



GIPPSLAND  
**TRAVEL**

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# ***AWESOME ANTARCTICA***

***with a taste of South America***

*22 day tour including a  
13 day Wild Antarctica featuring the Weddell Sea  
Expedition Cruise*

***12 February to 5 March 2026***

*Personally escorted by Jacquy Turner*



As well as being the world's most important natural laboratory, the Antarctic is a place of great beauty and wonder. Its frozen wastes have fired the public imagination for generations, and around 30,000 tourists now visit the Antarctic each year to experience what life is like in the Earth's last great wilderness.

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## Awe-Inspiring Antarctica with a taste of South America – 2026



**Thursday 12 February**

**Melbourne – Santiago**

**(D)**

We shall transfer from Gippsland to Melbourne Airport to depart on our flight to Santiago de Chile. On arrival we will be met by our guide and transferred to our hotel, CUMBRES LASTARRIA, or similar, for a 2-night stay. Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.

Sprawled across Chile's central valley tucked between high Andean peaks and the coastal cordillera, lies the cosmopolitan city of Santiago de Chile or Santiago for short. It was founded in 1541 and named Santiago del Nuevo Extremo, "Santiago of the New Frontier" by Spanish conqueror Pedro de Valdivia who also became Chile's first royal governor. The shaded Plaza de Armas is the city's heart framed by some of Chile's impressive colonial buildings such as the Metropolitan Cathedral, the Governor's Palace and the Historical Museum. The spectacular Parque Metropolitano is home to the city's zoo and botanical gardens. It is also one of the world's largest city parks.

**Friday 13 February**

**Santiago**

**(B D)**

This morning, we depart the hotel for a walking sightseeing tour of the city of Santiago. The tour combines conversation and walking through the main cultural points of the city in a unique experience.

We will hear interesting stories about Chilean culture, and explore downtown Santiago with stops at the Fine Arts Museum, Cerro Santa Lucia, the Central Market, and the Plaza de Armas, the Financial District, the Presidential Palace and Paris-London neighborhood. Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.







**Saturday 14 February** **Santiago – Puerto Natales** **(B D)**

We depart Santiago this morning and fly to Puerto Natales. On arrival we will travel by coach to the Torres Del Paine National Park, where we will stay at the LAGO GREY HOTEL, *or similar*, for the next three nights. Located on Grey Lake, surrounded by a crystalline glacier, granite mountains peaks, forests, and rivers, this hotel is the ideal location for a Torres del Paine National Park experience.

After we check in, we will meet a guide from Lago Grey to discuss which excursions you would like to take part in during your stay. A highlight of our stay will be taking a walk in pristine nature right outside of your room.

**Sunday 15, Monday 16 February** **Torres del Paine** **(B L D) x2**

Torres del Paine National Park is South America's most famous park and a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. It is best recognised for its magnificent central massif, sculptured by glaciers into unmistakable cuernos (horns) and torres (towers). Rising from the sea to over 3353 metres, these granite spires are truly impressive. Varied and abundant wildlife including guanacos, elusive pumas, and dozens of bird species roam here, making this Patagonia's top adventure destination.

During our time in Torres del Paine National Park Natales, we will participate in several walking excursions as well as driving tours that will highlight its natural wonders, outdoor activities, and essential travel adventures. This beautiful corner of Chilean Patagonia will be unforgettable.



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**Tuesday 17 February**

**Puerto Natales - Punta Arenas**

**(B D)**

This morning, we will travel by road to Punta Arenas. On arrival, we will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to our hotel for an overnight stay.

On the edge of the Magellan Strait on the Brunswick Peninsula lies Punta Arenas. It is the southernmost populous city in Chile and the capital of the region Magallanes and Antarctica Chilena. It was founded in 1848 and was at first a small penal colony to increase sovereignty over the Magellan Strait. As a port city, Punta Arenas is often an embarkation point for many cruises. Visitors can also cruise the Chilean fjords and glaciers, explore Tierra del Fuego or cruise to the southernmost town of Ushuaia.

