

ITINERARY
ATLANTIC ODYSSEY
March 27-April 21, 2024



Albatrosses are one of the most impressive groups of birds in the world, spending the vast majority of their lives on the ocean winds. Light-mantled Sooty Albatross might just be the sharpest looking of the group, and we should have some excellent views of this phenomenal bird as we ply the southern ocean. Photograph by guide Doug Gochfeld.

We include here information for those interested in the 2024 Field Guides Atlantic Odyssey tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

The southern ocean is by far the richest part of the world for seabird diversity, but it remains a mystery to most people due to difficulty of access. Even when birders do travel through these seabird-rich regions, it's almost always in a couple of relatively small areas of ocean confined to the most popular Antarctic expedition routes. Each year, however, expedition ships are re-positioned from the Antarctic to the Arctic, and this re-positioning offers a unique opportunity to explore seldom-visited swathes of the central Atlantic Ocean—including some of the most remote islands in the world. Foremost among these are the far-flung, but ecologically rich, islands of the Tristan da Cunha group. This expedition departs from Ushuaia, Argentina, at the southern tip of South America, and starts off with a visit to the breathtaking shores of one of the Antarctic region's true gems, South Georgia Island. South Georgia is considered by many to be the most

important seabird breeding island on Earth due to its size and the astounding abundance of birds—between Penguins and tubenoses, the biomass is astounding. After our sampling of this Antarctic flavor, we turn north, crossing back over the Antarctic Convergence and into the subantarctic seas, setting our sights on the even more remote islands in the center of the South Atlantic.

While the islands of Tristan da Cunha (including Gough Island, well to the south) are each smaller than South Georgia by landmass, and host fewer breeding birds overall, they feature over 20 species of nesting seabirds, giving it a higher breeding diversity than South Georgia.

The Moseley's Rockhopper Penguin, one of the most range-restricted penguins, is nearly endemic to the islands (almost 90% of the world population breeds here); the Tristan Albatross (which numbers just a few thousand pairs) is endemic; and these islands also make up the entire breeding range of the endangered Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross. Among the millions of other seabirds breeding here are hundreds of thousands of Great Shearwaters and Broad-billed Prions (as well as many of the mysterious cryptic taxon known as MacGillivray's Prion), and thousands or tens of thousands of Little Shearwater, Kerguelen Petrel, Gray Petrel, Soft-plumaged Petrel, Atlantic Petrel, Great-winged Petrel, Gray-backed Storm-Petrel, White-faced Storm-Petrel, Sooty Albatross, and Common Diving-Petrel.



The Tristan Thrush is one of the few landbirds we'll see in Tristan da Cunha. Photograph by Alexey German.

These starkly beautiful rocks in the middle of the Atlantic also have a handful of highly sought-after endemic landbirds, of varying difficulty to find. These include Gough Bunting, Gough Moorhen, Tristan Thrush, Inaccessible Island Finch, Nightingale Island Finch, Inaccessible Island Rail, and Wilkins's Finch. Much of our chance to find some of these landbirds is predicated on the weather and our ability to land on or approach the islands via zodiac, but we are quite likely to encounter at least some of these (some can even be seen from zodiac without landing on the islands). In addition to visiting Gough Island, Nightingale Island, and Inaccessible Island (and, if we are exceptionally, exceptionally lucky, landing on one or both of the latter two), we will also visit the main island of Tristan da Cunha, which is the most remote human-inhabited island on the planet! We plan to visit the one town—Edinburgh of the Seven Seas—as well as do some exploration of the island itself, which hosts a large number of breeding Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, as well as the Tristan Thrush. During our at-sea days in these southern waters, we will also encounter marine mammals such as Fin Whale, Minke Whale, Humpback Whale, and Hourglass Dolphin, and have a chance to encounter a great suite of other, more seldom seen marine mammals. A small selection of scarcely seen, but possible, marine mammals are Southern Right Whale Dolphin, Strap-toothed Beaked Whale, Southern Bottlenose Whale, False Killer Whale, and Killer Whale.

From here, we will head north towards our trip's terminus, leaving the cold water behind, slipping over the Tropic of Capricorn, and through the subtropical and tropical waters of the central Atlantic. Seabird diversity will dwindle though we will start to see warm-water species such as Bulwer's Petrel, the St. Helena-breeding form of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, Masked Boobies, and Red-billed Tropicbird. As we go through these waters, we should also encounter plenty of Flying Fish, and may also run into northbound migrating Arctic Terns, and some other great marine animals such as Whale Shark, several species of Rays, and Sperm Whale (as well as having a chance for some rarer and seldom-seen marine mammals). Once we arrive at St. Helena, we will still have a bit more birding and sightseeing to do. We'll prioritize finding the endemic St. Helena Plover, and will plan to have the opportunity to see Longwood House, where Napoleon Bonaparte spent the last few years of his life, the imposing Jacob's Ladder, at the edge of Jamestown, and some of the other sights around this remote town. In addition to the above-mentioned species, the island also hosts breeding White Terns and Brown and Black Noddies.



St. Helena Island is a remote waystation on this tour, and we'll look to see the endemic Wirebird (St. Helena Plover) here, but that's not all the island has to offer us. It has an interesting human history, and in addition to being where the famous astronomer Edmond Halley set up an observatory in the 1600s, it was also where Napoleon Bonaparte endured his second exile. We'll have an opportunity to visit Longwood House, pictured here nestled into the forested hillside, during our exploration of the island. Photograph by Hadoram Shirihi, Oceanwide Expeditions.

