

Antarctica Direct: Fly the Drake Passage

Experience the wild grandeur of the White Continent in a more efficient, expedient way with our **eight, nine and ten-day options**. On this new itinerary, bypass the traditional Drake Passage crossing on a two-hour flight to and from Antarctica, and discover all of the highlights without sacrificing the extra time. Travel with a diverse team of experts aboard our intimately scaled *National Geographic Explorer* and *National Geographic Orion,* purpose-built for polar exploration. Venture into channels and coves framed by towering peaks. Watch for whales off the bow; Zodiac cruise around enormous icebergs; and hike, kayak and (on *National Geographic Explorer* in November) even possibly cross-country ski or snow-shoe in complete tranquility. Choose an active agenda or surrender to the pleasures of relaxing downtime and shipboard camaraderie. Plus, get top shots with the help of a National Geographic photographer.

NOTE: This is an expedition in the truest sense—flexibility is key. Delays and early departures of flights due to inclement weather are common in Antarctica. In the event of a flight adjustment, your expedition team may implement a contingency plan with alternative activities. For answers to questions you may have about our Fly the Drake Passage programs, please see our FAQ page .

From

$ 12,600 / per person

Includes required flights

DATES
Jan, Feb, Nov and Dec

DURATION
8-10 Days

SHIPS
National Geographic Explorer
National Geographic Orion

STARTS AT
Puerto Natales, Chile

→

ENDS AT
Puerto Natales, Chile

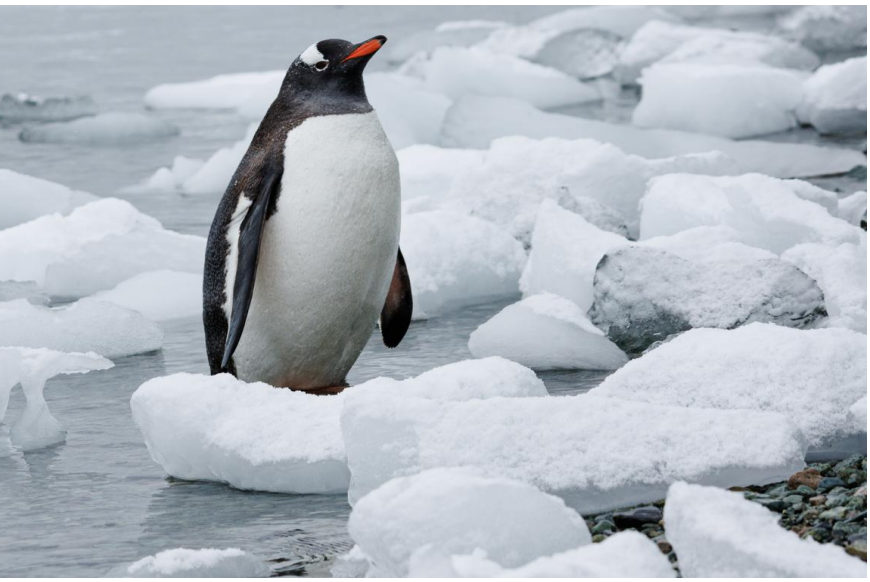
Minimum Age Requirement: Any children booked on Antarctic or Arctic voyages must be at least 4 years old at time of embarkation.

NOTE: For answers to questions you may have about our Fly the Drake Passage programs, please see our FAQ page .

