

ICE AXE EXPEDITIONS

2024 ANTARCTIC PENINSULA ADVENTURE CRUISE

Welcome!

This packet is designed to help answer any questions you might have about your upcoming expedition. The journey ahead of us is one filled with great company, good food and amazing natural and physical experiences. The memories of your Antarctic journey will be something you will cherish for the rest of your life.



The below forms are included in your Flybook reservation and were sent when you completed your registration online. You can access these anytime through your original confirmation email. They need to be completed no later than July 31, 2024:

- Medical Information: Including your mandatory Medical Evacuation insurance policy information
- Arrival and Departure Information
- Ski Skills Information: For those registered for ski mountaineering
- Signed IAE Terms & Conditions
- Signed IAE Waiver

When completing the medical form, please note that the ship's physician and medical director, insurance companies and Ice Axe personnel will have or may need to access your medical information.

Once we have received your final payment, we will send you an additional welcome packet of information*:

- Ushuaia Primer and Itinerary
- Luggage Tags
- Client Gift Bag

*US based clients will receive their welcome packet in the mail, International clients will receive their welcome packet in Ushuaia.

Antarctica Travel Details:

To plan your travel, most flights will route you through Buenos Aires and we encourage you to look at flights through the International airport (Ministro Pistarini International Airport, EZE) and the domestic airport (Jorge Newbery, AEP) to Ushuaia to find the best fares.

You need arrive in Ushuaia (Islas Malvinas Airport; USH) by 12pm on October 19th for orientation with your ski or trekking guide. We have a Welcome Dinner that night (the 19th) and board the boat the afternoon of the 20th at approximately 2pm. Some folks like to arrive to town early to acclimate and spend some time in Ushuaia. We offer an unofficial meet and greet at 6pm on night of the 18th for folks that arrive in town early. We highly encourage you to plan to arrive a couple days early to acclimate and to accommodate for possible loss of luggage during travel. There are many hiking and backcountry ski options in the area. Your hotel accommodations in Ushuaia are included for October 19th, please contact us to reserve your hotel rooms if you plan to arrive early to ski or participate in the 2-Day Ushuaia Ski Tour – Antarctic Prep Clinic.

Antarctic Prep/Glacier Travel Clinic:

For those interested, there will be a 2-Day Ushuaia Ski Tour – Antarctic Prep Clinic in Ushuaia. This program will be held on October 16th and 17th on the Martial Glacier in Ushuaia. This is the perfect opportunity to make the most of your Antarctic adventure by brushing up on skiing, backcountry basics and glacier travel in Ushuaia before you head out. Led by experienced Ice Axe Expedition on the Martial Glacier in Ushuaia which features conditions very similar to what we might find in Antarctica. For those that would like some guidance on gear and skiing glaciated terrain you'll have some workshop time with your guide – for those a bit more experienced you'll focus purely on skiing!

Flights:

It is required that you book your flight after 12pm on the 31st in case we are delayed for any reason. We cannot guarantee that you will be in port in time to catch any flight booked before 12pm as our approximate arrival time in port will be 8am on October 31st.

All southbound flights fly into the international airport in Buenos Aires EZE, but most then fly out of the domestic airport AEP to Ushuaia. There are a few flights a day that you would not need to change airports, but those are limited. The domestic airport, AEP is about a 1-hour cab ride from EZE. There is a shuttle available right outside the customs area of EZE, but you need to book your flights with enough time to clear customs at EZE, catch a shuttle (which often only run on the 1/2 hour but are very easy to use) or taxi, and then check back in and clear security at AEP. Four hours is a safe window of time to accomplish this. We recommend that you use the efficient airport shuttle service, Manuel Tienda Leon, which costs approximately US\$17 per person each way. Taxis are also available for the transfer from EZE to AEP; the cost is approximately US\$50.

Flights (cont'd):

Return flights back North through Buenos Aires often route through the domestic airport, AEP, though there are a few per day that go directly to the international airport, EZE. Please allow a minimum of 4 hours between arriving in Buenos Aires and catching your international flight home.