Tonight, we meet our fellow expeditioners at a voyage briefing where we will reconfirm transfer times for tomorrow, explain the procedures for our flight to King George Island and outline important IAATO regulations for visitors to Antarctica.



**Wednesday 18 February (EMBARKATION)**

**Punta Arenas – King George Island**

**(B D)**

This morning, we will be transferred to Punta Arenas airport for our charter flight to King George Island, Antarctica (weather permitting). The flight will take approximately one hour and forty-five minutes. On arrival into King George Island the expedition team is on hand to greet us and to prepare us for the Zodiac transfer to the vessel. You will have time to settle into your cabin before our important safety briefings.

Note: King George Island is located at the northern part of the Antarctic Peninsula in the South Shetland Islands and is one of the most remote places on Earth. A clear sky with perfect visibility is required for safe take-off and landing.

**Thursday 19 to Thursday 26 February**

**Weddell Sea & Antarctic Peninsula**

**(B L D) x8**

It is almost impossible to describe the feeling of arriving in Antarctica. Spotting your first iceberg and taking a deep breath of some of the most fresh, crisp air on earth is an experience that will stay with you forever.

Once we arrive, the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands are ours to explore, and we have a host of choices available to us. Because we are so far south, we will experience approximately 18-24 hours of daylight and the days can be as busy as you wish.



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Your experienced expedition team, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to design your voyage from day to day, choosing the best options based on the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities.

We generally make landings or Zodiac excursions twice a day. You will want to rug up before joining Zodiac cruises along spectacular ice cliffs or among grounded icebergs, keeping watch for whales, seals and porpoising penguins. Zodiacs will also transport you from the ship to land, where you can visit penguin rookeries, discover historic huts, and explore some of our favourite spots along the peninsula.



While ashore we aim to stretch our legs, wandering along pebbly beaches or perhaps up snow-covered ridgelines to vantage points with mountains towering overhead and ice-speckled oceans below. If you have chosen an optional activity, you will have the option to do that whenever conditions allow, and of course keen polar plungers will have the chance to fully immerse themselves in polar waters - conditions permitting!

In addition to Zodiac cruises and shore excursions, we may cruise some of the narrow, dramatic straits separating offshore islands from the mainland, or linger in scenic bays to watch whales travelling or feeding. This is a great time to enjoy the observation lounge for uninterrupted views of Antarctica in all its splendour. Keep an ear out for the creak and deep rumble of glaciers as they carve their way from summit to sea. Take a quiet moment to experience the wonder of this incredible white continent.

Central to the story of where Sir Ernest Shackleton's ship, the *Endurance* became trapped in formidable sea ice, the Weddell Sea certainly is high on the list for many polar adventurers. A small set of islands standing off to the east of the Antarctic Peninsula collectively form the Antarctic Sound – the gateway to the Weddell Sea.

With a well-deserved reputation as being an iceberg alley where large icebergs try to escape the Weddell Sea through Antarctic Sound, often making navigation difficult. However, the rewards can be great.



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Fossils are a reminder of a more temperate era – gastropods, large clams, and spiral-shaped ammonites, all turned to stone.

We hope to experience memorable wildlife encounters as the Weddell boasts a large Adélie penguin colony just outside of Antarctic Sound, some of which breed on the rocky slopes of a small volcanic island, where a large colony of Antarctic blue-eyed shags jostle for space with nest-building Wilson's storm petrels.

On thrilling Zodiac excursions or slicing a path through the maze of sea ice in your kayak, keep watch for chinstrap and gentoo penguins in and out of the water, as well as humpback, minke and orca whales. Your camera is sure to get a solid workout during your time in the Weddell Sea.



**Friday 27, Saturday 28 February** **Drake Passage Crossing** **(B L D) x2**

Enjoy a final morning landing in the South Shetland Islands before we enter the Drake Passage for our return journey to South America.