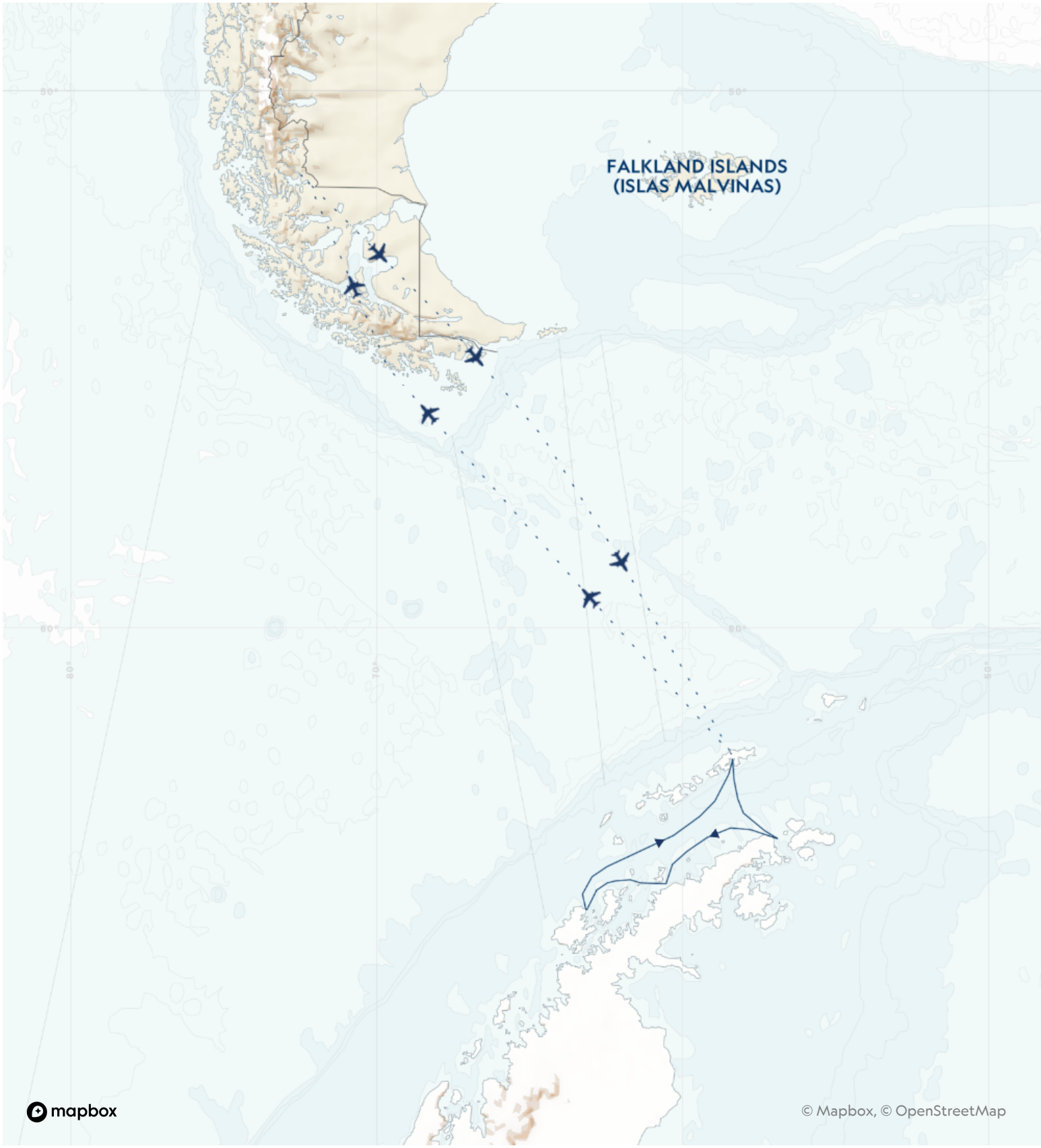
Highlights

- Get a head start on your Antarctica experience by flying across the Drake Passage from Puerto Natales to King George Island, landing at the Chilean research station which permanently operates there
- Explore the world's last great wilderness in the company of top naturalists and the most experienced polar captains in Antarctica, with more than 55 years of expedition heritage
- Marvel at the abundance of wildlife—a parade of gentoo, Adélie and chinstrap penguins; stealthy leopard seals; several species of whales from humpbacks to orcas; and more
- Hike, kayak and Zodiac cruise in complete tranquility, surrounded by a pristine kingdom of snow and ice








FALKLAND ISLANDS
(ISLAS MALVINAS)
mapbox
© Mapbox, © OpenStreetMap

Day by day

■ DAY 1

Puerto Natales, Chile

Arrive in Puerto Natales. Originally a small fishing port, the town is nestled on the Last Hope Sound and boasts a stunning view of the sea surrounded by the Cerro Benitez Mountains—the gateway to Torres del Paine. Transfer from the airport to your hotel, where you'll enjoy dinner and attend a briefing on the following day's activities.

Ask your expedition specialist about joining an immersive 5-day pre-voyage extension to explore Torres del Paine National Park, an incredible UNESCO biosphere reserve.

Arrival Time: Arrive to the hotel in Puerto Natales by 3:00 p.m. local time.
Arrival City: Puerto Natales, Chile

Meals included: dinner

◇ DAY 2

Puerto Natales / King George Island, Antarctica / Embark Ship

Following breakfast, check out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for your two-hour direct flight to King George Island in Antarctica, where you'll begin your Antarctic adventure. Home to a diverse assortment of wildlife, King George Island also has a human presence. Researchers from a wide range of countries, including the U.S., Chile, Argentina and Brazil, call the various stations home. Your flight will land on a gravel runway at the Chilean research station. You will then be transferred to the rocky shoreline, where you will board Zodiacs to embark on the ship and set sail as you begin exploring this amazing region.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 3-6

Exploring Antarctica

With long hours of daylight at this time of year, you'll have ample opportunities to explore. The schedule is flexible, allowing you to take advantage of the unexpected, whether you're watching whales at play off the bow of the ship, hiking alongside penguin highways or enjoying an evening Zodiac cruise amid porpoising penguins.