Many people like to break up the trip either on the way down or the way back and spend a nice spring day exploring Buenos Aires or other regions in Patagonia like El Calafate, El Chalten or Bariloche.

Quick Tips:

- Avoiding the EZE/AEP transfer is well worth it if a flight is available. If possible, always book flights to/from EZE.
- Changing out about US\$50 to Argentina pesos in the Buenos Aires airport is a good idea as it gives you some travel pesos for food and a taxi once you arrive in Ushuaia. Good exchange rates can be found in Ushuaia but may not be open when you arrive.

Arrival in Ushuaia

Taxis are plentiful and affordable in Ushuaia. A taxi for two, plus gear, is approximately US\$10. Taxis generally accept all major credit cards. Generous tips are not the norm in Argentina, but small tips or rounding up to the nearest 5 or 10 peso denomination is common. Keep cord/rope or ski straps accessible and look for taxis with a roof rack.

Hotel Accommodations:

Your hotel reservation will match your name on your passport. The group hotels for October 19th will be at the Hotel Albatros.

- Albatros Hotel, Av. Maipu 505, Ushuaia V9410, Tel +54 2901 42-3206

In most but not all cases, your roommate at the hotel will be your roommate on the boat. You will receive your hotel assignment in August 2024. **ALL HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS ARE DOUBLE OCCUPANCY.**

Orientation with your Ski Guide:

All ski groups consist of 4 skiers and 1 ski guide. Once ski groups are finalized (usually by the end of August), you will be introduced to your guide via email and/or WhatsApp. They will then coordinate with you and your ski group on what time and where you will be meeting on the official start date of the Ice Axe program on October 19th. Generally, this is meeting at the lobby of Albatros Hotel around 9am with all your gear, unless your guide has contacted you and made other arrangements. During the orientation with your guide, you will go over your gear and weather permitting, head up to the Glacier to go over safety protocol and perhaps ski a couple runs. If you are planning to ski at any time during your trip, you will need to meet with your ski guide and go over a safety and gear review.

If you are glacier trekking, your guide will reach out prior to the trip as well to make sure you are all prepared and will set up a time and meeting point on October 19th. You will want to dress for cold weather and snowshoeing and bring water and snacks. Weather permitting, you will take a guided snowshoe on the glacier.

EARLY ARRIVAL “Meet & Greet”:

Our official program begins on October 19th but we highly recommend folks plan to arrive in Ushuaia a day or two early as the boat will not wait should there be travel or luggage delays. If you are in town early, please join the Ice Axe team for an informal gathering at Kuar, a great local restaurant right on Beagle Channel. We will be offering an informal happy hour at the restaurant Kuar on October 18th from 6:00-8:00pm for those who have arrived in town early. This happy hour is great opportunity to meet with other clients and the Ice Axe team. We will be hosting heavy h'orderves. We encourage you to make a reservation should you wish to stay on at the restaurant for dinner.

The restaurant is a short taxi ride from the center of town:

KUAR

Av. Perito Moreno 2232, Ushuaia V9410, Argentina

Phone: +54 (2901) 43-7396

kuar.com.ar

Mandatory Travel Insurance:

We require that you have at least \$200,000 in medical evacuation insurance. Your insurance policy should cover hazardous sports and we recommend that your policy cover search and rescue. Since we cannot confirm each client's policy individually, it is your responsibility to make sure your policy will cover you while you participate in your activities of choice on the expedition. We encourage you to purchase TRIP CANCELLATION insurance in addition to the mandatory medical evacuation insurance.

For US citizens, we recommend the [Travelex Travel Select Insurance](#) with the Adventurer Pak upgrade. You will have a choice of purchasing it with or without the cancellation coverage--so make sure to select the one that gives you the coverage that you need. Other commonly used companies include Global Rescue and World Nomads.

When selecting a policy, please make sure they insure a) the region of Antarctica, b) ski mountaineering--which involves the use of ropes, crampons, ice axes and is a guided activity. Ski mountaineering is not considered the same as skiing by many insurers, and you need to confirm that they will cover this activity.

