

PHOTO EXPEDITION

SOUTH GEORGIA

03.11-17.11 2018



WILDPHOTO
TRAVEL

BEFORE THE EXPEDITION

Thank you for traveling with us to South Georgia 2018. We look forward to see and photograph some of the world's most spectacular scenery and wildlife along with you!

In this letter we have some information that might be helpful for your preparation to this expedition.

Personal details

To make sure you have the best trip possible to South Georgia 2018, we ask you to fill in the information needed, as listed below. Most of this information can be added on the booking form. Here you can make us aware of any dietary allergies, health issues or anything that might be of importance to us and the ship.

Copy of passport

We need a copy of your passport. This is for your safety, and makes it easier for us to make sure your name is spelled correctly.

Insurance

You need to have a valid insurance covering medical conditions (illness, accidents, death) and evacuation during the period on board the ship. This is mandatory! In case of any undesired event we need to have a copy of your insurance card / paper where we can see your insurance number and emergency telephone number to your insurance company. We do also recommend that you have cancellation insurance, but this is not mandatory.

Medical information

If you have had any major surgeries in the last two years or chronic illnesses that will affect your comfort on the expedition, we should be made aware of it. Everyone have to fill out and sign our Medical Information form, where you inform us and the ship doctor about any medical issues.

Passport and Visa

Your passport must be valid at least 90 days following your travel dates (17.02 2019), but we strongly recommend 6 months (17.05 2019).

Tourist Visa

There is no need for tourist Visa for most citizen in countries like Norway, France, Spain, UK etc., but some citizens (like from India) must apply for Visa. Let us know if you are not sure if you need a VISA or not. You can see more info about Visa at: <http://chile.visahq.com>

Many countries don't need a tourist Visa to enter the Falkand Islands. See more info at: <https://www.falklands.gov.fk/our-home/visit-us/> If you need a Visa you have to visit a British Embassy or Consulate to obtain Visa.

Currency

The currency in Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP). 1000 CLP is equal to around USD \$1,5. Credit cards (VISA, MasterCard and AmEx) will be accepted in most stores in Chile, but it's always good to bring some cash.

The currency in the Falkland Islands is British pounds (GBP). Some stores accept VISA.

Climate

We will visit South Georgia early in the summer season so it might still be some degrees below zero. Snow and wind is not uncommon in November, so bring warm clothes.

Flights to/from Falkland Islands

Flights to the Falkland Islands with LATAM are only on Saturdays! So make sure you don't miss this flight.

See www.latam.com for more information and booking of flight tickets with LATAM. These flights will be available 11 months in advance, so tickets can be booked from December 2017.

It is very important that you have one or two nights in Santiago (or Punta Arenas) prior to the flights to the Falkland Islands. If your flight to Santiago is delayed or cancelled and you miss the Saturday flight to the Falkland Islands, then you miss the whole South Georgia expedition. Back home you can fly as tight as you like.

We will have WildPhoto guides on the flights from Santiago 03.11.

NB: Book your flights as early as possible!!

Let us know if you need more information about the flights.

Checked luggage

Allowed weight of checked baggage is usually 2 x 20kg or 2 x 23kg. Make sure you don't have too much overweight. We recommend to take most of your photo equipment in your hand luggage (although it gets a bit heavy).

Hand luggage

The maximum measures of the bag is 55 x 25 x 35 cm. The weight on hand luggage is 10 kg on international flights and 8 kg on domestic flights (LATAM). Bring a photo vest (with some of your lenses) in emergency, if you need to reduce the weight of your photo bag.

Lost luggage

Lost or delayed luggage is out of our control. Please pack a small bag with all your essentials, including medicine, and bring it in your carry-on luggage. The most important photographic equipment should also be carry-on luggage. See the checklist below for packing details.

There are stores in Santiago selling the most essential equipment and clothes you need.

