

PRESS KIT 2019



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ONE OF THE GREAT TRAVEL EXPERIENCES IN SOUTHERN PATAGONIA



Since 1990, Australis has been voyaging the waters of Cape Horn, the Beagle Channel and Strait of Magellan in the company of fellow nature lovers, taking them to one of the world's most remote, and most beautiful regions. Our journeys, through the fjords of both Chilean and Argentine Patagonia, allow our travelling guests the chance to witness some truly exceptional landscapes, natural wonders and wildlife alike. Whether that's the Pia Glacier, Wulaia Bay or perhaps following in the footsteps of Darwin on the Tucker Islands, each Australis cruise is filled with one exciting sight after another on both land and sea, hiking to see colonies of Magellan Penguins, nesting Cormorants and so much more.

This connection with the landscape and its wild inhabitants has led Australis to form a unique partnership with not just the wildlife, but also scientific communities and groups keen on preserving the natural world, protecting species and enforcing ambitious environmental policies across the region

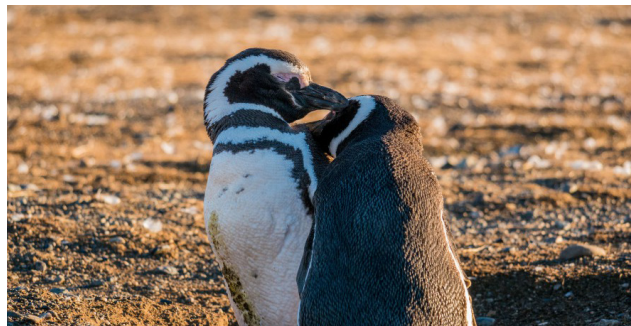


Australis S.A. Holding is a Chilean Shipping company owned by the Lecaros-Menéndez family, descendants of early settlers in the region. This family group employ nearly 7,000 people worldwide as in addition to the Patagonian cruise ships, they also own, run or operate salmon fisheries, real estate, hotels, the largest travel agency in Patagonia, Comapa; and the ferry company, Navimag.

What's more, thanks to decades of experience navigating the little-visited and remote channels of this part of Patagonia, Australis as a company have built up a wealth of knowledge and understanding of the natural world. With every journey, both passengers and expert guides will learn something new about the glaciology, biodiversity, ethnography and wildlife habitats of the area.

The Australis fleet is designed especially for the safe, environmentally-conscious navigation of these narrow waterways and canals. There are two ships, each offering 100 cabins split over three decks, meaning that every passenger has an intimate experience of first the landscape and wildlife that lives here, though also the guides, staff and crew, interacting with them on a day-to-day basis and gaining insight into their commitment to protecting these lands.

Between the two boats, Stella Australis and the recently inaugurated Ventus Australis, they embark on four departures per week from either Punta Arenas or Ushuaia during the sailing season, which runs from September to April. Both offer 4-night/5-day cruise itineraries that, among other attractions, includes Tierra del Fuego, disembarkation at Cape Horn and the Darwin Mountain Range, Águila Glacier and plenty more highlights of Tierra del Fuego, on the frontier between Chile and Argentina.





2020: Celebrating 500 years of exploring the Strait of Magellan

This unmistakable strait, in the heart of the Chilean fjords, owes its name to Portuguese explorer Ferdinand de Magellan, the first to discover this 564km (350 mile) natural crossing between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, separating Tierra del Fuego from the extreme south of the Americas. Commissioned by King Charles V of Spain, Magellan's fleet of five ships were tasked with navigating a westward route to the Spice Islands of Indonesia, which meant passing through Patagonia and ultimately, the Strait (of Magellan). This maze of channels, islets and fjords was already known to exist at the time, though it was also thought impenetrable until the 1st November 1520, when Magellan and his fleet successfully steered a route through the strait and out the other side.