Passports:

You must have a valid passport to participate in our expeditions. When you embark, an Expedition Team member will collect your passport and hold it for safekeeping during your entire voyage.

Your passport must be valid for six (6) months beyond the return date of your expedition. Please be sure that you have sufficient pages available for entry and/or exit stamps. If you do not have a passport, please apply for it well in advance of your departure. Make a photocopy or scan of your passport information pages, including the page with your photograph. This photocopy or scan will facilitate replacement if your passport should be lost or stolen while traveling to or from the ship.

Visas and Fees:

Please check with your local Argentine consulate for your requirements, as well as the consulates of countries through which you may be traveling en route.

Traveling with Avalanche Airbag Backpacks:

In past years, there has been no location in Ushuaia to purchase canisters or re-fill. Canisters have also caused luggage to be held in Buenos Aires or at other international airports. If you choose to travel with an airbag, please plan to arrive early so that you have adequate time to deal with any delays in the delivery of your luggage. It is very difficult to source any backcountry ski or split board equipment once you arrive in Ushuaia.

Money Matters:

Payment System

After embarkation, all on board purchases from the boutique, bar, internet, telephone, laundry, etc are charged to your shipboard account. At the end of the voyage, your account can be settled with credit card or cash USD.

Note: If you are sharing a cabin and would like separate accounts, you must advise the ship manager. You will want to maintain a cash reserve to pay for your ski guide tips, merchandise purchases made directly through Ice Axe onboard, and taxi fares.

Currency on Land

ATMS are plentiful in Buenos Aires and Ushuaia, but it is highly recommended to have cash USD with you to exchange. The exchange rate fluctuates greatly between currency exchange at the airport, ATM withdrawals, and exchanging at local "black market" locations in Buenos Aires and Ushuaia. To get the best exchange rate having "crisp" USD or euro 100 denomination bills is recommended.

The currency of Argentina is the Argentine peso; however, you will find that US cash and credit cards are accepted in popular tourist areas. We recommend that you inform your financial institutions about your travel plans avoid the possibility of having your bank or credit cards frozen. Check with your bank to ensure your ATM card will work outside your home country.

Tiping for Guides and Hospitality Staff

Tips are always greatly appreciated for ski guides, it is recommended to tip in the range of \$50-\$100 for each guided ski day. Tips for ski guides should be paid in cash directly to the guide at the end of the trip or provided to Ice Axe in an envelope to distribute to the guide.

Tips for hospitality staff can be added to your onboard account to be settled by credit card at the end of the trip. We suggest this guideline for hospitality staff: aboard ship US\$14 to \$20 per traveler per day. The amount you choose to give is at your discretion and can be added to your shipboard account. Tips are always optional and always appreciated.

Ship Life:

Electricity

The ship has a 220v / 50 Hz cycle system. Please check your appliances before use. 110-volt appliances require an adapter prior to use aboard the ship. The electrical outlets on board Ocean Albatros are the so called 'F-type sockets', round 2-pin, 220-240 V, grounded, used in continental Europe and Russia. They take C, E, and F-type 2-pin plugs.

Ship Life (cont'd):

Water

There are several water stations onboard Ocean Albatros. We strongly recommend that you bring a refillable bottle to use onboard. Please remember that clean water is a precious natural resource. We ask you to take care in conserving your water usage during daily routines such as showering and brushing your teeth.

Housekeeping Service

Your cabin will be cleaned on a daily basis. Your towels will be changed daily, and bed linens every third day, subject to the length of the voyage.

Bar & Wine Service

The well-stocked bar on the ship is open for you to enjoy with your fellow shipmates in the late morning, afternoon and evening. Soft drinks, juices and water are available, as is a selection of liquors, spirits, beer and wine. A varied list of good wine and champagne will be available in the dining room as well as the bar.

If you bring any beverages on board the ship, please confine their consumption to your cabin. If you do wish to bring your own wine to the dining room, a small corkage fee will be charged to your shipboard account.

Laundry

A complete list of laundry charges will be provided when you are on board the ship.

