

WALKING ANTARCTICA

Join us for Antarctica—our 7th continent!

Given that the Antarctica penguin to human ratio is the highest on the planet (one could make a strong case for the whole universe), you'd think that nabbing a booking on a ship to Antarctica wouldn't be such a difficult feat. What we have found, however, is that gaining a berth on a cruise to #7 is a bit like bidding for a ticket on the space shuttle!

However, we were able to book a smaller ship for our traveler's convenience. We intentionally chose a small-ship experience on a vessel with a capacity of about 100 passengers, because this low passenger count allows all passengers to go ashore at each destination. Since regulations prohibit a higher number of passengers ashore in any one destination at one time, passengers on larger ships are forced to "take turns" going ashore. Sitting aboard the ship during a landing is not our idea of maximizing our precious time at the far reaches of the globe!

Walking Antarctica promises to be an incredible and unique experience. This Adventure epitomizes the potentially life-changing experiences we strive to incorporate in all of our Adventures, and we are thrilled to offer it to our travelers! We invite you to experience Antarctica with us, and become a part of the Walking Adventures 7th Continent Club (privileges of membership to be explained in a subsequent message)!

NOTE:

One variable in these southern waters is the unpredictability of weather. Ships establish a sailing itinerary, which is then submitted to IAATO (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators) for approval the summer before the sailing season (July 2009 in our case). Once approved, that plan forms the basis of our cruise but can be adjusted at any time by weather conditions that are notoriously fickle.

What to do NOW!

We realize that we are talking about a trip that is nearly a year and a half away, but due to the high demand for travel in Antarctica, we feel fortunate to have acquired space! Because the ship is small, the operators have rather strict cancellation terms and require commitments much further in advance than our other Adventures. Due to the relatively high cost and aggressive nature of this program, it is unlikely that we will offer another Adventure to Antarctica anytime soon! If you'd like to join us for the experience of a lifetime, be sure to contact us as soon as possible!

We have until July 25 to fill our *Christmas in Antarctica* cabin allotment, after that date, cabins will be obtainable on a **SPACE AVAILABLE basis only!**

How do I lock in my place on this Adventure?

We are offering 2 Departures to the 7th continent: *Christmas in Antarctica* in December 2009 and *Exploring Antarctica* in February 2010. **Although there are spots still left on *Christmas in Antarctica*, *Exploring Antarctica* is SOLD OUT—let us know if you'd like to be added to the waitlist!**

To hold space, ships sailing to Antarctica require **non-refundable deposits of \$500** per person. Add to that the WAI deposit of \$50 and the full deposit comes to **\$550 per person, nonrefundable**. The balance is then due 90 days before departure, as usual.

Antarctica Cancellation

Notice of cancellation must be received in writing and receipt confirmed by Walking Adventures International.

Registration deposit of \$550 is nonrefundable

Cancellation: 60-90 days prior to departure will receive a 50% refund

Cancellation: Less than 60 days prior to departure; no refund

No refunds will be made on any unused or cancelled services once the trip has commenced.

The Walking Adventures International General Tour Conditions and The Polar Star Expeditions General Terms and Conditions apply to these Adventures. Please read both of these enclosed documents.



How to lower the costs!

The *M/V Polar Star* offers a variety of cabin accommodations. We have reserved 3 categories and will likely be able to obtain a limited number of upgrades for any travelers who prefer a higher category. If you are interested in the lower-cost cabins, it is important for you to make a decision soon!

K2-D: This is the category on which the Adventure prices in the brochure are based. This category has 2 lower beds, a private bathroom with shower, is approximately 115 square feet, and offers 2 full-size windows with a partially obstructed view.

K3-D: This cabin is the same as category K2-D except that the view is unobstructed. The upgrade charge for K3-D over K2-D is \$375 per person for *Christmas in Antarctica* and \$450 for *Exploring Antarctica*.

K1: This is the cabin that can save you money. It has 2 lower berths and 1 upper berth and is approximately 100 square feet. It has portholes instead of the full-size windows and it shares a toilet, shower, and washbasin with the neighboring cabin. We have 2 cabins of this category for *Christmas in Antarctica*. The savings are as follows:

Christmas in Antarctica:

Two travelers sharing: Up to \$950 credit for each traveler

Three travelers sharing: Up to \$1900 credit for each traveler

Exploring Antarctica:

Two travelers sharing: Up to \$1200 credit for each traveler

Three travelers sharing: Up to \$2500 credit for each traveler

Group Travel Credit

If you are part of a Group, remember that your full deposit of \$550 is required to hold your spot on this Adventure. Your group leader is responsible to submit your name to us before you register, qualifying you for the Group Travel Credit, but a full deposit is needed to officially reserve your place.

How is airfare arranged?

Airfare to and from Argentina is not included in the package price. We recommend that you contact the travel agent we work with to help book your flight arrangements. In this age of airfare complications and airport uncertainty, using a travel agent makes more sense than ever! Contact information for this agent will be provided with your first invoice after you register for the Adventure. The official meeting point for the Adventure will be in Ushuaia, Argentina. More details about these arrangements will be included in the *Adventure Advice* memo after registration—**please do not book your airfare without receiving the Adventure Advice flyer!**

Travel Insurance

As a requirement of participation on any Polar Star Expedition (PSE) Program, all passengers must purchase full medical and emergency evacuation insurance for the specific areas they will be visiting. The minimum coverage requirement is \$50,000; reference PSE general terms and conditions included in this brochure.

Walking Adventures has negotiated with an insurance carrier to provide travel insurance in the form of a Preferred Benefits™ policy. We are pleased to make this package available and believe that it will provide travelers with an important element of security at a reasonable price. (See the enclosures for more detailed information.) IMPORTANT: The insurance policy includes time-sensitive coverage provisions for pre-existing conditions, provided you purchase the insurance at the time you register for the trip, or within 15 days of your registration.

Should you choose to add the cost of your airline tickets to your insurance policy, you must specify this when you contact our office.

What happens next?

Upon registering for this Adventure, you will receive a welcome letter and an *Adventure Advice* memo with important information about steps to take in the months before our departure. Included in this packet will be time sensitive forms, unique to this Adventure, that you will be required to return to WAI within 30 days of receipt. The final payment for the program is due 90 days before departure, and you will receive a final billing about 2 weeks prior to that point, along with a fact sheet of information about the Adventure to help you get prepared in the weeks before departure. Then, about 2-3 weeks before departure, you will receive a final packet with all the details of the program, including contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a more detailed daily schedule!

So be sure to pack your woolliest socks and your furriest parka—and join us as we celebrate our inaugural journey through the wonders of our remarkable 7th Continent!

