

Epic South Georgia & The Falkland Islands Oct 8–Nov 2, 2019



It is the place on Earth where superlatives are born. The pinnacle, the apex and the zenith of nature's creation—there are no adequate words to describe the awesome beauty which is South Georgia. This phenomenal sub-Antarctic island—102 miles long and 24 miles wide, a mere speck in the vast Southern Ocean—is crowned by a wreath of flowing glaciers covering half of its expanse. The craggy scenery of South Georgia is no less spectacular than if the Alps had been plunged recklessly into the tempestuous South Atlantic. Despite its extreme isolation, South Georgia ranks among the most vital breeding oases for one of the world's greatest wildlife concentrations.

If you've dreamed of visiting South Georgia, or longed to return to its rugged shores, our 2019 Joseph Van Os Photo Safaris Epic South Georgia cruise offers an incredible opportunity to experience this fabulous island of penguins and ice for 10 full days of unparalleled photography. Our dedicated, exclusively chartered, photo cruise visits the island's most prolific wildlife habitats and scenic landscapes. We make shore landings primarily on the island's northeast coast that teems with wildlife and photo opportunities. Millions of penguins make the island their home and, in some places, complete hillsides are covered with them. There are more photogenic king penguins on South Georgia than on any other island on Earth and we visit several of their enormous colonies throughout our voyage.



Join our **LAST PHOTO VOYAGE** to the incomparable **South Georgia!**

A quarter of a million albatrosses return here each year, including the spectacular wandering albatross. With its 10-foot wingspan, the wandering albatross is a truly immense bird, and South Georgia is home to half the world's population. Under

the cover of darkness to avoid predators, an estimated 10 million other seabirds—shearwaters, petrels and prions—return each night to the nest. Most of the small offshore islands are honeycombed with their underground burrows. Now, after an innovative rat eradication program, the South Georgia seabird colony is expected to expand by 100 million birds over the next several years!

Rounding out our Southern Ocean odyssey is a visit to 4 of the legendary Falkland Islands. Sea Lion, Saunders, West Point and Carcass Islands feature photographer-pleasing gentoo and rockhopper penguin colonies and, during our voyage, black-browed albatross colonies are courting at the start of their breeding season. Oystercatchers and steamer ducks parade along the beach, while penguins ride the surf along with black-and-white Commerson's dolphins.

Compelling Reasons To Travel With Us In 2019

The Last Of Its Kind—Our Final Epic South Georgia Voyage

Our 2019 Epic South Georgia voyage will be the last time we offer this incredible exclusively chartered journey!

Small ships traveling in the Southern Ocean are quickly being phased out and are being replaced at an alarming rate with much larger vessels carrying hundreds of passengers each. The new ships, their itineraries and proposed shore operations restrictions will not be conducive for great photography, but rather they will cater to the whims of the massive general cruise market. In the coming 3 to 4 years, most ships suitable for in-depth photo tours will be a thing of the past.

Incredibly, nature in all its exuberance will also prohibit visiting many of South Georgia's wildlife-rich locations due to the burgeoning population of tens of thousands of aggressive Antarctic fur seals. In October, during our visit, very few fur seals have come ashore. By November, when they start arriving in massive numbers, the people on shore risk serious fur seal confrontations. The liability risk to tour operators and the Government of South Georgia from these increasing human/seal confrontations will prohibit landings at many of the most beautiful landing sites.





“This was my first Joseph Van Os expedition, and it was an outstanding and rewarding experience. I now see why so many of the participants I met were on their fourth, fifth, or sometimes eighth Van Os expedition. Having traveled with many other photography tour groups, I felt this company truly excelled in terms of quality of the staff, the knowledge and preparation in building the itinerary, and attention to details throughout the tour. From pre-trip planning to the completion of my tour, I was continuously impressed.”

—G. Grubb

Unparalleled Experience

Joseph Van Os Photo Safaris has 30 years of experience offering photography tours to the great wildlife destinations in the Southern Ocean—far more than any other photography tour company that now operates trips to the region. Our trip leaders have worked together for years. Some have led extensive camping

expeditions and others have been research scientists in the region. Our combined experience leading trips to South Georgia and Antarctica covers hundreds of voyages. Experience matters when exploring the vast Southern Ocean!

