

# 6 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE ANTARCTICA CHOOSING YOUR TRAVEL COMPANY



A HOW-TO GUIDE TO A SAFE & REWARDING ANTARCTICA EXPERIENCE



*Adult Adélie penguin.*



There are many, many reasons to want to visit Antarctica: the dashing history of the Heroic Age of Exploration; the penguins; the majestic bergs and glaciers; the breathtaking mountains surging 9,000 feet straight up from the sea; the ability to see for hundreds of miles through dust-free air; or the profound absence of anything man-made.

Antarctica is a place of extraordinary natural beauty that calls to many travelers. It is arguably the world's last great wilderness, providing travelers with a unique opportunity to experience genuine pristine wildness. And it is arguably threatened due to global warming, providing an increasingly urgent mission for many to view this increasingly vulnerable ecosystem.

However, the risks, inherent in any travel, of bringing guests to a remote and fickle environment are magnified in Antarctica, because there are more ways to get into danger and fewer rescue resources for vessels in trouble.

Over the last several years, safety has become an increasingly important component of any discussion on Antarctica, as the number of ships and visitors has increased dramatically. The number of incidents has also grown dramatically.

In 2007 the *M/S Explorer*\*, fondly known in the maritime world as “the little red ship,” foundered and sank in Antarctic waters. All the 100 passengers and 54 crew members were rescued, after a four-hour wait in open lifeboats and Zodiacs in biting 20° winds, by two ships that happened to be in proximity and responded immediately. In 2008 and 2009 respectively, additional ship mishaps involving currents and running aground on rocks were reported.

In April 2009, at a multi-nation conference on the Antarctic Treaty (originally signed in 1959, its 50th anniversary was celebrated in 2009), Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called on all nations to adopt stricter limits on Antarctic tourism and to formalize the voluntary policies of IAATO. (The International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators is a member organization founded in 1991 to advocate, promote and practice safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic.) IAATO members currently subscribe to policies including limiting the number of guests allowable ashore at once, and limiting ships carrying more than 500 passengers to cruise-bys with no landings.

Despite these factors, it is unequivocally possible to safely voyage to Antarctica, and to have an extraordinary experience there — intimate, personal, exhilarating, life-changing. We have created this guide to help you make the informed decisions that will lead to the adventure of a lifetime.

*\*Built as the Lindblad Explorer in 1969, the ship was operated by Lindblad Travel until it was sold in 1982. Ownership of the vessel changed several times, the last owner being G.A.P. Shipping, which acquired the M/S Explorer in 2004 and owned it until it sank in 2007.*



*Bright sunlight in the Antarctic casts the shadow of National Geographic Explorer onto a huge berg.*

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Ship's registry: Bahamas

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*Explorer's skilled Captains take advantage of favorable conditions, usually from October to December, to "park" National Geographic Explorer, allowing guests the thrill of disembarking onto the frozen sea.*

# WHAT KIND OF SHIP IS BEST?

**T**he style of vessel you choose for your Antarctic adventure will define your expedition experience. The kinds of vessels currently voyaging to Antarctica are large cruise ships, icebreakers, polar adventure ships and fully-equipped expedition ships.

For maximum safety, and to have a more in-depth experience, choose a vessel with an ice-strengthened hull.

*National Geographic Explorer*, the flagship of the Lindblad-National Geographic fleet, is a purpose-built expedition ship, the best-equipped

expedition ship afloat, and the only newly-converted ship whose design is informed by 40+ years of polar expedition experience. Her hull has been strengthened so extensively that the forward half of the ship has received a rating of DNV ICE-1A Super, the highest possible, short of an icebreaker classification. After the bow, the second most vulnerable area in the ice is a ship's stern. *National Geographic Explorer's* large extension, built around the stern, extends well beyond the propellers and rudder, to keep ice at a safe distance from

crucial areas. Ice keels and ice knives were installed around and aft of the propellers and rudders for further protection.


*Explorer* is able to easily and safely penetrate the softer, first-year ice that is common in the Antarctic, allowing her Captains to perform the "magic" of "parking" her on the ice so guests can disembark. And she is tough enough to provide guests with the thrill of crushing through ice; and nimble enough to navigate safely through the bergy bits floating in Antarctic waters.



*Insets: The stern extension safeguards propellers (above) and rudder from ice. In addition, Rolls-Royce stabilizers, retractable wings to help keep the ship steady in beam seas, were fitted into the hull.*



# WHAT SAFETY FEATURES ARE VITAL?

 In addition to the nature and inherent ice-worthiness of the ship, there are three important components to safety in Antarctica: Captain, staff and crew experience, on-board technology, and lifesaving protocol and equipment.