This massive and dangerous undertaking finally connected the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. Today, the Australis voyages through the Strait of Magellan are far less precarious, though no less exciting, for the incredible landscapes, icebergs and glaciers as well as the wildlife, such as Magellanic Penguins on the Tucker Islands and Isla Magdalena, plus the only King Penguin colony in the Americas, at Vain Bay's aptly named 'Penguin Park'.

Australis Celebrates World Penguin Day

It may sound like a bit of fun, and of course we try to keep the mood light, but on the 25th April every year the world of environmental NGOs come together to celebrate World Penguin Day, an essential recognition of this much-loved species being directly threatened by climate change. The sad truth is that global warming affects the natural habitat of penguins all over the globe, though especially here in Patagonia through both the availability of food and structure of their natural habitat. These fragile creatures, specifically Magellanic Penguins, can be found in Tierra del Fuego, the Tucker Islands and Isla Magdalena, all of which are visited during an Australis cruise for the spectacle of seeing such a majestic species in its native habitat, though also an awareness of their struggles.

In 1990, when Australis first began its operations, there was a colony of 6,000 penguins on Isla Magdalena, but this number was consistently declining year after year. Finally, thanks to monitoring and improved record keeping it was discovered that fishermen were killing the penguins to use their meat as bait, attracting crabs that were then sold on local markets. This prompted local authorities to act, enforcing rules and watches to monitor the area and today, more than 120,000 penguins thrive in this area, an initiative that Australis cares deeply about.

The Art of Photography

This remote region of Patagonia is picture-perfect, some of the most stunning scenery on earth. And with that in mind, there's no better way to capture it all than with the help of a professional photographer, so Ventus Australis has recently begun operating photo workshops during special tours in 2019. In the company of multi-award-winning National Geographic photographer Nori Jemil, lucky guests will get the chance to learn tips and tricks from the best, understand the proper use of light, angles and lenses to get the best possible pictures of Patagonia during their tour. This small group adventure is an exclusive, once-in-a-lifetime experience to not only enjoy the magic of an Australis cruise, but also learn an invaluable skill from one of the world's best photographers along the way.



PATAGONIA: THE LAND OF FIRE BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND CHILE



Patagonia is roughly the size of France, and stretches between Argentina and Chile in the extreme depths of South America. With a modest population of just over 4 million and a density of 3.8 inhabitants per square kilometre, Patagonia is actually one of the least populated places on earth. This stunningly beautiful landscape is known for its varied and dramatic geography, huge glaciers, native forests and uniquely adapted wildlife that can be seen while navigating the fjords and canals aboard an Australis ship, though also during on-land excursions. Passengers can witness sea lions, beavers, whales, dolphins and one of the largest penguin colonies in the southern hemisphere, as well as a huge variety of bird species including gulls, terns, giant petrels, cormorants, albatrosses, ducks and condors.

Magellan’s sub-Antarctic region also includes some of the most unique ecosystems anywhere in the world, found between the 52° and 56°S latitudes, such as the most southernly forests on earth which hold immeasurable value when it comes to biodiversity and understanding the wildlife here, given that they are totally untouched by man.

CHILE : CAPE HORNS, THE MEETING POINT OF TWO GREAT OCEANS

Cape Horn – some 250km south of the Strait of Magellan – has been a UNESCO-stamped biosphere since 2005, though this mythical region in the Tierra del Fuego archipelago has been catching the imagination of intrepid explorers since its discovery in 1616. The reason this part of the world holds such status is the ferocity of the climate, conditions and dramatic geology that both reminds you of your place in it all, as well as leaving with a real sense of awe and wonder, such is the remoteness, beauty and power of this untamed region. There’s nothing quite like the spectacle of the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean’s meeting point, as these choppy seas throw up their fair share of difficult conditions for even the most experienced of sailors, only adding to the legend of Cape Horn.