Smoking

For safety reasons and to protect the health of our guests and employees, smoking is only allowed in designated areas on the outside decks. Smoking is not permitted inside the vessel, in the stateroom or near the Zodiacs. Please remember to respect our natural environments and dispose of cigarette butts in designated bins

Staying in touch while on board

Keep in mind, we will be cruising in a very remote region of the world. Where accessible, internet access is available for an extra charge. As we utilize satellite equipment's for our connections, it is possible that occasional degradation or outages of services may occur. Personal communication services are not always guaranteed throughout your voyage. We encourage passengers to disconnect from digital life and reconnect with the natural world.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is also a great way to communicate while traveling internationally, and functions on Wi-Fi or international cell service if you have it. You will be invited to a group WhatsApp chat for important updates from Ice Axe while in Ushuaia, as well as a group chat with your ski guide and group. Therefore, we highly recommend downloading it – it is free. WhatsApp communication will serve as the best way to “text” while on board as well. As stated above the weather conditions and satellite position may effect for connection. Be sure to download the app before your arrival in Ushuaia.

Health and Medical:

General Health

If you are taking any prescription medicines, we suggest that you carry an extra week's supply in case of flight delays or other unforeseen circumstances. As your health and safety are a priority for us, if you have particular health needs, please advise the ship doctor upon your arrival. If you are under regular treatment for any ailment, you must bring a sufficient supply of medicines for yourself. We cannot accept responsibility for not having a specific brand or type of drug on board.

Mobility

As your voyage will be operating in remote parts of the world, it is essential that you have a high level of mobility. You must be able to complete the on-board safety drills and emergency evacuation procedures without the assistance of others. Rolling seas and windy conditions require you to be stable on your feet, especially when walking on slippery decks or up and down the steep gangway to your Zodiac.

Combating Motion and Sea Sickness

While crossing the Drake Passage it is possible to periodically encounter changing environments and climate patterns, including rough seas and large swells. If you are prone to motion sickness, consult with your doctor prior to departure to help ensure your comfort while traveling. Before you leave home please read the dosage instructions, because most preventive seasickness medicine must be ingested while you are still feeling well to be effective. There will be limited (over the counter) motion sickness medication available onboard. Most people feel better sitting on deck looking at the horizon or lying still with their eyes shut. Some people have found that ginger pills or foods can help alleviate nausea. Previous expedition members have found the patch most helpful.

COVID-19 Policy

Please check health requirements of destination and transit countries, as well as those of transport services (airlines). In the two weeks prior to travel, we recommend you closely monitor your health, do a symptom self-check regularly, and practice good hygiene (physical distancing, hand washing, limited social interactions, avoid social events and gatherings in badly ventilated spaces).

If you test positive in Ushuaia you will not be able to board the ship. We strongly recommend guests to purchase travel insurance that covers any isolation costs. If you test positive on board you will be required to isolate for 5 days. Ice Axe Expeditions will not give any form of credit for lost days due to Doctor/Captain enforced isolation. For this reason we reiterate the strong recommendation for suitable travel insurance that would cover said lost days.

Antigen and PCR testing is available for onboard guests if required. Cost is \$45 for Antigen test (Supervised), and \$75 for a PCR test.

Medical Facilities

The vessel has a small medical facility equipped with the necessary equipment and medicine to handle small emergencies. The infirmary is always staffed by a professionally licensed, English-speaking physician. Should a serious incident occur, the nearest hospital will be contacted. All guests must have personal travel/health insurance. Please note that consultations and treatment by the doctor will be charged to the guest's onboard account. Consultations vary from US\$25-US\$75 and treatments from US\$5-US\$100. Make sure to keep the receipt for your insurance company.

Snacks:

If you have specific energy foods you like to use for touring or trekking we encourage you to pack some. There is a great local grocery store in Ushuaia where you can pick up any last-minute items, but they do not carry items like Shot blocks, GU, or snack bars.

White Party at the White Continent:

The costume party is back this year, with the White Party at the White Continent. Get to know your fellow expedition members while dressing up in your best formal or fun wear. Come dressed as a snow petrel, a storm trooper, in your fabulous winter whites or as your smashingly stylish self! Fun and fabulous is key!