Time, Time And More Time

Our Epic South Georgia trip offers more time at South Georgia than virtually any other voyage! As with our near-legendary Ultimate Antarctica photo cruises, our Epic South Georgia 2019 photography odyssey is an exclusive charter— we direct all aspects of the cruise so photography and wildlife observation are second to no other activity aboard ship. Once at South Georgia, travel time from location to location is very short, so we waste little time in transit. We usually reposition at night. We get you exactly where you need to be for the best photo opportunities—each and every day of your trip.

Our trip offers 10 full days of breathtaking photography at South Georgia—with a luxurious amount of time to spend ashore. We also enjoy 3 days in the Falkland Islands—a destination that is amazing in its own right. During our cruise, participants' photography and wildlife interests shape our plans. On many days we stop at only one landing site, and our photography experience at these locations allows for virtually comprehensive coverage of the seasonal wildlife and rugged snowy landscapes. On these full days with only one landing, logistics will not require all participants to leave the shore, and optional bag lunches extend your shore time (weather permitting).



Small Ship, Fewer Passengers, Great Leaders

Now is the time to visit South Georgia with a comparatively small group aboard a comfortable small research-expedition ship that offers an excellent “platform” for photography. Our ship, the *Ushuaia*, carries only 76 passengers—small enough that you will get to know most of them. She has lots of outside deck space for bird and

landscape photography, a friendly crew, and a group of great seasoned tour leaders traveling on our last epic cruise to the island where Shackleton ended his own epic voyage.

We carry a fleet of Jacques Cousteau-designed Zodiac landing craft, allowing us to set foot on very isolated shores. Perfectly suited to expedition cruising, these nimble craft enable passengers to travel in small groups and facilitate visits to some of the most spectacular wildlife concentrations in the world.

Prime Time For Photography

We are at South Georgia when occasional snowfall on the beaches is likely—the sight of tens of thousands of king penguins in the snow with serrate mountain and towering glacier backgrounds is breathtaking. Southern elephant seals are pupping and the gigantic bull beachmaster seals are locked in titanic combat on the beaches—a spectacular event most late season visitors usually miss! In October, aggressive bull Antarctic fur seals are still mostly at sea, which allows us access (usually impossible later) to nesting areas of gray-headed albatrosses and light-mantled sooty albatrosses. Also in October, Prion Island is open to visitation (it closes in November) and we are there at the prime time to photograph wandering albatrosses.



Get an idea of what it's like to visit and photograph on South Georgia by watching this [video](#).



Download our free [eBook](#) featuring dozens of client images from a past South Georgia photo tour.

“An outstanding trip, made all the more enjoyable by the leaders who were beyond anything I’ve experienced before—ensuring I got the very best experience—both from a photographic and wildlife point of view.”

—H. Williams

Check out the [trip report](#) from our 2012 South Georgia photo cruise.

Tour Itinerary

Day 1

Depart from home.

Day 2 (Oct 9)

Arrive in Ushuaia, Argentina. The hotel tonight is included in the tour fee.

Day 3

The morning is free to explore the southernmost city in the world. An optional bus tour of Tierra del Fuego National Park with an asado (barbecue) lunch is available. Stores and shops in easy walking distance from our hotel are open, presenting a chance to stock up on some personal “snacks” or purchase forgotten items. In late afternoon we board our ship the *MV Ushuaia* and set sail to the Falkland Islands traversing the famous Beagle Channel. (BD)

Day 4

We start our journey following the "Scotia Arc," traveling with the prevailing current to the Falklands. We see a variety of birds, including our first ship-following black-browed and wandering albatrosses and hundreds of petrels and other “tubenoses.” On all “at sea” days throughout the cruise, there are discussions on photography, digital workflow, and natural history, as well as inspiring nature photo presentations. Plus, if wind conditions are favorable, great bird flight shots can be made on deck. (All meals are included while aboard ship.)

Day 5

The first landing of our voyage takes place on Sea Lion Island



situated 10 miles southeast of East Falkland—the largest island in the Falkland Archipelago. A sheep farm for almost 100 years, Sea Lion Island is now a fantastic ecological reserve that provides great opportunities to photograph nesting gentoo penguins, Falkland steamer ducks, ruddy-headed geese and huge elephant seals. Peale's dolphins escort our Zodiacs to the beach and, with luck, a pod of orcas can be observed close to shore attracted by a potential meal of seals or penguins. Our one-day schedule here allows us to break up the crossing time to South Georgia and we will return to the Falklands for two more days on our return trip.