While wildlife is magnificent, ice defines the Antarctic. You'll get to know ice up close and personal—from icebergs the size of islands, bergy bits and near-vertical glaciers, to the fragile, nearly invisible layers that have just begun to freeze. One day, you might set out by kayak to encounter towering icebergs at water level; embark on a Zodiac excursion in search of seals and blue-eyed shags; or walk amid thousands of Adélie and gentoo penguins. The next, you might experience the thrill of the ship crunching through pack ice.

Everywhere you go in Antarctica, you'll be surrounded by opportunities to capture uniquely beautiful images. Along the way your expert expedition team will enrich every experience.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 7

King George Island / Disembark Ship / Puerto Natales

This morning, the ship will be moored off of King George Island once again. Following disembarkation and Zodiac rides to shore, your flight departs the White Continent and returns to Puerto Natales where you overnight at your hotel.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

DAY 8

Puerto Natales

Check out of your hotel and transfer to the airport to begin your journey homeward.

Departure Time: Outbound flights from Puerto Natales should depart no earlier than 1:00 p.m. local time (or as late in the day as possible).
Departure City: Puerto Natales, Chile

Meals included: breakfast

8-Day Expedition

Puerto Natales, Chile → Puerto Natales, Chile

2026 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Explorer*

25 Nov	30 Nov			
14 Dec				

2027 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Explorer*

02 Jan	21 Jan			
26 Nov				
15 Dec				

2028 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Explorer*

03 Jan	22 Jan			
10 Feb	29 Feb			

Alternative Routes

Visit Expeditions.com for more information.

2026 Departure Dates

19 Nov, 01 Dec, 20 Dec, 27 Dec

2027 Departure Dates

08 Jan, 19 Jan, 25 Jan, 31 Jan, 06 Feb,
28 Nov, 04 Dec, 21 Dec, 27 Dec

2028 Departure Dates

02 Jan, 25 Jan, 31 Jan, 23 Feb, 23 Nov,
29 Nov, 21 Dec, 27 Dec

2029 Departure Dates

18 Jan, 24 Jan, 15 Feb, 21 Feb



National Geographic Explorer

GUESTS	CABINS
148	81

Built to handle deep swells and towering waves, the *National Geographic Explorer* lends herself to globe-spanning travel and a dedication to curiosity and wonder.

Originally constructed for service along Norway's coast as part of the famed Hurtigruten, or Coastal Express, she ferried passengers among the fjords of this iconic coast in conditions that could deteriorate into heavy seas in a matter of minutes. She had to be able to handle deep swells and towering waves—and have a high degree of maneuverability. Those traits, and an ideal size, made her a natural choice for addition to the Lindblad fleet.

The plans to completely rebuild her drew on 50 years of pioneering expedition history and expertise. *National Geographic Explorer* was equipped with an ice-strengthened hull and advanced navigation equipment for polar expeditions; a roster of tools for exploration; and a well-appointed interior with vast expanses of glass for an unprecedented connection to the environment. Her interior and exterior design embodied the Lindblad expedition ethos—the privilege of wildness and the luxury of comfort.

For many guests she remains their paradigm of an expedition ship. She is devoted to exploration—from her Welcoming Bridge, and the Chart Room below it where you can tuck in to warm up with a hot chocolate, to her high-perched Observation deck with its aqueous light and compelling 24/7 views. Even the art on the walls— from the Hurley prints of Shackleton's expedition to the stunning National Geographic photos— tells an uber- narrative of globe-spanning travel and a dedication to curiosity and wonder.

National Geographic Explorer is a state-of-the-art expedition ship. She is a fully stabilized, ice-class vessel, with an ice-reinforced hull, enabling her to navigate polar passages while providing exceptional comfort.







Cabin Categories

Category 1

MAIN DECK **#301-308**

Cabins feature one or two portholes. Most cabins feature two single beds that can be converted to a queen. Cabins #301-306 feature one queen-sized bed. All cabins feature a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, well-appointed bathrooms with a roomy glass-wall shower, and a TV.



Category 2

MAIN DECK **#317-320, 335-336**

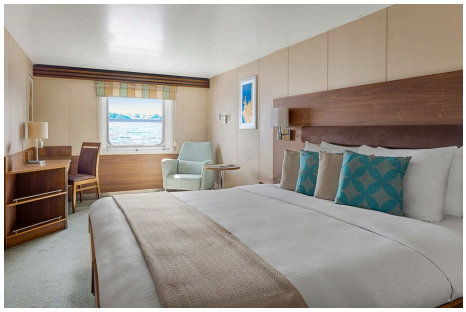
Cabins feature two single beds (some can convert to a queen-sized bed), and one large window. They offer a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, sitting chair, well-appointed bathrooms with a roomy glass-wall shower, and a TV.