ARGENTINA : USHUAIA, THE SOUTHERNMOST CITY IN THE WORLD

Founded on the 12th of October 1884, Ushuaia is known as the ‘End of the World’, the southernmost city on earth and launch point for trips to the South Pole. Today the population numbers around 65,000, and upon its founding was one of the first meeting points between the native Yamanas people and arriving pioneers; in fact the name Ushuaia was taken from a Yamanas word at the time. The landscape here is truly wild, a mix of windswept coastline and formidable mountains, making for one of the last true experiences of the untouched natural world that is worth spending the time to admire, before venturing into the famous Beagle Channel.



THE HISTORY OF CAPE HORN



DESCUBRIMIENTO: HACE MÁS DE 400 AÑOS

More than 400 years ago, back in 1614, Dutch sailors Jacob Le Maire and Willem Schouten led a pioneering expedition to East Asia and the Pacific from the city of Hoorn, just north of Amsterdam, along with a few ship owners and merchants. Their goal was to break into the Dutch commerce market which up until then was entirely monopolised by the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC), which Jacob's father, Isaac, had actually co-founded (though he was later kicked out). Isaac wanted to establish a new route to the Spice Islands of Indonesia and the Pacific Ocean, so his son Jacob was put in charge of this ground-breaking navigation along with the esteemed captain, Willem Schouten, who together would travel through uncharted territory: the turbulent waters of deepest America.

Two ships – the Hoorn and the Eendracht – set off from the Texel port in June 1615. Devastatingly, the Hoorn vessel was engulfed in a fire during a stop-off in Puerto Deseado, Argentina, so the expedition was forced to continue aboard just one ship. The Eendracht and its crew sailed further south, bypassing the Strait of Magellan and heading deeper into unknown territory, finally rounding the tip of South America via turbulent waters, past land that was barren and covered in snow, on 29th January 1616, after weeks of challenging navigation. They named this land Cape Horn after the pioneers' hometown and the ship they had lost along the way.

By navigating this territory, Schouten and Le Maire had opened up a new route to the Pacific and East Indies. However, after successfully reaching the Spice Islands, the VOC did not believe that they had found another route, but rather that they had sailed the Strait of Magellan which was under the VOC's control. As such, they were arrested, while their goods and trusty ship were confiscated.

To this day, Cape Horn is considered to be one of the most difficult maritime passages in the world; the equivalent of climbing Mount Everest.

THE LIGHTHOUSE OF CAPE HORN

The Lighthouse of Cape Horn is inhabited by a single sailor throughout the year, commissioned by the Chilean Navy who designate one officer to monitor maritime traffic and guide ships through dangerous conditions, high winds and adverse weather for a year, before passing the responsibilities on. Another important part of this role is, of course, welcoming visitors to the lighthouse, so lucky Australis guests will get to witness the stark conditions of daily life here, between September and April when the seas are calm enough to sail. The rest of the year, these brave lighthouse keepers are left alone, with limited opportunities to refuel or stock up on supplies, though they do often have their families with them; it's a fascinating experience

CAPE HORN MONUMENT

On the 5th December 1992, the Cape Horn Monument was erected on order of the Chilean Brotherhood of Captains, in memory of all the courageous sailors who lost their lives to the dangerous southern seas off Cape Horn. This giant 7m monument, depicting an abstract albatross in flight, was the work of sculptor José Balcells Eyquem, made with the help of the Chilean Navy over the course of a month in difficult conditions – including winds of up to 200km per hour! The result is an everlasting coastal homage to these brave comrades that certainly warrants a visit.



EXCURSIONS INTO CHILEAN PATAGONIA



Australis ships wave the Chilean flag, which means that they can drop passengers off in places other companies are simply not able, because they do not have the same permits that Australis has access to. One such destination in Chilean Patagonia is the Wulaia Bay concession (which Australis actually owns); a historic archaeological site where the Yamanas indigenous people once lived. There's an old radio building here that has been transformed into an interesting museum showcasing the ethnological aspects of the region, making for a fascinating visit that details the turbulent history of this bay and its native inhabitants.

