

SPIRIT OF ANTARCTICA

6th – 17th of December 2014

ANTARCTICA EXPEDITION – Lead by Joshua Holko and Antony Watson

Join Moab Master Photographer, X-Rite Coloratti and Gura Gear Pro Team member, Joshua Holko, and Pro Photographer Antony Watson, on a photographic expedition to Antarctica.

WHEN

December 6th – December 17th 2014: **Strictly Limited to 50 Places + Leaders and Expedition Guides**

ABOUT

This photographic expedition departs on the 6th of December 2014 and docks on 17th of December 2014. The trip will set sail from Ushuaia in South America and will take in some of the very best of Antarctica before docking in Puerto Williams. A connecting flight (included) will then take you to Punta Arenas in South America for connecting flights home.

This expedition includes amazing locations such as the breathtaking Lemaire Channel, the Gerlache Strait and the surreal Geothermal Deception Island, to name but a few.

The expedition is for a **strictly limited number of 50 participants** plus leaders and expedition guides and will be shared with both kayakers and climbers. Whilst most trips to Antarctica take 100+ tourists, this expedition is capped at a maximum of 50 in order to ensure the best possible experience. We will be using an ice hardened expedition ship with a highly experienced crew in order to ensure we get as close as possible to big ice, and also to place you in the best locations for making photographs. Our expedition ship is equipped with sufficient zodiacs and crew for all photographers to be shooting simultaneously, with plenty of room to spare for camera equipment. It is going to be a truly spectacular trip for a very limited number of photographers aboard an ice hardened expedition class ship – The Polar Pioneer.

There will be informal talks and image reviews and plenty of opportunity for one-on-one instruction for those who wish it throughout the length of the trip. As well as informal side-by-side shooting from the deck, or on zodiacs, and during shore landings, there will be many of opportunities to discuss all aspects of photography and image making with like-minded individuals.

These expedition notes will give you a brief summary of what you will discover on your voyage to Antarctica. Our emphasis is on photography, personal contact with the environment, wildlife encounters, and visiting sites of historical significance. Your safety is our priority, closely followed by showing you the best Antarctic experience possible.

Please remember that the enclosed itinerary is a guide. The voyage is expedition-style, and our adventure will be influenced by the prevailing weather and ice conditions. We'll delight in taking advantage of spontaneous opportunities and there is always an element of the unexpected. Our expedition staff will keep you updated and provide you with daily programs during the voyage.



Ice Sanctuary Wilhelmina Bay Antarctica : Photograph Joshua Holko

ITINERARY

Please note: The itinerary is subject to change depending on weather, ice conditions and the movements of other vessels. We strongly recommend you arrive at Ushuaia at least one day prior to departure.

