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THE VOICE OF THE CRUISE INDUSTRY

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EXPEDITION SPECIAL

HOT STUFF

Why warm weather destinations are
emerging on the expedition scene



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EXPEDITION SPECIAL



When Paul Brousseau, chief customer officer for Quark Expeditions, told *Cruise Trade News* that we are entering a “re-energised era in expedition travel”, we

couldn't help but get excited. “The travel void of the pandemic has created new demand for the extraordinary,” he explains, speaking to us for the supplement's trends focus on page six. Is it any wonder that expedition cruising is now the most emergent sector of the cruise industry?

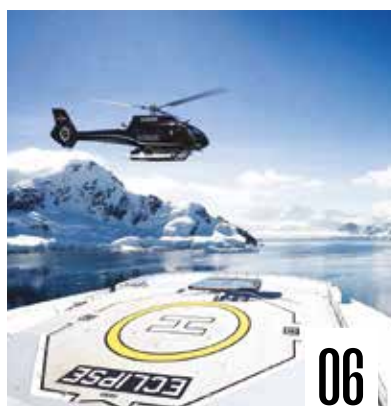
Indeed, whether it's sinking to the ocean floor in a submarine in search of elusive Arctic sea life, sitting fireside with

Inuit tribes in Canada's tundra valleys or sampling Caribbean cooking against the backdrop of St Lucia's Pitons, one thing is clear: expedition travel is evolving.

Join us as we set out to uncover why more people are turning to this visceral form of exploration as a way of discovering the world, while we reveal the best citizen science programmes to help guests give back to the environment.

Jack Carter

Editor



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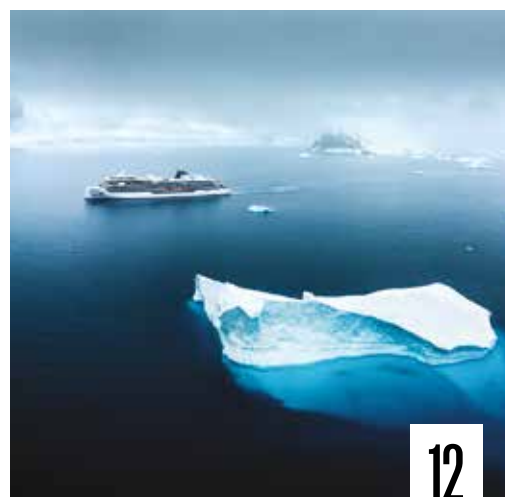
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ANTARCTICA21 REVEALS NEW SHIP

Antarctica21 has confirmed construction has begun on its latest ship, *Magellan Discoverer*, which is set to join its fleet for its 2026–27 Antarctic season.

The new vessel, which will be sister ship to *Magellan Explorer*, comes as a result of the increasing demand for the Chilean company's fly and cruise Antarctic expeditions.

Magellan Discoverer will share the yacht-style of its sister ship and has been enhanced with new features like larger guest cabins, all with private balconies, and a wraparound walking deck offering 360-degree views of the polar landscapes.

Built to meet the PC6 ice class specifications and welcoming up to a maximum of 76 guests on each

MAGELLAN DISCOVERER SUPPORTS OUR DEDICATION TO SUSTAINABILITY

Antarctic air-cruise, the vessel supports environmental responsibility with a Heat Recovery System and complies with Tier III emission control standards.

The ship features a dining area, meeting rooms, an observation lounge and bar, a gym, a wet science lab to support Antarctic research programmes, a gift shop and a sauna with panoramic windows.

Jaime Vásquez, president of Antarctica21, said: "This ship is born

out of our unwavering commitment to meeting the rising expectations of our guests. Equipped with the latest technology, *Magellan Discoverer* supports our dedication to sustainability while offering seamless comfort for our travellers."

The onboard accommodation, the line said, has been designed to "combine the essence of adventure and comfort" on an Antarctic expedition.

The ship features twelve suites, including two family suites for four guests each and two triple deluxe veranda suites, 22 deluxe veranda cabins, and six dedicated single veranda cabins, all of which are equipped with king-size beds, sitting areas and private balconies.



DOMESTIC DESIRE

➤ Swan Hellenic is offering travellers three new expert-curated cultural expedition cruises, designed to immerse passengers in the history, culture and wildlife of the British Isles and Iceland, from the mystic romance of ancient Celtic civilisations to the trails of Vikings.

The first is the 11-night Spirit of the Celts voyage, from 24 May to 4 June 2024, which sails from Portsmouth and visits Cornwall; the Scilly Isles; Bantry, Dingle, Galway and Killybegs in Ireland; Scotland's Iona, Stornoway, Loch Ewe and Oban; before concluding in Portrush, Rathlin Island and Dublin. All three cruises will take place on board the line's *SH Vega*.