In our review of the available literature, we found some of the ships enthusiastically entering Antarctic tourism touting “on-board physician” as a primary safety feature. While having a doctor aboard is undoubtedly important, there is far more to ensuring passenger safety in Antarctica. Here are some of the baseline criteria to use in evaluating your travel provider.

## CAPTAIN AND CREW EXPERIENCE

Captains who have attained the necessary experience navigating polar waters are called Icemasters. An Icemaster is not only familiar with the unique wind, weather and current dynamics in polar waters, he or she is also intimately familiar with all the forms of ice and the unique challenges each form presents.

The Captains of the Lindblad-National Geographic fleet have spent decades in the ice. Respectively, they have each

navigated over 100 Antarctic expeditions, ensuring that they have the crucial knowledge we demand. And they are extraordinary mariners. For example, before Leif Skog, Lindblad VP of Marine Operations and Master of the *National Geographic Explorer*, became a Captain in 1984, he worked as an Officer on a variety of vessels including general cargo ships, LPG-gas tankers, a multi-purposed helium deep-diving support vessel and passenger ships carrying from 800 to 1,200 passengers.

*Lifesaving Protocol and Equipment: National Geographic Explorer's enclosed lifeboats (left) are a combination of a rigid fiberglass shell and a small plastic or heavy duty canvas door to protect all occupants from the elements in case of having to abandon ship. Safety Drills beyond standards set by SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) include weekly damage control and testing of damage control equipment drills. Veteran Polar Crew hand-picked and trained to act without hesitation in any severe condition. Stand-by Zodiac at all times for immediate response. Physician on board.*







What further qualifies our Icemasters is our 40+ year heritage of record-keeping. Our Captains have soundings and coastal map records going back to 1966 and the pioneering days of Lindblad Travel. In addition, our Icemasters are not merely skilled maritime professionals, they have a profound love for the polar geographies, and are as adept as our Naturalists at spotting wildlife. They dedicate their skills to ensuring that spontaneity remains our expedition hallmark. Their seasoned ship's officers are also polar veterans, hand-picked and well-trained to act without hesitation in any severe condition.

*Below: Exploring via Zodiac.*



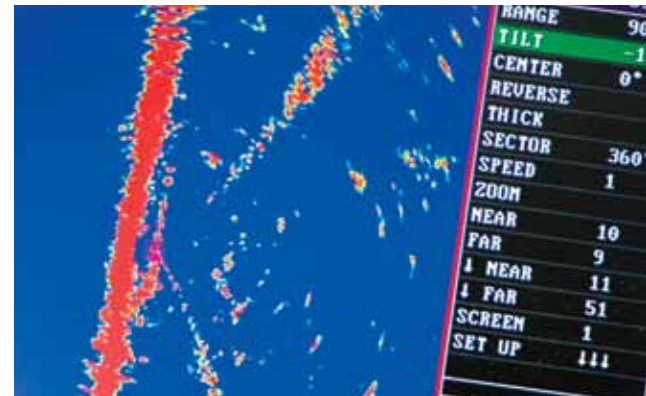


*Captain Leif Skog, Lindblad VP of Marine Operations, has been a member of IAATO since 1998 and served as Chairman of the IAATO Marine Committee for five years, when he developed the safety and emergency procedures for all IAATO vessels. It ensures that all IAATO ships operating in the region keep in daily touch to form the initial response for any incident. This system was tested during the 2007 distressed vessel incident (referenced in the Introduction, page 1) and resulted in several vessels, including National Geographic Endeavour, responding and arriving on the scene within a matter of hours.*



## ON BOARD TECHNOLOGY

All passenger ships plying Antarctic waters are equipped with a GMDSS (Global Maritime & Distress Safety System) emergency communication system and a satellite weather forecasting system. However, more technology is available that can be harnessed for greater travel safety. Knowing that the ship you're traveling on contains the latest technology further assures your peace of mind, as well as your safety.



### To illustrate the point, look at the technology on *National Geographic Explorer*:

#### ✓ **Forward-scanning Sonar**

*National Geographic Explorer* is one of the very few passenger ships fitted with this. While every ship has a depth sounder that measures the depth of the water directly beneath the ship, a depth sounder can't look forward and see upcoming obstacles. Our Captains are able to continually scan several hundred feet ahead and see not only where uncharted obstacles (rocks, shoals or submerged ice) may be, but also what is the safest way around them. Because of its vital safety function, we've taken the lead in advising IAATO to mandate it for all ships.

#### ✓ **Double Weather Forecasting**

We subscribe to two independent weather forecasting companies and receive real time satellite images of weather and ice conditions. The Bon Voyage service provides predictions on wind, sea and swell, while our Wind Plot service uses a Gridded Binary forecasting system to accurately predict wind conditions every six hours at almost

any location on the Peninsula.

