

# Frozen South Adventure

## Join Mark Carwardine and expert friends in South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula via the Falkland Islands

12 November - 1 December 2020 *(plus travel to and from Ushuaia, in Argentina)*



*"This will be my 25th visit to the Frozen South, and we've combined all the very best wildlife and wild places in this one outstanding trip. If you're going to make the journey to the bottom of the world you might as well do it properly – as once-in-a-lifetime experiences go, it doesn't get much better."* **Mark Carwardine**

We have exclusively chartered the 97-passenger Akademik Sergey Vavilov – a comfortable and ice-strengthened polar expedition ship – for this wonderful, far-reaching 19-night expedition cruise. We'll visit prime sites in the Falkland Islands, around the remote island of South Georgia, along the breathtakingly beautiful Antarctic Peninsula and in the South Shetland Islands to see a mind-boggling variety of wildlife and wild places.

We'll have loads of time ashore and plenty of opportunity to enjoy the overwhelming scenery of ice-choked waterways, glaciers, blue and white icebergs, and some of the most impressive mountains on the planet – all in long hours of daylight. Along the way, we'll mingle with literally hundreds of thousands of penguins, meet 20-foot-long elephant seals, cross the Antarctic Convergence, navigate the famous Drake Passage, sail across the Scotia Sea, round Cape Horn, set foot on the White Continent itself, meet researchers at scientific bases, visit Ernest Shackleton's grave, and enjoy an outstanding schedule of entertaining and informative lectures, talks, workshops and seminars by top polar and wildlife experts and professional photographers. Our journey begins and ends in Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world, in Argentina's Tierra del Fuego.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel on Mark's exclusively chartered, very comfortable and safe, ice-strengthened polar expedition ship – the Akademik Sergey Vavilov. An exclusive charter makes for a far more cohesive and rewarding experience
- Wonderfully varied Southern Ocean

journey with superb wildlife-watching in a spectacular polar setting.

- A record-breaking 19 nights on board the ship – giving much more time to explore than most comparable trips.
- Enormous rookeries of king, macaroni, gentoo, chinstrap and adélie penguins (we also hope to see magellanic and rockhopper penguins).
- Fabulous close encounters with Weddell, crabeater, leopard, southern elephant and Antarctic fur seals.
- Wandering, royal, black-browed, grey-headed and light-mantled sooty albatrosses accompany the ship.
- Wide variety of cetaceans likely, including: fin, sei, humpback, Antarctic minke and orca (several different ecotypes), as well as hourglass, Peale's and Commerson's dolphins (previous trips Mark has led to this part of the world have also seen southern right whale dolphins, southern right whales, long-finned pilot whales, sperm whales, southern bottlenose whales and even Cuvier's beaked whales).
- We will be joined by award-winning landscape photographer Joe Cornish, and a resident team of polar experts.
- Exciting cruises in inflatable Zodiacs among towering, sculpted icebergs and breathtaking ice floes, and for up-close encounters with seals, penguins, whales, and other wildlife.
- Learn first-hand about the remarkable history of the region and meet scientists working at active field stations.





- Good-sized and exceptionally stable ship for comfortable sea crossings (ships that are too small take considerably longer and give a rougher ride).
- Spend maximum time ashore (larger ships offer slightly cheaper tours but have so many passengers they need to operate a shift system, which means that each passenger has far fewer landings and much less time ashore – plus they can't get into many more remote areas that are inaccessible to such large vessels).
- Fabulous photographic and video opportunities, with special tuition and workshops by Mark and Joe Cornish.
- We lend you all the appropriate polar outdoor clothing – jacket, trousers and boots – as well as waterproof rucksack and binoculars.

## ITINERARY

The cruise itinerary is outlined below (please bear in mind that we strongly advise you to arrive a day early – we can help with an optional flight and hotel package).

**Thu 12 Nov:** There will be time to explore Ushuaia, on the north shore of the Beagle Channel, near the southernmost tip of South America, before boarding the Akademik Sergey Vavilov late in the afternoon. After becoming familiar with our home for the next 20 days, we depart early in the evening for the Falkland Islands.

**Fri 13:** Our first day at sea, watching for whales, dolphins, albatrosses, petrels, prions, and other wildlife. There will be lots of photographic opportunities, as myriad seabirds follow the ship. Meanwhile, our onboard lectures, workshops and presentations begin, covering everything from Antarctic wildlife and heroic stories of some of the early polar explorers and photography.