By the time we disembark, we will have experienced two of the most important, and also most remote, seabird breeding areas in the world, seen hundreds of thousands of birds, including penguins, albatrosses, and enough varieties of tubenoses to make your head spin (or dance with joy), and covered more than 40 degrees of latitude, from the "Furious Fifties" all the way up to the tropical doldrums, and all without having to change hotels. This expedition, from the vistas of remote windswept volcanic islands to the incredible wildlife we'll see along the way, is sure to live on in your memory forever.

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS & WALKING:** Nearly half of the days on this cruise are at-sea days. All hiking during shore landings is optional; when given the option by the expedition staff, we usually opt for the shorter hikes and less rigorous physical activities because they allow more time for birding and enjoying wildlife. During landings, we will be walking on uneven terrain, potentially with the option to take hikes with considerable incline. Terrain can be wet and/or muddy in places, but you will be wearing your ship-issued rubber boots, so this should not be a problem. During shore excursions, the expedition staff usually offers multiple options, e.g., a longer hike to climb a ridge for a good view; a more moderate hike, where more time is available for photography and birding and might also entail going uphill; or a more leisurely walk for those who do not wish to venture far.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We travel between ship and shore by zodiac, a type of sturdy inflatable boat designed for shore landings. Participants should be able to climb into the zodiacs by stepping down the gangway which requires good balance and some agility. Wet landings on shore usually require stepping into 6-8 inches of water for a step or two to reach the beach. This is all reversed when returning to the ship. Everyone boarding a zodiac is required to wear a life vest. Access to some vista points and seabird nesting cliffs may require some short scrambles up steep, icy, or muddy slopes that may be covered in tussock grass. Rough seas are not guaranteed, but they should be expected at some point. Wind, salt spray, and rain are to be expected. It is important for you to be in relatively good shape and health. There is a doctor on the ship; however, once at sea, medical issues take on heightened significance due to the difficulty in transporting passengers to medical facilities.
- **PACE:** Most days on board the ship will begin about 8 a.m.; activities for the day will depend upon where we are, and whether landings are planned. Length of day will vary greatly through the trip as we cover so much latitude, and during sea days, we will likely be birding as the weather allows for much of daylight excepting meal times. There will be presentations on a range of topics from ship expedition staff, and all of these are optional, and the amount of time you spend seabirding in transit between islands is completely up to you.
- **ELEVATION:** Elevation is not an issue, however, rough seas are to be expected. Seasickness is a real possibility as the Southern Ocean is a windy place with occasional high seas. Seasickness can be managed with medication including, but not limited to, Bonine and Scopolamine. Please contact your physician for detailed information.
- **WEATHER:** Be prepared for regular daytime temperatures in the high-30s to the mid-40s Fahrenheit around South Georgia. When we are in the southern section of the tour, early Antarctic cold-fronts and/or high winds could occur during the tour, dropping temperatures below the 30s, however. It will be windy on some days, and some rain or snow is to be expected. Temperature on the Tristan da Cunha Islands generally ranges from the 50s to 70s F at this time of year, and St. Helena is usually in the 70s. Temperatures on the outer decks of the ship will usually feel colder due to the wind.
- **BATHROOMS:** We use modern facilities aboard the ship.
- **ZODIAC LANDINGS:** It is important for you to be able to get into and out of a zodiac (inflatable boat used as cruising and landing craft for 8-10 people at a time) in occasionally rough sea conditions.
- **OPTING OUT:** All shore excursions are optional and participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day aboard the comfortable ship.

We'll visit some of the loveliest and wildest islands of the Southern Ocean, with an emphasis on the endemic seabirds, landbirds, and shorebirds. The dramatic settings, play of light and cloud, and close encounters with wildlife create a photographer's dream, although wet weather can be problematic for gear.