Such detailed weather forecasting systems allow us to make better informed decisions – for safety and to drastically reduce cancelled landings due to poor weather.

#### ✓ **Ice Radar**

Provides an adjustable, high definition picture using data from the ship's 3cm wavelength radar. By averaging the radar picture over a length of time, the ice radar processor filters out the scatter, resulting in a clearer image and reducing the likelihood of an unplanned ice encounter. Different sizes of ice and open leads are easily discerned in the radar, allowing the Captain to better choose the safest routes through ice packs.

#### ✓ **Ice Light**

A xenon bulb ice light, mounted on the mast, shines forward and brightly reflects ice. This equipment is useful at night and in heavier seas, when waves may prevent the radar, or an unaided eye, from picking up hazardous ice.

#### ✓ **GMDSS (Global Maritime & Distress Safety System)**

The ship is also equipped with five portable Iridium satellite phones, relying on 66 near polar-orbiting satellites for continuous coverage in Antarctica, including emergency communication on lifeboats. In addition, two EPIRBs (Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacons) send out a coded distress signal giving position in the case of an incident; and two Search and Rescue Transponders are on board to aid in any search and recovery effort.

#### ✓ **IAATO Emergency Response System**

Developed by Captain Leif Skog, Master of *National Geographic Explorer*, it ensures that all IAATO ships in Antarctica keep in daily touch to form the initial response for any incident. Tested during the 2007 distressed vessel incident (see Introduction), it resulted in several ships, including *National Geographic Endeavour*, responding and arriving on the scene within a matter of hours.

*The point of it all — experience, expertise, technology, and technique is this: To enable you to have the unparalleled thrill of heading into the unknown, armed with confidence in your leadership, to inhabit the vastness, and discover the wonder of being somewhere utterly new.*







# WHAT IS THE TRAVEL OPERATOR'S EXPERIENCE? DO THEY OWN & OPERATE THEIR SHIP?

**N**ow, more and more cruise lines have begun to add Antarctica to their itineraries. And many tour operators, accustomed to voyaging in “tamer” waters are leasing adventure ships to offer Antarctic voyages, too. Given the increasing number of reported ship mishaps in Antarctic waters, it is not hard to conclude too many guests and operators alike may be undertaking this too lightly.

While there are many committed, conscientious operators in Antarctica, literally no other company has the length of tenure, hands-on experience and expertise of Lindblad Expeditions. We own *National Geographic Explorer*, not as a matter of fact but of faith. We believe that having a ship you control, and a completely coordinated staff and crew is vital for safety reasons. But equally important, we believe it's vital for service reasons – to provide an authentically adventurous and

meaningful expedition experience. A Cruise Director employed by a leasing travel company coordinating with a Captain and crew who work for a different owner simply cannot produce the teamwork that is the hallmark of our expeditions. The synergy that exists among our expedition team members – Expedition Leaders and their staff working with the Captains, and their officers— fosters a community of service to the guest experience that is impossible to duplicate.



*Joining forces in 2004, Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic formed an alliance with the goal of “Inspiring people to explore and care about the planet.”*

*Below: King penguins, South Georgia.*



## EXPERIENCE EQUALS SAFETY

On September 20, 1958, Lars-Eric Lindblad, considered by many to be the “father of eco-tourism,” opened the doors to his new company, Lindblad Travel, in New York City.

As his company continued to grow, he searched for new places on the map. In 1966, Lindblad brought the first group of “citizen” explorers to Antarctica. He initially operated his pioneering Antarctic voyages with chartered vessels. However, within two years he decided to build his own ship – to run expeditions the way he wanted, and to exercise the level of control and

reliability he considered vital. The *Lindblad Explorer* was launched in 1969. With a reinforced hull that allowed it to penetrate the ice, she soon traveled further north and south than any passenger ship had ever ventured before.

Over the subsequent 40-plus years since Lars-Eric’s pioneering voyage, the collective polar intelligence of Lindblad Expeditions has grown exponentially through consecutive voyages. As a result, Lindblad knows Antarctica to a greater degree than any other company voyaging there.

We systematically continue the surveying practices Lars-Eric began in 1966. In recent years, we’ve continually recorded our tracks by satellite positioning and overlaid each position with the water depth our crew has measured at that spot to create “safe tracks,” enabling us to return to exciting, off-the-beaten-path spots. And building on paper surveys dating back to the original *Lindblad Explorer*, we have accumulated considerable data on safe anchorages. We regularly share our newly acquired data with the British Hydrographic Agency.