Transport to the expedition ship in Port Stanley

When arriving the Falkland Islands 3rd November 2018 we have bus transport directly to Port Stanley. We will embark the ship Polar Pioneer around 16:00 and head directly for our main target – South Georgia.

For those arriving the Falklands 27.10 we will fly directly out to our 2 destinations as described in the Falkland Island 27.10–03.11 2018 program. All transportation will be taken care off to the ship 03.11 to meet the rest of the group, and head east for South Georgia.

Photography in the Falkland Islands

The Falkland Islands are great for wildlife photography. Since it is only one flight a week, you have to fly out 27.10 if you want to photograph before the expedition, or fly out 24.11 if you want to photograph after the South Georgia expedition. We have organized two extensions 27.10 – 03.11 & 17.11–24.11 2018 for those who want to photograph more penguins, albatrosses, seals etc. Let us know if you want more information about this.

If you are flying to the Falklands 3rd November and out 17th November, there will be close to no photo opportunities at the islands, since we offer transport from the airport to the harbour (30.11) and back again 24.11.

SHIP INFORMATION POLAR PIONEER



Polar Pioneer was built in Finland in 1982 as an ice-strengthened research ship, and for many years she plied the treacherous waters of the USSR's northern coast. In 2000 she was refurbished in St Petersburg to provide comfortable accommodation for 54 passengers.

A combined bar/lounge/library area (stocked with a good collection of polar books) was also created by simple internal restructuring.

This class of vessel has a fine reputation for polar expedition cruising, due to its strength, manoeuvrability and small number of cabins. All cabins have outside portholes plus ample storage space. The Russian captain and crew are among the most experienced ice-navigators in the world and their enthusiasm is legendary.

The spacious bridge is always open to us and the decks are ideal for viewing. The chefs are European, and the dining room is attended by Russian stewardesses.

Polar Pioneer is not a luxury vessel as such, but this ship is almost perfect for photographic expeditions to Antarctica. The accommodation is simple yet comfortable, and the meals are wholesome and uncomplicated. A small fleet of inflatable Zodiacs with outboard motors enable us to travel from ship to shore.

Length: 71 Metres
Max speed: 14 Knots
Zodiacs: 5 (6)

Passenger Capacity: 54
Guides: 5
Crew: 23, led by an experienced Captain

FACILITIES ON BOARD



Cabins

There are 29 passenger cabins on board – 2 Triple cabins (#300 & #301), 12 Twin Share cabins (#302 – #312), 12 Twin Private (#400 – #408 and #504 – #507) and 3 Double cabins (#501 – #503).

Electricity

The electrical supply aboard the ship is 220 volts using Scandinavian (Russian) two-prong plugs. We recommend that you bring an international adapter if needed.

Money Matters

USD is the currency on board this expedition ship. On board you will be required to pay your charges such as bar bills, laundry, email and phone calls in USD \$. We also accept all major credit cards including VISA, Mastercard and American Express on board the ship.

Gratuities on the expedition ship

We recommend gratuities to the staff of the ship of USD \$ 15 per person per day on the boat. It is not possible to pay the gratuities by VISA-card. Let us know if you want to prepay the gratuities before the trip, so you don't need to bring cash on board.

Meals

The two dining rooms located in the lower deck seats all passengers. Our chef will serve you three meals a day. Breakfast is buffet style and lunch and dinner will be waiter serviced. If you have special dietary needs, these must be clearly indicated prior to your departure.

Medical

There is a doctor on board, but passengers under regular treatment or requiring special medication should bring sufficient quantities to last the duration of the expedition.

Security

Money and valuables should always be stored safely when traveling. Keep your passport with you at all times and do not leave it in your main luggage. You will need it to change money and check into hotels. Where safety deposit boxes are available, we recommend that you use them.

On Board Communication

Email access and phone connection is available on board Polar Pioneer, however rates are very high.

Mobile phones

Before you leave home contact your mobile phone service provider for details on international roaming, access and rates. Alternatively, if your phone is not locked to a network you can purchase a pre-paid sim card when you arrive in South America.