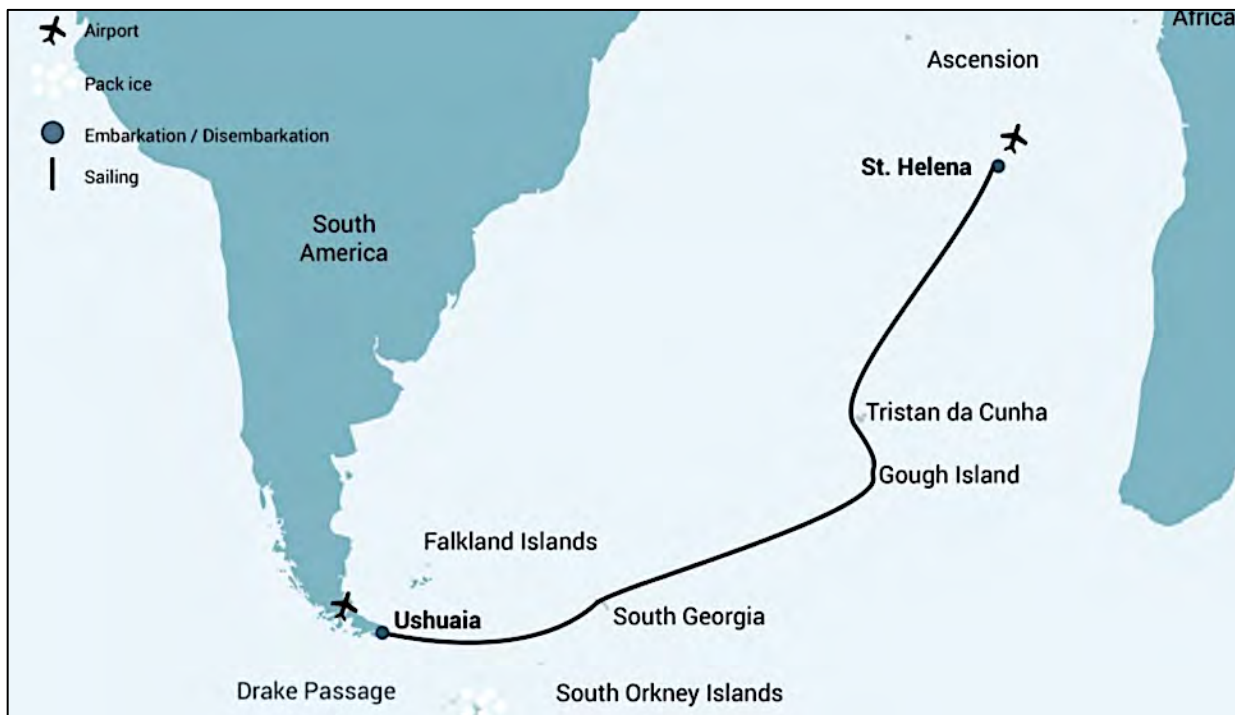
The pace of the tour varies from relaxed to moderately vigorous (if one opts for one of the more challenging hikes that *may* be available depending on which islands we are able to land on). Most birding will be from the ship or a zodiac, or along trails or boardwalks. There may be one or more *optional* excursions that require a rather involved scramble up steep, muddy slopes covered in tussock grass, but for most outings, only modest levels of fitness are needed. The most regular challenge is the process of boarding or de-boarding the zodiacs, which requires some balance and agility. Also, most landings will be wet (requiring waterproof boots for wading through surf and wet seaweed) and so you need to be capable of climbing in and out of the zodiacs with some agility.

Because this tour is a cruise in the open sea (as well as more sheltered waters around the islands), outings can be cold and wet. Fortunately, today's marvels in outdoor clothing make it ever easier to enjoy being out in the elements. For the first portion of the trip, we'll be in the region of persistent westerly winds and cold fronts known as the "Roaring Forties" and the "Furious Fifties," and the open sea *can* be really rough if we encounter a storm, so one needs to consider their "seaworthiness." Conversely, towards the northern end of the trip in tropical latitudes (we will span over 40° in

latitude in our 21 days at sea) it will be rather warm, and the seas tend to be much calmer. Regardless, nearly everyone will need to adjust to the ship's motion early on, and medications to ease this process are advisable (please contact your physician for detailed information).

Our vessel, the *Hondius*, is a new (Polar Class 6, the highest class in expedition cruise ships) vessel purpose built by Oceanwide Expeditions to specialize in polar and open sea eco-tourism. It is 355 feet long and 58 feet wide, and due to its new build and technology, rides more stably relative to other expedition ships. The accommodations on board are very comfortable, reaching the level of a hotel on the high seas. There is even a large observation lounge to use if the conditions are too extreme to be out on the decks at any point, or if you simply want to view the ocean while having a nice warm beverage inside the heated cabin of the ship! The cuisine is consistently good aboard the ship, and they are able to accommodate a variety of dietary needs. Our very reliable operators will do their best to stick to the itinerary, but the captain is in charge and if absolutely necessary may amend the plan due to weather or for reasons of safety. More information about the ship can be found further along in the itinerary.

While aboard the ship, apart from our Field Guides group, there will be a mix of other birders and voyagers with whom we'll share discoveries, knowledge, and a sense of fun.



About the Birding Areas

South Georgia – The montane oceanic island of South Georgia is one of the world's most important breeding areas for seabirds and marine mammals, and we aim to spend several days enjoying it. Massive colonies of hundreds of thousands of King Penguins await us at Salisbury Plain and St. Andrews Bay. In between, we'll set foot on this impressive island and learn about the impact of humans on this site. For example, the introduction of rats here has led to large declines of some breeding seabirds and the world's most southerly- breeding songbird, South Georgia Pipit. Just in the past several years, however, a project spearheaded by the South Georgia Heritage Trust has eradicated rats from the island, and pipits and seabirds are already rebounding dramatically. Where the pipits were once quite difficult to see, they are now much more common along the entire shoreline of the island! We'll visit the whaling station of Grytviken and perhaps drink a toast to the spirit of Ernest Shackleton, the heroic British explorer who is buried in a small cemetery there. Penguins abound on South Georgia, and we'll likely encounter Gentoo, Macaroni, and King at close range. We will also spend time looking for Gray-headed Albatross, Light-mantled Albatross, Fairy Prion (a rarity in the herds of Antarctic Prions), and diving-petrels, including the difficult-to-identify South Georgia Diving-Petrel. Marine mammals are also spectacular here, with huge numbers of Antarctic Fur Seals and Southern Elephant Seals on the beaches and plenty of whales in the waters around the island.

Tristan da Cunha Islands—The Tristan da Cunha island group is, like South Georgia, one of the most important breeding areas for seabirds in the entire world, and it is the ability to visit this exceptionally remote group of islands that makes this tour itinerary unique among expedition cruises. The Tristan group consists of four major islands, three of them clustered together within 25 miles of each other, and the fourth, Gough Island, on its own well to the south.