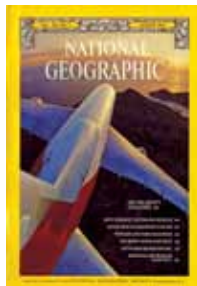
After so many consistent years of surveying and recording, our officers have more data at their fingertips on the Bridge than many government hydrographic agencies.

In 1996, the US Geological Society recognized Lindblad's contribution to Antarctica by officially designating a section of Trinity Peninsula as "Lindblad Cove." Their letter stated that, "A noted conservationist, Mr. Lindblad operated the first cruise to Antarctica in 1966 and was a leader in the concept of expedition tourism as a means of environmental awareness."

Lars-Eric in the 1970s. Once common, dog teams were banned in the 1991 Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty.

Since Lars-Eric's day, we have remained committed to owning and operating our own expedition ships. Our pioneering history and years of experience, including having safely introduced thousands of exhilarated guests to the wonders of Antarctica, give us a profound advantage in providing guests with a genuinely exploratory experience.

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, AUGUST 1977**



*I was working on staff for my father when we were hit twice by fierce storms with no warning. During one storm, the Expedition Leader and I were being hoisted up in a Zodiac after safely delivering guests to the ship in a force 12 wind. The Zodiac collapsed, dropping the Expedition Leader into the sea, and me onto the ship's deck. Since he had on a survival suit and was rescued within 5 minutes, his accident was not life-threatening. Had it been me, however, I wouldn't have survived, since I was improperly dressed for conditions, and sapped of energy. I*

*escaped with cuts and bruises. I never forgot that lesson, the slim margin for error in Antarctica, or the need for absolute standards to ensure safety. Our entire operation is based on lessons learned in 40-plus years of annual voyages. — Sven Lindblad*



*This NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC article, with photographs by Des and Jen Bartlett, depicts the incident Sven Lindblad describes above.*





UNITED STATES BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

In reply please use this address:  
U. S. Geological Survey  
523 National Center  
Reston, Virginia 22092

July 12, 1996

Mr. Sven-Olof Lindblad  
c/o Special Expeditions Inc.  
720 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10019

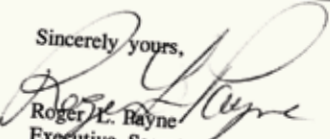
Dear Mr. Lindblad:

We are pleased to inform you that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names approved the Antarctic geographic name *Lindblad Cove* at its March 28, 1996 meeting, following the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN). The name will be published in future editions of the Antarctic Gazetteer and will also be available to the public through the Nation's official repository of geographic names, the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS).

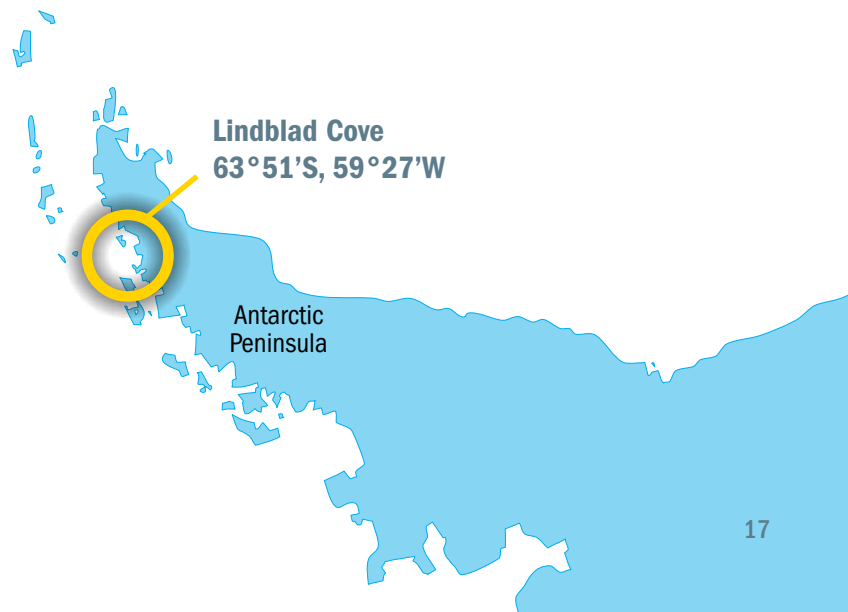
The descriptive entry for the decision reads as follows:

**Lindblad Cove** 63°51'S, 59°27'W  
Cove, 5 km wide, between Almond Point and Auster Point in Charcot Bay, Trinity Peninsula. Named by US-ACAN in 1995 in commemoration of Lars-Eric Lindblad (1927-94), pioneer in Antarctic tourism. A noted conservationist, Mr. Lindblad operated the first cruise to Antarctica in 1966 and was a leader in the concept of expedition tourism as a means of environmental awareness.