Category 3

MAIN DECK **#313-316, 321-328, 337-340, 342, 344, 348, 350**

Cabins feature two single beds (some can convert to a queen-sized bed), one large window, and two sitting chairs and a small table and ample storage. They have a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, well-appointed bathrooms with a roomy glass-wall shower, and a TV. Cabins 341 & 343 have a sofa bed for a triple.



Category 4



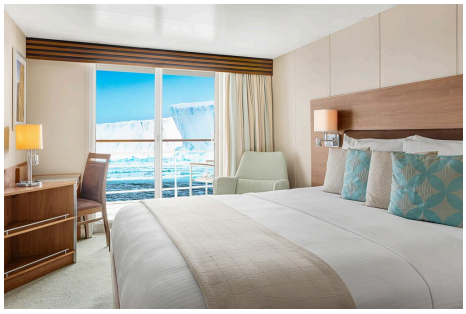
UPPER DECK **#201-202, 204-207, 210, 212, 217, 226, 228**

Cabins feature two single beds and at least one large window. All cabins can convert between two single beds to a queen, except Cabins 217, 226 and 228, which feature one queen- size bed only. All cabins feature climate controls, sitting chairs and a TV. Bathrooms are also generously sized with a roomy, glass-walled shower stall.

VERANDA DECK **#103-104, 107-108**

Cabins feature two single beds that can convert into a queen. They have a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, sitting chair, private bathrooms with a glass-wall shower, and a TV.

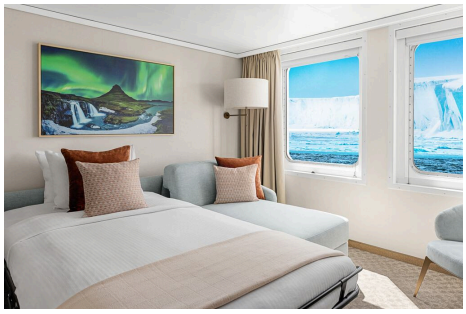
Category 5



UPPER DECK **#209, 211, 214, 216, 218, 220-222, 224**

Cabins feature a balcony with sliding glass doors, one queen-sized bed, writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, private bathrooms with a glass-wall shower, and a TV. (Cabin 221 has two single beds that can convert to a queen.)

Category 6



UPPER DECK **#213**

This spacious cabin has a private balcony, two single beds that can be converted into a queen, a writing desk, double closet, bookcase, pull-out sofa, armchairs, two large windows and a TV. The sleeping area has a glass partition separating the living room. Bathrooms are generously sized with a roomy glass-walled shower stall and twin sinks.

VERANDA DECK **#101-102**

These spacious cabins can be converted into triples. They have two single beds that can be converted into a queen, a writing desk, double closet, bookcase, sofa-bed, chairs, two large windows and a TV. The sleeping area can be closed off with the glass partition. Bathrooms are generously sized with a roomy glass-walled shower stall and twin sinks.

Category 7

UPPER DECK **#215, 219, 230**

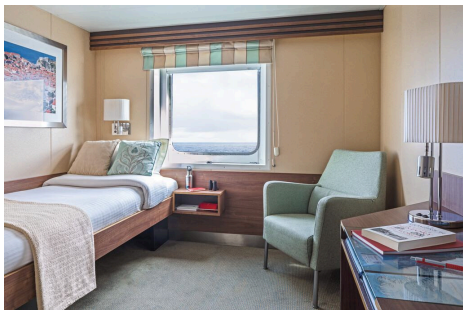
These large cabins with private balconies have two single beds that can convert to an Olympic-sized queen. They have seating areas with a sofa-bed and can be converted to triples. Cabins also include a desk with chairs, coffee table with sitting chair, and a small table. Bathrooms are generously sized with a roomy glass-walled shower stall and twin sinks.



Category A Solo

MAIN DECK **#309-311, 329-334**

These cabins feature one single bed and a large window, a writing desk, reading lamp, bathroom with a roomy glass-wall shower stall, and a TV.



Category B Solo

UPPER DECK **#203, 208**

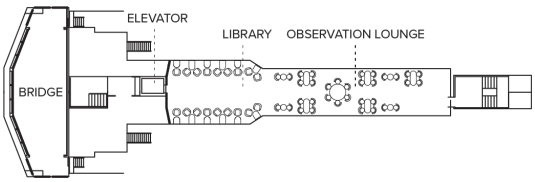
VERANDA DECK **#105-106**

These cabins feature one single bed and a large window, a writing desk, reading lamp, bathroom with a roomy glass-wall shower stall, and a TV.