During the cruise expeditions, two zodiac landings are organised per day: one in the morning and the other after lunch. For certain activities, three versions of the excursion with varied difficulty levels are offered, to ensure that all passengers can participate and won't be left out due to their physical fitness

LANGUAGES

The official languages spoken onboard our vessels are English and Spanish

EQUIPMENT

In terms of clothing and footwear, it is vital to bring warm clothes appropriate for winter. Essential items include protective jackets that are also waterproof, hats, gloves, waterproof trousers and boots, walking shoes, sunglasses and sunscreen.

GASTRONOMY

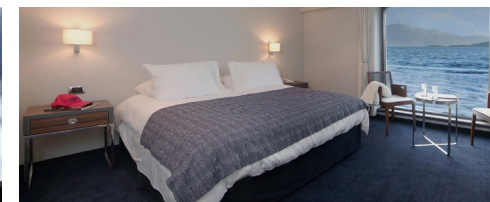
Australis serves delicious cuisine as part of an all-inclusive package, which encompasses themed buffets for lunch and an a la carte menu for dinner. The open bar serves a selection of liquors, regional and international wines as well as cocktails such as Calafate Sours, the local favourite

LIFE ON BOARD

Throughout the cruise, passengers can play board games, browse the collection of books in our onboard library and access interesting materials relating to places visited on each excursion. Lectures are held daily to discuss the landings ahead and provide context before delving into the destination first-hand. Our guides also explain in great detail not only the navigation routes though also the autochthonous indigenous populations, the history of the region and both its flora and fauna. When the cruise comes to an end, the tradition is for the captain to auction off the navigation chart that has guided us across Cape Horn; the highest bidder wins the prize

ADVENTURES BEYOND AUSTRALIS

At the end of the journey we invite passengers to keep exploring the wonders of Patagonia by continuing to any of three beautiful regions (all of which are close to the landing cities in either Chile or Argentina). Torres del Paine National Park in Chile, dominated by its distinctive peaks nicknamed the 'Horns'; Los Glaciares National Park near El Calafate in Argentina, famous for immense glaciers including El Perito Moreno and Upsala; or another Argentine national park – Tierra del Fuego, characterised by its lunar landscapes and colony of King Penguins.



Australis cruises are part of an innovative initiative that unites science with private enterprise through a program funded by the National Commission of Scientific and Technological Research of Chile.

The science aspect is represented by the University of Magallanes, while the private company participating in this initiative is COMAPA SA (owners of Australis). Together, they have forged a solid and reciprocal link between the tourism sector and scientific community in order to foment the transmission of scientific knowledge. This sharing of information is achieved through the training of tourist guides by researchers, so that they can collect data and information during expeditions and landings. The trained guides must follow rigorous, ordered scientific protocols to carry out a biodiversity inventory, monitor changes and better understand the evolution of the area in question.

The objective of this partnership is to collect data via Australis guides, who are trained to monitor the marine sciences of the southern archipelago, the flowering and development of native plants, coastal benthic biodiversity, a bird census, and the collection of waste.

The company has also signed agreements with CONAF (National Forest Corporation), regarding projects across other protected lands in Patagonia including the Alberto De Agostini National Park, the Cabo de Hornos National Park, the Los Pingüinos Natural Monument and the Centre for Quaternary Studies in Patagonia and Antarctica (CEQUA).

- The boats themselves comply with national and international standards for environmental protection (SOLAS, Marpol, etc.). They are also fitted with systems for treating wastewater and the efficient removal of solid waste.
- Paper is recycled and passengers are asked to be responsible when it comes to using onboard supplies.
- The zodiacs used in each expedition and disembarkation are equipped with 4-stroke engines, which emit less pollution.
- The number of visitors participating in the excursions is limited in order to keep the impact on the local environment to a minimum. We also use signposted footbridges or trails to avoid damaging fragile terrain, and collect waste found at the sites to then analyse later.
- In fact, by recording how much waste is found (which is often fatal for local wildlife) we can make concrete proposals to local authorities in order to find the ways to reduce it.
- Finally, by giving passengers instructions on how to preserve the local environment (for instance, not to disturb the animals, avoid trampling or picking plants when visiting nature reserves, etc.), we raise awareness of good practices that must be adopted.