Sincerely yours,

  
Roger L. Bayne  
Executive Secretary  
U.S. Board on Geographic Names

In 1966 Lars-Eric Lindblad launched the first laymen expedition to Antarctica, at a time when explorers and scientists were the only visitors. For his efforts, he received honors accorded a polar explorer.





# HOW ACTIVE WILL YOUR ANTARCTIC EXPERIENCE BE?

**A**ntarctica is a place of extraordinary natural beauty. Someone traveling there on a 2,500-passenger megaship can enjoy some of the same scenery as guests aboard a nimble expedition ship like *National Geographic Explorer*. But much else would be lost. Because Antarctica is not mere scenery, it is a place to be experienced, an eco-system that delights upon closer inspection. It seems obvious that the experiences of a guest on an agile, 148-guest ship with the outdoors instantly accessible; and a guest on a huge cruise ship requiring elevators to reach viewing decks would be too different to compare. However, there are equally significant differences between an expedition with a genuine expedition company and other small ship operators.



Above: Guest on a ridge above the Weddell Sea.

Left: Exploring amid king penguins on South Georgia Island.

## TOOLS FOR EXPLORATION

One could have a perfectly wonderful time in Antarctica seated in a deck chair with a pair of good binoculars. But we believe that genuine encounters with beauty, wildness and the seldom-seen are the difference between wonderful and extraordinary. *National Geographic Explorer* travels with cool tools for that reason: to enable extraordinary experiences. Why settle, you should ask yourself, for seeing Antarctica from a window, or even on deck, when you can get out and explore. Inhabit the vastness. Hear the silence. Have up-close and personal encounters with penguins. Walk, hike, climb. Try a polar swim if you're inclined (and many are). Learn about the geology, the climate forces. And see beneath the sea.



*Clockwise from upper right: Our innovative proprietary launch platform enables guests to kayak virtually anywhere; swift Zodiac deployment makes the most of exploration time. An explosion of gentoo penguins alongside makes this kayaking experience doubly extraordinary; guest draws near for the perfect shot of a lounging leopard seal.*





## EQUIPMENT

The following is a list of the equipment capable of transforming your experience of Antarctica from merely sightseeing to a life-enhancing, personal encounter with the wildlife, geology and fantastic varieties of ice in this astonishing eco-system.

### Zodiacs and Zodiac deployment system

Zodiacs are key to your ability to get out and about on daily explorations, so the quality of your experience will suffer without the ability to make landfall and explore that Zodiacs provide. However, having Zodiacs is not enough — deployment is an important factor too — since waiting in line in the tender area is not adventure-enhancing.

*National Geographic Explorer*

carries a fleet of 13 Zodiacs. But more importantly, *Explorer* is designed for swift deployment. In fact, Zodiac deployment aboard *Explorer* can begin even before the ship drops anchor. As a result, there is virtually no wait time in the tender area, and more time ashore engaged in activities. Our efficiently designed loading bay makes embarking and disembarking a Zodiac safe and simple for people of all fitness levels.

### Kayaks

Lindblad Expeditions pioneered sea kayaking from expedition ships in polar waters, to provide guests with unprecedented opportunities for profoundly personal and exhilarating explorations in “penguin country.” Considerable time and safety testing

was involved in vetting the idea of polar kayaking, before we got the “green light” from our veteran Captain and Expedition Leaders. *NG Explorer* carries a fleet of 36 virtually untippable double kayaks, not a symbolic two or three, so everyone can paddle. In addition to being innovative about “personal” polar exploration, we also invented an ingenious deployment protocol. The Lindblad engineering team designed and built a proprietary staging platform that allows us to deploy guests in kayaks in ideal locations — again, without even waiting for the ship to drop anchor. While other travel companies have copied the kayaking idea, not all do it, so if a genuinely exploratory experience matters to you, check for this feature — and how swiftly they deploy to get you out exploring.

## UNDERSEA EXPLORATION INSPIRED BY JACQUES COUSTEAU

Far from cold, gray and lifeless, the polar sea is vibrant, colorful and remarkably full of life. Inspired by Jacques Cousteau and allied with National Geographic, Lindblad Expeditions is the only company operating in Antarctica with an extensive undersea program. And our guests, sitting in the warmth of *NG Explorer's* Lounge can experience it in HD, thanks to the dauntless passion of our Undersea Specialists – unique members of our expedition team.

An Undersea Specialist dons nearly 200 pounds of gear, including an insulating dry-suit to go diving in the frigid waters. One of our divers has over 200 dives in the Antarctic, and one is believed to be the only person ever to have received dive training and certification in the Antarctic.