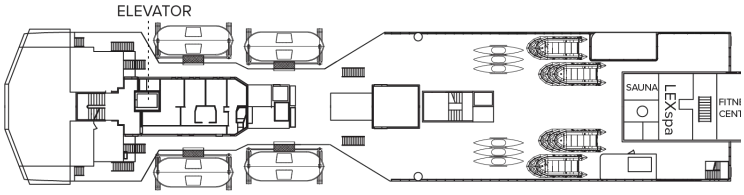


Deck Plans

Bridge Deck

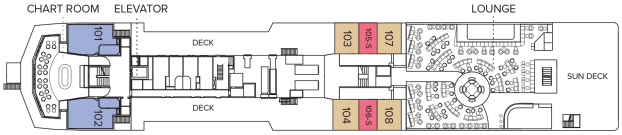


Wellness Deck



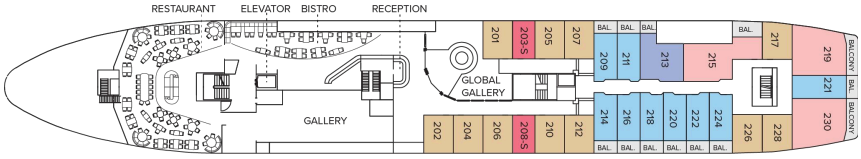
Veranda Deck

- Category 4
- Category 6
- Category B Solo



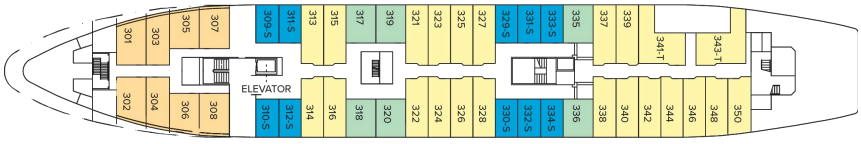
Upper Deck

- Category 4
- Category 5
- Category 6
- Category 7
- Category B Solo

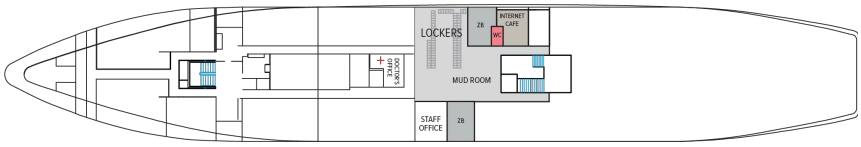


Main Deck

- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 3
- Category 2 Solo



B Deck



Ship Amenities

Public Areas

Reception; three dining areas; global gallery; library, OM System photo locker; 24-hour Bistro area beverage bar; lounge with bar and state-of-the-art presentation facilities; observation lounge; mudroom with lockers for expedition gear; plus open access to the Bridge, the Captain, officers and on-duty wildlife spotters.

Meals

Meals are served in the dining room, Bistro bar or the Observation lounge, at a single seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Menus feature sustainable choices, local where possible.

Cabins

81 outside cabins. All cabins face outside with windows or portholes, private bathroom and climate controls. Cabins are equipped with Wi-Fi, multiple electrical outlets, USB outlets, full length mirror and phones. TV featuring entertainment on demand, live feed for onboard presentations, bow camera and ship's position. Luxury bed linens and pillows. Botanically inspired shampoo, conditioner, shower gel and lotion are all available in cabin bathrooms, as well as an Expedition Essential Kit. Hair dryers, complimentary insulated water bottles and a National Geographic Atlas are available in each cabin.

Expedition Equipment

Zodiac landing craft, a fleet of double kayaks, a crow's nest camera, a hydrophone, underwater video cameras, video microscope and an ROV. Plus, for South Pacific voyages: snorkeling gear for all guests, scuba gear for a number of pre-qualified guests, stand-up paddleboards, glass-bottom Zodiac and splash-cam.

Special Features

A full-time doctor, undersea specialist, National Geographic photographer and National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor, internet café and laundry. Enjoy a session in the topside library with a good book.



Wellness

A glass-enclosed fitness center, outdoor stretching area, a LEXspa treatment room and sauna, staffed by wellness specialists.

Self-Disinfecting Ships

ACT Clean CoatTM is a light-activated, self-disinfecting cleaning process that continuously breaks down viruses, bacteria, mold, and airborne allergens across all ship surfaces. Not only does this create a cleaner, healthier shipboard environment for guests and crew alike, but this non-toxic, chemical-free system also saves more than one million gallons of water each year in our cleaning procedures, and reduces our carbon footprint as well as the amount of plastic and waste in our supply chain.



National Geographic Orion

GUESTS	CABINS
102	53

Joining the Lindblad fleet in 2013, the state-of-the-art *National Geographic Orion* serves as a luxurious base camp for voyages to the far-flung corners of the planet.

