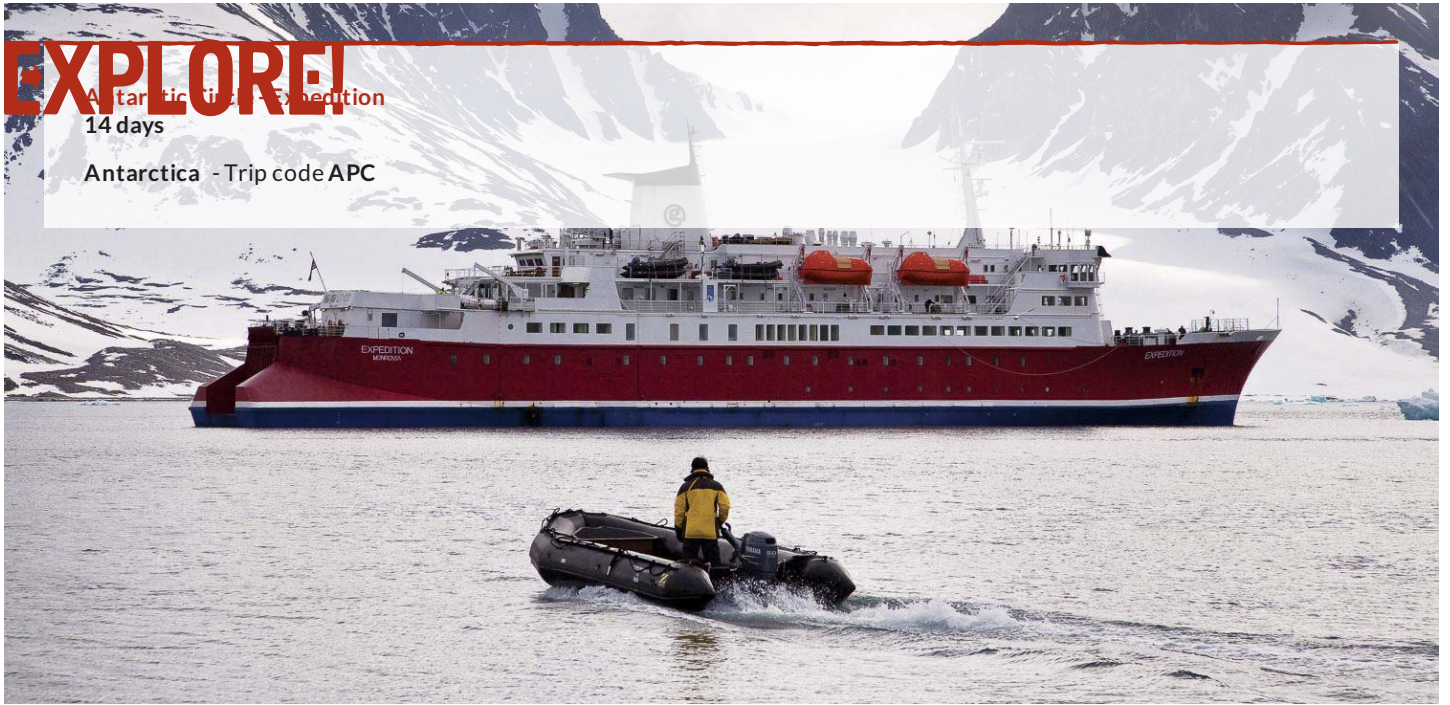


EXPLORE!

Antarctic Circle Expedition
14 days

Antarctica - Trip code APC



Antarctic Circle - Expedition

To the South Shetland Isles and Antarctic Peninsula.

From Ushuaia we navigate the Beagle Channel then head south across the Drake Passage and across the turbulent waters of the Antarctic Convergence. This meeting of cold polar water flowing north and warmer equatorial water moving south pushes nutrient rich waters to the surface, attracting a variety of seabirds, whales and other species. Reaching land at the South Shetland Islands we hope to sail into the flooded volcanic caldera of Deception Island. We continue to the peninsula and will revisit this area on our return. Ice-capped mountains, crevassed glaciers and endless white expanses herald our arrival in Antarctica. Possible landings include Paradise Harbour, Neko Harbour or Wilhelmina Bay and cruising Lemaire Channel, Errera Channel or Neumayer Channel. Scientific research stations and abandoned whaling stations will also be of interest. Conditions permitting, we'll attempt two excursions per day to explore the rich diversity of wildlife and potential wildlife sightings include Gentoo, Adelie and Chinstrap penguins, Fur, Leopard, Weddell and Crabeater seals, Minke and Humpback whales - and possibly even Orcas.

