

## **WELCOME ONBOARD THE OCEAN ENDEAVOUR!**

**Friday, November 24, 2017**

We are happy to welcome you onboard the Ocean Endeavour for our voyage to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia & the 7th continent - Antarctica.

This is a truly epic adventure through the remote Falkland Islands, the wildlife paradise of South Georgia and the extraordinary landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula. You'll enjoy unforgettable encounters with untamed wildlife in a vast, dramatic and spectacular setting; you'll take a step back in time at historically significant sites; and you'll be mesmerized by the rich diversity and contrasts that make these regions so captivating and unique. You'll be transported to your own wildlife documentary, staged in a magnificent setting of mountains, sea and ice.

### **Captain & Officers:**

Captain: Denis Radja

Chief Mate: Kyrylo Pokalchuk

Chief Engineer: Sergei Shlenkin

### **Hotel Staff:**

Hotel Manager: Robert McGillivray

Purser: Olga Dubytska

Executive Chef: Bill Anderson

Maitre D: Chris Stearn

Bar Manager: Richard Palmos

Spa Manager: Melisa Milivojcevic

### **Ship Specifications:**

Crew: 124

Guests: maximum 199

Length: 137m

Draft: 5.6

Ice Class: 1B

Maximum Speed: 15n

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## **AT SEA TO THE FALKLANDS**

**Saturday, November 25, 2017**

Today we made our way across the Scotia Sea towards the Falkland Islands. The Scotia Sea is located at the northern edge of the Southern Ocean at its boundary with the South Atlantic Ocean. It is bounded on the west by the Drake Passage and on the north, east and south by the Scotia Arc - an undersea ridge and island arc system supporting various islands. The sea sits atop the Scotia Plate.

## **THE FALKLANDS**

**Sunday, November 26, 2017**

We spent the first full day getting prepared for the excursions to come on this epic 18 day voyage to the white continent and beyond. Emotions flooded through all of us; excited, nervous, relaxed, happy were a few which may have been felt at different times...and unfortunately sick! In the Nautilus lounge we listened to the various mandatory briefings or lectures throughout the day others anxiously became acquainted with our new friends, roommates and expedition staff all the while sailing towards the Falklands leaving from the windy city of Ushuaia. Some chose to be outside on the decks and become one of the few in this world who have witnessed an Albatross soaring with the wind.

Nov 26 was the day we would start our first day of excursions where we would step foot onto Carcass and West Point Islands. Instead the weather offered up another itinerary - one which forced us to remain on board as the wind speed created conditions which were unsafe for zodiac operations. Looking at the bright side...What an amazing site to see the wind blowing at storm force and up to a beaufort scale of 10.

The Beaufort scale is an empirical measure that relates wind speed to observed conditions at sea or on land. Its full name is the Beaufort wind force scale. The scale was devised in 1805 by Francis Beaufort -later Rear Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort) - an Irish Royal Navy officer, while serving in HMS Woolwich. Beaufort succeeded in standardizing the scale.

The Falklands tested our flexibility. The waves were rolling and we experienced some movement, always keeping 1 hand for the ship available. The wind outside was gusting up to 60kt. We were invited out on deck to feel the winds as they blasted against our face. We will wait another day for the anticipation of stepping onto the Falklands!

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## **STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS**

**Monday, November 27, 2017**

Stanley was established in the early 1840s and used as a port of call by sealers and whalers until late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was followed by a period of sheep farming which became the primary industry of the Falkland Islands until the 1980s. The Falklands current economy is based on income from the sale of fishing licenses - which are heavily monitored. Just over 2000 people live in the town.

We spent the day here wandering in the shops, pubs and museum. The flowers were in bloom bringing lively colours to the streets of the town. Landrovers sped their way along the streets and from a distance you could see the other yellow parkas enjoying their walks.

Some of us were feeling the need for a bit of exercise after a few days at sea and went for an extended nature hike, while others opted to take a shuttle bus out to Gypsy Cove. This cove is home to Magellanic penguins, who burrow underground to protect their eggs. A variety

of other birds were seen around the island including gulls, terns, geese and ducks. We were even greeted by the local welcome party - a sea lion who spent her day watching us on the main jetty.

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## **AT SEA TO SOUTH GEORGIA**

**Tuesday, November 28, 2017**

Today we crossed a natural boundary known as the polar front or the Antarctic convergence. It is the region of the Southern Ocean encircling Antarctica, roughly around latitude 55 degrees South (but deviating from this in places) where the cold waters of the Antarctic circumpolar current meet and mingle with warmer waters to the north. This intermixing creates local variations in weather (such as fogs) and also results in a concentration of marine plant life because of its higher than average nutrient concentrations.