Built in Germany by the Cassens shipyard, the 102-guest *National Geographic Orion* was created with a high ice class to be able to venture safely into polar regions. A ship of her size is seldom built with such ice-cutting ability, which makes her a rarity. She is yacht-scale, yet rugged enough to venture far afield, making her a perfect addition to the Lindblad fleet, which she joined in 2013. Her size and nimbleness offer the perfect combination of safety and liberty to voyage untrammeled locations. In fact, *National Geographic Orion* currently holds the distinction of having sailed further south than any other Lindblad vessel.

Her menu, created by famed Australian chef, Serge Dansereau, owner of Sydney's acclaimed Bather's Pavilion restaurant, enormously popular with *National Geographic Orion*'s guests, so impressed Sven Lindblad, that Serge, a chef-owner who shared the Lindblad commitment to serving local and sustainable food, was enlisted to design the dining program for the entire National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions fleet.

National Geographic Orion is gracious and intimate, with a rewarding, almost clubby feeling. Of her many amenities and features, the most appealing is her outside deck space which beckons in the balmy reaches of the Pacific, and on those days in Antarctica when the midnight sun and the spectacle of the ice makes going indoors, let alone going to bed, impossible.





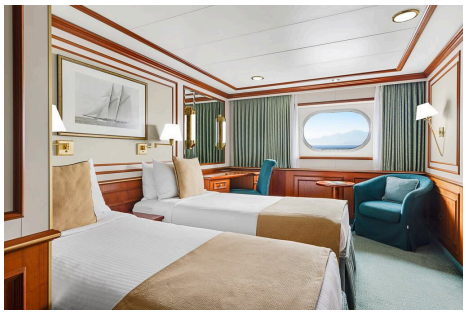


Cabin Categories

Category 1

MAIN DECK **#316, 318-321**

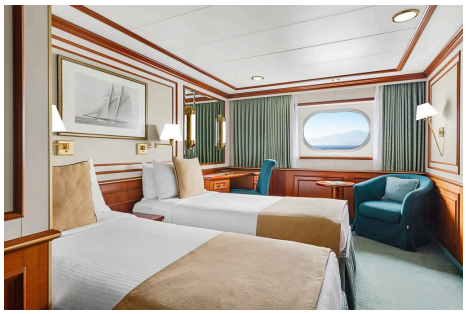
Cabins feature a luminous oval window and configurable beds: two single beds that can be converted to a queen. An armchair, reading lamps, a flat screen TV, two bedside tables, coffee table, desk and climate controls complete the amenities. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 2

MAIN DECK **#302-312, 314, 315, 317**

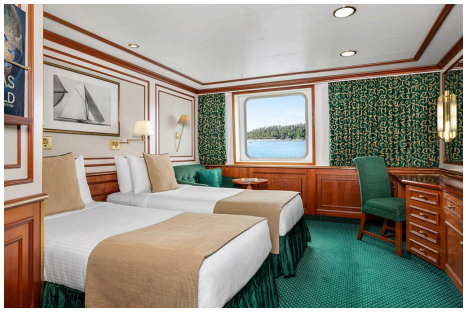
Cabins feature a luminous oval window and configurable beds: two single beds that can be converted to a queen. An armchair, reading lamps, a flat screen TV, bedside table, coffee table, desk and climate controls complete the amenities. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 3

UPPER DECK **#401-412, 414-419**

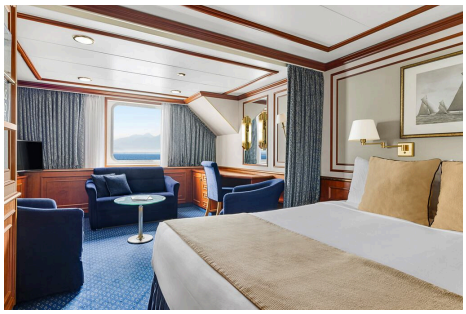
These suites feature a sitting area with a large window, a sofa—except slightly smaller #401 & #402—an armchair or two, writing/laptop desk, reading lamps, coffee table, flat screen TV, bedside table and climate controls. Beds are configurable (call for details). Marble bathrooms include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 4

BRIDGE DECK **#511, 515**

These two suites feature separate sleeping and sitting areas, with a chair and armchair, coffee table, and a two-cushion sofa facing an expansive window. Beds are configurable (call for details). Ample storage, reading lamps, a flat screen TV and climate controls complete the amenities. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 5

BRIDGE DECK **#501, 503-506, 508**

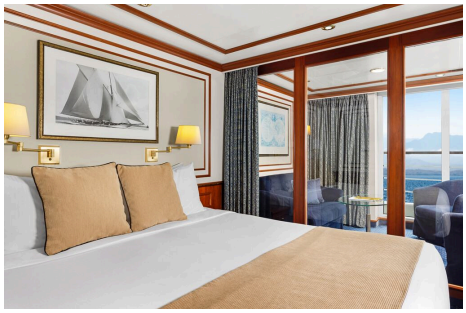
These spacious suites feature open living areas and sliding glass doors opening to a shared French balcony. Beds are configurable (call for details). A separate sitting area with armchairs and a sofa, a writing/laptop desk, coffee table, well-placed reading lamps, a flat screen TV and climate controls complete the decor. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 6