With lectures and film presentations to complete our Antarctic experience, there is still plenty of time to enjoy the magic of the Southern Ocean and the life that calls it home. There is time for reflection and discussion about what we have seen and experienced. We hope you become ambassadors for Antarctica telling your family, friends and colleagues about your journey to this magical place, advocating for its conservation and preservation so that they might one day visit the region to experience what you have been lucky to see and do here.

As we approach the tip of South America, our Captain may sail close to legendary Cape Horn, weather and time permitting.

**Sunday 1 March (DISEMBARKATION) Ushuaia - Buenos Aires (B D)**

During the early morning, we cruise up the Beagle Channel, before quietly slipping into dock in Ushuaia, where we will be free to disembark around 8.00 am. We then farewell the expedition team and transfer to the airport for our flight to Buenos Aires.

On arrival, we shall be met and transferred to our hotel, INTERSUR RECOLETA, *or similar*, for the next two nights. Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.

Buenos Aires is the Argentine Republic's capital city. Located on the southern bank of the River Plate, the population of greater Buenos Aires is around 13.5 million people and has been virtually rebuilt since the beginning of this century with very few of the old buildings remaining. The centre of Buenos Aires has maintained the original layout since foundation and the Plaza de Mayo is its heart.

# Awe-Inspiring Antarctica with a taste of South America – 2026

**Monday 2 March**

**Buenos Aires**

**(B D)**

This morning, we drive down 9de Julio Ave, the widest avenue in the world, past the famous Colon Opera House, the Obelisk, commemorating the first founding of the city in 1536 to get to Plaza de Mayo (May Square). We will also see the surrounding buildings; Government House, the Metropolitan Cathedral with the Mausoleum of General San Martin, Argentina's greatest national hero and the Cabildo, the colonial town hall built in 1751. Then we will head to La Boca, the typically Italian district where the first Italian immigrants settled and 'Caminito' street.

The tour continues to the Buenos Aires port area, past San Martin Square towards the residential district of Palermo Chico and Palermo Park with its jacaranda and palo borracho trees which flower in the spring and late summer. The ride continues to Recoleta elegant district to visit the Recoleta Cemetery where the famous are laid to rest (including Eva Peron). We will return to the hotel along the stylish Alvear Ave.

On our last night in Buenos Aires, we will get a taste of Argentina's local cuisine with an interactive Argentine Dining Experience, designed to give you an introduction to the best of Argentine cuisine and culture. This is NOT a cooking class, but a fun and unique experience, where you will meet and dine with people from all over the world.

An international team of guides are on hand to spoil you and take you through every step of this culinary journey: Master the art of correctly closing empanadas before sitting down to a meal of authentic Argentine cuisine, paired with four boutique wines. Finish by learning how to prepare 'maté' paired with alfajores. We will meet and eat with fellow foodie travellers from all over the world.

**Tuesday 3 March**

**Buenos Aires – Melbourne**

**(B)**

Today, we say goodbye to South America and head to the airport for our flight back to Australia.

**Thursday 5 March**

**Arrive Melbourne**

We arrive in Melbourne where our coach will transfer us back to Gippsland.







## THE SYLVIA EARLE

Capacity	132 (avg)	Beam	60 feet
Year Built	2022	Draft	17 feet
Crew Members	71-80	Cruising Speed	10-12 knots
Length	341 feet	Flag	Bahamas

The Sylvania Earle is an adventure-ready polar expedition ship and sister ship to the Greg Mortimer and Douglas Mawson. This modern ship honors the highly accomplished marine biologist, oceanographer, and explorer Sylvania Earle.

Sylvia Earle was first female chief scientist of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and named by Time Magazine as its first Hero for the Planet in 1998. The ship plays tribute to her longstanding conservation efforts for marine protected areas and ocean wildlife by boasting one of the lowest-polluting marine engines in the world due to low energy consumption, high fuel-efficiency, and a streamlined design. She is at the cutting edge of nautical technology: robust, powerful, and designed for rugged, remote areas.

