



AUSTRALIS®
CAPE HORN & PATAGONIA



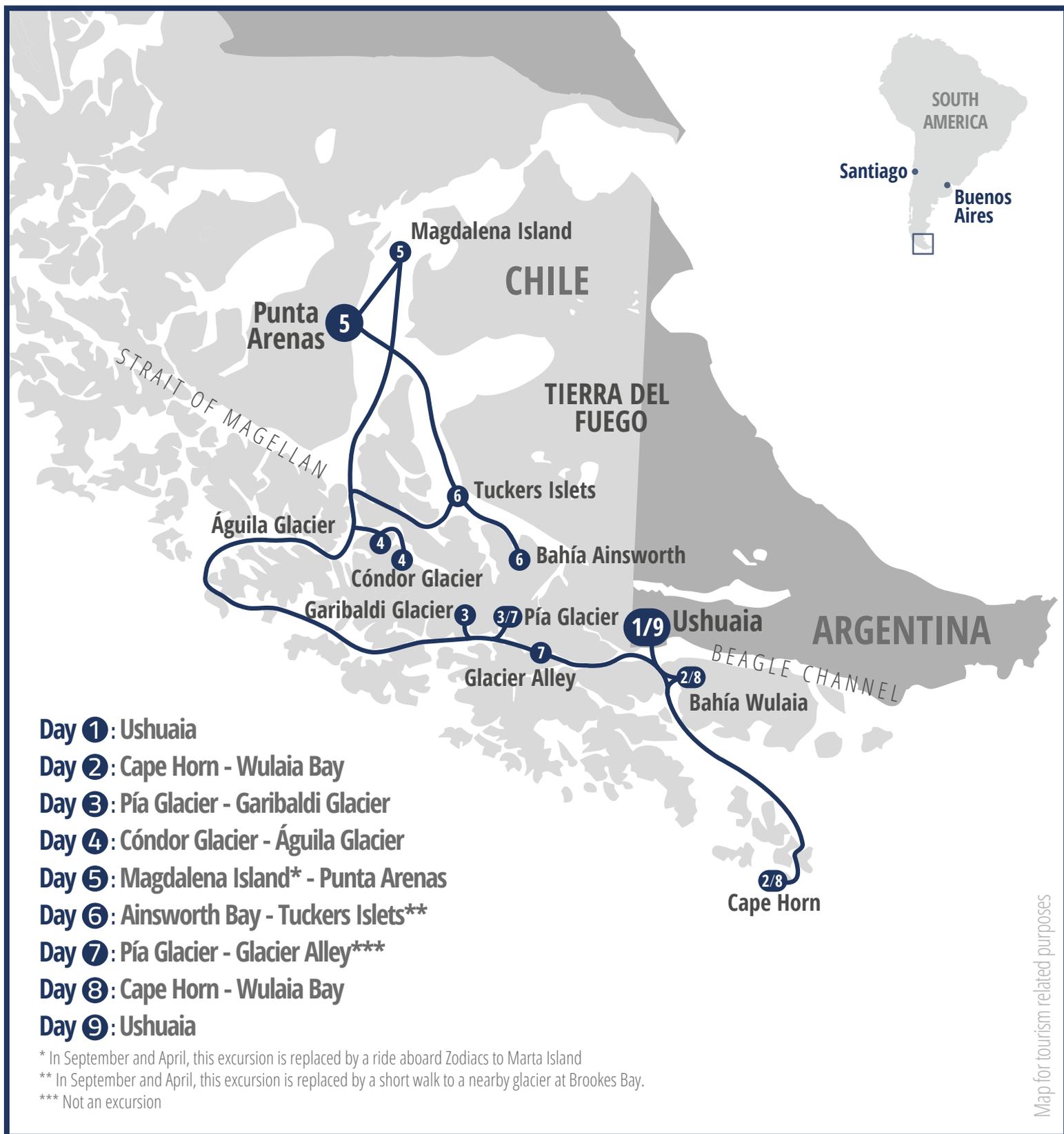
Round Trip Route

USHUAIA - PUNTA ARENAS - USHUAIA | 8 NIGHTS

Darwin's Route from Ushuaia

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Map



Map for tourism related purposes



AUSTRALIS
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Day 1: Ushuaia

Check in at 409 San Martín Ave. in downtown Ushuaia between 10:00 and 17:00 (10 AM-5 PM) on the day of your cruise departure. Board the Australis at 18:00 (6 PM). After a welcoming toast and introduction of captain and crew, the ship departs for one of the most remote corners of planet Earth. During the night we traverse the Beagle Channel and cross from Argentina into Chilean territorial waters. The lights of Ushuaia disappear as we turn into the narrow Murray Channel between Navarino and Hoste islands.