Using an HD camera, our specialist captures images – fish with anti-freeze in their blood, or swimming, plant-like crinoids – that fundamentally change the way guests view the ocean. Some of the animals they have encountered during our expeditions, like a large-scale worm discovered in the Weddell Sea, are so rare or unusual that even Antarctic biologists can't identify them.

In addition, *National Geographic Explorer* voyages with a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) that can operate up to 1,000 feet below the surface, far below what any diver can reach. Often when Lindblad specialists deploy the ROV, it is filming areas no one has ever seen before.

Splash cams or underwater cameras on a pole that can be operated from a Zodiac, are also used during expeditions to catch video of surface activity including krill or playful penguins.

*Undersea specialist geared up for a polar dive, and launching from a Zodiac. The images from his or her video forays will later reveal the undersea to guests.*











## COOPERATION & COORDINATION

In most cases, a given ship's crew has a very limited impact on the experience of the average guest. On most cruise ships, a standard itinerary is set out well in advance, and the experience is not very different week to week, no matter which Captain or Cruise Director is aboard.

On an expedition ship, however, the Captain and Expedition Leader play a vital role in creating the entire experience. Their camaraderie and team spirit, as well as their knowledge and skill, play a big role in defining the number and nature of guest activities.

It is impossible to firmly plan an expedition to Antarctica months in advance, as varying ice and weather conditions make landings and activities dependent on hour-by-hour evaluations. We tailor each expedition to best suit the prevailing conditions. Flexibility means having the ability to change plans, not only when you have to, but when you want – to take advantage of unusual animal sightings or opportunistic ice conditions. Most often, it is the unplanned, unexpected wildlife encounters – a 40-ton humpback whale surfacing directly ahead of the ship, for instance – that leave guests most thrilled.

Our experience over time has given us the ability to deliver more ambitious and wide-ranging itineraries. Because we have been venturing ever deeper into the Weddell Sea on our October, November and December departures, our guests are increasingly having the amazing and rare experience of seeing emperor penguins, either alone or in a small group on the ice. While not guaranteed, it can be a lifetime experience.

*Guests exploring by Zodiac have an extraordinary encounter with a spy-hopping humpback whale.*



# WHAT DOES THE TRAVEL OPERATOR OFFER IN TERMS OF STAFF AND ONBOARD EXPERTS?

**M**ost travel companies operating in Antarctica claim to have knowledgeable experts onboard. It can be hard therefore to determine how to choose – to assure yourself of the most authentic, engaging and informative experience.

One of the metrics you can use to judge your travel provider is the ratio of staff to guests. A small number of guides can mean both fixed assignment to a group, and/or groups of more than ideal size.

Over the 40+ years of Lindblad Expeditions' history, our veteran staff, and the quality

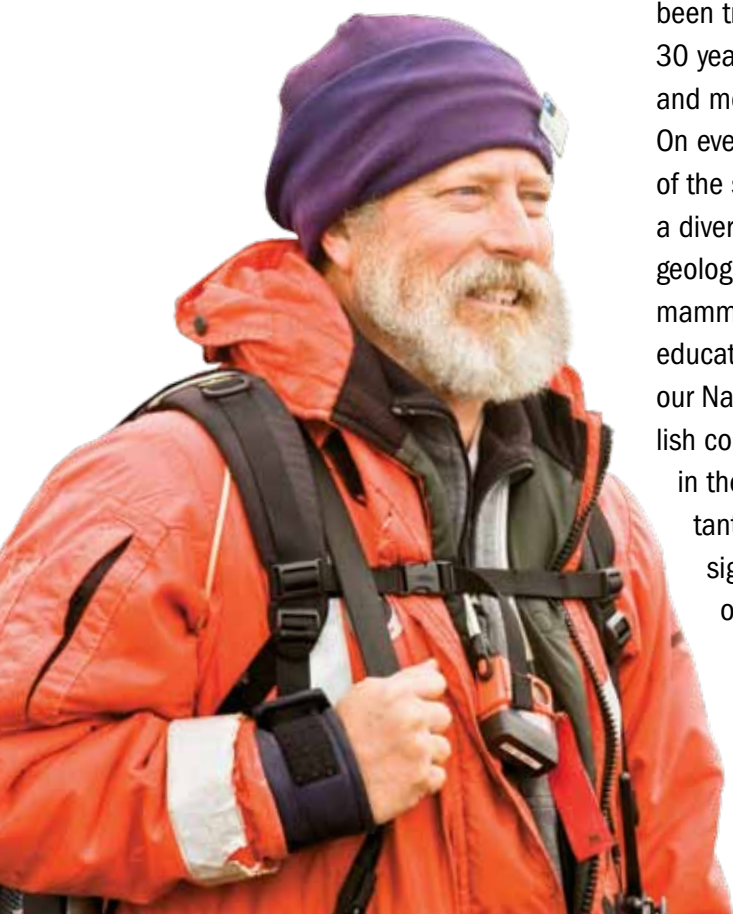
companionship they provide, has earned us a reputation for superior expeditions. And now with the National Geographic alliance, there is no better team available anywhere.