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## **SHAG ROCKS**

**Wednesday, November 29, 2017**

The fog rolled in as we made our way towards Shag Rocks. These islands of slate are the only land for miles in the sea and an important habitat for Cormorants. Also known as blue eyed shags, these birds are the only member of the cormorants to venture down into the Antarctic proper, as far as 68 degrees south. They are characterized by the vivid eye colour and the orange / yellow growth at the base of the beak that becomes particularly large and bright during the breeding season. They nest on these rocks on seaweed nests which grow larger and larger each year as breeding pairs return to mate. The area is ideal as shag rocks are surrounded by a shallower continental shelf stretching 20nm by 60nm. Shags feed on fish, preferring ones that feed on the bottom of the sea and are able to dive anywhere from 50-145m to retrieve a meal. While we were unable to view the rocks themselves a variety of birds were seen flying across the ship heading towards their oasis.

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## **ELSEHUL**

**Thursday, November 30, 2017**

Situated at the northwestern extremity of South Georgia, Elsehul is a beautiful little Harbour with an array of wildlife. It is the only site where black-browed and grey-headed Albatrosses can be viewed. Entered between Post Rock and Cape Pride, Elsehul is quite sheltered, making it an ideal area for a zodiac cruise. The swell was up but everyone managed to get out into the zodiacs cautiously. From the gangway we headed out into the fog, which over time rose to give us a glimpse of South Georgia's mountains. Along the beaches, seals & penguins could be heard communicating while in the sky albatross, petrels and prions soared. On the rocks, macaroni penguins climbed up to their colony, high above.

## **SALISBURY PLAIN**

**Thursday, November 30, 2017**

Salisbury Plain lies on the southern shore of the Bay of Isles, 50km (31m) from the western tip of South Georgia. It has the second largest king penguin colony on the island with an estimated 60,000 breeding pairs which swells to 250,000 individuals in total during the moult. This indicates an extraordinary population increase as only 350 breeding pairs were counted at this site in 1912. Historically, Salisbury Plain was a favored hunting ground for sealers during the 19<sup>th</sup> century where both fur seals and elephant seals were taken in large numbers.

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## **FORTUNA BAY**

**Friday, December 1, 2017**

This bay was named after Fortuna, the first whale catcher to operate in the early 1910's. Our landing beach sits at the end of a 6km fjord at the heart of South Georgia's rugged interior. Breakwind Ridge lines the western shores, towering above the sea. Shackleton's route extended from this ridge, across the beach and over the pass to Stromness.

Thousands of King penguins come here to breed, amassing a colony of over 7000 pairs. We made our way over the lush green landscape after weaving through the beach full of fur seals. At the mountain's edge we spotted a lightly mantled sooty albatross on its nest. It's soft grey feathers blowing in the wind, which picked up and dropped repeatedly throughout the morning. Antlers and bones reminded us that at one time reindeer called this place home, but have since been eradicated, much like the rats brought by ships through the years. South Georgia pipits were spotted flying amongst the tussock - a positive sign that their populations are growing.

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## **STROMNESS**

**Friday, December 1, 2017**

Stromness is a former whaling station on the northern coast of South Georgia. Its historical significance is that it represents the destination of Ernest Shackleton's epic rescue journey in 1916. It is the central of three harbours in the west side of Stromness Bay, South Georgia. The name "Fridtjof Nansen" or Nansen appeared for this harbour on some early charts, but since about 1920 the name Stromness has been consistently used. "Stromness" comes from the Norse Straumsnes - Straum refers to the strong tides, Nes means "headland".

The landing beach was again full of fur seals, testing our bravery. Cautiously we made our way past them and heading out for a hike. Along the plain, we were greeted by gentoo penguins, terns and even flies! Making our way from the whaling station to the waterfall,

one began to imagine what it was like to be Shackleton. After cresting the pass and hearing the whistle of the station, the excitement and relief of knowing help was near must have been overwhelming. The men working in the whaling station must also have been shocked to have seen these 3 men emerge from the mountains.

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## **GRYTVIKEN**

**Friday, December 2, 2017**

The settlement at Grytviken was established on November 16, 1904, by the Norwegian sea captain Carl Anton Larsen as a whaling station for his Compañía Argentina de Pesca (Argentine Fishing Company). It was considered very successful, with 195 whales taken in the first season alone. The whalers used every part of the animals - the blubber, meat, bones and viscera were cooked to extract the oil and the bones and meat were turned into fertilizer and fodder. Elephant seals were also hunted for their blubber. Around 300 men worked at the station during its heyday, operating during the southern summer from October to March. A few remained over the winter to maintain the boats and factory. Every few months a transport ship would bring essential supplies to the station and take away the oil and other produce.