Gough Island is considered part of the Tristan group, but it actually lies more than 225 miles to the southeast of the rest of the islands, so is very much its own entity. It is considered by some the seabird capital of the South Atlantic since it is home to 20 or more (depending on your taxonomy) species of breeding seabird, with the total number of individual birds using it each year numbering into the millions. These include ~15 species of tubenose, among them Tristan Albatross, Sooty Albatross, Kerguelen Petrel, Atlantic Petrel, Great-winged Petrel, Broad-billed and the cryptic MacGillivray's (sometimes grouped with Salvin's) prions, and several types of storm-petrel. We will not be landing on the island, which is a World Heritage Site, but we will hope to make a zodiac cruise near enough to the sheltered side of the island to see the two endemic landbirds here: Gough Bunting and Gough Moorhen. Gough will also be our first exposure to Moseley's Rockhopper Penguins, of which more than 90% of the world population breed in the Tristan group. We will continue to be "in the zone" for this range restricted middle-of-the-ocean penguin for our entire time around these islands.



Moseley's (Northern) Rockhopper Penguin is arguably the most difficult species of penguin on the planet to see, only breeding on two tiny and very remote island groups in the middle of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. At Tristan da Cunha and Gough Islands we'll be in their world stronghold and should get lovely views of these charismatic characters.
Photograph by Erwin Vermeulen, Oceanwide Expedition.

Two hundred miles to the north we'll find the main islands of the Tristan group, the principles of which are Nightingale Island, Inaccessible Island, and Tristan da Cunha itself. Tristan da Cunha Island is the largest of these, and it holds the distinction as the most remote human-inhabited island on the planet. We'll plan to visit the town of Edinburgh (population a whopping 300!), and meet the locals with their rich and colorful history and ancestry, as well as drop in on their (have we mentioned, very remote?!) post office! Tristan hosts the largest colony of Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross, and while we are around the main island we should find them to be in abundance. Less than 25 miles to the southwest of Tristan da Cunha sit Nightingale Island and Inaccessible Island (which are roughly ten miles from each other, the three islands creating a triangle oriented to the southwest of Tristan da Cunha). We plan to visit these two islands though our ability to physically land on the islands will be completely in the hands of the weather gods. The weather is unpredictable, and since these are islands amidst the high seas, there are often, well, high seas! This will govern how thoroughly we can

explore the smaller islands in the Tristan group (Inaccessible Island, Nightingale Island, Gough Island). There is the potential for landing on Inaccessible and Nightingale, but the conditions must be just right for that, and it's just as likely that we will explore the coasts of these islands by zodiac or from the ship itself. Some of the endemic landbirds, such as the Inaccessible Island Finch, Tristan Thrush, and Nightingale Island Finch are sometimes visible without actually setting foot on the islands themselves. If we are in fact able to set foot on Inaccessible Island, then the coveted Inaccessible Island Rail, a tiny flightless bird (related to Black Rail), which lives only in dense cover on the island, is in play (though still not guaranteed). If we land on Nightingale Island, then there is also some chance we may be able to encounter Wilkins's Finch, which is scarce and favors the higher elevations of the island, and so is unlikely to be seen from the waters offshore. Whatever our landing prospects, there will be seabirds galore, and great vistas to take in, on these two strikingly scenic seabird paradises.

St. Helena Island The final island on our tour will be St. Helena. It is most well-known for being the place where Napoleon Bonaparte was ultimately exiled and died, but this large volcano protruding from the tropical sea in between Africa and Brazil does have other things to recommend it. There are breeding colonies of Band-rumped (St. Helena) Storm-Petrels, Red-billed Tropicbirds, Masked and Brown boobies, Black and Brown noddies, and the unique White Tern, and we also have a chance to see Pantropical Spotted Dolphins, which are common around the islands. Whale Sharks are also frequently encountered on this part of the tour, and seeing one of these behemoths could be yet another highlight. The bird of most interest, however, is the endemic St. Helena Plover, known locally as the Wirebird, which is the only St. Helena endemic that did not go extinct with the arrivals of humans to the island. In Jamestown, we will have the chance to visit Longwood House (where Napoleon lived his final years), the Governor's residence, climb above town on the 699-step Jacob's Ladder, and visit some of the nearby high peaks, as well as the location where astronomer Edmond Halley (discoverer of Halley's Comet) observed the night sky several hundred years ago.



*While we are in transit, we'll watch for seabirds such as the incredible Wandering Albatross.
We have the opportunity to see several subspecies of this majestic bird.
Photograph by guide Doug Gochfeld.*

The High Seas This trip will involve a significant number of at-sea days, and given that these days will cover more than 40 degrees of latitude, we will have an excellent opportunity to run up a very impressive tally of seabirds. We will have chances of birds ranging from cold-water species like Blue Petrel and multiple taxa of Wandering Albatross, to tropical ocean species like Bulwer's Petrel and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel. These sea days are also an excellent opportunity to experience non-avian marine fauna which spend their lives on (or in, rather) the high seas. The list of what is possible runs on and on, but some of the less common species that have been headlined trips along this route are Southern Right Whale Dolphin, Strap-toothed Beaked Whale, Southern Bottlenose Whale, False Killer Whale, Dusky Dolphin, Rough-

toothed Dolphin, Southern Right Whale, Sei Whale, Blue Whale, Blainville's Beaked-Whale, Gray's Beaked-Whale, and Dwarf Sperm Whale. We will certainly not see ALL of these, but we have enough time at sea that there is a reasonable chance that we will see at least some of them—an exciting prospect indeed.