BRIDGE DECK **#502, 507, 509*, 510**

These large, elegant suites feature a French balcony, except for #509 which has double windows. Each provides a separate living area with a sofa and two armchairs, coffee table, except for #502, which uniquely offers a 'soaking tub with a view' in addition to a shower stall and expansive vanity. All cabins have reading lamps, a flat screen TV and climate controls. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 1 Solo

MAIN DECK **#301, 322, 323**

These solo cabins feature a window or two portholes, a queen-size bed, except for #301 which has a double bed, writing desk and chair, climate controls, reading lamps, coffee table, two bedside tables and a TV. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a roomy shower stall with a glass door.



Category 3 Solo

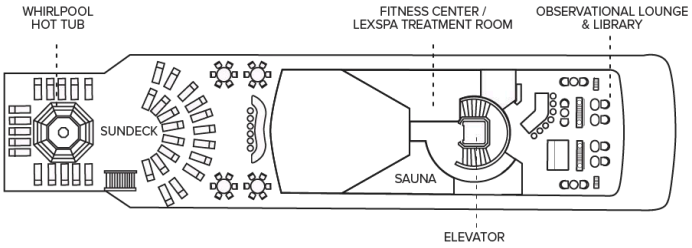
UPPER DECK **#512**

This solo suite features two single beds and two large windows, plus two armchairs and a small table, reading lamps, coffee table a flat screen TV and climate controls. The marble bathroom is generously sized and includes a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



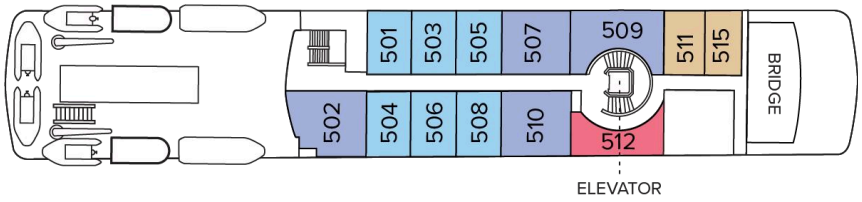
Deck Plans

Observation Deck



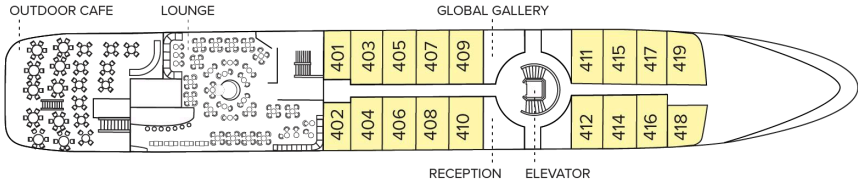
Bridge Deck

- Category 4
- Category 5
- Category 6
- Category 3 Solo



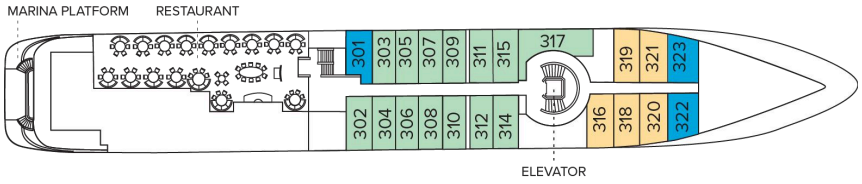
Upper Deck

- Category 3

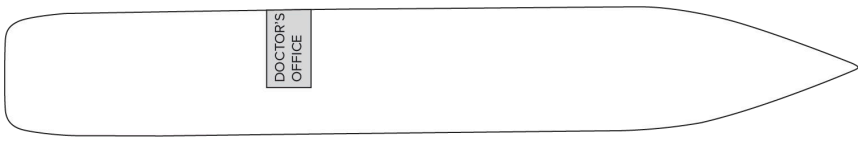


Main Deck

- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 1 Solo



Expedition Deck



Ship Amenities

Public Areas

Reception; two dining areas; lounge with bar and state-of-the-art presentation facilities; OM System photo locker; sundeck with a whirlpool hot tub that doubles as a plunge pool in warm climates; observation lounge and library; global gallery; a marina platform; plus open access to the Bridge, the Captain, officers and on-duty wildlife spotters.

Meals

Meals are served in the dining room, or weather permitting, the outdoor café, at a single seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Menus feature sustainable choices, local where possible.