Grytviken is closely associated with Ernest Shackleton. Shackleton's most famous expedition set out from London on August 1, 1914, to reach the Weddell Sea on January 10, 1915, where the pack ice closed in on their ship, the Endurance. The ship was crushed by the ice on October 27, 1915. The 28 crew members managed to flee to Elephant Island, off Antarctica, bringing three small boats with them. All of them survived after Shackleton and five other men managed to reach the southern coast of South Georgia in the James Caird. Shackleton, Worsley & Crean then trekked to Stromness on the northeast coast and from Grytviken. From there they organized a rescue operation to bring home the remaining men.

Shackleton was laid to rest in Grytviken in 1922. He had died unexpectedly from a heart attack at sea at the beginning of another Antarctic expedition, and his widow chose South Georgia as his final resting place. Under a brilliant blue sky and in the warmth of the sun we toasted to both Shackleton and his right hand man Wilde.

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## **ST. ANDREW'S BAY**

**December 2, 2017**

St. Andrews Bay is home of the largest king penguin colony with over 100,000 breeding pairs. We brought our zodiacs into the beach and walked to the edge, stopping to listen to the cacophony of birds. In 1911, Norwegian whalers imported reindeer to the island, but an eradication program by the South Georgia Heritage Trust ended successfully over the 2014-2015 summer season. The beach is one of the largest elephant seal breeding beaches on the island with up to 6000 cows estimated at peak haul out. Amongst the wallows were many

young weiners all snorting and burping while having a rest. Thirty years ago, the nearby Cook Glacier terminated at the high water mark on the beach in a spectacular 30m high, 500m long ice cliff.

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## **GOLD HARBOUR**

**December 3, 2017**

Gold Harbour is backed by an amphitheatre of hanging glaciers and cliffs at the base of the Salvesen Range. The northern entrance to the bay is lined with bluffs and cliffs marked with the scars from the Bertrab Glacier. This rapidly retreating glacier has left a series of lagoons, the largest of which is lined by a wave-swept moraine, which marks its former face.

All along the beach and in these lagoons we found elephant seals jousting, sleeping and snorting. Walking carefully around them we could get to the edge of the king penguin colony. Nearer to middle is where the eggs are being cared for on the feet of their parents. The younger birds are most often found near the edges & with their feet in the run off (trying to stay cool) while still sporting their brown down feathers. It's obvious why they were first known as "wooly penguins".

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## **COOPER BAY**

**December 3, 2017**

Cooper bay was named after Robert Cooper - a first Lieutenant on James Cook's HMS Resolution. This voyage charted the coastline and waters of Cooper Island in 1775. We took to the zodiacs with a sense of adventure - the wind was blowing, the waves were splashing and the salty spray hit our faces but we were not deterred. Once into the bay, we were welcomed by calm waters and 4 different species of penguins! King, Chinstrap, Gentoo & Macaroni all breed in the area. Macaroni & Chinstrap are being the most abundant, the latter being over 10,000 pairs.

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## **DRAGALSKI FJORD**

**December 3, 2017**

Approximately 15,000-20,000 years ago a very large ice cap covered South Georgia. This glacier that carved out a u-shaped valley is still visible today at the head of the fjord. With great skill and concentration the Captain navigated the ship down the Dragalski fjord, turing the ship on a dime at the end to give us a complete view. Brash ice littered the water and snow petrels flew alongside as we sailed deeper inside.

Drygalski Fjord lies along the contact between two ancient groups of rocks, each of different geologic composition. The rocks on the north side of the fjord, known as the

Drygalski Fjord Complex, include mountains up to 1000m of elevation which fall steeply into the ocean. The igneous rocks have been radiocarbon dated to be over 200 Million years old and are therefore the oldest rocks on the island of South Georgia.

While the north side of the fjord is from an ancient continent, the southern side are relics of an ancient, and expanding ocean floor. This southern group of rock is known as the Larsen Harbour Complex. This rock is from an ancient ocean, similar to the rest of South Georgia, it is a sedimentary rocks estimated to be around 150 million years old. The major difference of this rock group, is that around 140 million to 110 million years ago, this expanding ocean floor became volcanic, leaving behind lots of lava and lava pillows.