Day 2: Cape Horn & Wulaia Bay

By early morning, Stella Australis is cruising across Nassau Bay into the remote archipelago that includes Cape Horn National Park. Australis is the only expedition cruise ship company with permission from Chilean authorities to navigate the Murray Channel to Cape Horn, and because of its concession the only travel company allowed to land passengers at Wulaia Bay.

Weather and sea conditions permitting, we shall go ashore on the windswept island that harbors legendary Cape Horn (Cabo de Hornos). Discovered in 1616 by a Dutch maritime expedition -- and named after the town of Hoorn in West Friesland -- Cape Horn is a sheer 425-meter (1,394-foot) high rocky promontory overlooking the turbulent waters of the Drake Passage. For many years it was the only navigation route between the Pacific and Atlantic, and was often referred to as the "End of the Earth." The park was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2005. The Chilean navy maintains a permanent lighthouse on the island, staffed by a lightkeeper and his family, as well as the tiny Stella Maris Chapel and modern Cape Horn Monument.

Sailing back across Nassau Bay, we anchor at fabled Wulaia Bay, one of the few places in the archipelago where the human history is just as compelling as the natural environment. Originally the site of one of the region's largest Yámana aboriginal settlements, the bay was described by Charles Darwin and sketched by Captain FitzRoy in the 1830s during their voyages on HMS Beagle. This area is also renowned for the mesmerizing beauty and dramatic geography. After a visit to the Australis-sponsored small museum in the old radio station -- which is especially strong on the Yámana people and European missionaries in the area -- passengers have a choice of three hikes (of increasing degrees of difficulty) that ascend the heavily wooded mountain behind the bay. On all of these you will be strolling through an enchanted Magellan forest of lengas, coigües, canelos, ferns, and other endemic fauna to reach a panoramic viewpoint overlooking the bay.



Day 3: Pía Glacier – Garibaldi Glacier

Overnight we sail around the western end of Tierra del Fuego via the very narrow Gabriel Channel, Magdalena Channel and Cockburn Channel. After rounding the remote Brecknock Peninsula, Australis tacks eastward and enters the Beagle Channel again. By morning we are entering Pia Fjord and boarding the Zodiacs for a shore excursion to Pia Glacier. After disembarking we take a short hike to gain a panoramic view of the spectacular glacier, which extends from the mountaintops down to the sea or a longer much more difficult walk up a lateral moraine of the old Pia Glacier.

No one knows for certain how the hulking mass of snow and ice got its feminine moniker, but one theory says it was named for Princess Maria Pia of Savoy (1847-1911), daughter of the Italian king.

Making our way further west along the Beagle Channel, we enter another long fjord and drop anchor near Garibaldi Glacier for another shore excursion. Garibaldi is one of only three glaciers in Patagonia gaining mass rather than staying the same or slowly shrinking. This time we hike through virgin Magellanic forest to a glacial waterfall, a towering wall of ferns and moss, and spectacular viewpoints looking down on the glacier and fjord. The walk is demanding -- very steep, negligible trail, rough footing -- and not for everyone. For those who choose to stay onboard, our captain will point the bow towards the beautiful sky blue Garibaldi Glacier so everyone can enjoy the panoramic view from the upper decks.



Day 4: Agostini Sound – Águila Glacier – Cóndor Glacier

Early in the morning, we will sail through the Cockburn Channel and enter Agostini Sound. From there it is possible to see the glaciers that descend from the middle of the Darwin Mountain Range -- some of them reaching the water. This morning, we will disembark and go for an easy walk around a lagoon, which was formed by the melting of the Águila Glacier. We will reach a spot right in front of that glacier with stunning views. In the afternoon, we will approach the Condor Glacier via Zodiac -- and hopefully see some of the abundant Andean Condors in the area.