The ocean, as mentioned a few paragraphs above, is fickle and unpredictable. One day could feature whipping winds and bouncy seas, sending the petrels and albatrosses into breathtaking aerial displays, while giving us little opportunity to detect cetaceans in the frothy seas. The next day it could be calm with glassy seas and fewer avian acrobatics, but in these conditions the creatures living in the water itself become much more detectable. It is best to expect both scenarios, as on a trip covering this much open expanse of ocean, we will likely experience both ends of the spectrum. Whatever the weather, the seabirding during this cruise will be incomparable, with upwards of 20 species of cetaceans and over 40 species of tubenoses possible.



We'll have a few world-class land-based experiences (such as the incomparable South Georgia Island), but the thing that really sets this itinerary apart are the seabirds. We have the opportunity to see millions of individuals of over 40 species of tubenose on this tour, in some of the richest pelagic birding waters in the hemisphere. Here, a Gray-headed Albatross leads a White-chinned Petrel and an Antarctic Prion across the bow of the ship as we head towards South Georgia.

Photograph by guide Doug Gochfeld.

Itinerary for Atlantic Odyssey

****Important note**** - This itinerary reflects a plan based on the ship's past trips on this route and its current plan. Please note that all sites and landings are subject to change due to weather and the discretion of the captain and expedition staff.

****Arrival in Argentina—As noted below in our Day to Day itinerary, the tour begins in Ushuaia;** however, to travel to Ushuaia it is necessary to fly from Buenos Aires. We request you plan your arrival in **Ushuaia, Argentina** by **March 27** to avoid potential flight delays – the ship is unlikely to wait around for any late connections and will embark on March 28. While it is possible to travel from the US to Buenos Aires and on to Ushuaia without staying an extra night in Buenos Aires, it is also possible to spend the extra night in Buenos Aires. However, Field Guides recommends spending at least the night of March 27 in Ushuaia. **For most travelers on US airlines, coming in a night early (whether you stay in Ushuaia or Buenos Aires) means that you will need to depart the US on or before March 26.**

Note: The "Land Fee" portion of the tour cost will cover **one pre-cruise night in Ushuaia**, on March 27th, along with ground transfers, a couple meals, and luggage handling in Ushuaia; *see inclusions on page 10.*

Days 1-2, Tue-Wed, 26-27 Mar. Flights from the US to Buenos Aires/Buenos Aires to Ushuaia. Most flights depart the US in the evening and fly overnight to reach Buenos Aires early the next morning in time to make connections to Ushuaia. The airport in Ushuaia is about 10 minutes from our hotel by taxi. After checking in (and unwinding from the long flight), we'll meet in the hotel lobby at 7:30 p.m. for dinner and to discuss the following day's plan. Night in Ushuaia.

****Please note:** A full buffer day in Ushuaia is necessary to guard against problems stemming from flight or baggage delays. This will mean departing the US on or before March 26th, and arriving in Argentina on or before March 27th. The ship will leave port on March 28. Our office will be happy to assist you with reservations for extra nights. (**The night of March 27th is included in the Land Option, for those who purchase it; see inclusions on page 10.)

Day 3, Thu, 28 Mar. Boarding day in Ushuaia, Argentina. Following instructions provided by Oceanwide Expeditions, we'll stage our luggage and arrive at the pier in Ushuaia to board the ship. We'll check into our staterooms (just like arriving at a hotel, really!) and explore the ship, becoming acquainted with the various decks, lounges, and dining facilities and expedition staff. Your Field Guides leaders will host a welcome meeting to go over our strategy for the tour, if they have not already done this, and Oceanwide's staff will hold briefings to outline the expedition's plans. Our Field Guides group will represent a subset of the participants of the cruise (up to 170 guests total), and it will be a good idea to start getting to know each other before we're fully underway. Of course, we'll want to keep an eye outside as we begin our eastward transit of the Beagle Channel, and we're sure to see our first Southern Giant-Petrels and Black-browed Albatrosses arcing against the dramatic, forested slopes of Tierra del Fuego. All subsequent nights will be on the ship.



Snow Petrel is the "Angel of the Antarctic," and we'll be keeping a close eye out for them when we're in the waters and bays around South Georgia. Photograph by guide Tom Johnson.

Days 4-6, Fri-Sun, 29-31 Mar. At sea en route to South Georgia. By sunup, we should be in the open ocean heading east, bound for South Georgia (having passed through the Beagle Channel in the night). Early on, the expedition staff will brief us on zodiac safety and we'll receive our ship-provided rubber boots (good quality Muck Boots or similar). En route, we'll begin to get acquainted with the seabirds of the region including massive Royal Albatrosses, White-chinned Petrels (and maybe a Westland Petrel if we're vigilant and lucky early on in the voyage), Common and perhaps Magellanic diving-petrels, and our first Slender-billed Prions. Your guides will be outside as much as possible, helping you to key in on the characteristic flight style and field marks of the seabirds that we'll encounter. This leg of the journey can be rather impressive for pelagic seabird diversity as well as an excellent stretch in which to find whales and dolphins, and we'll want to spend plenty of time on deck in anticipation of seeing our first individuals of Soft-plumaged Petrel, Gray Petrel, and more. As we reach the Antarctic Convergence, where cold Antarctic water meets warmer northern water and creates highly productive zones of upwelling, we'll begin our watch for Blue Petrels. During this crossing, our chances at finding Gray-headed Albatross and Light-mantled Albatross increase as we close in on South Georgia (where both species nest), and these coldest waters around South Georgia are our only opportunity on this route for the iconic Snow Petrel, which can be tricky this far north.