AUSTRALIS ITINERARIES



RATES

Australis cruises are 4 nights itineraries, navigating from Ushuaia to Punta Arenas or vice versa. Expeditions take place between September and April; the spring, summer and autumn seasons in the southern hemisphere.

The prices shown correspond to the rate per person staying in a double room – which varies depending on the season and cabin category – on an all-inclusive basis. This includes the cruise, full board meals, drinks, excursions and program of talks and entertainment onboard.

FIORDS OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO

Price : 4 nights from US\$ 1565 (approximately € 1400)

PATAGONIAN EXPLORERS

Price : 4 nights from US\$ 1565 (approximately € 1400)



* During the months of September to April this excursion is replaced with a walk near the glaciers of Brooks Bay.

** No excursions take place at Glacier Avenue.

EXCURSIONS AND SITES VISITED WITH AUSTRALIS



PUNTA ARENAS

Resting on the banks of the Magellan Strait, 3,090km south of Santiago, this Chilean town marks the beginning of an incredible journey into the heart of Patagonia. Founded by the first settlers on December 18, 1848, Punta Arenas is today a charming little town with 133,000 inhabitants, which still retains its authenticity. One of the best ways to get a grasp of Punta Arenas' heritage is by visiting the small museums housed in original buildings from the 19th century.

ÁGUILA GLACIER

This landing begins with a quiet walk along the beach, continuing towards a lagoon encircled by dramatic mountains before reaching the Águila Glacier itself. The excursion invites visitors to discover the cold and humid Patagonia forest and learn about the natural movements that have shaped this special landscape.

WULAIA BAY

This bay was one of the largest settlements of the Yamana People in the region, and it's also known that Charles Darwin disembarked here during his trip aboard the Beagle, on the 23rd of January 1833. Wulaia Bay is a stunning spectacle to behold, with its unique vegetation and geography. The excursion here involves hiking to an important viewpoint in the Magellan forest, awash with varied floral species including lenga, coigue, cinnamon and ferns, among many others.

PÍA GLACIER & GLACIER AVENUE

This excursion takes visitors to a privileged viewpoint that's prime for admiring the majestic mountains all around, as well as discovering the origin of the impressive Pía Glacier. Once back onboard, the journey continues through the jaw-dropping Glacier Avenue, which bestows magnificent views of the various glaciers in the area that segue into the sea, flowing from the Darwin Mountain Range. Most of them are named after the homelands of European explorers who embarked on intrepid expeditions here: Germany, France, Italy and Holland

TUCKER ISLETS

From the zodiac boats, guests can get up close to the colonies of Cormorants and Magellanic Penguins, both being species that dwell only in the southern hemisphere.

AINSWORTH BAY

Near the Marinelli Glacier, in the Darwin Mountain Range and Alberto De Agostini National Park, this hike at Ainsworth Bay offers the chance to witness a dam of beavers and the beautiful sub-Antarctic Magallanes forest that surrounds it. While on the beach here, with a bit of luck it's also possible to see Elephant Seals – depending on the time and the species' movements, of course.

USHUAIA

With a population of 65,000, Ushuaia is the biggest town in Tierra del Fuego and also the southernmost in the world, serving as a gateway for expeditions to Antarctica. Founded on October 12, 1884, Ushuaia was one of the first meeting points between the Yamana culture (Yaghan) and missionaries of the time.