Day 5: Magdalena Island - Punta Arenas

After an overnight cruise through Magdalena Channel and back into the Strait of Magellan, we anchor off Magdalena Island, which lies about halfway between Tierra del Fuego and the Chilean mainland. Crowned by a distinctive lighthouse, the island used to be an essential source of supplies for navigators and explorers and is inhabited by an immense colony of Magellanic penguins. At the break of dawn, weather permitting, we go ashore and hike a path that leads through thousands of penguins to a small museum lodged inside the vintage 1902 lighthouse. Many other bird species are also found on the island. In September and April -- when the penguins dwell elsewhere -- this excursion is replaced by a ride aboard Zodiacs to Marta Island to observe South American sea lions. After a short cruise south along the strait, disembarkation at Punta Arenas is scheduled for around 11:30 AM.

Board at 6 PM. After a welcoming toast and introduction of captain and crew, the ship departs for one of the remotest corners of planet Earth. During the night we cross the Strait of Magellan and enter the labyrinth of channels that define the southern extreme of Patagonian. The twinkling lights of Punta Arenas gradually fade into the distance as we enter the Whiteside Canal between Darwin Island and Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego.

***Camera extension poles are prohibited on Magdalena Island**



Day 6: Ainsworth Bay - Tuckers Islets

By dawn the ship is sailing up Admiralty Sound (Seno Almirantazgo), a spectacular offshoot of the Strait of Magellan that stretches nearly halfway across Tierra del Fuego. The snowcapped peaks of Karukinka Natural Park stretch along the north side of the sound, while the south shore is defined by the deep fjords and broad bays of Alberto de Agostini National Park. We go ashore at Ainsworth Bay, which harbors copious bird life and a colony of southern elephant seals which can sometimes be spotted from the Zodiacs. Two guided excursions are available: one is along the edge of a stream, peat bog and beaver habitat to a waterfall-and-moss-covered rock face tucked deep inside a pristine sub-polar forest; the other is a more strenuous hike along the crest of a glacial moraine. Both afford views of Marinelli Glacier and the Darwin Mountains.

Leaving Ainsworth Bay behind, we sail west along the sound to the Tucker Islets. After lunch, we board the Zodiacs again for a close-up view of the Magellan penguins that inhabit the tiny islands. More than 4,000 penguins use Tucker as a place to nest, give birth and nurture their chicks. Many other bird species also frequent the area including king cormorants, oystercatchers, Chilean skuas, kelp geese, dolphin gulls, eagles and even the occasional Andean condor. In September and April -- when the penguins live elsewhere -- this excursion is replaced by a short walk to a glacier at nearby stunning Brookes Bay.



Day 7: Pia Glacier - Glacier Alley

Overnight we sail around the western end of Tierra del Fuego via the very narrow Gabriel Channel, Magdalena Channel and Cockburn Channel. After rounding the remote Brecknock Peninsula, Stella Australis tacks eastward and enters the Beagle Channel again. By morning we are entering Pia Fjord and boarding the Zodiacs for a shore excursion to Pia Glacier. After disembarking we take a short hike to gain a panoramic view of the spectacular glacier, which extends from the mountaintops down to the sea or a longer much more difficult walk up a lateral moraine of the old Pia Glacier.

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Back onboard the ship, we continue east along the Beagle Channel through an area called Glacier Alley. Living up to its name, the passage features a number of impressive tidewater glaciers flowing down from the Darwin Mountains and Darwin Ice Sheet on the north shore. Most of them named after European countries -- Holland, Italy, Germany, Spain and France.



Day 8: Wulaia Bay - Cape Horn

During the morning we will be sailing through Murray Channel, going ashore at historical Wulaia Bay, originally the site of one of the region's largest Yamana aboriginal settlements. Charles Darwin landed there in 1833 during his voyage on the HMS Beagle. This area is also renowned for the mesmerizing beauty of its vegetation and geography. We will take an enchanted walk through the Magellan Forest of lengas, coigües, canelos, ferns, and other endemic vegetation, to reach a panoramic viewpoint. In the afternoon we will go South through Nassau Bay to reach Cape Horn National Park, where, weather permitting, we shall go ashore. The legendary Cape Horn was discovered in 1616 and is a sheer 425-meter (1,394-foot) high rocky promontory. For many years it was an important navigation route between the Pacific and the Atlantic, and is referred to as the 'End of the Earth'. The park was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2005.