Polar Circle Crossing

We continue southward along the western coast of the Antarctic Peninsula, passing colossal icebergs and countless colonies of penguins. After attempting to cross the Polar Circle at 66°33'S. We will then turn north for the first time and head back through the 'inside passage' (pending ice conditions) to continue our exploration of the Antarctic peninsula.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Cross the Polar Circle** - a true expedition a little deeper into Antarctica
- ★ **Travel on a small ship** - allowing access to inhospitable areas
- ★ **Be encircled by rookeries of penguins** - chinstrap, Adelie and gentoo penguins
- ★ **Be dwarfed by colossal glaciers** - experience icebergs towering high above you
- ★ **Explore on shore** - aiming for two landings each day

For any questions about this trip contact one of our Adventure Travel Consultants on:

01252 884 243

See our opening hours

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Premium

Our premium accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

TRIP PACE:

Relaxed

You can enjoy easy-going activities and experiences on these Relaxed pace tours, with opportunities to absorb the sights and immerse yourself in the local surroundings, but still come home feeling relaxed and refreshed.

Itinerary

For any questions about this trip contact one of our Adventure Travel Consultants on:

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See our opening hours

DAY 1 - Arrive Ushuaia

Arrive into Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world. If you arrive in on this day, you will be transferred to your hotel and will have the evening at leisure to explore Ushuaia. The city has 40,000 inhabitants and is a major ski resort area for both alpine and cross-country skiers. It also offers magnificent hiking options in the nearby 'Parque Nacional Tierra del Fuego' - the only coastal national park in Argentina.



Accommodation: Hotel in Ushuaia to be confirmed (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Ushuaia

Group embarkation is set for 4:00 pm. The morning is free to do any last minute shopping or an optional excursion to the Terra Del Fuego National park or a good hike up to the Marshall Glacier. The evening is spent on board the ship watching the sunset over the Beagle Channel.

Please note while it is our intention to adhere to the itinerary described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. On the first day on board, your Expedition Leader will give you an expedition overview.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 3 - Drake Passage

Our adventure begins with a 400 mile crossing of the passage that bears the name of the 16th century English explorer Sir Francis Drake. The Expedition is at home in this part of the Southern Ocean, known for the unimpeded fetch of the winds that encircle the Antarctic. At some point on the second day we cross the Antarctic Convergence, a meeting of cold polar water flowing north and warmer equatorial water moving in the opposite direction. This mixing pushes nutrient rich waters to the surface attracting a variety of seabirds, whales and other species.

As we make the passage you have time to become acquainted with the ship and frequent the common areas that include the lounge, dining hall, library and lecture hall where we meet our guides, ship's crew and expedition staff. We also begin the lecture and information sessions to learn the extraordinary human and natural history of the Antarctic region.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - Drake Passage

As we make the passage you will have time to become acquainted with the ship and frequent the common areas that include the lounge, dining hall, library and lecture hall - where we meet our guides, ship's crew and expedition staff. We also begin the lecture and information sessions, to learn the extraordinary human and natural history of the Antarctic region.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 - Antarctic Peninsula & South Shetland Islands

This is what we've all been waiting for - a chance to step foot on the Great White Continent! Over the following days, we will navigate southwards making stops in the South Shetland Islands then through the Bransfield Strait and to the Antarctic Peninsula. Our goal is to attempt two excursions per day, while we navigate through the area, but our itinerary and daily schedule will be based on the local weather and ice conditions that we encounter.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Antarctic Peninsula & South Shetland Islands

The Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands abound with wildlife activity. Penguins gather with their fast-growing chicks, whales are seen in great numbers, seals haul out onto ice floes and beaches, and numerous albatross and other seabirds trail in our wake. There is plenty of time to enjoy the sheer beauty and the breathtaking scenery of ice-choked waterways, blue and white icebergs, impressive glaciers and rugged snow-capped mountains. The Peninsula also has a remarkable history and, during the voyage, we will learn about some of the most important and dramatic expeditions to this remote corner of the world. Keeping a lookout from the Bridge or the deck of the ship, as we thread our way along the continent, you'll feel the same sense of excitement as many of those early Explorers.