Day 7-9, Mon-Wed, 1-3 Apr. South Georgia. Depending on weather, we'll attempt to make landings each day during our stay at South Georgia. This island represents the most awe-inspiring concentrations of animals that we are likely to see on the cruise, including penguins and marine mammals. This part of the trip includes an adventure to a large (100,000+) King Penguin colony, exploration of tussock grass-lined coves for South Georgia Pipit and South Georgia Pintail, time to enjoy big concentrations of scrappy Antarctic Fur Seals and bizarre (and sweet) Southern Elephant Seals, and maybe even a visit to a Wandering Albatross colony. We'll plan to land at Grytviken where we can learn about the historic role of the island in the whaling industry, as well as other aspects of the island's human history, including the legendary exploits of Ernest Shackleton, who is buried in the small graveyard here (a traditional pilgrimage for all visitors). The museum, post office, and gift shop at Grytviken are also popular attractions.



South Georgia Island provides one of the greatest wildlife spectacles on the planet, and the King Penguin show here is the anchor of that experience. Photograph by guide Doug Gochfeld.

Days 10-14, Thu-Mon, 4-8 Apr. At sea en route to the Tristan da Cunha island group. We'll have our fingers crossed for the pleasant tailwind that often accompanies the vessel through the westerlies, and we will set our eyes once more on the ocean in search of pelagic birds and marine mammals. We have great opportunities for seabirding here, and we will start off with the familiar tubenoses of the past few days. As we head north however, the avifauna will begin to shift from that of South Georgia and the Antarctic to that of the subantarctic and the southern Atlantic. Antarctic Prions will give way to Broad-billed, and perhaps eventually MacGillivray's prions, Light-Mantled Albatrosses will dwindle in number as Sooty Albatrosses increase (if we're really lucky we may get to see them in the same field of view!), and we will begin to run into more of the species that breed in the Tristan group such as Kerguelen Petrel, Great-winged Petrel, and Gough Storm-Petrel (a taxon of Black-bellied or White-bellied storm-petrel that is likely its own species). If the conditions are right, you can also observe the stars changing position as we travel north.

Day 15, Tue, 9 Apr. Gough Island. Today we plan to approach Gough Island for a zodiac cruise in Quest Bay, if the weather permits. Here you might see Moseley's Rockhopper Penguins and Subantarctic Fur Seals. If the weather gods are very kind to us, it could even be possible for us to circumnavigate most of Gough Island's 33-mile circumference, taking in this area's splendid scenery and abundant wildlife. Virtually the entire world population of Tristan Albatross breeds on this isolated volcanic island, as does half or more of the world's population of Moseley's Rockhopper Penguin, as well as hundreds of thousands of other seabirds (discussed in detail in the locations section, above). We'll also be keeping an eye out for Southern Elephant Seals amidst the Subantarctic Fur Seals dotting the shoreline, and if we can get close enough to the coast, we have a good chance of seeing Gough Moorhen and Gough Bunting.

Days 16-19, Wed-Sat, 10-13 Apr. Tristan da Cunha, Nightingale, and Inaccessible islands. We will continue to enjoy the seabird bounty as we move north to the main island group of Tristan da Cunha. We have multiple days reserved

in this area to improve our chances of being able to land on, or at least ride zodiacs close to, Nightingale Island and Inaccessible Island, though over the two decades that Oceanwide has been running this trip, around a third of planned landings in the entire Tristan group have been cancelled due to bad weather. This percentage is much higher when talking specifically about Inaccessible Island, which has only one potential landing spot, and they have seldom been able to land there (but it does happen sometimes, so cross those fingers and toes!). Regardless of how many times we set foot on these ruggedly beautiful islands, we will be awash in seabirds, such as the snazzy Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross, the bizarrely-patterned Spectacled Petrel, and the fantastic Moseley's Rockhopper Penguin, and we have a reasonable chance of seeing endemic landbirds such as Tristan Thrush and Nightingale Island Finch regardless of whether we set foot on the smaller islands.

Days 20-23, Sun-Wed, 14-17 Apr. At sea en route to Saint Helena. We are back into the open ocean heading north, but this time eventually leaving the cold water behind completely, crossing the Tropic of Capricorn, and continuing into the subtropical and tropical waters of the central Atlantic. We will start off this at-sea stretch retaining a good number of cold water seabirds that breed in the Tristan group, but the species breakdown of sea life will change as the water warms, and the last cold water birds remaining with us could be some of the "ship-followers," like Spectacled Petrel, though eventually they too will stop journeying with us as the water gets too warm for them. Though the diversity and numbers of seabirds will decrease, our best chance to see a few highlight warm-water pelagic species such as Bulwer's Petrel is in this stretch of open warm ocean, so we will remain vigilant. We will also be keeping an eye out for the St. Helena-breeding form of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, Masked Boobies, and Red-billed Tropicbird. As we go through these waters, we should also encounter more and more Flying Fish, and may also run into northbound migrating Arctic Terns and some other great non-avian marine animals such as Whale Shark, oceanic rays, or Sperm Whale, among others.



As we reach warmer waters approaching St. Helena, we'll begin to see more tropical species such as the lovely Red-billed Tropicbird, which breeds on the island. Photograph by participant Whitney Mortimer.