From Expedition Leaders to Naturalists, our staff is veteran, or gaining field experience under veteran mentorship. Some have been traveling to Antarctica for over 30 years, others for 20+ years, and most hold advanced degrees. On every voyage, the composition of the staff is chosen to ensure a diverse range of expertise from geology to history to marine mammals, giving as complete an educational base as possible. All our Naturalists are able to establish context and answer questions in their specialty. Equally important, they're available: we invest significantly in a large number of Naturalists, to keep an excellent guest to staff ratio of 15:1, or better. Guests are not herded around



in large groups, but can gravitate naturally to the staffers they're most interested in, ask individual questions and pursue their own interests.

Thanks to our alliance with National Geographic, we offer unprecedented resources, as well – from top-quality National Geographic DVDs and programs available for in-cabin viewing, to the top-tier National Geographic Photographers that accompany every voyage. Whether you are a point-and-shoot camera user, or an advanced photographer, you'll have





*Explorer's expedition staff include polar veterans as Expedition Leaders, plus a team of Naturalists and various specialists: Ornithologists, Marine Biologists, Geologists, Oceanites penguin researchers and more. A National Geographic Photographer is on each voyage. And videos chroniclers provide guests with a lasting digital record of their unique expedition.*

unprecedented opportunities to get tips and on-site guidance from top pros – in the field where it counts.

And thanks to our Global Luminaries program, you can count on the company of varied, and invariably interesting, fellow guest explorers. For example, over the past season, three former Astronauts satisfied their yearning to explore new corners of the planet by voyaging to Antarctica

with us. Our guests not only heard inside stories, they also got an inside view of the current and future space program.

Just as important as our staff's and guest experts' knowledge, however, is their individual and collective personalities. Passion and enthusiasm are endemic, and guests often comment how the staff seems just as excited as they are over a pod of orcas hunting for seals on ice



floes, or the antics of a penguin pecking at a boot. They are active participants in the guest's experience, personal guides and not just passive lecturers, and are always willing to engage, to continue the conversation with guests over a drink in the Lounge, over dinner or on the Bridge.

# WHAT IS THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD & COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION?

 In 1991, IAATO (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators) was formed to develop, adopt and implement operations standards that mitigate potential environmental impacts. IAATO is comprised of more than 100 respected travel companies from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States and the Overseas Territory- Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas).



Many of IAATO's policies were developed by current Lindblad staff members. Senior Expedition Leader Tom Ritchie served on board the original *Lindblad Explorer* during Lars-Eric Lindblad's ownership, and due to his veteran status was the natural choice to author policies on human behavior and wildlife protection. Those policies, accepted without edit, became known as the "Lindblad Model," and are the policies all IAATO companies voluntarily follow.

Many of today's site specific guidelines, written for sensitive areas where limitations needed to be established to protect wildlife colonies or historical sites, were

written by Lindblad Expedition Leader, Tim Soper. Lindblad's VP-Marine Operations and Master of *National Geographic Explorer*, Captain Leif Skog, was the head of the IAATO Marine Committee for five years and developed the safety and emergency procedures for all IAATO vessels.

In April 2009 at a multi-nation conference on the Antarctic Treaty (originally signed in 1959, one year after Lindblad's founding) Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called on all nations to adopt stricter limits on Antarctic tourism and to formalize the voluntary policies IAATO members currently follow, including limiting the number of guests



ashore at once, and limiting ships carrying more than 500 passengers to cruise-bys with no landings.

Lindblad Expeditions strongly supports the limitations of guest numbers ashore and vessel size, but is the only IAATO member calling for even greater restrictions, urging that ships larger than 500 passengers should not be allowed to even access Antarctica waters at all for



*Upper left; Souvenir of the 50th Anniversary Antarctica Treaty Conference attended by Lindblad Expedition Leader, Tom Ritchie.*

*Above: Guest hiking above Neko Harbor. Right: Adélie penguins.*

scenic “cruise-bys.” We do not believe the risks have been reduced to an acceptable level, especially given the limited ability to rescue up to several thousand people simultaneously.