Guests can discover the Callanish Stones on the west coast of Lewis and Harris or experience unique clifftop walks along the Causeway Coast, leading to the UNESCO-listed Giant's Causeway with its 40,000 basalt formations.



OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

➤ Azamara Cruises' *Azamara Onward* successfully visited Pitcairn Island during its 2024 World Cruise, marking the first time the cruise line brought guests ashore on the remote destination.

Guests were able to immerse themselves in the hard-to-reach locale, which is home to one of the world's largest marine reserves and some of the best stargazing on the planet due to the exceptionally dark skies.



CHASING WATERFALLS

Coral Expeditions is ready to set sail on the Kimberley waterfall season 2024 with the first of its annual departures aboard *Coral Adventurer* due to depart on 5 April.

As record rains fall across northern Australia, the season is primed for a spectacular flow across the many waterfalls on the specialist's 10-night itinerary.

Guests can experience the majestic and powerful twin falls, which plunge from more than 80 metres high, with passengers arriving at the face of the falls in Zodiacs for what is known as the "Kimberley Shower".



AN INDUSTRY FIRST

➤ New Zealand-based expedition cruise company Heritage Expeditions will mark an industry first when it visits Polillo Island in the Philippines on its Asian Island Odyssey voyage from Taipei to Darwin.

Commercial director and expedition leader Aaron Russ said the destination "has the perfect mix" of unexplored paradisaical island, wildlife

both above and below the water and conservation history. "We expect to make history as the first expedition ship to visit this remote tropical outpost," he added.

It came after the line revealed the first wave of its 2025-26 season, coupled with a 20 per cent early bird discount on the first nine voyages, exploring Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia and the Kimberley coast, on bookings made by 29 April 2024.





Adventures abound

They may be the most remote places on Earth, but more travellers than ever are making the journey. **Dave Monk** takes a look at the top ten trends in expedition cruising

1 THE EXPEDITION BOOM CONTINUES

Sailing to far and adventurous destinations is the fastest-growing sector of the cruise industry, according to the newly formed Expedition Cruise Network (ECN), which represents 23 lines and more than 900 travel agents.

After seeing the market double in the space of two years, the group forecasts continued growth in 2024 and beyond, led by rising demand for the polar regions. Nearly three quarters of expedition lines saw their business grow while the remainder said it remained the same – tellingly, none suffered a drop. And among the 100 or so expedition ships currently at sea, Americans are the principal bookers, followed by Germans and Brits.

“The growth in our expedition business shows that UK travellers are increasingly looking to fulfil their bucket-list ambitions and travel to some of the world’s hardest-to-reach destinations,” says Lynn Narraway, vice president for UK, Europe, Middle East and Africa at Seabourn, which now operates two ultra-luxury expedition ships.

2 MORE FAMILIES AND SOLO TRAVELLERS

Even babies are joining expedition cruises now as working parents, families and solo travellers continue to expand the customer base. While the average age for most lines is still between 56 and 75, some operators say it has dropped to between 46 and 55.

Noah Brodsky, the chief commercial officer of Lindblad Expeditions, says: “We have no minimum ages on any of our ships – we have babies as well as children of all ages.” He adds that with better internet connections on ships and the rise of working from home, young executives find it easier to carry on their businesses even at sea.

At the other end of the age scale, longer, more healthier lives mean 90-year-olds can go snorkelling while bringing their children and grandchildren along for the ride, too. Patrizia Iantorno, the CCO of Swan Hellenic, says: “We are seeing younger guests and more families with children. Some couples take the trip as an educational experience for their kids.

We’ve also seen an increase in solo bookings.” That trend is echoed by ECN, which reports “a noticeable increase” in single travellers. Ponant says they make up a quarter of expedition customers, a higher ratio than on ocean ships. “The solo travel trend is on the rise,” agrees Peter Shanks, Silversea’s MD for UK, Ireland, Middle East and Africa.

3 WARMER DESTINATIONS

Antarctica remains the leading destination, followed by Greenland and Svalbard. However, there is an emerging trend for sailing in warmer climes. In 2023, Swan Hellenic visited the west and east African coasts for the first time, with the expedition line’s general manager for UK & Ireland, Mario Bounas, saying that its itinerary planners are looking at similar destinations for its 2026 voyages. “Going by ship is one of the easiest ways to experience Africa’s coastline,” he says. “Because we offer one excursion per port of call, you really get to discover the destination.”