MEET THE EXPEDITION TEAM

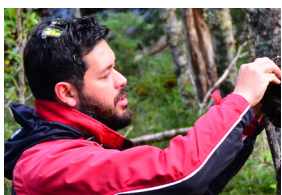


FELIPE ARRUDA., LEADER OF EXPEDITIONS



Felipe was born in Recife, in the northeast of Brazil on April 18, 1986. He spent much of his early life in Milan, Italy where he absorbed the language and culture of Italy. From there he was raised travelling through Europe and where years later he would return to study in Valladolid, Spain as an exchange student in university. He finished his studies in Industrial Design in his birth city in 2010, where he also specialized in product design and photography. His relationship with travelling, photography and his adventurous spirit carried him to visit beautiful places, learn about cultures and strengthen his various languages. From these experiences he saw the extremes, from the Antarctic Peninsula to Swedish Lapland and journeys through Latin America and Europe. A lover of nature and outdoor activities, he is dedicated to sharing his adventures which finally, have brought him to the extreme south of America, “the great Patagonia”. Australis expedition team member since 2014.

MARCELO GALLO R., LEADER OF EXPEDITIONS



Australis expedition director Marcelo was born in Santiago de Chile, but has chosen to live in the Magallanes region. He started working on Australis until 2009. After a two year break, he returned in 2011 to guide and show Patagonia, “the most beautiful place on earth”, to our guests. He traveled to France where he perfected his French and he works guiding in Spanish, English, and French.

GERMÁN BRICEÑO , EXPEDITION GUIDE



He was born and grew up in Santiago until becoming an adult, at which point beginning a period of travel that would allow him to work and study in different parts of the world: Art History and science in Connecticut and Philosophy in New York. He travelled to the old continent where he pursued a degree in Philosophy specializing in Anthropology and spending his free time freelancing as a tourism guide in Rome. Before finally returning to his homeland, he served as a professor of ethics and civics in Mexico City. He moved from the piazzas and basilicas of Rome and the classrooms of Mexico City to set down in beautiful Patagonia where he combines his passions: discovery - enjoying the beauty and harmony and pleasure of accompanying groups of tourists to share the richness of the Magallanes and to somehow return the cordiality he received during his stay abroad. Among his interests is the study of the pioneers in the Magallanes just like Gunther Pluschow and Alberto De Agostini.

JUANITA GUERRA, EXPEDITION GUIDE



Born in Osorno, Chile. From a very young age she took a liking to camping and nature. She is an English teacher, a job she carried out for many years in Santiago. Her main passion is mountaineering, an activity she practices primarily in the central and northern regions of Chile. She is a member of the German Mountaineering Club, DAV, becoming its trekking director in 2013. Birds are her second passion. She is a member of Unorch (Chilean Union of Ornithologists).

In 2008 she moved to Patagonia Norte and became an ecotourism guide on a ship. Later on, she continued her path and today she is established in Southern Patagonia and has been working as an expedition guide with Australis since 2015

PRACTICAL INFORMATION



Getting here from UK

International flights to Santiago de Chile or Buenos Aires

Airlines :

- British Airways
- Latam
- Iberia
- Air France
- KLM

Domestic flights between Santiago de Chile and Punta Arenas

Airlines :

- Latam
- Sky Airlines

Domestic flights between Buenos Aires and Ushuaia

Airlines :

- Latam
- Aerolineas Argentinas

Flights between Punta Arenas and Ushuaia

- DAP

INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

Telephone : +34 93 497 04 84

Opening hours:

From Monday to Friday, 09:00am to 07:00pm

E-mail : europa@australis.com

Website : www.australis.com

TIME DIFFERENCE : GMT -4 or -5 HOURS

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE : between 5 y 15°C

INTERNET & MOBILE

Note that there's no Wi-Fi or mobile signal onboard; emergency calls can be made via satellite telephone

FIND AUSTRALIS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Connect with fellow travellers, read reviews, share photos and get the latest news at:



<https://www.facebook.com/crucerosaustralis/>



<https://www.pinterest.com/australisexp>



<https://twitter.com/AustralisEXP>