Days 6–8

Departing the Falklands, our ship crosses the Scotia Sea. Although we are far from land, there is much to see, on deck or the bridge, if you are an active wildlife observer. Many birds follow the ship. Whales are a good possibility. Numerous leader presentations prepare us for the landings to come. Our course takes us across the Antarctic Convergence, the invisible boundary between the cold Antarctic waters and the warmer currents flowing from the South Atlantic. We start to see the first icebergs. Our next landfall is South Georgia, some 800 miles from the Falklands. Experiencing advantageous weather, we arrive at South Georgia the evening of Day 8 with a possible shore landing.

Days 9–18

With favorable crossing conditions we start our photography in earnest on Day 9. The freezing effects of the Antarctic continent—1,000 miles to the south—dominate South Georgia's climate. Its landscape, reminiscent of the last ice age, is dotted with vast glaciers, meltwater streams, alluvial beaches and occasional offshore icebergs. The topography offers incredible landscape photography prospects.

Millions of penguins make the island their home and, in some places, complete hillsides are covered with them. There are more king penguins on South Georgia than on any other island on Earth and we visit their enormous colony—the incomparable Salisbury Plain—for two very full days of photography.



A quarter of a million albatrosses return here each year, including the spectacular wandering albatross. With its 10-foot wingspan, the wandering albatross is a truly immense bird, and South Georgia is home

to half the world's population. Under the cover of darkness to avoid predators, an estimated 10 million other seabirds—shearwaters, petrels and prions—return each night to the nest. Most of the small offshore islands are honeycombed with their underground burrows. Now, after an innovative rat eradication program, the South Georgia seabird colony is expected to expand by 100 million birds over the next several years!

More than 4 million Antarctic fur seals—95 percent of the world's population—pile onto the island later in the summer. The total population is thought to be increasing by ten percent each year! We are here early enough to miss the highest density of the aggressive bull seals and we should be able to reach the usually “inaccessible due to aggressive seals” nest sites of gray-headed albatrosses. Half the world's population of southern



elephant seals also comes to breed on South Georgia's beaches. The largest of all seals, males can be over 20 feet (6m) long and weigh 8,800 pounds (4,000kg) or more. We are here at the height of the mating/fighting season—making for truly exciting photo opportunities!

Our ten days at South Georgia should allow us time to locate and photograph most of the more unusual nesting species, such as macaroni penguins, light-mantled sooty albatrosses and southern giant petrels, and give us time to find the best possible photo situations in several of the vast king penguin colonies. Potential landings include Salisbury Plain and Prion Island in the Bay of Isles for king penguins and wandering albatrosses, and a day each at wildlife-packed St. Andrews Bay and Cooper Bay for good measure. We have an extensive amount of flexibility built into our schedule and we direct our activities toward the best photographic situations possible. The experience is exceptional.

Days 19–21

Our nature and photography lectures continue while at sea toward the Falklands. The photographic potential for flight photography of wandering and black-browed albatrosses, northern and southern giant petrels, and Cape petrels is excellent during this crossing.

Days 22–23

Saunders, West Point and Carcass Islands on the northwest side of the Falklands round out our trip's photo opportunities. The “Neck” on Saunders features a large gentoo penguin colony with a throng of these photogenic birds riding the surf along with black-and-white Commerson's dolphins. Oystercatchers and steamer ducks parade along the beach while, on a nearby slope,



rockhopper penguins and black-browed albatrosses are just starting their breeding season.

Carcass Island and West Point Islands are home to camera-friendly colonies of Magellanic penguins and cheeky striated caracaras. Abundant ducks and small birds are found on Carcass since the island does not have introduced rats. West Point has an albatross colony plus abundant caracaras, turkey vultures and black-crowned night herons. We start our homeward voyage by late afternoon of Day 23.

Day 24

Today we are at sea en route to Ushuaia.

Day 25 (Nov 1)

Arriving in Ushuaia, we clear Customs, disembark the ship, and transfer to the airport to depart for home. (B)

Day 26

Arrive home

Please Note: The above itinerary is intended as an example only. Participants should allow for flexibility due to changes in weather, natural history events, or other logistical arrangements deemed necessary by our leaders.

Trip Details

Oct 08 - Nov 02, 2019

Fee: **\$15,995–\$20,995*** from Ushuaia, Argentina
(see complete cabin pricing on next page)

Deposit: **25% of cabin fee**

Limit: **78**

* Includes one hotel night in Ushuaia, Argentina,
October 9, 2019

CONTACT US ABOUT THIS TOUR

“In addition to out-of-this-world scenery and wildlife, we had the opportunity to photograph during the best light times of day, including very early in the morning. One unexpected bonus from the trip was the chance to learn from the other participants, as there were many world-class photographers in addition to the excellent leaders.”