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT An expedition cruise makes Alaska's fjords accessible; getting closer to wildlife is part of the thrill; the twin *Scenic Eclipse* ships offer exhilarating helicopter excursions



Lindblad offers sailings to remote beaches in Costa Rica, with Seabourn and Scenic both planning voyages to Australia's Kimberley region. Viking's two expedition ships sail the Great Lakes in North America when they're not in Antarctica, while the Galápagos islands, with their exotic wildlife, remain a popular warm alternative.

4 WIDER CHOICE OF OPERATORS

Expedition cruising used to be the preserve of specialised lines with very hardy ships, such as Russian nuclear-powered icebreakers. Now, established expedition lines are introducing more luxurious vessels, such as Quark Expeditions' *Ultramarine* with its twin helicopters, while more traditional ocean and river companies, including Viking, Seabourn and Scenic, are entering the market.

They are being joined by outsiders from the hotel trade like Atlas Ocean Voyages, too. The introduction of more high-end brands is bringing in more comfort, more flexibility and more facilities, such as the submarines on the twin *Scenic Eclipse* ships and the two Seabourn expedition craft.

5 COMPETITIVE PRICING

Long flights, personal service and specialised equipment means expedition cruising isn't cheap, with the average booking price believed to be around £8,000 per passenger for more than half of ECN members. However, thanks to a growing number of operators and a desire to reach a younger market, more competitive pricing is on the way.

Many cruisegoers like to book early in order to research their bucket-list holidays, with Narraway saying that travellers enjoy the excitement and anticipation that comes with planning. In contrast, Swan Hellenic is seeing savvy customers book closer to the departure date. Either way, there are bargains to be had during the wave season of January to March.

Akville Marozaitte, the CEO and co-founder of Expedition Cruise Network, says: "We feel that in the expedition cruising sector, more than in any other, the clients who will benefit most from wave season are the ones who will book with an expert travel company that can match the best operator and ship according to clients' expectations and budget."

6 SHIPS GETTING SMALLER

Most expedition ships carry an average of just 160 people, with travellers continuing to favour more intimate sailing experiences. "Small ships are becoming more attractive," says Swan Hellenic's Iantorno, "not just because of the one-to-one service, but because of the overall experience guests can receive in terms of exploring remote and unique destinations and connecting with like-minded people on board."

In Antarctica only 100 people can be off the ship at any one time. "On a 500-person ship you might only get off once in five days," says Brodsky. "For us it would be twice a day. You can only really do this type of experience on a small ship."

7 AUTHENTIC EXCURSIONS

The experience around expedition cruising is changing, with more luxury ships, more immersive excursions and added extras like door-to-door transfers. Quark Expeditions is seeing growing demand for more adventurous off-ship experiences, such as helicopter landings, visiting Inuit communities or hiking miles over Snow Hill Island in Antarctica to visit a colony of Emperor penguins.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Passengers can enjoy a gentle kayak amidst truly stunning scenery; warmer destinations such as Costa Rica are growing in popularity amongst expedition cruise clients

9 CITIZEN SCIENCE GROWS

Passengers can now get hands-on experience of the research carried out on expedition ships, with ECN reporting that more than 90 per cent of its members work with citizen science projects and charities. That means travellers perform tasks such as tracing whale migration or observing cloud formations.

Sometimes these scientific partnerships between cruise lines and universities produce ground-breaking results. For example, researchers got rare glimpses of giant phantom jellyfish on *Viking Octantis*. HX's Sherborne explains: "For many years now, we have actively encouraged guests to participate in citizen science projects as we want to help them understand the places they visit."

10 GROWING THE GREEN AGENDA

Seven out of ten ECN members agreed that sustainability will play a bigger role in customer choice moving forward. Many new environmental initiatives are being introduced and Ponant has announced plans for a zero-emission ship. Other lines are implementing initiatives such as streamlining their vessels, changing to cleaner fuel, using dynamic positioning rather than anchors to remain stationary, eliminating plastic and connecting to shore power in ports.

"We are investing in innovation for future fuels and decarbonising ships," Naraway explains. "We are reviewing energy consumption on board, looking at innovative ways to reduce it or replace it with green energy."

Climate change is also affecting itineraries and excursions, opening up routes such as the Northwest Passage while encouraging more sustainable tours. ●

"In the expedition sector, clients who benefit the most from wave are those who book with a travel expert"

The company's chief customer officer, Paul Brousseau, says: "The travel void of the pandemic has created new demand for the extraordinary. Our guests tell us that experiences like these are the 'must-haves' for a re-energised era in expedition travel."