Pair this with her interior comforts and extensive menu of active off-ship excursions and you have the perfect package for an expedition experience.



**YOUR TOUR ESCORT Jacquey Turner** is a highly experienced travel agent and tour escort with more than 40 years industry experience.

Jacquey's attention to detail and personal care ensure that everyone travelling in her group will have a most enjoyable Antarctica and South America experience.

*"On my previous travels to Antarctica, I have been amazed and in awe of the spectacular scenery and wildlife on display." - Jacquey*



## AWESOME ANTARCTICA with a taste of South America 12 February to 5 March 2026

EXPEDITION CRUISE COST: \$25,190 per person on a twin share basis

Cruise Single Supplement: \$11,190

\*\*Cost based on a **Balcony Stateroom C** on the cruise (three stateroom C available)

★ ADDITIONAL COST for **Balcony Stateroom B** (three stateroom B available)

\$1223 pp additional cost (based on twin share)

★ REDUCED COST for **Superior Stateroom** (one superior available)

\$1258 pp reduction (based on twin share)

**Note:** Cabins will be allocated in order of receipt of confirmed registrations and full deposit. Cabin upgrades available – cost on application.

LAND TOUR COST: \$15,299 per person on a twin share basis

Single Supplement: \$ 3,141

★ Upgrade to Business Class – cost on application

★ Should you wish to extend your travel arrangements after the tour, please contact me to discuss further options.

★ Should you select to travel on flights other than the included group flights, or upgrade to business class, payment for the air fares will be required at the time of booking the flights.

★ Please note that a surcharge due to currency fluctuations may arise. If applicable, this will be confirmed prior to the balance of deposit being due.

### PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Full deposit	Due by 14 August 2024	\$2000 per person
Second payment	Due by 30 September 2024	\$6000 per person
Third payment	Due 31 March 2025	\$4000 per person
Balance of payment	Due by 1 November 2025	

*Costs based on exchange rates prevailing on 31 July 2024*

The tour cost is based on a minimum of 12 and maximum of 16 participants. In the unlikely event that this number of participants is not reached, Gippsland Travel reserve the right to cancel the tour. In this instance only, a full refund of all deposits paid will be refunded.

## INCLUSIONS on land arrangements

- This tour is personal escorted throughout by Gippsland Travel Tour Leader, Jacquey Turner. *In the unlikely event that Jacquey is not available to escort all or part of the tour, she will be replaced with a well-trained tour escort.*
- Minimum 12 guests - maximum 16 guests
- Coach transfers between Gippsland and Melbourne Airport on group flight travel days.
- Return economy airfares and taxes Melbourne/Santiago; Buenos Aires/Melbourne
- One way economy fare Santiago/Puerto Natales; Ushuaia/Buenos Aires
- All airport arrival and departure transfers
- First class hotel accommodation in double/twin-bedded rooms with private facilities
- Coach transport on land tour.
- Experienced drivers throughout tour
- Comprehensive sightseeing as per itinerary and admission fees where applicable
- Meals as per itinerary-complete tour:  
Land tour includes **50 meals** – 19 Breakfasts (B), 12 Lunches (L), 19 Dinners (D)
- Gippsland Travel hat or cap; luggage strap/tags; hand gel; reusable water bottle.
- End of tour Journal and USB with photos showcasing your time on the tour.
- Porterage (one suitcase per person)
- Tour group Reunion at Gippsland Travel on return of tour
- **ALL tipping** of waiters/restaurant staff at included meals throughout the escorted tour
- **ALL tipping** of guides and drivers throughout escorted tour.