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## **A TASTE OF THE PHILLIPPINES**

**December 4, 2017**

Tonight the galley treated us to a taste of the Philippines. Chef Bill introduced us to the dinner menu at recap, encouraging us to try out a variety of dishes that were likely new to most of our palates. Crew members sang and danced for us then welcomed us to the Dining Room with even more music. Many of us started with Sio Pao - a steamed bun stuff with chicken and sweet chili sauce. Respecting the strong Filipino family connections, we had our main course served family style. Waiters brought bowl after bowl of delicious items for us to try, each one tastier than the last. There were half a dozen different mains to test and we were just about full but dessert was there to round out the meal. A fantastic night was had by all, and what better way to enjoy than with our entire onboard family gathered round.

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## **ICEBERG B-15**

**December 5, 2017**

Today while enjoying pancakes and piano in the Aurora we spotted a mammoth tabular off the starboard side. It's been given the name B-15Z. In it's complete and original form, Iceberg B-15 was the world's largest recorded iceberg. It measured around 295 kilometres (183 mi) long (160nm) and 37 kilometres (23 mi) wide (20nm), with a surface area of 11,000 square kilometres (4,200 sq mi)—larger than the whole island of Jamaica. Breaking free from the Ross Sea Ice shelf in March 2000, it further broke up November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005, leaving B-15A as the largest piece measuring approximately 16nm long. Its face stands at 37m/121feet above sea level, and on top there may still be footprints as Shane, our Expedition Leader, landed a helicopter on top in 2006.

## ELEPHANT ISLAND

December 6, 2017

Point Wild, on Elephant Island is a site of great historical significance. Shackleton's ship, the Endurance was trapped in the Weddell Sea ice on January 19, 1915. With hopes to be free again in spring, the men turned the ship into a winter station. By July, the ice began to build and by the end of October the ship was abandoned. The Endurance sank on November 21, 1915. The men attempted to walk to Paulet Island but the ice was deteriorating underfoot. By April they were forced to use the lifeboats and decided to attempt a sail to Elephant Island.

Wearing clothing for crossing Antarctica not oversea in a lifeboat the endured temperatures of below -35C. They landed on Elephat Island 497 days after leaving South Georgia. Our time outside this morning gave us a taste of what the sea in this area could be like - we were blasted with wind and snow and had to hold on to not be blown around on deck.

Shackleton decided to leave Elephant Island on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 1916. There were 6 men in 1 lifeboat - the James Caird. Watches of 4hrs on 4hrs off were held. The remaining 22 men stayed at Point Wild in hopes that their comrades would reach South Georgia and begin the rescue process.

On May 8, 1916 they reached the coast of South Georgia but the winds were hurricane force and they were unable to land.

*"We felt our boat lifted and flung forward like a cork in the breaking surf." ~ Shackleton*

They made landfall at what they called Peggotty Camp to rest and plan how to cross the island. Setting out from Fortuna Bay they brought with them a primus stove, 3 days worth of food, a pair of binoculars, matches, 1 Carpenter's axe and of Frank Worsley's Diary. They reached Stromness and heard the whistle of the whaling station. - they had made it.

After a further 105 days and 4 attempts, Shackleton arrived back at Elephant Island to rescue all 22 men who had remained.

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## KINNES COVE - A VIEW FROM THE WATER

DECEMBER 7, 2017

Arriving in Antarctica brought much excitement around the ship in the early hours. The sun was shining as we woke up but it was the amount of icebergs and glaciers that caught our eyes and woke us up. massive icebergs floated near the ship and shore cooling the ocean. The sun shimmered off the sea and sparkled the blues from the ice allowing for some great photographic opportunities. The conditions allowed for a great kayak opportunity, We had a smaller group this morning as five of the kayakers were also skiing with Pete and Keith high up on top of Madder Cliffs.



Our paddle began in the middle of Kinnes Cove with views of massive glaciers coming down off the mountains and icebergs as far as the eye could see in the middle of the Antarctic Sound. Once we were all settled back into the kayaks after being out of them for several days we got up close to a small islet where many Gentoo and Adelie penguins live. We had not seen Adelie's as of yet so it was a treat and the shoreline allowed us to get up very close for a proper view. The Adelie penguin was named after the wife of Jules Dumont D'Urville of France, Jules was an one of the early explorers from the mid to late 1800's. From here we made our way towards the base of Madder Cliffs where even more Adelie's called home. This is where we were treated with a "special" zodiac handing out cups of hot chocolate. We each took our turn paddling along side to get out "shot" of hot chocolate. Slowly we made our way along the shore watching the Adelie's go about their daily life. Groups gathered in what we would call a "waddle" looking as though they may jump off the frozen snowbank from the winters snow fall, they never did seem to be able to build up enough courage to jump into the freezing water.