Laundry

Laundry service is possible on this expedition, and will be charged in USD \$.

Rubber boots

It is possible to borrow rubber boots on the expedition ship free of charge, but we recommend you to bring your own knee-high pair.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

During the time you'll be visiting South Georgia, the mean temperature is 0–5 °C. Due to the wind chill factor, you may experience temperatures a few degrees below zero. When going ashore by Zodiacs, make sure to wear waterproof jacket/trousers and knee-high rubber boots. Below you will find some instructions on how to dress in polar climates, as well as an equipment checklist.

A FEW WORDS ON HOW TO DRESS IN POLAR REGIONS

The key is to dress in three or more layers, which allows perspiration, insulates you from the cold and protects you against the wind. The layering method also allows you to easily adjust your clothing when the weather and temperatures change.

The inner layer

Clothing next to your skin must get rid of perspiration from your body to keep you dry and warm. This layer should be close to your body and should be quite tight. Good materials for this first layer are wool or synthetic materials. Cotton should never be worn close to the body, or preferably not at all.

The middle layer (or layers)

This layer provides insulation and retains body heat without restricting movement. Suitable materials for this layer are polar fleece or wool. This way you control your body temperature, and on a cold day we recommend two or more middle layers. It is better to wear several thin layers than one thick layer. On cold days you may need extra insulation.

The outer layer

The main function of this layer is to offer protection against the wind and water, but also to let out excess body heat. Therefore it is good to have a breathable material here such as Gore-Tex. Impregnated cotton materials are not recommended.

NB: WildPhoto will have an expedition jacket and pants for sale through our Travelers Shop, which is perfect for expeditions to Polar regions: <http://wildphoto.com/shop/expedition-clothing/sail-racing-pole-down-parka/>

The top

80% of your body heat is lost through your head. Your head is like the body's funnel, and you should always wear a hat. The same principle applies here – preferable materials are synthetic fibre or wool. It should also be wind proof.

Hands and feet

These parts of your body are extra sensitive. It is important to keep hands and feet dry and warm! The same layering method applies here. Use inner gloves made of synthetic fibre, silk or wool and cover with a wind/waterproof mitten. Mittens are much warmer than gloves! Please remember to bring an extra pair of mittens. You should wear inner socks of synthetic fibre and cover with layers of wool or synthetic socks. A pair of solid knee-high rubber boots is the se-

WILDPHOTO TRAVELS SHOP

Some expedition clothing is difficult to buy in advance and we understand that it's difficult for most clients to find the quality needed for Polar expeditions. Thus we have opened a Travelers shop with high quality clothing that we and our guides have been using with great success. Now you can order in advance and pick it up at the expedition ship (or get it shipped to your home address) before your expedition.

Dry bag

We strongly recommend everyone to bring a dry bag for your camera gear. This is a cheap camera insurance and it is a must for you to keep your camera dry in rough conditions. After testing different brands and sizes we recommend the MR Jan 80 liter dry bag, which we have customized and available in our shop: <http://wildphoto.com/shop/expedition-clothing/dry-bag/>

Suggested equipment & cloths for SOUTH-GEORGIA 2018

Luggage:

A Hand luggage (photo bag)	C Clothes on the plane	D Checked bag(s)
B PC-bag		

Clothes

Warm socks D	Gore-Tex jacket C	Pants D
Cotton socks D	Gore-Tex pants D	Sweaters D
Panties/boxers D	2 Wind/water proof gloves D	Warm jacket (down) D
T-shirts D	Pair of mittens D	
2 Warm underwear upper D	2 Warm hats D	
2 Warm underwear lower D	Pair of knee-high boots D	
Fleece Jacket D	Pair of hiking boots C	
	Pair of shoes (on board) D	