*Chinstrap penguins on massive iceberg.*





## TRAVEL PHILANTHROPY

To encourage greater awareness and understanding of issues impacting the regions where we travel, Lindblad Expeditions has initiated innovative Lindblad programs in Conservation, Community Development, Education and Sustainable Cuisine. Efforts are made on board to directly engage guests in conservation and to provide open forums on climate change – like our recent Arctic Summit offered in partnership with the Aspen Institute. To learn more about this important conference, including who attended, see the Useful Links section on page 33.

In 2007 Lindblad accepted the Tourism for Tomorrow Global Tourism Business Award, presented annually by the World Travel & Tourism Council. The coveted award recognizes Lindblad Expeditions for “outstanding leadership as a global model for environmental stewardship.”

In 2008, in an effort to raise more monies for conservation and sustainable tourism projects, Lindblad Expeditions launched a new Joint Fund for Exploration and Conservation in conjunction with the National Geographic Society. Both organizations are committed

to working collaboratively through the fund to support projects worldwide, with a special focus on the regions we explore together.

In Antarctica, Lindblad supports Oceanites, an Antarctica-focused non-profit organization seeking to gather information on resident penguin populations and the impacts of tourism; and the only non government-funded scientific project on the continent. During every Antarctica sailing, two scientists sail with the ship, surveying landing sites and counting penguin populations. As a result of this symbiosis, Oceanites has been able to make 1,000 site visits at 135 separate locations. The data continues to grow, as 8 previously unvisited sites were reached in 2008.

On most evenings, the Oceanites scientists present the day’s data to the guests, giving them a front row seat on the effects of climate change in real time on resident populations. Oceanites President Ron Naveen reports a significant increase of gentoo penguins and decline of Adélies as part of the group’s site inventory. As of February 2010, together with guests, we have raised \$672,000 to support the work of Oceanites.



*Perfect reflection of a cape petrel.*

# SUMMARY

A voyage to Antarctica is one of the most exhilarating adventures the planet offers, and one of the most life-enhancing travel decisions any traveler can make.

This guide was created to nurture your dream of discovering Antarctica, by helping you understand what's involved so you can safely enjoy the adventure of a lifetime. We hope you found the information provided valuable, and that it serves you well in making your travel decision.

We believe that in any comparison between Lindblad-National Geographic and any other travel company operating in Antarctica, we will emerge the clear best choice. You simply cannot pick a better polar team, and if you place your confidence in us, we will provide you with an experience that will exceed your every expectation. We look forward to the prospect of sharing Antarctica with you.

## USEFUL LINKS

- »To receive answers to questions or request a phone call from an Expedition Specialist at your convenience, email us at [info@expeditions.com](mailto:info@expeditions.com)
- »For more information or to make a reservation, see your travel agent or call our Expedition Specialists at 1.800.EXPEDITION (1-800-397-3348). Monday through Friday, 9am to 8pm (ET); Sat. and Sun, 10am to 5pm (ET).
- »To see a video tour of *National Geographic Explorer*, the world's ultimate expedition ship, go to [www.expeditions.com/ngexplorer](http://www.expeditions.com/ngexplorer)
- »To read an informative and interesting blog by a recent Antarctic traveler, visit [www.travelswithmaureen.blogspot.com](http://www.travelswithmaureen.blogspot.com)
- »To learn more about the Arctic Summit Lindblad hosted with National Geographic and the Aspen Institute, visit [www.expeditions.com/climate\\_action](http://www.expeditions.com/climate_action)
- »To review our Antarctica webinar session, go to the archive at [www.expeditions.com/webinars](http://www.expeditions.com/webinars)
- »To view Antarctica videos, go to [www.expeditions.com/antarcticavideo](http://www.expeditions.com/antarcticavideo)
- »To read Daily Expedition Reports (DERs) from actual expeditions of past seasons, go to [www.expeditions.com/der](http://www.expeditions.com/der)
- »To learn more about our heritage, our destinations, our commitment to responsible travel and travel philanthropy, and more, visit [www.expeditions.com](http://www.expeditions.com)
- »To learn more about the Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic alliance, go to [www.expeditions.com/partnership](http://www.expeditions.com/partnership)

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Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic have joined forces to further inspire the world through expedition travel. Our collaboration in exploration, research, technology and conservation will provide extraordinary travel experiences and disseminate geographic knowledge around the globe.

*All the photographs in this book were taken by National Geographic photographers and/or Lindblad Photo Specialists or guests traveling aboard Lindblad-National Geographic ships. To find out more about Photo Expeditions and photo opportunities on Antarctica expeditions, call 1.800.EXPEDITION. Photo credits: Sisse Brimberg & Cotton Coulson, Stewart Cohen, David Cothran, Ralph Lee Hopkins, Sven-Olof Lindblad, Stefan Lundgren, Flip Nicklin, Michael Nolan, Kevin Schafer, Brooks de Wetter-Smith.*