Cabins

All cabins face outside with windows or portholes, private bathroom, and climate controls. Cabins feature a coffee table, lounge chair, desk, phone, TV with on demand entertainment, multiple outlets and USB, mini refrigerator, and safe. Luxury linens and pillows. Botanically inspired shampoo, conditioner, shower gel and lotion are all available in cabin bathrooms, as well as an Expedition Essential Kit. Hair dryers, complimentary insulated water bottles and a National Geographic Atlas are available in each cabin.

Expedition Equipment

Zodiac landing craft, a fleet of double kayaks, a crow's nest camera, a hydrophone, underwater video cameras, video microscope and an ROV. Plus, for South Pacific voyages: snorkeling gear for all guests, scuba gear for a number of pre-qualified guests, stand-up paddleboards, glass-bottom Zodiac and splash-cam.

Special Features

A full-time doctor, undersea specialist, National Geographic photographer and National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor. A central staircase and elevator reach all decks. Enjoy daily teatime and the smoothies served after the sunrise stretch sessions on the sundeck in Polynesia.

Wellness

A fitness center, LEXspa treatment room and sauna, staffed by wellness specialists.

Self-Disinfecting Ships

ACT Clean CoatTM is a light-activated, self-disinfecting cleaning process that continuously breaks down viruses, bacteria, mold, and airborne allergens across all ship surfaces. This non-toxic, chemical-free system also helps us save over one million gallons of water each year in our cleaning procedures.

Special Offers

SUITE EXCLUSIVES

Spacious living areas and incredible views immerse you in the beauty of your marine surroundings. Our new Suite Exclusives package helps make your voyage all the more memorable. **Learn more**

SAVE 5% TRAVELING AS A GROUP

Save 5% when traveling as a group of 8 or more people. Valid for new bookings only on select departures, subject to availability, not applicable on extensions, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

CELEBRATE LIFE'S MILESTONES

Celebrate a milestone with a group of eight or more and enjoy a special amenity package including: 5% savings on voyage fares, custom group photo, US$150 shipboard credit for the group, and other special gifts. Milestone celebration to be communicated at time of booking.

COMBINING OFFERS

Certain offers may be combinable, up to two savings opportunities, except where noted otherwise. For example, travel with a group of 8 or more on back-to-back expeditions, and take advantage of both savings.

INCLUDED IN PRICE

All accommodations aboard ship or in hotels per itinerary; all meals as indicated in the itinerary, both aboard and onshore; beer, wine, cocktails, liquors and spirits aboard the ship (except certain premium brands which are available for purchase); hors d'oeuvres, 24-hour access to snacks, premium coffees and teas, non-alcoholic beverages, and filtered water; excursions and airport transfers, as indicated in the itinerary, as indicated in the itinerary; crew gratuities; exploration tools curated to destination, such as Zodiacs, kayaks, snowshoes and cross-country skis; guidance and company of our leading expedition staff; assistance by the National Geographic photographer and National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor; Basic Wi-Fi aboard ship; complimentary reusable water bottle; access to the OM System Photo Gear Locker; presentations by expedition staff and expert guest speakers; complimentary parka; complimentary reusable water bottle; onboard physician consultations; morning stretch classes and 24-hour access to exercise equipment; 24-hour access to lounges, observation decks, library, and other shared spaces; park and site entrance fees, special access permits, and port taxes. Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE

Airfare (except flights* when indicated as included); pre- and post-expedition extensions; additional hotel nights (except when indicated as included); private transfers; laundry, spa treatments, enhanced and premium Wi-Fi plans aboard expedition fleet; phone services (except when indicated as included); travel protection plans; and passport, visa, and immigration fees.

*Recommended flight costs include flight(s) that take place during the date range of your trip to transport travelers from one itinerary destination to another. This cost also includes ground transportation, luggage transfer, and airport assistance. If you prefer to arrange your own flights privately, have alternate means of transport, or wish to modify at a later time, please contact an Expedition Specialist at 1.833.400.0831

Additional costs associated with medical services outside onboard physician consultation.

For select voyages, completing a medical evaluation form with VIKAND is required. If you utilize your physician, VIKAND's processing fee for your documentation will be added to your National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions invoice. If you utilize VIKAND's physicians, an additional charge will be due and payable directly to VIKAND.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We strongly recommend our guests to take advantage of our Travel Protection Plan. This plan offers comprehensive coverage to protect you from cancellation fees, costs incurred due to trip delays/interruption, damage or loss of baggage, medical assistance, and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date, Travel Protection premiums are non- refundable once plan is purchased. Learn more about our Travel Protection "Plus" Plan: https://www.expeditions.com/terms-conditions/travel-protection-plan/

CANCELLATION POLICY

Review our cancellation policy: https://www.expeditions.com/cancellation-policy/