Days 24-26, Thu-Sat, 18-20 Apr. Highlights of Saint Helena. We will arrive at St. Helena and begin exploring this small British Overseas Territory, starting at Jamestown, the capital. We will prioritize seeking St. Helena Plover (colloquially called the Wirebird), the lone extant landbird endemic to St. Helena. We will also have time to enjoy the seabirds that breed around the island including Brown Noddy, Black Noddy, White Tern, Masked Booby, Brown Booby, and Red-billed Tropicbird, and we have a good chance to see Pantropical Spotted Dolphin. As far as other attractions on the island, we will plan to pay a visit to Longwood House, where Napoleon spent the last few years of his life in exile, or, if you're feeling ambitious, walk the 699-step Jacob's Ladder. Snorkeling in the shallows rich in tropical and subtropical fish may also be a

possibility, as will be visiting the location where English astronomer Edmond Halley (of Halley's Comet modern-day fame) observed the southern sky, describing nearly 400 stars and their constellations during the 17th century.

Day 27, Sun, 21 Apr. Departure. You will be able to fly out of the St. Helena airport on the next available flight(s). As of the writing of this itinerary, in July 2023, flight schedules have stabilized after being in flux during the pandemic, and they are currently back to normal. This includes regular weekly service to Johannesburg (typically on Saturdays, the day after the ship departs St. Helena, which has multiple suitable lodgings), as well as less frequent flights to the UK. Alternatively, if you would not like to fly out of St. Helena, the ship will continue to the Cape Verde Islands, and you may make arrangements with Oceanwide Expeditions (we are happy to be of assistance!) to continue on the cruise beyond St. Helena.

About Your Guide

Doug Gochfeld was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, and his interest in birds was sparked at a young age (he participated in his first CBC at the age of 7), in part by his father. This interest soon spiraled into a full-blown obsession for Doug, and aside from a several year adolescent and teenage sabbatical, he has been a dedicated and passionate birder ever since. He is especially interested in seabirds, long-distance migration, and avian vagrancy, but takes pleasure in all aspects of the natural world. He's always excited to share his enthusiasm in, and knowledge of these subjects, and much more, on his tours.

He has guided dedicated pelagic birding trips off the East Coast of North America for many years, and worked aboard vessels (for NOAA and others) as a seabird observer for weeks at a time. He has guided birding groups on expedition cruises in the Antarctic, the Arctic, and the Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand. Before beginning to guide a full slate of tours all around the world for Field Guides in 2016, he traveled extensively as a working birder. These field jobs included several years of guiding on remote St. Paul Island, in Alaska's Pribilof Islands, and several seasons spent monitoring migration at the legendary migration hotspots of Cape May, New Jersey, and Eilat, Israel.

In addition to finding peace, excitement, and fascination in birds, he absolutely loves to communicate his insights into the bird world with all those who are interested, and interpreting this world for participants is a pastime that comes naturally to him. Whether close to home or halfway around the world, on land or at sea, this penchant for education and sharing is noted by participants, and his enthusiasm for finding and enjoying birds has proven to be contagious.

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for Doug's complete tour schedule; just click on his photo.

About Your Ship

The *m/v Hondius* is a 356-foot vessel perfectly suited to expedition travel in polar regions with good viewing areas from the various decks. With an ice-strengthened hull, it is able to navigate waters more comfortably than many other ships of similar size, and in normal conditions its average travel speed is about 15 kts. *Hondius* was completed and launched in 2021 by Oceanwide Expeditions as one of the company's two newest flagship expedition vessels. It surpasses the requirements of the Polar Code adopted by the International Maritime Organization, and has a Polar Class 6 (Equivalent to 1A-Super) ice class rating.

In addition to the comfortable cabins, the ship contains an infirmary, a well-appointed dining room, a large observation lounge (with bar), a library, and a separate lecture room. The ship's crew is international, and the expedition staff is largely European. *Hondius* carries a fleet of zodiacs to guarantee swift and safe transit from ship to shore. Announcements, briefings, and lectures will be in English and, in keeping with the spirit of expedition travel, dress is informal. You may pay for internet service on board, but it is limited, and can be unreliable in much of our travel area. For urgent and important communications, the ship is equipped with satellite phone (pricey) and facsimile systems. There is power in all cabins and electric current is of the European 220-volt, 60 Hz variety, with standard European outlets, with two thick, round pins.

***American travelers will require an adapter for any electronic devices*.** Laundry service is available on board for a fee. A doctor will travel with us, and the infirmary is well provisioned with medicines and equipment. Those passengers on regular medication should bring with them an adequate personal supply, and participants concerned about seasickness are encouraged to consult with their physicians before departure.

More information about *Hondius* can be found on Oceanwide's website at:

<https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/our-fleet/m-v-hondius>

Financial Information

CRUISE FEE: \$10,600 Per Person in a Shared Twin Porthole Cabin

\$11,150 Per Person in a Shared Window Cabin

\$11,850 Per Person in a Shared Deluxe Cabin

(All prices are per person in double occupancy from Ushuaia, ending in St. Helena.)

LAND OPTION FEE: \$525, in double occupancy (single supplement applies, if traveling as a single)

DEPOSIT: 25% of the cruise fee per person (your statement will reflect zero until we know your cabin type; *please let us know your cabin category preference asap, as space in mid-range cabins fill first.*

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: September 28, 2023

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: 1.7 times the cruise fee. Single travelers who wish to share their cabin/hotel room should indicate this on the registration form. The published per person twin occupancy fare is guaranteed in this case, whether or not a cabinmate is available. Single travelers who require sole occupancy of cabins will be charged at 1.7 times the published fare for a porthole or window cabin.