The continent itself is roughly circular with a spindly arm, called the Antarctic Peninsula, reaching northwards towards Tierra del Fuego. South America is the nearest landmass, some 600 miles away. Antarctica is a continent of superlatives. It is the coldest, windiest, iciest and highest of all the major landmasses in the world. It is the continent with the longest nights and the longest days and it is home to the world's greatest concentration of wildlife. It is also one of the last true wilderness areas left on earth - largely unchanged since the early Explorers and Whalers first landed on its inhospitable shores, less than two centuries ago.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 7 - Polar Circle Crossing

With a close eye on weather conditions, we set off southward along the western coast of the Antarctic Peninsula. Passing colossal icebergs and countless colonies of penguins we push on with our goal in mind - crossing the Antarctic Polar Circle.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 8 - Polar Circle Crossing

Few travellers have ventured this far south, but with our fully equipped ice-strengthened vessel and favourable sea conditions, we can access many remote locations other ships just can't reach.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 9 - Antarctic Peninsula

We will continue our exploration of the peninsula and then into the South Shetland, as we move north again. Keeping a close eye out for wildlife we might have the opportunity to do some whale watching or even go for a polar plunge in the Southern waters.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 10 - Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands

We will stop at various landing sights along the peninsula to visit penguin rookeries, where you will enjoy spotting a variety of breeds;- Adelie, chinstrap and gentoo - all very playful at this time of year ! We also hope to make a Continental landing and to include a visit to one of the Scientific research stations, giving you further insight into 'Life in Antarctica' for those who live here year-round.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 11 - Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands

Our final day in the White Continent will be spent in the South Shetland Islands, where you may be able to visit the volcanic landing sites of Half Moon Island and Deception Island. Here you will find black sandy beaches surrounded by dramatic, craggy rock faces. There is an abundance of chinstrap penguins in this area, easily identifiable by the thin black band that runs under their chin.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 12 - The Drake Passage

Today we head back north and begin our journey back to our home port of Ushuaia.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 13 - The Drake Passage

Our final day at sea is a perfect time to reflect on our memorable adventure. Our guides and lecturers will be on hand to review the highlights of our sensational Antarctic experience.



Accommodation: Expedition (or similar)



Premium Boat



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 14 - Depart Ushuaia

And so our adventure comes to a close. We'll say our goodbyes as we disembark in Ushuaia in the morning, after breakfast on board the ship. If you are departing Ushuaia on this day, you will be transferred to the airport for your onward flight.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

Polar information

Ship information

At a nimble 105 metres (345 ft) in length, with a capacity to hold 132 guests, the Expedition is an ideal vessel to ply polar waters. The ship is large enough to provide stability, speed, spacious cabins and ample public space, yet she is small enough to manoeuvre in remote areas and get you close to the action. Ship stabilizers ensure a smooth ride in rough waters, such as the infamous Drake Passage, allowing you to enjoy more of your time at sea. A fleet of ten zodiacs allows passengers to get out and actively explore the remote shores of our destinations. The Expedition is a speedy vessel. A top speed of 16 knots means you'll spend less time getting from A to B, and more time to explore your surroundings.



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 13
Lunch: 11
Dinner: 12



Transport

Expedition
Zodiac



Trip staff

Expedition Crew
Naturalist(s)



Accommodation

12 nights premium boat
1 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

Antarctica

Climate

Polar Temperatures during Antarctic season: Min.: -15°C; Max. 12°C; Average 0°C.

Time difference to GMT

-3

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

To add to your polar adventure, take to a kayak for an eye-to-eye view with seals and whales or camp in some of the most remote and beautiful places on earth.

Kayaking is available as an optional excursion on your Antarctica trip for GBP 839 per person.
Camping is available as an optional excursion on our Antarctica trips for GBP 249 per person.

You must book prior to travel and space is limited - so book early to secure your place! Please speak to one of our polar experts to request availability.

Clothing

Dress on board is informal. Pack comfortable, casual clothing for all activities. Wind and waterproof outer layers are essential, and the most important piece of clothing you will bring is a parka. Beware of tight clothing that leaves no room for trapped air, which is an excellent insulator. Wool, silk and some of the new synthetic fibres, like polar fleece, retain heat better than cotton.

Parkas

This will be provided by the ship operator. Please register your size with us before travel and we will arrange for your parka to be available in your cabin on arrival.

Gloves

Keeping your hands warm and dry can be a challenge. Thin polypropylene gloves can be worn underneath warm outergloves. This allows you some protection from the cold when removing your gloves to operate your camera etc. We strongly recommend that you bring more than one pair of gloves, in case one gets wet (or lost).

Hat/Cap

Warm, woollen hat/cap to protect your ears, as well as a scarf, neck gaiter or other face protection, such as a balaclava.