Weather:

The weather in Antarctica is extremely unpredictable. Heavy rain and snowfall is unusual; but strong winds are relatively common, so it is important to pack accordingly. The average temperatures on the Antarctic Peninsula during the summer months' range from approximately 23° - 41° F. Wind and waves are the deciding factors on the zodiacs getting to shore. The weather in Ushuaia is a bit warmer but also has the wind and rain characteristics of the Antarctic weather systems.

If any trip must be delayed due to bad weather, cancelled or delayed transportation, sickness or any other situation for which Ice Axe Expeditions cannot make provisions, all costs incurred during such delays must be borne by trip members.

Rules for Landings & Excursions:

When ashore, it is very important to show a deep respect for the unique nature and act according to the motto: leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but memories. We also ask that you remain together with your group, as we are truly in the wild and must remain extra vigilant of the wildlife and weather conditions around us. Walking around independently is strictly prohibited. It is essential to abide the strictly communicated safety rules.

Cancellations:

All requests for cancellations must be received in writing. Cancellations received by June 1, 2024 or prior are refunded less an administrative fee of \$750 per person. Cancellations received between June 2, 2024 and July 31, 2024 will be subject to forfeit the deposit. Please note that for cancellations received after July 31, 2024 of which full payment has not yet been received, the full penalty will still apply, and unpaid monies are due immediately. For these and other reasons mentioned, you are strongly encouraged to obtain trip cancellation insurance. Prices quoted are based on group participation and no refunds will be made for any part of the program in which you choose not to participate.

Courses:

2-Day Ushuaia Ski Tour -- Antarctic Prep Clinic:

Location: Martial Glacier, Ushuaia

Cost: \$800 USD

Dates: October 16-17, 2024 – 9am-4pm

Our 2-Day Ushuaia Ski Tour – Antarctic Prep Clinic is the perfect opportunity to make the most of your Antarctic adventure by brushing up on skiing, backcountry basics and glacier travel in Ushuaia before you head out. Led by experienced Ice Axe Expedition on the Martial Glacier in Ushuaia which features conditions very similar to what we might find in Antarctica. For those that would like some guidance on gear and skiing glaciated terrain you'll have some workshop time with your guide – for those a bit more experienced you'll focus purely on skiing! The class size is limited to four skiers/riders per guide and takes place on the Martial Glacier, which is a short ten minute taxi ride outside of downtown Ushuaia.

Itinerary for Antarctic Prep/Glacier Travel Clinic:

Day 1: After meeting at the Hotel Albatros in the center of town, we will review gear and answer any questions before heading up to the glacier. From here, we'll attach skis onto packs and walk a short distance up to the snowline before transitioning into ski mode where we will cover beacons, avalanche awareness, efficient skinning, kick turns, heel lifters, ski crampons, transitions, gear organizing and glacier skiing strategies.

Day 2: A similar format to day one, but with more technical information. Topics include roping up for glacier travel, using boot crampons and an ice axe, climbing steeper terrain on foot, short roping, lowering and rappelling and self-arrest. As time allows, we will also cover building anchors for crevasse rescue, how to set up a C drop loop, and how to rig a 3:1 pulley system for crevasse extraction.

Course participants should bring all the equipment on the Ice Axe Expeditions gear list to each day of the clinic and be prepared for 5-7 hours of skiing. Unless participants arrive with a preformed group of four or more, they will be broken into groups depending on experience. No prior backcountry skiing experience is required for these clinics. The clinics will go until approximately 4:00pm and people can expect to be back in Ushuaia by 5:00pm.

Please be sure to select the 2-Day Ushuaia Ski Tour -- Antarctic Prep Clinic option when registering online or email us at questions@iceaxe.tv to notify us of your desire to participate.

CME: Continuous Medical Education Course:

Ideal for physicians and other medical professionals who engage in wilderness activities, who counsel individuals who take part in such activities, or who are likely to encounter illness or injury in remote or resource-limited settings.