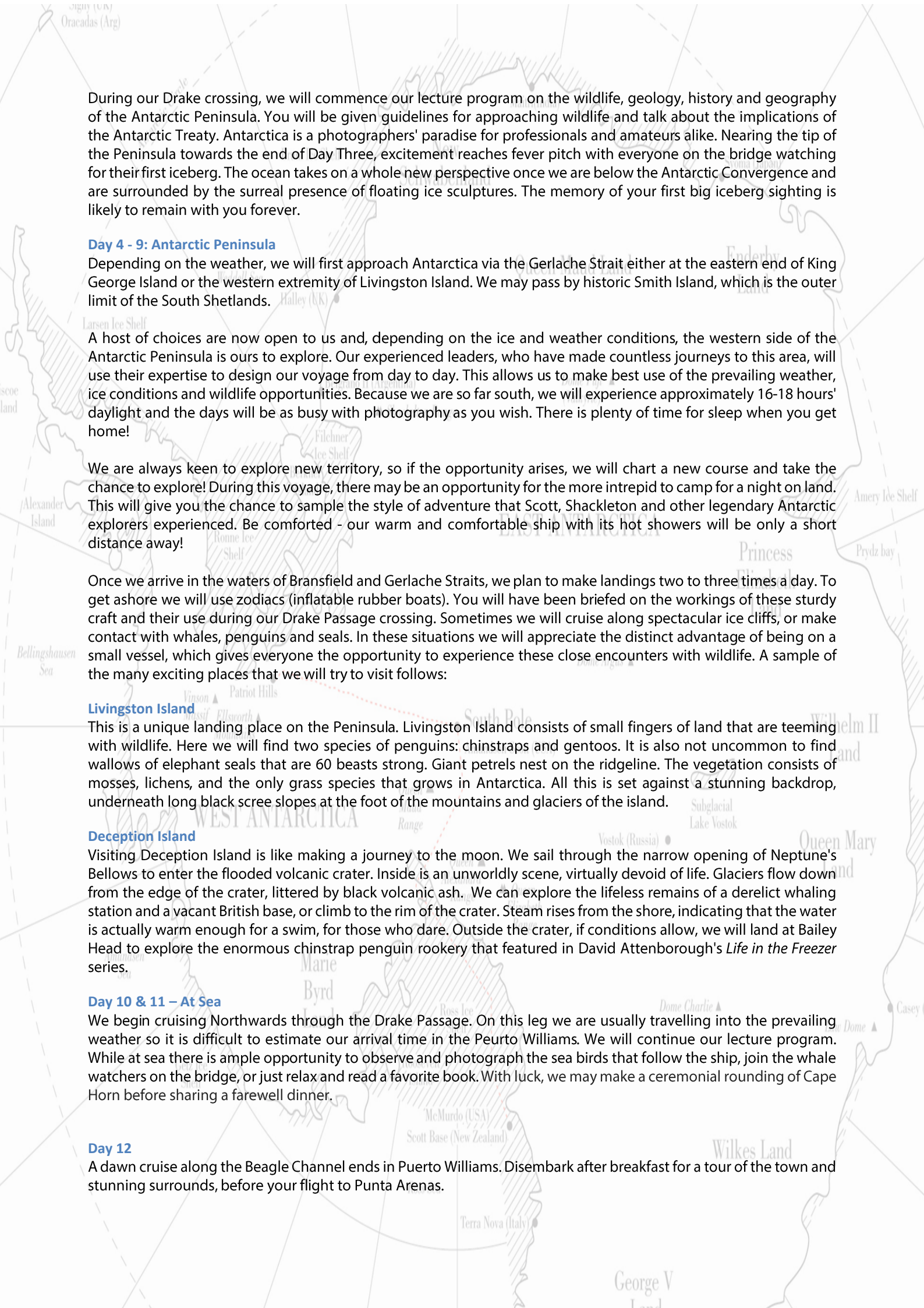
Day 1: Embark Ushuaia South America

After we gather in Ushuaia, and before departure, we will have time to explore the bustling community that lays claim to being the world's most southerly town. It sits beneath the spectacular mountains of Tierra del Fuego on the edge of the Beagle Channel. There are plenty of things to keep you occupied while waiting to board *Polar Pioneer* at 1600 (4pm). You could take a trip to the Lapataia National Park by train or bus, or visit the small museum, which has informative displays about the original inhabitants and the current population of Tierra del Fuego. There are fantastic photographic opportunities around the Andes Mountains where you can take a helicopter ride for some truly spectacular aerial photography. Ushuaia is a duty free port with a reputation for its Argentine chocolates, cheap alcohol, and leather goods, and it is a great place to buy souvenirs and presents. There are a host of excellent restaurants, whether you're looking for a quick coffee, an excellent meal of king crab, or an Argentine barbecue. After our competent Russian crew welcomes us aboard *Polar Pioneer*, we will settle into shipboard life as we sail down the Beagle Channel and enjoy our first meal on board.

Days 2 & 3: Drake Passage

Cape Horn, the most southerly point of the American continent, has stimulated the imagination of mankind since Sir Francis Drake inadvertently rounded it back in 1580. Some of us will approach this historic crossing with more than a little trepidation. But despite its reputation, there are many times when the Drake Passage resembles a lake, with lazy Southern Ocean swells rolling under the keel. On the other hand, we sometimes encounter rough crossings with large waves. The size of the waves and the force of the gale will take on gigantic proportions when related around the fire back home.

Polar Pioneer is not a luxury ship; she is homely and strong, built to be a research vessel and refitted to comfortable passenger standard in 2001. The mood on board is definitely casual. At sea we are totally self-sufficient. A favorite pastime on board is to stand at the stern watching and photographing the many seabirds, including majestic albatrosses and giant petrels following in our wake. They rise and fall skillfully, using air currents created by the ship to gain momentum.