Trousers

Water-resistant trousers of coated nylon or, even better, Gore-Tex® are essential for your comfort. They can be worn over your regular clothes to keep you warm and dry. We suggest that you purchase trousers a few sizes larger than you normally wear as you will be wearing them over other clothing. Gore-Tex® or similar fabrics are excellent for keeping out wind and water without trapping excess heat. Rain gear and Gore-Tex® products can be found in any outdoor sport clothing store. In addition to your waterproof trousers, warm ski pants are suggested if you have them. Warm trousers such as jeans, corduroys etc are also good.

Socks

Warm wool socks worn over a thin pair of silk, polypropylene socks should provide enough warmth and insulation for your feet. Bring several pairs of socks, since you will inevitably get your feet wet.

Outer Clothing

Woollen, knit or cotton sweaters/tops, polar fleece tops (medium weight), several cotton turtlenecks and T-shirts for layering on and off the ship.

Underclothing

Thermal underwear is highly recommended as it will keep you warm without adding bulk. Most polar travellers prefer a lightweight version.

Footwear

Complimentary, used waterproof boots will be supplied onboard. However, guests might want to bring their own if they are the following sizes due to the limited quantities onboard:

- men's UK size 12 & 13 1/2

- women's UK size below three & seven and above

Guests must bring their own if they are:

- men's UK size six 1/2 or smaller

- men's UK size 13 1/2 or larger

- women's UK size two or smaller

- women's UK size nine 1/2 or larger

These are rubber, waterproof boots that are just below your knees with a strong, ridged non-skid sole.

You usually have to step from the Zodiac into icy water up to 30 cm high on most landings. Do not bring heavy, cumbersome boots that make it difficult to walk or boots with metal cleats as they cannot be used for landings. For maximum warmth, wear loose-fitting boots and two pairs of socks. Try out your boots before the voyage.

Luggage

15Kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Please note that a 15kgs luggage weight limit is sporadically enforced on the internal flight to Ushuaia, occasionally charges may be levied against passengers taking luggage in excess of 15kgs.

Equipment

Sunglasses and sun cream

Personal toiletries

A refillable water bottle

Books/reading material

Camera and memory cards (and something to protect the camera when out in the elements)

Seasickness remedy

Walking poles

Personal First Aid

Tipping

Local crew

Tipping is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. It is an expression of satisfaction.

The suggested amount is USD \$10 - 15 per person per day spent on board. Of course, tipping is a personal choice and the suggested amount is set only as a guideline. The money is collected by the Hotel Manager at the end of the voyage and distributed among the crew and Expedition Staff. The Officers choose not to participate in the tipping pool.

Country Information

Antarctica

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Foreign Exchange

Recommended Currency For Exchange

A combination of US dollars cash and cards is best. It is advisable to take a minimum of US\$200-500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations (notes should be in good condition).

Where To Exchange

Banks or Forex offices in major cities.

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on credit or debit cards from ATMs in major cities

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a service charge. The ship accepts Visa and Mastercard.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be difficult to exchange and are not accepted aboard.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Expedition, Zodiac

Ship description

At a nimble 105 metres (345 ft) in length, with a capacity to hold 132 guests, the Expedition is an ideal vessel to ply polar waters. The ship is large enough to provide stability, speed, spacious cabins and ample public space, yet she is small enough to manoeuvre in remote areas and get you close to the action. Ship stabilizers ensure a smooth ride in rough waters, such as the infamous Drake Passage, allowing you to enjoy more of your time at sea. A fleet of ten zodiacs allows passengers to get out and actively explore the remote shores of our destinations. The Expedition is a speedy vessel. A top speed of 16 knots means you'll spend less time getting from A to B, and more time to explore your surroundings.

Cabins

Prices are based on the use of outward facing, category one cabins on the lower deck. Category one cabins are triple or quad share. They are comfortable with a private toilet and shower, and porthole. The Expedition has a number of different cabin categories, all outside facing and with two beds (apart from suites which have queen size beds). Some have larger windows. We can also offer single occupancy, subject to availability. Call us for details on the cabin choice to fit your requirements.

Ship dining

Onboard our expedition ship you'll find a diversity of gourmet international cuisines prepared and catered by professional chefs; all meals are included in the price of your expedition. Dining is casual, tables are unassigned and the dining room is capable of seating the entire passenger complement at one time. There is always a selection of different meals available, and vegetarians will find plenty of options. Special dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice; please advise us at time of confirmation. Coffee, tea and water are all provided free of charge. All other beverages, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, are not

included and can be purchased in the dining room, pub or in the lounge.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): you will need to apply for an ESTA if you are transiting the USA as you will have to disembark and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel.

Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan in the past five years or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel under the Visa Waiver Programme. Instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

For further information please check out the US embassy website.

Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Antarctica

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.