Antarctica21, which provides fly cruises to the continent, has opened a new Explorers House in Punta Arenas, Chile, a private pre-departure club for travellers with its own restaurant, bar, library and presentation space. Other lines like Silversea lay on door-to-door chauffeur services to ferry customers to airports.

8 SHORTER TRIPS FOR THE BUSY

Travelling to Antarctica is a big time commitment. Just getting to the White Continent is an expedition in itself when you factor in flights to Chile or Argentina and sailing the notorious Drake Passage. As a result, more cruise lines are offering shortened trips, flying to Antarctica to join a ship already there, for busy travellers with limited holiday allowance. Seabourn is offering an 11-night voyage while Silversea



operates 'Antarctica Bridge' sailings, following in the wake of fly-cruise pioneer Antarctica21.

"Now we can get you to and from Antarctica in a week and have just as many days on the continent," says Brodsky. For travellers with more time on their hands, Viking is seeing increasing demand for longer voyages, such as longitudinal world cruises which sail north-south rather than east-west. Lindblad offers 31-day Antarctic and 25-day Northwest Passage cruises, which sell out well in advance.



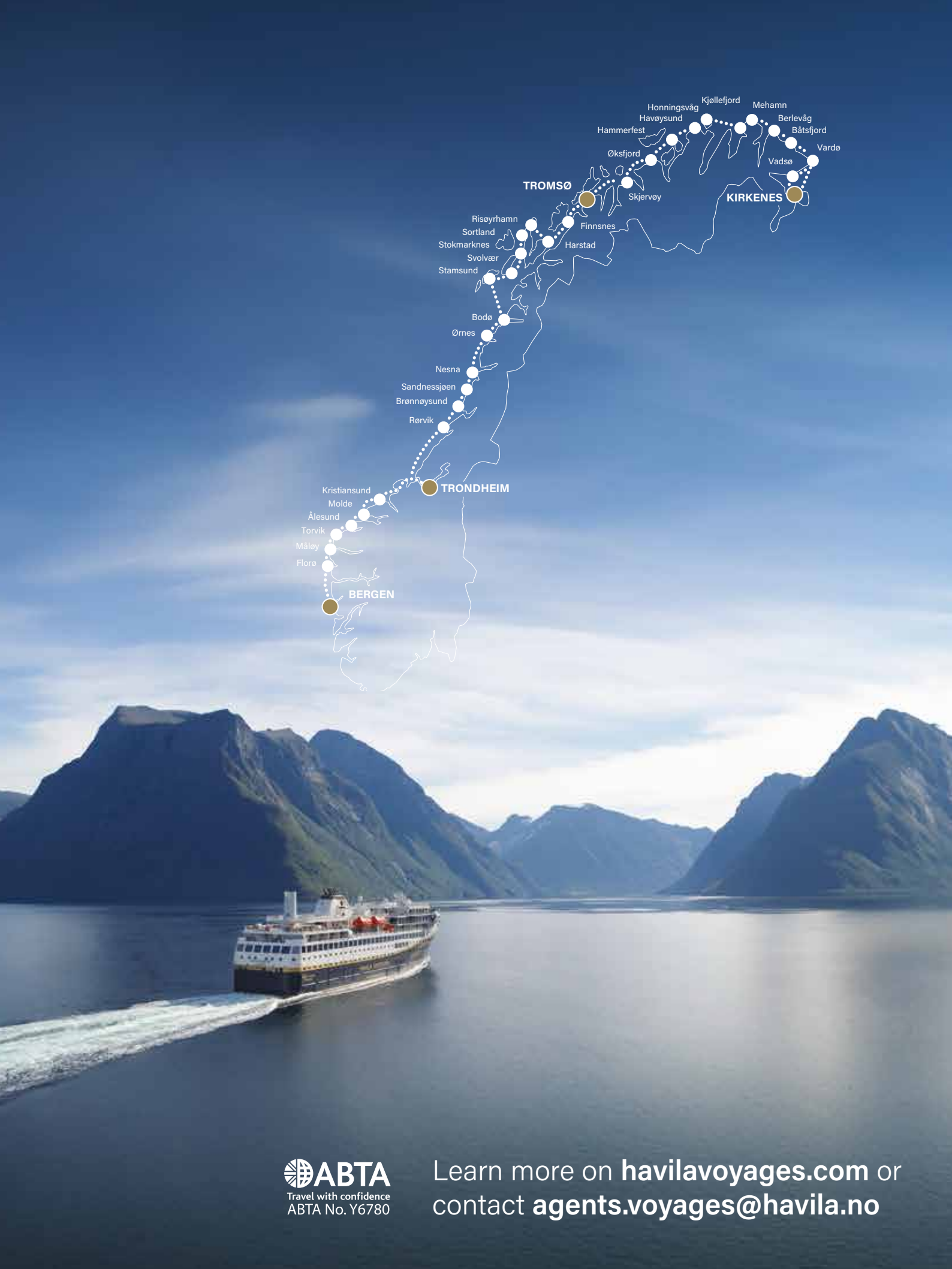
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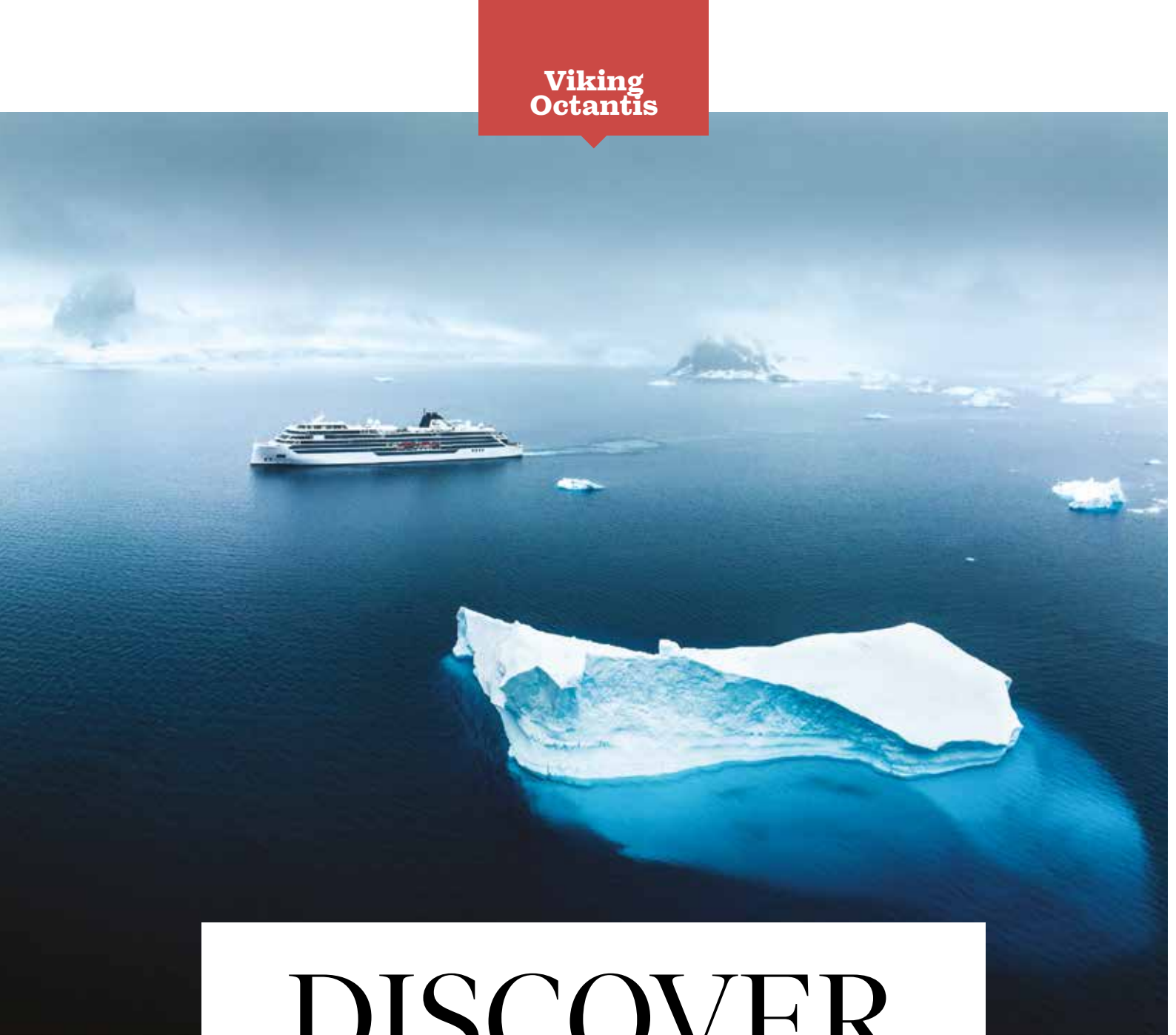
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DISCOVER *the* WHITE CONTINENT

Viking Octantis mixes Bond-worthy tech and Scandi-chic with wildlife-spotting and scientific insights on the Antarctic Peninsula, says **Louise Roddon**



“*Viking Octantis* effortlessly cleaved her way through five-metre waves and withstood 60-knot winds”



It's early morning on Astrolabe Island and penguins are zipping through Antarctica's petrol-blue seas, their plump bodies surfacing then disappearing, seemingly stitching the waves with impressive speed. Above, a storm petrel rides the thermals in a sky of ink-blue brilliance, and when our Zodiac reaches the shore, a cacophony of screeches from chinstrap and Adélie penguins shatters the icy air.