During our Drake crossing, we will commence our lecture program on the wildlife, geology, history and geography of the Antarctic Peninsula. You will be given guidelines for approaching wildlife and talk about the implications of the Antarctic Treaty. Antarctica is a photographers' paradise for professionals and amateurs alike. Nearing the tip of the Peninsula towards the end of Day Three, excitement reaches fever pitch with everyone on the bridge watching for their first iceberg. The ocean takes on a whole new perspective once we are below the Antarctic Convergence and are surrounded by the surreal presence of floating ice sculptures. The memory of your first big iceberg sighting is likely to remain with you forever.

Day 4 - 9: Antarctic Peninsula

Depending on the weather, we will first approach Antarctica via the Gerlache Strait either at the eastern end of King George Island or the western extremity of Livingston Island. We may pass by historic Smith Island, which is the outer limit of the South Shetlands.

A host of choices are now open to us and, depending on the ice and weather conditions, the western side of the Antarctic Peninsula is ours to explore. Our experienced leaders, who have made countless journeys to this area, will use their expertise to design our voyage from day to day. This allows us to make best use of the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities. Because we are so far south, we will experience approximately 16-18 hours' daylight and the days will be as busy with photography as you wish. There is plenty of time for sleep when you get home!

We are always keen to explore new territory, so if the opportunity arises, we will chart a new course and take the chance to explore! During this voyage, there may be an opportunity for the more intrepid to camp for a night on land. This will give you the chance to sample the style of adventure that Scott, Shackleton and other legendary Antarctic explorers experienced. Be comforted - our warm and comfortable ship with its hot showers will be only a short distance away!

Once we arrive in the waters of Bransfield and Gerlache Straits, we plan to make landings two to three times a day. To get ashore we will use zodiacs (inflatable rubber boats). You will have been briefed on the workings of these sturdy craft and their use during our Drake Passage crossing. Sometimes we will cruise along spectacular ice cliffs, or make contact with whales, penguins and seals. In these situations we will appreciate the distinct advantage of being on a small vessel, which gives everyone the opportunity to experience these close encounters with wildlife. A sample of the many exciting places that we will try to visit follows:

Livingston Island

This is a unique landing place on the Peninsula. Livingston Island consists of small fingers of land that are teeming with wildlife. Here we will find two species of penguins: chinstraps and gentoos. It is also not uncommon to find wallows of elephant seals that are 60 beasts strong. Giant petrels nest on the ridgeline. The vegetation consists of mosses, lichens, and the only grass species that grows in Antarctica. All this is set against a stunning backdrop, underneath long black scree slopes at the foot of the mountains and glaciers of the island.

Deception Island

Visiting Deception Island is like making a journey to the moon. We sail through the narrow opening of Neptune's Bellows to enter the flooded volcanic crater. Inside is an unworldly scene, virtually devoid of life. Glaciers flow down from the edge of the crater, littered by black volcanic ash. We can explore the lifeless remains of a derelict whaling station and a vacant British base, or climb to the rim of the crater. Steam rises from the shore, indicating that the water is actually warm enough for a swim, for those who dare. Outside the crater, if conditions allow, we will land at Bailey Head to explore the enormous chinstrap penguin rookery that featured in David Attenborough's *Life in the Freezer* series.

Day 10 & 11 – At Sea

We begin cruising Northwards through the Drake Passage. On this leg we are usually travelling into the prevailing weather so it is difficult to estimate our arrival time in the Puerto Williams. We will continue our lecture program. While at sea there is ample opportunity to observe and photograph the sea birds that follow the ship, join the whale watchers on the bridge, or just relax and read a favorite book. With luck, we may make a ceremonial rounding of Cape Horn before sharing a farewell dinner.

Day 12

A dawn cruise along the Beagle Channel ends in Puerto Williams. Disembark after breakfast for a tour of the town and stunning surrounds, before your flight to Punta Arenas.

Fitness Requirements

This voyage is suitable for people of a wide range of ages and physical abilities. You are free to participate in whichever activity you choose. Less mobile clients are given the choice to land if they wish. If you decide to land, there are plenty of willing arms to lean on. If you require special assistance, please discuss this with one of our Expedition Experts at time of booking.