**Sat 14:** Arriving in the Falklands

overnight, by morning we are ready to make our first shore landings: West Point Island, which is home to magellanic, gentoo and rockhopper penguins, and a black-browed albatross breeding colony. It is also one of the few places where the rare flying steamer duck can be observed. We also have a good chance of seeing Commerson's and Peale's dolphins today. We'll also have a short stop in Port Stanley, the colourful capital of the Falkland Islands.

**Sun 15 - Mon 16:** Now we sail south-east, bound for the remote island of South Georgia, watching for wildlife along the way and enjoying more lectures, workshops and presentations.

**Tue 17 - Sat 21:** We have five full days to explore South Georgia. A mere speck in the immensity of the Southern Ocean, this extraordinary island is remote by any standards. It has an ethereal beauty that is nothing short of breathtaking and, with 50 million seabirds and more than 5 million seals, is home to some of the greatest concentrations of wildlife on the planet. There are animals everywhere – from wandering albatrosses and macaroni penguins to southern elephant seals and endemic South Georgia pipits – and they are so unconcerned by our presence that most of them merely stand and stare or

come and take a closer look. We hope to see the writhing mass of Antarctic fur seals at picturesque Elsehul, visit Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave at Grytviken, mingle with a mind-boggling 150,000 pairs of king penguins at St. Andrew's Bay, wander among the myriad wildlife at stunning Gold Harbour, and much, much more. The colour, the noise, the smell and the commotion of these unforgettable five days guarantees sensory overload at every turn.

**Sun 22 - Tue 24:** Now we cross the Scotia Sea, heading south-west towards the Antarctic Peninsula. There will be more wildlife-watching along the way, as well as lectures, workshops and presentations. We will cross the Antarctic Convergence, a biological barrier where cold polar waters sink beneath the warmer waters of the temperate zone; beyond the Convergence, the world changes as signs of the frozen south arrive – we start to see little blocks of ice, then larger blocks, then proper tabular icebergs.

**Wed 25 - Sat 28:** We explore the beautiful and wildlife-rich South Shetland Islands. Here we visit enormous adélie, chinstrap and gentoo penguin rookeries, land on beaches ruled by Antarctic fur seals and observe wallowing southern elephant seals.

A highlight will be sailing into the other-worldly flooded caldera of Deception Island – through a nerve-wrackingly narrow entrance often patrolled by humpback whales – to see more penguins and Antarctic fur seals. Then we sail across Bransfield Strait and on to the Antarctic Peninsula, one of the world's great, undisturbed wildlife paradises. We'll visit enormous penguin rookeries, and see blue-eyed shags, kelp gulls, cape petrels, snowy sheathbills and many other birds. We'll cruise in our inflatable Zodiacs among other-worldly icebergs or past crabeater, Weddell and leopard







6, with incredible 180-degree views; tea and coffee are available here 24 hours a day. There is also a well-appointed library, a gift shop, a multimedia centre (with Apple Mac computers), a small gym, hot tub and a tiny sauna. Briefings and lectures are held in a large presentation room.



seals hauled out on ice floes. And we hope to have close encounters with orcas, humpback whales and Antarctic minke whales.

**Sun 29 - Mon 30:** We leave the magical world of Antarctica and head back across the famous Drake Passage, watching for whales, dolphins, albatrosses and other wildlife. We round Cape Horn, where we make a short stop just offshore – quietly contemplating this notorious landmark and perhaps observing the Peale's dolphins and large numbers of seabirds that often gather in the area. Then we make our way back along the Beagle Channel towards Ushuaia.

**Tue 1 Dec:** We bid farewell to the staff and crew of the Akademik Sergey Vavilov and, after breakfast, disembark in Ushuaia.

*Please note: this tour is highly weather-, sea- and ice-dependent. Although we will stick to the itinerary as closely as possible, it may change to make the most of local conditions. It's part of the fun of polar exploration!*

## SHIP DETAILS

The Akademik Sergey Vavilov is a modern, safe, comfortable, ice-strengthened vessel, like a floating wilderness lodge. It is ideally suited for polar exploration. Over the years, Mark has travelled on many of the vessels available for polar adventures, and rates the Vavilov as one of the best ships working in the region.