## INCLUSIONS on board THE SILVIA EARLE

- All airport transfers mentioned in the itinerary.
- One night's hotel accommodation including breakfast, in Punta Arenas on Day 1.
- Charter flight from Punta Arenas to King George Island.
- Onboard accommodation during voyage, including daily cabin service.
- All meals, snacks, tea, and coffee during voyage.
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner.
- Captain's Farewell reception including four-course dinner, house cocktails, house beer and wine, non-alcoholic beverages.
- All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises.
- Educational lectures and guiding services provided by Expedition Team.
- Complimentary access to onboard expedition doctor and medical clinic (initial consultation).
- One 3-in-1 waterproof, polar expedition jacket.
- Complimentary use of Muck Boots during the voyage.
- Comprehensive pre-departure information.
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees.
- Wi-Fi\*. Please note we travel to remote regions and therefore the connection can be unreliable.
- **All tipping** of crew on board

## EXCLUSIONS

- Comprehensive travel insurance.  
We highly recommend insurance be issued at time of paying full deposit.
- Expenses of a personal nature like laundry, telephone charges, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, gratuities not included in itinerary and medical expenses
- Expenses for transfers/sightseeing or meals not included in itinerary.
- Any optional tours or activities other than those specified in the itinerary
- Passport, visa, reciprocity and vaccination fees and charges.
- Excess baggage charges.
- Health requirements
- WiFi charges eg. Hotels, cruise ship, trains.



## CANCELLATION FEES

Cancellation date	Cancellation fee
Cancellation received after 14 Aug & prior to 30 Sept 24	\$2000pp
Cancellation received after 1 Oct 24 & prior to 31 Mar 25	\$8000pp
Cancellation received after 1 April & prior to 31 Oct 25	\$12000pp
Cancellation received on or after 1 November 25	100% of tour cost

## GIPPSLAND TRAVEL ESCORTED TOURS - TERMS & CONDITIONS

### INTRODUCTION:

This contract is governed by Gippsland Travel Centre Pty Ltd and all members of the travelling parties as listed on your itinerary. Gippsland Travel Centre acts as the agent selling and coordinating products on behalf of a third-party travel supplier/s. A separate contract with the supplier/s will apply and will be governed by the supplier's Terms and Conditions. Gippsland Travel cannot guarantee the performance of any third-party supplier/s. Gippsland Travel may receive fees, commissions, gifts or financial incentives from third party supplier/s under this contract.

### LATE BOOKINGS

Higher deposit payments are required for late bookings. A guarantee of full payment is required at the time of booking for all bookings received within 4 weeks of departure.

### PASSPORT and VISA

A valid passport is required for all international travel.

If you do not hold an Australian passport, you may require a resident return visa. Some countries require a visa to be issued before you depart Australia. Gippsland Travel will advise you of all passport and visa requirements for this tour.

The Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade regularly updates travel advice on various destinations. We recommend that you refer to [www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au) for the latest updates before choosing to travel and prior to departure.

### BOOKINGS SOLD ON A SHARE BASIS

Bookings may be accepted on a share room basis on the proviso that the person requesting the share reservation agrees that while every effort will be made to match suitability of the passengers there is no guarantee that a share room can be provided. If a share room is not available at the time of final payment, either the single room supplement will apply, or the cancellation conditions detailed in your itinerary will apply.

### ITINERARY CHANGES and ITINERARY VARIATIONS

Gippsland Travel reserves the right to amend the hotels, itinerary and excursions if deemed advisable or necessary due to adverse weather conditions, road conditions or other unforeseen circumstances. Any necessary alternative arrangements will be made to a similar standard.

Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of Gippsland Travel make it necessary to change airlines, hotels or amendments to daily activities. We will inform you of any changes as soon as they occur.

### HEALTH & FITNESS

A minimum level of fitness is required to be able to participate on a Gippsland Travel Tour, you are required to at least:

- Be able to walk at least 1 hour on uneven surfaces without the use of any walking aid (walking stick for stability is acceptable)
- Walk up flights of stairs and short, steep hills, stand for 20 minutes without needing to sit down
- Carry your own hand luggage / handle your own suitcase when portage is not supplied eg. at airports.
- Get on and off various modes of transport without assistance, including small boats. Assistance will be offered where necessary.