In truth, we were never destined to visit this rocky outcrop. The previous day, a guest had fallen sick aboard our expedition ship, *Viking Octantis*, and an emergency evacuation was considered necessary. Cue a speedy itinerary rethink and here we now are, enjoying what is quickly becoming a highlight stop on this 12-night Antarctic Explorer voyage.

We scuddle ashore, stepping gingerly to avoid the foul, fishy-smelling guano that carpets this tiny island. And goodness, it's a remote spot. Snow-cloaked serrated peaks rise from its core. A fur seal sprawls on a blond beach, while Weddell seals snooze in the sunshine close to our Zodiac landing, occasionally stirring to scratch their whiskers before returning to their doze.

I scan the basalt ledges with my binoculars, pulling into focus countless colonies of chinstraps, waddling like superannuated waiters. Two fluffy chicks nestle against their parents, and this pinch-me moment only intensifies when I look down and find a baby chinstrap staring quizzically at my thick rubber boots.

Our expedition guide, Andres, says: “The last time there was a penguin count on Astrolabe was in 1996, so we are hugely excited by this detour. Our penguin experts, Mairi and Hayley, will send up a drone later to do a new count.”

We are midway through our extraordinary adventure and fast becoming familiar with penguin species – along with whales, birds and icebergs – thanks to the lectures given by *Viking Octantis*'s crack team of onboard scientists.

Day by day, the experiences accumulate. There's the thrill of lying in bed, watching clouds of vapour erupt from an unseen blowhole, the chilly air resounding with cetacean sighs as a humpback whale begins to breach. Then, when land is within reach, dressing for bitter temperatures before boarding a military-grade Zodiac.

Mind you, we have certainly earned these memorable moments. Our crossing from Ushuaia on the southern tip of Argentina included the fearsome 600-mile Drake Passage, and although *Viking Octantis* effortlessly cleaved her way through five-metre waves and withstood 60-knot winds, the notorious ‘Drake shake’ chased many guests back to their beds.

As we sip hot chocolate, the waves grow calmer and it feels as though Moses has arrived to ease our passage through the narrow Lemaire Channel. Ice floes litter the ocean surface like the scattered pieces of a giant jigsaw. As this is the Antarctic summer, we are greeted by eye-smartingly blue skies and plate-glass reflections of snowy peaks. It's an ethereal seascape, with icebergs frosting the horizon in an array of astonishing shapes.

Our home, *Viking Octantis*, is like a hybrid of the line's ocean and river ships, but with Polar Class 6 capabilities including a toughened hull that cuts through ice. Public spaces for 378 guests include The Living Room, Explorers'

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT *Viking Octantis* has a toughened hull to cut through ice; it's worth braving the chilly air for the thrill of a humpback whale sighting; onboard scientists are penguin experts; the ship's two submarines are the star attractions





ABOVE The Antarctic summer creates a truly unforgettable landscape

Fast facts

378

guests

256

crew

4

restaurants

1

inside/outside pool

“One day you could be peering through a microscope at phytoplankton; the next, helping to launch a weather balloon”

Lounge and a well-stocked library. Then there's the indoor thermal pool, hot tub, steam room and gym, alongside an array of rejuvenating Nordic treatments in the complimentary spa.

Equally soothing is the neutral decor in our Deluxe Nordic Balcony stateroom, where a floor-to-ceiling window slides down at the press of a button, allowing us to capture that perfect shot of whales. There's also a heated bathroom floor and a drying cabinet for wet gear (boots, waterproof trousers and keepsake jackets are complimentary for all guests).

Life on board is supremely relaxing, moving from cocktails in the Explorers' Lounge, accompanied by live classical music, to lunches and dinners in World Café or the more formal Restaurant. I also enjoy a memorable scallop ravioli, Dover sole and a perfectly cooked Chateaubriand at the Italian-themed speciality venue Manfredi's.

But the star attractions are the ship's two yellow submarines. I can't wait to join five other guests for a thrilling

dive aboard Paul (like the subs aboard *Viking Polaris*, it's named after one of the Beatles).

Our captain, Josh Pons, guides us through the narrow aperture where a ladder leads to our seats. A deep thrum resounds as we slowly descend to the frigid seabed, the light changing from deep blue to speckled maroon. Josh tells us this is marine snow, made up of algae and phytoplankton. Then, at the touch of a switch, he swivels our seats so we can enjoy uninterrupted views from the curved lens windows.