Built in Finland in 1988, she is designed to be exceptionally stable – which is great news for long sea crossings! Her highly sophisticated internal stabilizers and built-in ballast trimming system reduce motion significantly and ease the way. The Vavilov is also remarkably quiet, with very little ambient noise in the cabins and public areas.

There is ample deck space, with viewing areas on each passenger level of the ship, while the bridge and chart room are open to everyone virtually 24 hours a day. The bridge is excellent for sightseeing and viewing wildlife – expedition staff will be on duty most of the time, watching for wildlife and ready to answer questions.

The public areas are expansive and include a fabulous bar and lounge on deck

complement of Zodiacs (rigid-hulled inflatable boats) aboard, for breathtaking wildlife cruises, and to take everyone ashore.

The 117-metre vessel is maintained to the highest standards and kept immaculately clean. She has a crew and staff of 63 – the passenger-to-staff ratio is one of the highest in the industry – and there is an extremely high level of personal service. Attention to detail is second-to-none, yet the atmosphere on board is extremely relaxed and informal.

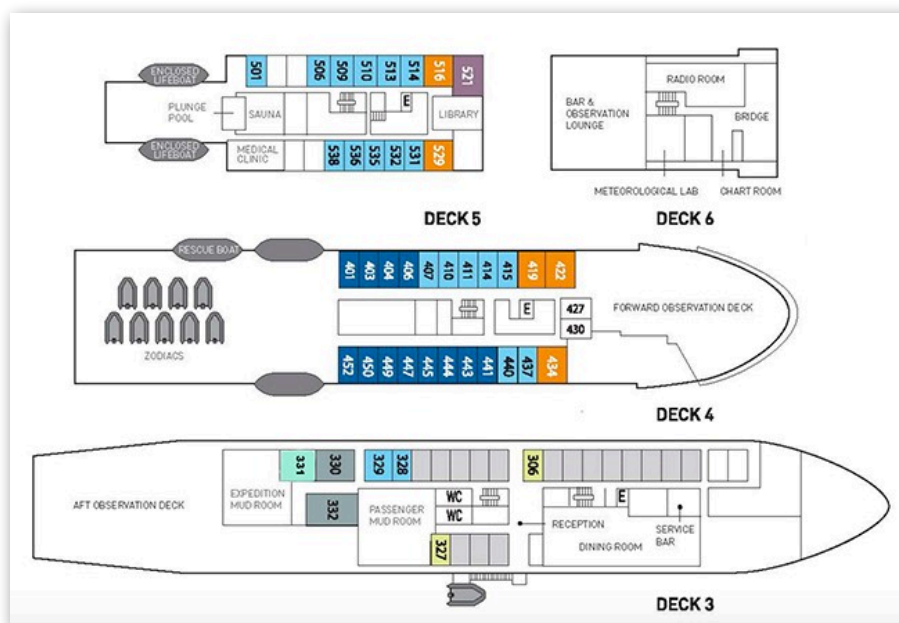
The Akademik Sergey Vavilov has an impressive maximum cruising speed of 14.5 knots. With a bow-thruster and a stern multi-directional propulsion unit, and twin controllable-pitch propellers, she is also incredibly maneuverable. It's the perfect set-up for wildlife watching – and getting into (and out of) tight corners!

Safety is a priority, of course. The Akademik Sergey Vavilov is a Russian-flagged vessel and carries all current certifications required by Russian and international maritime law for ensuring passenger safety and well-being. An extremely experienced captain and crew, and an ice-strengthened hull (Lloyds Register 1A, Canadian Type B) provide an exceptionally safe combination for polar expedition cruising. Safety and emergency equipment on board the vessel is inspected and tested on a regular basis and there are two fully-enclosed lifeboats with a total capacity of 132, as well as four life rafts with a total capacity of 200. There is also a small infirmary and a crew doctor, who is available to provide a basic and emergency medical service.

And, finally, the Vavilov is built and operated to be as environmentally friendly as possible, from using Marine Grade Fuel (the highest grade marine fuel with the lowest emissions) to the ecologically sensitive cleaning supplies used by the cabin stewards.