Photo gear

Camera bodies A	Tripod D	Extra camera batteries A
Telephoto lens 400mm+ A	Polarizing filter A	Battery charger(s) B
70-200 A	Flash A	CF-cards min. 150GB C
Wide angle zoom(s) A	Batteries flash A	Rain coat for camera D
1,4x + 2x extenders A		Photo «First aid kit» A
		Dry bag (80 l)

Laptpop

13" or 15" Laptop B	2 Hard drives (1000 GB) B	Memory card reader B
Power cable B	Software B	

Miscellaneous

Letherman multitool D	PASSPORT !!! C	Toothbrush D
Cell phone charger B	Copy of passport B	Shampoo D
Binoculars D	Insurance card C	Sunscreen (SPF 30-50) D
Tape D	Flight tickets C	After-sun (Aloe Vera) D
Large plastic bags D	Notebook B	Sea sickness pills A
	Water bottle D	Sunglasses D
		Any Medicine A

To do or buy!

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DAILY PROGRAM

This is an expedition and we never know the exact program in advance. Based on the weather and ice condition, we want to maximize our photo opportunities during this expedition. Our planned daily program for 03.11 – 17.11 2018 is:

03/11 Port Stanley

Arrive Mount Pleasant airport (with LAN) and bus transport to Port Stanley and our expedition ship Polar Pioneer. Boarding from 16:00. Heading east toward South Georgia.

04–05/11 At sea toward South Georgia

If the weather conditions are good we can pass Shag Rock.

06/11 South Georgia

First landing in South Georgia.

07–14/11 South Georgia

We are visiting some of the best areas for wildlife and landscape photography, such as Salisbury Plains, St. Andrews Bay, Gold Harbour, Cooper Bay, Drygalski fjord and other great places. We will schedule longer stops than usual when going ashore in order to provide participants with enough time to get excellent pictures. We use 5 zodiac boats to get ashore or when searching for the wildlife at sea. This is an expedition so weather and wave height will determine where we can go and when.

15–16/11 At sea toward Port Stanley

17/11 Port Stanley

We return back to Port Stanley and prepare our flights back home. Bus transport to Mount Pleasant airport.

ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is the main activity on this photo expedition. The level of interest, skills and equipment will differ from person to person, but the following may help you to prepare for your upcoming photo expedition.

EQUIPMENT

- **Camera:** Whatever camera you use, be sure to check that it is working properly before you leave home, and perform sensor cleaning (by yourself or an expert). We recommend to bring 2 cameras so you have one back-up if something happens with your primary camera. It's also handy to have one camera with a telephoto lens and another with a wide-angle lens.
- **Camera features:** The most important is that it has good low-light capabilities (High-ISO). ISO 1600 (or more) will in many situations be your desired ISO setting.
- **Lenses:** We recommend a 400+ mm telephoto lens for photographing wildlife, even when the penguins and seals are not very shy. A 70–200 mm or wide angles (20 mm or wider) are also useful for landscape photography if you want to get close to animals with great surroundings.
- **Batteries:** Bring back-up batteries for your cameras, flash etc. You can recharge your batteries on board Polar Pioneer. In cold climates the batteries last shorter than normal.
- **Memory cards:** The general rule is to bring more memory cards than you expect to need. We recommend at least 150 GB in memory cards.
- **Weather:** Your equipment should be "weatherproof", or you should bring rain cover for your equipment. Rain is not the worst, but it's sea water spray in the zodiacs. Small sand particles on some beaches might also cause problems.
- **Tripods:** might be useful onshore, and also on the boat, but not in the zodiacs. Most likely you will use the tripod less than you might expect in advance.
- **Flash:** Use of flash might be useful when photographing birds in flight, or as a fill flash.
- **Computer:** It's always good to have a laptop with 1–2 back-up disks (min. 500 GB) to store and edit your images. This is also how you can share your photos with other photographers during the expedition.
- **Dry bag:** It's a must for you to have a dry bag for your camera gear, to get your equipment safe in the zodiacs when we get rough sea. Also your long lens have to fit into this drybag.
- **What to bring on shore:** We strongly recommend you to limit your equipment to ONE dry bag. In rough weather it will be very difficult to also bring a normal photo bag or an extra dry bag, which also most likely isn't waterproof. Train at home how to pack ALL your camera gear (except the tripod) in the dry bag.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

When travelling with WildPhoto Travel you visit places that have been off-limit up until recently. Now, thanks to modern technology, we can visit these remote places. This also means that we have a responsibility to ensure that the natural environments we visit are not disturbed by our presence. While you are on board our ship, you will find that the principles of conservation are of great importance.