At 203m down he flicks off the lamp. The blackness is absolute. “What's cool is that what we're about to see has never been seen by anyone before,” he tells us. “If we're lucky, we might see the elusive phantom jellyfish.”

The ocean floor is a rock-garden world of tiny krill, knobbly volcano sponges and dark-red algae. A starfish the size of a plate, with 50 hairy legs, looms into view – a species, Josh explains, that has been around for 350 million years.

These submarines are also used by the onboard scientific team, and Josh explains that their plans include measuring salinity as well as observing life forms on the seabed.

The ship's scientific bias is hugely valuable because it allows researchers to do academic work in a remote region that would normally be beyond their budgets. There's a fully equipped laboratory on board, and the team includes a marine mammal specialist, an engineer from the US Antarctic Program and researchers affiliated to renowned institutions such as Washington-based Oceanites, which monitors penguin populations.

Alongside lectures in the panoramic Aula auditorium, they share their research with us in the “Expedition Central” part of the ship. One day you could be peering through a microscope at phytoplankton; the next, helping to launch the ship's weather balloon.

Our cruise ends with yet another highlight. It's evening, and as we enjoy a cocktail in our stateroom, the sea suddenly boils with activity. Rushing to the window, we marvel at humpbacks beyond number, sighing then breaching in a slo-mo dance of curved grey bodies, while cape petrels stain the sky. Among many others, it's an image I won't easily forget. ●

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Yuri Matisse Choufleur

Helping hand

Not all heroes wear capes: some just wear anoraks. From counting penguins to photographing whales, more passengers are turning to citizen science to assist with vital research, says **Dave Monk**

SOARING SPIRITS

Viking's twin 378-passenger expedition ships carry submarines to study the ocean and marine life such as giant jellyfish. They are also the world's only commercial vessels that launch weather balloons, an essential tool for climate forecasters. In Antarctica and the Great Lakes in North America, passengers can go on deck to watch or participate in the release of the helium-filled balloons which measure temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction.

"Wherever they travel in the world, our guests are curious and keen to learn about each destination," says Wendy Atkin-Smith, managing director, Viking Cruises UK. "We provide reading lists and filmographies before each voyage

and once on board, guests enjoy daily briefings, lectures and sessions in the laboratory with our chief scientists. On shore, guests also like to participate on a deeper level by assisting in fieldwork."

Get on board

Viking's eight-day Niagara and the Great Lakes cruise on *Viking Octantis* departs from Toronto, Canada, on 9 May 2024. From £5,395, including UK flights. [viking.com](https://www.viking.com)

WHALE OF A TIME

New expedition entrant Atlas Ocean Voyages is one of the lines collaborating with Orca, a marine conservation charity that studies and protects

whales, dolphins and porpoises and their habitats. On voyages to the Arctic and Antarctic, ocean conservationists raise awareness, collect data and involve passengers in citizen science projects. By using an app, guests can track and photograph the behaviour and movement of the marine mammals – the sort of data that Orca has used over the past three decades to improve protection measures for whales and dolphins in ocean hotspots.

James Rodriguez, the line's president and CEO, says: "Together with Orca, we look forward to fostering a deeper connection between our travellers and the incredible marine life they will encounter, ensuring a meaningful and enriching experience for all."



Jonnie Lafferty



Tommy Simonsen

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT Tracking penguin colonies with HX; passengers fishing for microplastics with AE Expeditions; experts are often on board to educate passengers; guests help researchers collect data in return

“Our team are dedicated to exploring in a responsible way, with science at the heart of our experiences”

Get on board

Atlas Ocean Voyages' 10-night Glaciers of Greenland cruise on *World Voyager* departs Reykjavik, Iceland, on 5 August 2024. From £4,512. atlasoceanvoyages.com

PLASTIC CLEAN-UP

Turtles entangled in discarded carrier bags isn't the only hazard caused by rubbish in our oceans. Microplastics – fragments of plastic under 5mm – can endanger humans, too. On excursions with AE Expeditions – part of Aurora Expeditions – passengers scoop sea water into buckets and sieve it for microplastics, which are sorted and recorded on the ship for further analysis.

Expedition leader John Kirkwood says: “Plastics in the ocean may take centuries

to break down, often persisting as tiny pieces that may be ingested by marine life. Humans who eat seafood can then consume the microplastics that smaller organisms have ingested. Seabirds can have their guts clogged by so much plastic that they are unable to digest their food and eventually die.”