## ACCOMMODATION

There is a choice of comfortable, fresh and clean cabins (triple, twin or superior) as well as suites, on four different decks (please see the ship's deck plan for more details). All are tastefully and pleasantly decorated and furnished, with a writing



Click [here](#) for more detailed information about the cabins

desk and chair and ample storage. All of them have opening windows (except triple cabins, which have opening portholes) with some of the most spectacular views in the world! Some have sofa-beds, which are the size of normal beds, and just as comfortable, but double-up as sofas during the day (they are converted every evening by the cabin stewards, while we are eating dinner). Bathrobes, as well as a toiletry kit, hairdryer and coffee/tea maker are provided in all cabins (only bathrobes in triple cabins).

**Triple cabin (2 available):** Two bunk beds and one sofa-bed, washbasin. Shared facilities.

**Twin share cabin (6 available):** Two bunk beds, washbasin. Shared facilities.

**Twin semi-private cabin (12 available):** One single bed and one sofa-bed. Facilities shared with one other cabin (the bathroom is in-between the two cabins – so you don't have to walk through a public area).

**Twin private cabin**

**(17 available):** Two single beds. Private facilities.

**Twin private-plus cabin (1 available):** Two single beds, sofa. Private facilities.

**Superior cabin (2 available):** Two single beds, sofa. Private facilities.

**Shackleton Suite (5 available):** Very spacious with separate sleeping quarters, with one double bed and one sofa-bed. Private facilities.

**One Ocean Suite (1 available):** Very spacious with separate sleeping quarters, with one double-bed and sofa-bed. Private facilities with a bathtub. This

cabin has windows (which can be opened) overlooking the bow.

## MEALS

All meals aboard ship are included. The window-lined dining room (which can seat everyone in one sitting) is catered by international chefs, offering a daily choice of cuisine. The food is excellent, varied and tasty, with plenty of healthy options made with fresh ingredients.

## LEADERS

Mark Carwardine will be hosting the trip and will also give lectures and run workshops. As well as a highly experienced resident polar expedition team, he will be accompanied by Britain's best-known landscape photographer Joe Cornish (owner of his own photographic gallery and author of many books), and Rachel Ashton (Mark's project manager since 2004, and trip administrator), who will produce a film and slideshow of the trip for everyone to take home afterwards. And there will be several other members of the team – to be announced soon ...

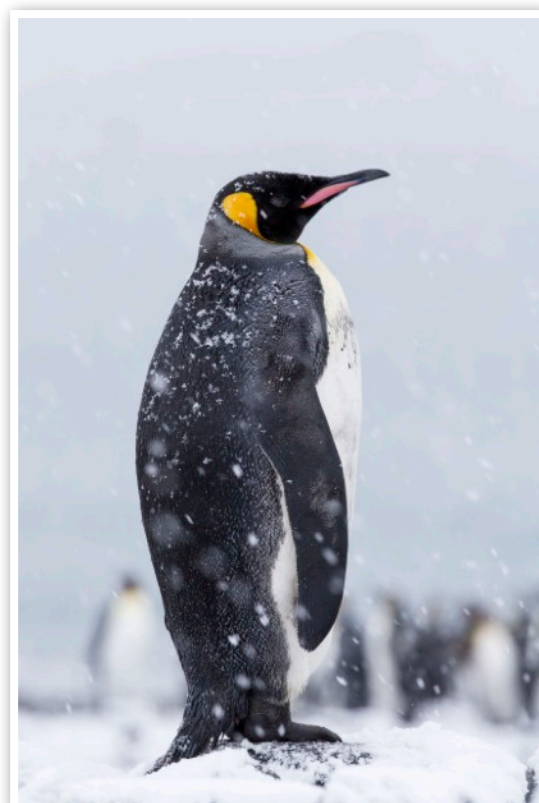
## GROUP SIZE

There will be approximately 97 passengers on the ship altogether, plus Mark and his team.

## WEATHER AND SEA CONDITIONS

The weather where we're going is highly variable – we're likely to get a bit of everything (bright sunshine, cloud, rain and snow). But we will be exploring the wildlife-rich eastern (leeward) side of South Georgia, which has a much more pleasant climate than the exposed western side, and the mildest part of the Antarctic continent. Temperatures in November typically range from 0°C to 7°C (but could be colder or warmer). With appropriate clothing (which we provide) this can be exhilarating and not at all uncomfortable.