Passengers on our voyage to Antarctica should be capable of walking up and down the ship's gangway – equivalent to walking up and down a steep set of stairs (at times, the ship may be pitching and rolling), getting in and out of zodiacs with assistance from our staff, making their way across rock surfaces which can be wet and slippery at times, and walking on snow and ice.



Zodiac Cruising in Antarctica : Photograph Joshua Holko

YOUR INVESTMENT

Prices quoted are in US Dollars, per person, twin share. Single Occupancy is 1.7 times the twin share price. No single supplement applies if you are willing to share your cabin (triple and twin cabins only). Deposit to secure your place is \$1,250 USD with balance not due until 90 days before date of departure.

Please note that due to initial expressions of interest and registrations, there are only **limited places remaining. Some Cabin types are already sold out. Please contact us to confirm the cabin would like to book is available.**

CABINS

- o Triple Share Cabin \$8,700 per person
- o Twin Share Cabin \$10,290 per person
- o Twin Private \$11,550 per person
- o Mini-Suite \$12,900 per person
- o Captain's Suite \$14,290 per person

PAYMENT TERMS

A deposit of \$1,250 must be paid at time of registration to secure your place, with the balance due 90 DAYS prior to the expedition commencement. All payments are made directly to the expedition charter company.

EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS

- o Accommodation on board the *Polar Pioneer* and use of all public areas.
- o All meals on board.
- o All Photography guide services
- o All sightseeing, shore excursions, and zodiac rides as required for the cruise itinerary.
- o All port landing service charges imposed by local administrations and government authorities.
- o Lectures, DVDs, slide and film shows on board.
- o Service of the vessel's expedition staff.
- o Basic attention and treatment by the ship's medical staff.
- o Pre-departure information and briefing.
- o Transfer to Puerto Williams airport on day of *Polar Pioneer's* arrival only.
- o Flight from Puerto Williams to Punta Arenas

EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS

- o Air or land transportation to/from ship (except flight from Puerto Williams to Punta Arenas).
- o Excess baggage on any flights.
- o Vaccination costs / passport / visa fees (if required), airport departure tax, noise levy tax, government taxes.
- o Items of personal nature, laundry, bar charges, phone calls, cable / fax charges, etc.
- o Tips to on board service personnel.
- o Any travel or personal insurances or emergency evacuation charges.
- o Any hotels, meals, transfers or other services before or after the cruise.
- o Any medication or treatments by the ship's medical staff other than basic day-to-day necessities.
- o Emergency evacuation charges
- o Please note that travel insurance is mandatory

REQUEST A BOOKING

Please contact me via email at antony@antonywatson.com if you would like a booking and reservation form.



Green Ice and Pebbles Antarctica : Photograph Joshua Holko

TOUR LEADER – JOSHUA HOLKO

Born in Melbourne, Australia, I am a full-time professional landscape, nature and wilderness photographer. A passionate photographer, teacher and adventurer I run workshops and expeditions for other photographers and travellers to some of the world's wildest and remotest regions.

Specializing in the Polar and sub-Polar regions of the globe, my work celebrates the extreme latitudes of the Polar environment. An ambassador for the Polar Regions, I gave up the corporate world to pursue my true passion for photography. You are welcome to join me on a photographic trip of a lifetime to some of the most magical destinations on this planet.

Living in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, I studied with distinction at the Australian Photography Studies College and the Australian College of Journalism. I am a fully accredited associate member of the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP) and was selected to appear in their 'Look for the Logo' television campaign highlighting some of Australia's best photographers. In 2011, I was appointed as Australia's first and only Moab Master Photographer and Printer by Moab and Legion Paper in the USA.



TOUR LEADER – ANTONY WATSON

Born in Melbourne, Australia, I am a full-time professional photographer with a passion for photography and the environment. My work documents my interpretation of the dwindling vestiges of pristine wilderness and cultural diversity.

Leading Expeditions into the Polar Regions as well as Asia provides amazing opportunities to share these rare and amazing experiences with fellow photographers and travelers.

Residing in Melbourne Australia with my wife and two daughters, I graduated from Photography Studies College majoring in Commercial Photography. I am a full accredited member of the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP) having won awards at both the state and national level.

When not running photography expeditions, I work selectively for a number of commercial clients.