—P. Craig



Rate Schedule

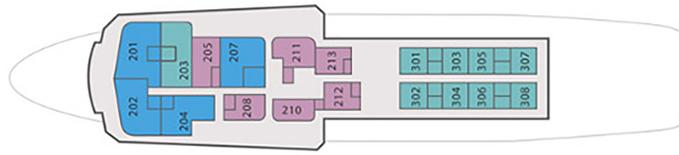
CABIN TYPE	RATE
Standard: Twin outside cabins with portholes on Deck E, two berths (upper/lower), semi-private facilities*.	\$15, 995
<small>*Two cabins share one bathroom accessible from both cabins (shower and toilet). Each cabin is also equipped with its own washbasin.</small>	
Standard Plus: Twin outside cabins with portholes or windows on Deck E, two lower berths, private facilities.	\$16, 995
Premier: Twin outside cabins with windows on Deck G, two lower berths, private facilities	\$17, 995
Superior: Twin cabins with windows on Deck G, two lower berths, private facilities	\$18, 995
Suite: Twin cabins with windows on Deck G, two lower berths, private facilities, lounge, video, TV and fridge	\$20, 995

All prices above are per person based on double occupancy (except Premier Single Cabin category) from Ushuaia, Argentina and are shown in USD. The trip fee does not include airfare of any kind, transfers other than with the group, visas, excess baggage charges, airport departure taxes, tips for the ship's crew, travel insurance, bottled water, beverages other than coffee, tea, milk and juice taken at meals, bar expenses, phone calls, faxes, email, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

Bridge Deck H

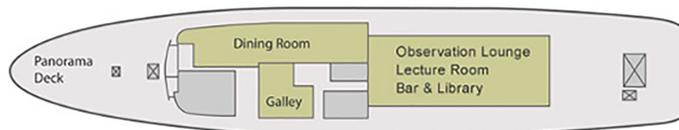


Upper Deck G

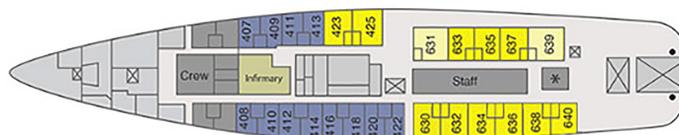


- 4 Suites
- 9 Superior twin private cabins
- 6 Premier twin private cabins

Main Deck F



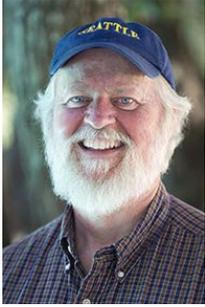
Deck E



- 12 Standard twin semi-private cabins (two berths - upper/lower)
- 11 Standard Plus twin private cabins
- 2 Standard Plus triple private cabins

N.B. Semi-private facilities: Two cabins share one bathroom accessible from both cabins (shower and wc). Each cabin is also equipped with its own washbasin.

Tour Leaders



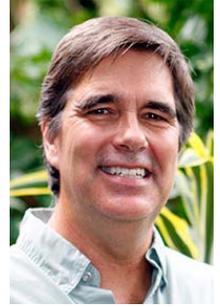
JOE VAN OS



JEFF VANUGA



ERIC ROCK



MARK THOMAS



JOE & MARY ANN
MCDONALD



CHRIS EDWARDS



ANNA SUTCLIFFE



MONIKA SCHILLAT

“The knowledge of the leaders and their willingness to provide us with information about photography, history, and natural history, was superb and added immeasurably to the trip.”

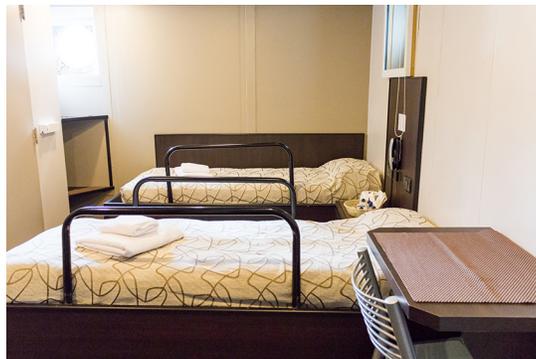
—S. Arkin



Our Ship—*Ushuaia*



Standard Twin Cabin



Standard Plus Twin Cabin



Superior Twin Cabin



Premier Twin Cabin



Suite