Passengers must inform us of any medical conditions which may affect your ability to participate in the tour.

At our discretion we can exclude you from a tour or any activity if we consider that you are unable to safely participate in that tour or activity or consider your participation may place the safety of other guests at risk.

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You will be requested to supply a letter from your doctor indicating your prescription medication and your reason for taking it, which shall be carried in the event of an emergency. This information will remain confidential and can be supplied in a sealed envelope.

## UNUSED COMPONENTS OF THIS TOUR

We regret refunds will not be given for any unused component of this tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, or transfers.

## GENERAL CONDUCT

Gippsland Travel reserves the right to remove a traveller from a tour if they are acting in a way that interferes with the general operation of the tour or compromises the general enjoyment of the tour by other travellers in any way

## FLIGHT SCHEDULES

Airlines schedules are subject to change without notice. Voluntary date changes will incur fees. Gippsland Travel is not liable for delays or disruption of air travel.

## FORCE MAJEURE:

Force Majeure means the occurrence of an event that is beyond Gippsland Travel's reasonable control and which could not have been reasonably prevented by Gippsland Travel. Force majeure includes, but is not limited to: acts of God, accident, riots, war, terrorist act, epidemic, pandemic, quarantine, outbreaks of infectious disease or any other public health crisis, civil commotion, breakdown of communication facilities, natural catastrophes and natural disasters (including but not limited to flooding, fire, earthquake, landslide), adverse weather conditions, high or low water levels; government directed travel restrictions or omissions, changes in laws or regulations, national strikes, explosion, generalised lack of availability of raw materials or energy, nuclear or other industrial accident causing environmental pollution or contamination; change in law, meaning, enactment, amendment (including repeal) in the law or administration of any law in Australia or any jurisdiction or territory relevant to the booking contract, which includes changes in statute, regulation, determination, by-law, declaration, licence and the common law as applicable from time to time.

For the avoidance of doubt, Force Majeure shall not include (a) financial distress nor inability of either party to make a profit or avoid a financial loss, (b) changes in market prices or conditions, or (c) a party's financial inability to perform its obligations hereunder. In the event that a Force Majeure is declared, the customer will be bound by the third-party supplier/s Terms and Conditions, if applicable.

## LIMITATION OF LIABILITY:

Subject to Australian Consumer Law, Gippsland Travel does not accept any liability in contract, tort or otherwise for any injury, damage, loss, delay, additional expense or inconvenience caused by a third-party supplier/s over who we have no direct control. Gippsland Travel is not liable for Force Majeure or any other event which is beyond our control or which is not preventable by us.

## TERMINATION OF BOOKING CONTRACT OR CHANGE OF TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS DUE TO FORCE MAJEURE

If Gippsland Travel, in its reasonable opinion, considers that any Force Majeure event prevents Gippsland Travel (whether directly or through its employees, contractors, subcontractors and agents) from lawfully or safely providing any products or services subject of the booking contract with you, Gippsland Travel may immediately by written notice; (a) terminate the booking contract (in whole or part of); or (b) change your travel arrangements as reasonably practicable to ensure your safety and invoice for any additional costs. If you are eligible for a refund once a booking has been cancelled, the balance less any non-refundable amounts will be forwarded to you once received by Gippsland Travel from the third-party supplier/s.

Gippsland Travel is not responsible for any delays of refunds from the third-party supplier/s. Refunds from third party supplier/s can take in excess of 6 weeks. Refunds will be processed as per original form of payment.

Travel insurance policies may provide cover for cancellation fees subject to their terms and conditions.

## GOVERNING LAW

These booking conditions are governed by the law in force in Victoria, Australia.