Cost: TBD (includes 10-12 hours of Category 1 CME issued by the WILDERNESS MEDICAL SOCIETY and taught by Tahoe Wilderness Medicine, LLC.)

How to Register: Please be sure to select the CME Course option when registering online or email us at questions@iceaxe.tv to notify us of your desire to participate.

Itinerary:

Optional, Early Arrival Itinerary:

OCTOBER 16th: 8:30am meet for Antarctic Prep/Glacier Travel Clinic, until 4pm.

OCTOBER 17th: 9am meet for Antarctic Prep/Glacier Travel Clinic, until 4pm.

OCTOBER 18th: Free day in Ushuaia to explore or ski. 6pm early arrival happy hour 'Meet & Greet'.

OCTOBER 19th - Arrive in Ushuaia, Argentina. Orientation with ski or trekking guide. Welcome Dinner. Overnight in Ushuaia.

OCTOBER 20th - Board the Ocean Albatros and set sail down the Beagle Channel.

OCTOBER 21st - Cross the Drake Passage. Sperm, fin, and humpback whales, along with skies of seabirds will accompany our journey.

OCTOBER 22nd - Continue crossing the Drake Passage, possible afternoon ski and trekking objectives at Deception Island in the South Shetlands.

OCTOBER 23rd - Ski and trekking objectives at Charlotte Bay and Bluff Island.

OCTOBER 24th - Ski and trekking objectives at Nansen and Enterprise Islands. Zodiac cruises, penguin rookeries, and kayaking.

OCTOBER 25th - Ski and trekking objectives at Wenke Island and Damoy Point. Lemaire Channel.

OCTOBER 26th - Ski and trekking objectives at Ronge Island, Mt. Britannia. Visit penguin rookery at Georges Point on Cuverville Island.

OCTOBER 27th - Ski and trekking objectives on Brabant Island at Chiguano Bay. Killer whale and leopard seal sightings. Zodiac cruises, penguin rookeries, and kayaking.

OCTOBER 28th - New ski descents and nature cruises Livingston Island and Half Moon Bay in the South Shetlands. Zodiac cruises, penguin rookeries, and kayaking; begin journey north in the evening.

OCTOBER 29-30th - Sail Drake Passage; pass the dramatic cliffs of Cape Horn.

OCTOBER 31st - Disembark the Ocean Albatros in Ushuaia, Argentina.

**Flexibility is necessary for all Antarctic travel. This program is subject to change throughout the journey depending on ice, weather, and local conditions.*

The Ship:

Ice Axe Expeditions is proud to introduce our new vessel, the Ocean Albatros, as our Antarctic home. With a total of 93 comfortable staterooms for our guests, all with a view of the ocean, (and 90% with their own balcony), several restaurants, a wellness area, an Albatros Nordic Bar, an open deck dining facility, a modern lecture lounge, and other amenities, the vessel will also be environmentally friendly onboard, with an implementation of the Green Initiative Program, ensuring both absolute comfort and sustainability for our guests.

The Ocean Albatros is owned by the company Albatros Expeditions. They provide the crew, including the Captain, First Mate, the "hotel staff" which includes the restaurant staff, bartenders, cabin workers, etc. They also provide their own "Expedition Team" which includes the Expedition Leader, ornithologists, marine biologists, historians, field guides and various other roles. Albatros runs multiple trips each year both in the Arctic and Antarctic. They are responsible for client safety from leaving Ushuaia to getting everyone ashore in the zodiacs to ski. The Ice Axe trip is the first trip of the season for the crew and is typically the first ship to head to the peninsula.

Ice Axe Expeditions charts the entire "cruise" with Albatros Expeditions years in advance and organizes provisions which enable us to ski. This is a special arrangement and not typical in the Antarctic cruise industry. Ice Axe provides the certified mountain guides who are responsible for client safety ashore while skiing and trekking.



We look forward to seeing you in October 2023 on this trip of a lifetime! Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions, (530) 582-1246 or questions@iceaxe.tv.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Stoup".

Doug Stoup
President
Ice Axe Expeditions