We'll have quite a few days at sea (the rest of the trip – most of it, in fact – is spent in much calmer, sheltered waters close to shore). Sea conditions are hard to predict, of course. Mark has made these crossings more times than he can remember: one Drake crossing (many years ago, much later in the season) was very bad, a few have been rough enough to make about a fifth of the passengers feel sick, many have been with a slight swell but perfectly comfortable, and quite a few have been glassy calm. Most importantly, we have a good-sized ship with highly sophisticated stabilizers and a built-in ballast trimming system to reduce motion and ease the way.





#### PRICES (excluding flights)

**£12,495** (sharing triple cabin with shared facilities)  
**£12,995** (sharing twin cabin with shared facilities)  
**£13,995** (sharing twin cabin with semi-private facilities)  
**£15,495** (sharing twin cabin with private facilities)  
**£16,495** (sharing twin cabin-plus with private facilities)  
**£17,995** (sharing superior cabin with private facilities)  
**£18,995** (sharing Shackleton Suite with private facilities)  
**£19,995** (sharing One Ocean Suite with private facilities)

**Price includes:** Airport-to-ship transfer pre-voyage and ship-to-airport transfer post-voyage; 19 nights' accommodation in comfortable cabin on the Akademik Sergey Vavilov, with daily housekeeping; all breakfasts, lunches and dinners throughout the voyage; guide services of Mark Carwardine and expert friends from arrival in Ushuaia; leadership throughout the voyage by the resident Expedition Team; all shore landings and excursions during the cruise; comprehensive pre-departure advice and information; all miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the voyage; loan of polar jacket, trousers and Wellington boots, waterproof rucksack and binoculars (means you are well prepared – and saves packing space).

**Price does not include:** Return flights to Ushuaia, Argentina; airport/government arrival and departure taxes; hotels, transfers and other land arrangements pre- and post-voyage (ie not listed in 'Price includes'); passport and visa expenses; excess baggage charges; cancellation, baggage and travel insurance (compulsory); meals on shore; alcoholic and soft drinks (tea, coffee and water are free on the ship); items of a personal nature such as laundry and telecommunications charges; medical expenses; crew and resident expedition staff gratuities (we suggest about US\$10 per day – it's usually collected just prior to the end of the cruise).

#### OPTIONAL FLIGHT AND HOTEL PACKAGE

We are delighted to offer an optional hotel and flight package, to get you to and from the ship, in Ushuaia, with the minimum of fuss (or we are more than happy to book any other flight options for you):

#### British Airways (international) and Aerolineas Argentinas (domestic)

**Tue 10 Nov:** Fly London to Buenos Aires to Ushuaia (arrive 11th). Transfer to a comfortable hotel for the night.

**Thu 12 Nov:** Transfer to ship.

[CRUISE UNTIL TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER]

**Tue 1 Dec:** Transfer to domestic airport. Fly Ushuaia to Buenos Aires – transfer to a comfortable hotel for the night.

**Wed 2 Dec:** Transfer to international airport – fly Buenos Aires to London.

**Thu 3 Dec:** Arrive in London.

The flight/hotel package is **£2,195** per person (based on two people sharing hotel rooms) and this includes all economy flights and transfers and two nights' hotel accommodation with breakfast. BA World Traveller Plus, the package is **£2,995** per person return. BA Club World, the package is **£4,595** per person return. Single supplement in hotels, **£325**

#### MAIN TOUR PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

- Non-refundable deposit due on booking: £2,000 per person.
- First-stage payment due on 1 August 2019: £3,000 per person.
- Second-stage payment due on 10 January 2020: £3,000 per person.
- Balance due on 1 July 2020: varies according to cabin.

#### OPTIONAL FLIGHT AND HOTEL PACKAGE PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- Non-refundable deposit due on booking: £500 per person.
- First-stage payment due on 1 August 2019: £1,000 per person
- Balance due on 1 July 2020

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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#### Financial security

This trip's bonding and liability insurance is provided by Wildlife Worldwide – so all the money you pay is safe even in the highly unlikely event of cancellation or insolvency. Wildlife Worldwide holds an ATOL (Air Tour Operator's Licence) issued by the CAA, which regulates the entire travel industry.

ABTOT: registered member 5199