LAND OPTION SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$110 (this covers the day of March 27, 2023, in Ushuaia).

LIMIT: 10

Price Changes—*Oceanwide Expeditions (from whom we have an allotment of cabins) reserves the right to impose surcharges (price increases) up to 60 days before departure due to unfavorable changes in exchange rates, increases in airfares or other transportation costs, increases in local operating costs, harbor dues, duties, taxes, or government action.*

Insurance—*Oceanwide Expeditions requires that travelers obtain insurance that will cover personal injury, medical, repatriation, and evacuation expenses. The cost of emergency evacuation and medical care can be very high. A minimum of \$75,000 is required and it is strongly recommended that coverage be extended to include cancellation and trip interruption. Coverage offered through CSA on the Field Guides Comfort Plan meets these minimums as well as trip cancellation/interruption insurance.*

Please review the following link for Oceanwide Expeditions most up-to-date terms and conditions:

<https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (which includes a booster for those eligible to have one). Note too, that many travel destinations may still require proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time. Proof of a booster shot, too, may be a requirement for some travel destinations.

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Sharon Mackie. Sharon will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

DOCUMENTS: A current passport valid for six months beyond the date of your return is necessary for US citizens to enter Argentina. No visa is required.

If you are a citizen of another country, please check with the Argentinian consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you.

Be sure you have enough pages for your entire journey to and from your home country, as multiple pages could be needed. Passports take weeks to process currently, so allow plenty of time if you need a new passport with ample pages. The St. Helena tourism board advises travelers to be sure that you have the travel documents to cover all destinations you intend to travel to, including return trips through the UK, Cape Verde and/or South Africa. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed. Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees. **Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.**

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **cruise fee** from Ushuaia includes the voyage aboard the vessel as indicated in the itinerary; all meals throughout the voyage aboard the ship including snacks, coffee, and tea; all shore excursions and activities throughout the voyage by zodiac; program of lectures by noted naturalists, leadership by experienced expedition staff, and the guide services of your Field Guides leader(s); all miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the program; and comprehensive pre-trip material. Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The tour fee does not cover bar drinks on the ship that are charged to one's cabin. This includes soft drinks, juices separate from those served at meals, and alcoholic beverages. Coffee, tea, and hot chocolate are free of charge and available 24 hours in the lounge.

The **land fee** of \$525 is for one person in double occupancy in Ushuaia. It includes lodging on the night of March 27th in Ushuaia, dinner on March 27th, breakfast and lunch on March 28th and luggage transfer from the hotel to the ship.

The above fees do not include your airfare to Ushuaia and from Saint Helena, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, the customary gratuity at the end of the voyage to the ship's crew (guidelines will be provided), phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

Neither the cruise fee or the Land Option fee includes any lodging on St. Helena after the cruise. Our office staff can assist, if you require accommodations there prior to your departure flights.

The **single supplement** for the land portion of the tour is \$110. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

Single travelers who wish to share their cabin on the ship should indicate this on the registration form by entering "SHARED PORTHOLE" or "SHARED WINDOW", depending on your preferred cabin type. We'll do our best to accommodate cabin request, but we can guarantee availability of any cabin type until your space is confirmed on the tour. If you are a single traveler willing to share a cabin and Oceanwide Expeditions is unable to match you with a roommate, you'll have the luxury of occupying the cabin without the extra cost of paying the supplement. The published per person double occupancy fare for the cruise is guaranteed in this case, whether or not a cabinmate is available. You can read the Safety and Health Protocol for Oceanwide Expeditions here, <https://www.oceanwide-expeditions.com/page/health-and-safety-protocol>.

As stated above, **single travelers who require sole occupancy of cabins will be charged** at 1.7 times the published fare on all cabins except suites and deluxe & superior cabins, which will be charged at 1.8 times the published fare.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, please contact us at [fieldguides.com/contact-us/](https://www.fieldguides.com/contact-us/) and be **sure to confirm your cabin type with your tour manager**. Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day

(Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail us your **deposit of 25% of the cabin fee, per person**, or see our Payment Options at <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/>. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due to Field Guides 180 days prior to departure, or **by September 28, 2023**. **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.**

Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Please note that the *m/v Hondius* is generally smoke-free with designated smoking areas outside. Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Due to the cancellation policy of our supplier, Oceanwide Expeditions, we must amend our usual cancellation policy as follows: If cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure, Field Guides will refund 10% of your deposit (25% of the cabin fee). If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

The Field Guides cancellation policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for the Land Fee (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, the cost of trip insurance is non-refundable in most cases, so it is best to purchase the policy at time of full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE:

The following paragraph is a statement regarding travel insurance from Oceanwide Expeditions (OEX):

A proper travel insurance that includes coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation costs by helicopter, plane, or ship is obligatory. After the booking process, you will be asked to provide the details of your insurance policy to OEX. Participation on an expedition cruise is at 100% your own risk. In our travel documentation (most notably our personal information form for scuba diving), all passengers need to sign a liability statement in which participants agree that Oceanwide Expeditions, including all staff and crew, are exempt from responsibility for personal injury and property damage, including the loss of items. Oceanwide Expeditions cannot accept any claims.

We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs outside of our cancellation policy as published in the itinerary (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive information from us regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other

arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii. We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit. Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

NCP 7/2020

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