINGSHAUSEN SEA

Arrival 27/02/2024

Departure 27/02/2024

Stretching from the west of the Antarctic Peninsula to the Amundsen Sea, the **Bellingshausen Sea** was named after the Russian admiral and explorer who has been attributed the first confirmed sighting of mainland Antarctica, in 1820. Among others, its waters surround two of the Antarctic's largest islands: Alexander Island and Thurston Island. You will explore this sea amid ice floe, blocks of sea ice and majestic icebergs. The coastal areas along the Bellingshausen Sea are also renowned as the home of colonies of emperor penguins. Depending on the month of the southern summer, you will perhaps be lucky enough to observe isolated adults, adolescents seeking emancipation or recently independent new adults.

EXPEDITION TO CHARCOT ISLAND

Arrival 28/02/2024

Departure 28/02/2024

When he discovered this island surrounded by sea ice in 1910 from aboard the *Pourquoi Pas ?* as he mapped Alexander Island, **Jean-Baptiste Charcot** had not be able to get less than 40 miles away from it. Situated in a zone that experiences frequent low-pressure systems and regular cloud cover, the island remains in many ways an enigma. It is **entirely covered in ice and sheer cliffs**, with the exception of the rocky outcrops extending over a dozen kilometres in the far north-west. The ice in the narrowest part of Wilkins Sound has been cracking in recent times, thus officially detaching this island from its neighbour, Alexander Island, lying 50 km away. Very few people have landed on this **largely untouched island**, whose waters attract numerous seabirds, such as petrels, Antarctic terns and skuas.

MARGUERITE BAY

Arrival 29/02/2024

Departure 29/02/2024

The icebergs are each more majestic than the next and scattered around the deep and intense blue waters of **Marguerite Bay**, one of the most beautiful regions in the Antarctic. It is delimited in the north by the mountainous Adelaide Island, in the south by George VI Sound and Alexander Island, and in the east by the Fallières Coast. Charcot named it after his wife during his second expedition to the Antarctic between 1908 and 1910. In 1909, in the southern summer when the skies are at their clearest, he led an important scientific mission to map and study this region. The

bay is home to a **number of cetaceans** and you may get the chance to observe **leopard seals** or **Adelie penguins**.

CROSSING THE DRAKE PASSAGE

Arrival 01/03/2024

Departure 02/03/2024

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 03/03/2024 early morning

Disembarkation 03/03/2024 at 07:00

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...