Día 9: Ushuaia

Arrival in Ushuaia, Argentina's most important city in Tierra del Fuego, and the southernmost city in the world.

Disembarking is scheduled at 8:00 a.m



IMPORTANT: The itinerary of the 8-night route, Ushuaia - Punta Arenas - Ushuaia repeats excursions on days 2 and 8 landing on Cape Horn and Wulaia Bay.

NOTE: The excursions described in the itineraries can usually be carried out without any problems. Nevertheless, the shipowner holds the right to alter, change or skip certain portions of the itinerary without prior notice, whether motivated by the passengers' well-being and safety, by the appropriate protection of the environment, or in case of any extraordinary event, unforeseeable circumstance or force majeure. For this reason, departures or arrival may be subject to change. Furthermore, sighting of birds and other species cannot be guaranteed as their exact location is variable by nature.

During the cruise members of Australis expedition teams will host interesting presentations on the wildlife, history and geography of this legendary region. The presentations will take place both on board (with audio-visual support) and on land.

Navigation Route

It is the first lecture that is given to passengers and its objective is to present the region and Patagonia to the world, showing where we are and where we will be going day-to-day on our cruise, places we will visit, climate, suggested clothes for excursions, possible sightings etc...

Glaciology in Patagonia

More than any other earth force, glaciation shaped the spectacular landscapes of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego. This lecture and slideshow details the natural process that created the glaciers, ice fields, moraines and U-shaped valleys that we observe from the ship and during shore excursions. While explaining glacier origin, forms, colors and former/current conditions, the presentation also delivers an important message about caring for the environment and our planet.

Discovering Tierra del Fuego

Presentation on the famous navigators and naturalists who explored Tierra Del Fuego between the 16th and 19th centuries, and in doing so came across a number of different indigenous groups. The presentation examines how the British visitors Phillip Parker King, Pringle Stokes, Charles Darwin, and Sir Francis Drake, the Dutchmen Wilhem Schouten and Jacob LeMaire, the French explorer Bouganville, and the Spaniards Ferdinand Magellan, Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa and the Nodal brothers, interacted with the Patagones (Aónikenk), Ona (Selk'nam), Yámana (Yaghan), Alacalufes (Kawéskar) and Haush (Manekenk).

Informative Progress

Detailed information on next day activities, with maps of the route and pictures we pretend to inform the passengers of activities for the following day.

Cape Horn

This lecture reveals the reason why Cape Horn (Cabo de Hornos) is such a legendary geographic feature. In addition to various aspects of the cape's natural and human history, the presentation includes precise instructions for landing at Cape Horn (weather and water permitting).

Patagonia from Ice to Flowers

This presentation details the evolution of local flora after the last Ice Age, which covered more than 60% of Patagonia. It also discusses some of the more important trees, shrubs, flowers and plants that inhabit Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego today.

Magellanic Penguins

Prior to visiting their colony, learn everything you always wanted to know about Magellanic penguins including facts about their migration cycle, nest construction, reproduction, nutrition and how they nurture their chicks. Around 60,000 pairs nest of Magdalena Island between October and March. They nest in burrows, taking turns incubating the eggs, raising the chicks and venturing into the frigid water for food.

Strait of Magellan

Historical review of the great navigators and explorers who dared to sail in the southern seas, analyzing contemporary factors during the Age of Exploration that prompted these audacious maritime expeditions and how the results of their discoveries changed the maps of the world. The lecture is based upon historic maps and navigation charts from ancient Greece through the 20th century, as well as the exploits of Marco Polo, Bartolomé Dias, Christopher Columbus, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, Ferdinand Magellan, Sir Francis Drake and those who followed them in discovering the planet's most important ocean passages.

NOTE: The presentations described in the itineraries can normally be, and are frequently, carried out. Without prejudice to the aforesaid, the shipowner reserve the right to reschedule shorten or alter all or part of itineraries and/or excursions without previous notice.