By the end of our paddle we found ourselves drifting along with the strong current, as if we were planktonic, the wind had picked up and helped the current along with our drift. We spent the final few moments going with nature, enjoying nature and being with new friends. It was a special morning for everyone involved we felt lucky to have this experience and a new vision of what makes this world beautiful and spectacular.

*~ Ryan Munro, Kayak Guide*

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## **BROWN BLUFF**

**December 7, 2017**

Brown Bluff lies on the eastern side of Tabarin Peninsula and is part of the mainland continental Antarctica. The 745 m (2,225 ft) bluff is an exposed section of a glacial volcano, embedded with lava bombs. Large wind worn rocks were strewn along the beach amongst bergy bits that became grounded as the tide went down. Penguins returning to the colony wandered past us on the beach around and sometimes in the tidal pools remaining amongst the rocks. Both adélie and gentoo penguin colonies are present on the side of the hill, with many carefully protecting their eggs. A short climb lead to a small cave where snow petrels nest. Carefully, we were able to climb close enough to see them huddled in the smallest of cracks.

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## **HALF MOON ISLAND**

**December 8, 2017**

Half Moon Island lies at the entrance to Moon Bay, between Livingston and Greenwich Islands. The 2 km long island is crescent shaped, and the Argentine Camara Station is located on the southwest side of the island. It is home to approximately 3,300 breeding pairs of chinstrap penguins. Antarctic terns, skuas, kelp gulls, Wilson's storm-petrels and blue-

eyed shags also breed at this site.

Out on the zodiacs, we ventured far from the island in search of marine mammals - and we were rewarded with whales! Minkes and Humpacks were observed logging, spy hopping and diving.

Once back on the ship we also had the opportunity to dive in when Shane announced the Polar Plunge. Getting our robes on and in some cases, nothing else, everyone headed to the mudroom. Those brave souls who were keen to jump into the frigid Southern Ocean were given the chance, and a warm tea once they were back out.

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## **BARRIENTOS ISLAND**

**December 8, 2017**

The Aitcho Islands lie in the northern entrance to English Strait, between Greenwich and Robert islands. They were charted by the Discovery Investigation in 1936 and named after the Admiralty Hydrographic Office, commonly referred to as H.O. When we started our excursion the sun was shining but it wasn't for long and the fog began to roll in. The island began to become eerie as shadows could be seen and bird calls were heard in the distance. Both chinstrap penguins and gentoo penguins breed here in small groups all over the island. All were sitting tight on eggs, keeping them warm for a while longer.

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## **THE DRAKE PASSAGE**

**December 9, 2017**

Today we began our journey across the infamous Drake Passage or Mar de Hoces - Sea of Hoces. Living up to its reputation, our Drake crossing has had us rolling side to side throughout the day but we are staying ahead of the predicted violent storm.

This is the body of water between South America's Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands of Antarctica. It connects the southwestern part of the Atlantic Ocean (Scotia Sea) with the southeastern part of the Pacific Ocean and extends into the Southern Ocean. The passage receives its English - language name from the 16th-century English privateer Sir Francis Drake. Drake's only remaining ship, after having passed through the Strait of Magellan, was blown far south in September 1578. This incident implied an open connection between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

## **CAPE HORN**

**December 10, 2017**

The Cape Horn National Park was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in June 2005. This is a special place, often with high winds and rough seas. Paola got on the radio early this morning to chat with her Chilean compatriots. Always eager to hear a friendly voice they granted us permission to come in closer. From the ship we could see the monument dedicated to the thousands of sailors lost on more than 800 ships that were wrecked sailing around this iconic landmark.

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## **USHUAIA, ARGENTINA**

**December 11, 2017**

While the storms rocked outside the Beagle Channel we arrived safely in Ushuaia this morning. Shortly after breakfast we headed out to explore the area. Five buses loaded and we were off into the mountains surrounding the town. Our first stop was to see some huskies at a resort where we would later return for a large BBQ. The lambs were already cooking over the fire and it was a tease for what we would get to enjoy later on. Deeper into the mountains we visited Hidden Lake and Fagnano Lake. Travelling past Mount Olivia and through the Tierra Mayor Valley. To round out our day we returned to the resort where we were treated to a feast. Smaller coal fired BBQ on individual tables were topped with carved lamb and sides of potatoes and vegetables. Over the fire our hosts brewed a special warm drink for us with hints of chocolate and coffee and a healthy dose of whisky.

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## **DISEMBARKATION IN USHUAIA**

**December 12, 2017**

On behalf of Captain Denis Radja, our Expedition Leader, Shane Evoy, the Quark Staff and the crew of the M/V Ocean Endeavour, we wish you a safe journey home. Thank you for sailing with Quark Expeditions, we hope to see you again soon.