By sharing our environmental concerns as we explore the wonders of nature, we look forward to guiding our guests towards becoming ambassadors for these remote corners of the world.

The following guidelines must be followed by all participants.

LANDINGS

Passengers must be aware of certain regulations involving the Zodiacs in order to ensure safety in our operations:

- The Zodiac driver is in charge of the boat and its operations. Please follow his or her instructions at all times.
- There will be wet landings (these may require getting your feet wet by wading ashore). We would advise passengers to wear appropriate waterproof clothing as protection from sea spray or rain when in the Zodiacs. Passengers should also use a weatherproof bag (or bring along a small plastic bag) to protect non-waterproof items such as cameras and binoculars.
- Always wear the life jackets provided when travelling in the Zodiacs. This is for your safety, and is required at all times while in the Zodiacs, regardless of weather and sea conditions.
- Always accept the helping hands of crew members and Zodiac drivers when moving into or out of the Zodiacs at the ship's gangway. Keep both hands free for this operation and use the preferred "sailor's grip" (i.e. grip each other by the wrist, because this gives a much stronger grip than just holding hands).
- Minimise the number of separate articles you take along with you when using the Zodiacs. Backpacks are ideal for consolidating such diverse objects as cameras, binoculars, rain wear, extra shoes, etc. It also enables you to have both hands free.
- Personal hand luggage should be given to the boat handlers before embarking or disembarking the Zodiac.
- Landings are limited between 04:00 to 22:00, so no "overnight" landings are allowed in South Georgia.

RESPECTING WILDLIFE

The main focus on this WildPhoto Travel expedition is photographing wildlife and landscape, and we want to get great images without stressing or disturbing the wildlife too much.

- Watch your step. Keep to established paths when possible. Exercise extreme care among breeding colonies of seabirds. Be aware of ground nesting birds. Follow the instructions given by your guides.
- Approach wildlife very carefully when taking photographs. It is important to remember that your photography is not over when the shutter clicks. Make your retreat from the subject in the same way you approached. The key point to remember is not to cause the animals any distress. Never harass wildlife for the sake of a photograph.
- Take care not to startle or chase any bird from its nest. Your attention to a nesting or moulting bird should never be prolonged when a predator is in the vicinity. Gulls and skuas are especially adapted to exploiting disruptions by raiding exposed nests and the young.
- Monitor your surroundings and be sensitive to any disruption you may be causing. If an animal shows signs of distress or avoidance, move away carefully.
- Look but never touch. These are wild animals going about the daily business of their lives. We want to observe and photograph natural behaviour in its natural state.
- Avoid repeated trampling of plants. In cold habitats, the recovery of plants is very slow.
- When ashore, stay with the group and/or one of the ship's guides. For your safety, never wander off on your own. Listen to the expedition leader and guides. Do not hesitate to ask your leaders and guides if you are not sure about something.

WILDERNESS ETIQUETTE

- In order not to introduce new species into South Georgia please wash your boots at home and make sure that no seeds are included in the packaging or clothing (pockets, photo bag, etc.).
- Do not litter! Respect the wilderness, its wildlife and the enjoyment of future visitors. Return all litter to the ship for proper disposal. This includes litter of all types, such as wrappers, plastic bags, food waste and tissues. Leave no evidence of your visit.
- Do not collect natural souvenirs such as shells, rocks, feathers, bones or fossils.
- Keep noise level to a minimum.

HAVE A NICE JOURNEY!