Get on board

AE Expeditions' 15-day Antarctic Peninsula in Depth cruise on *Greg Mortimer* departs from Ushuaia, Argentina, on 6 November 2024. From £10,780. aexpeditions.co.uk

PICK OUT A PENGUIN

Counting penguins may sound like an almost impossible task, considering their quantity and speed in the water, but that's what travellers with HX, formerly Hurtigruten Expeditions, endeavour to do with a little help from Penguin Watch. Participants use images and videos to gather important information on colony numbers, which helps shape global policies in the polar region. The research runs in parallel with other projects such as Southern Ocean Seabird Surveys, which measures the distribution of birds across the area,

helping researchers understand how avian behaviour may be changing.

Overall, HX supports more than 20 research projects including eight citizen science programmes, and estimates passengers will contribute more than 16,000 items of data in 2024. Head of guest learning, Dr Emily Baxter, explains: “Curious travellers come to HX to be part of adventurous expeditions that broaden their understanding of the world. Our expert team is dedicated to exploring in a responsible way, with science at the heart of our experiences.”

Get on board

HX's 12-day Highlights of Antarctica cruise on *Fridtjof Nansen* departs Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 7 December 2024. From £7,034. hurtigruten.com

ON CLOUD NINE

Sixties singer Joni Mitchell once sang, “I've looked at clouds from both sides now.” Swan Hellenic passengers can do the same as they collect cloud data for climate research, measuring how much sunlight is absorbed by the Earth and the amount of heat that escapes into space. During cruises to the Antarctic Peninsula, Svalbard archipelago and Greenland, an expedition guide takes guests to the top deck so they can upload their observations via a Nasa app to a satellite as it makes a 10- to 15-minute flyover.

Expedition guide Carine Zimmermann says: “Normally we offer a cloud survey on sea days when it is not conflicting with mealtimes or other programmes. Most of this research is conducted from land so citizen science is very helpful at filling in the gaps from the ocean.”

Get on board

Swan Hellenic's 13-night Antarctic Peninsula in Depth cruise on *SH Vega* is a return trip from Ushuaia, Argentina, departing on 15 December 2024. From £10,485. swanhellenic.com

*Prices exclude UK flights except for Viking



Gemma Roland

Voyage of discovery

After gaining her PhD, Danaë Sheehan spent 16 years at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds before swapping the office for expedition ships. Danaë walks *Kaye Holland* through a typical day and reveals her dream cruise

Hi Danaë, can you tell us what a typical day looks like for you? If you had asked me two years ago, I would have given you a very different answer. I've gone from being on an expedition ship to managing Seabourn's interactive webpage, Voyage Tracker. Each day, the onboard team send me descriptions of activities, photos and videos which I edit then upload to Voyage Tracker so guests' friends, family and anyone else can gain an insight into what happens on a day-to-day basis. It's a phenomenal resource. It answers any questions you might have, from what to wear to where an expedition ship is located. And because it's updated daily, it's live and accurate.

What do you love most about your job? The amazing experiences you have at sea – one day you might find yourself in a snowstorm of birds, the next you could see a whale breaching. You share these incredible experiences with like-



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Danaë Sheehan is passionate about expedition cruises; experiences such as seeing a whale breach make these types of trips truly unforgettable

What is your favourite expedition destination? My favourite parts of the world are northern Europe. I'm biased, of course, but you can't beat my homeland, Scotland. Also Antarctica, where you get to see large congregations of migratory birds.

What's your dream expedition cruise? To follow the migratory journey of a red-necked phalarope – yes, I am talking birds again. These little birds breed in the Shetland Islands, cross the Atlantic, North America and Central America then end up off the coast of Peru. If I had my way, I would follow them all the way around the world!

minded travellers, too. For example, after crossing the notorious Drake Passage and coming up on deck for the first time in Antarctica, people often burst into tears. The air is so clean and pure, Antarctica really touches people. It takes people to places where they experience a real depth of feeling. It's fantastic.

What's your advice for people wanting to follow in your footsteps?

Younger people need to be passionate about what they do and have the ability to communicate it. But if, like me, you are changing career late in life, I would say just go for it. Cruise lines are looking for people with experience.

What makes expedition cruising such a unique form of travel? Expedition ships are small, so you get to know everyone onboard. The conversation is phenomenal – everyone is excited about what they have seen. It's such a friendly environment so it's ideal for solo travellers, families and couples. The destinations are varied too – you can visit places larger ships simply can't. 📍



“**EXPEDITION SHIPS ARE SMALL, SO YOU GET TO KNOW EVERYONE ONBOARD... THE CONVERSATION IS PHENOMENAL**”



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