

# Falkland Islands and South Georgia 20-Day Wildlife Adventure

Onboard Ocean Explorer



# Expedition Overview

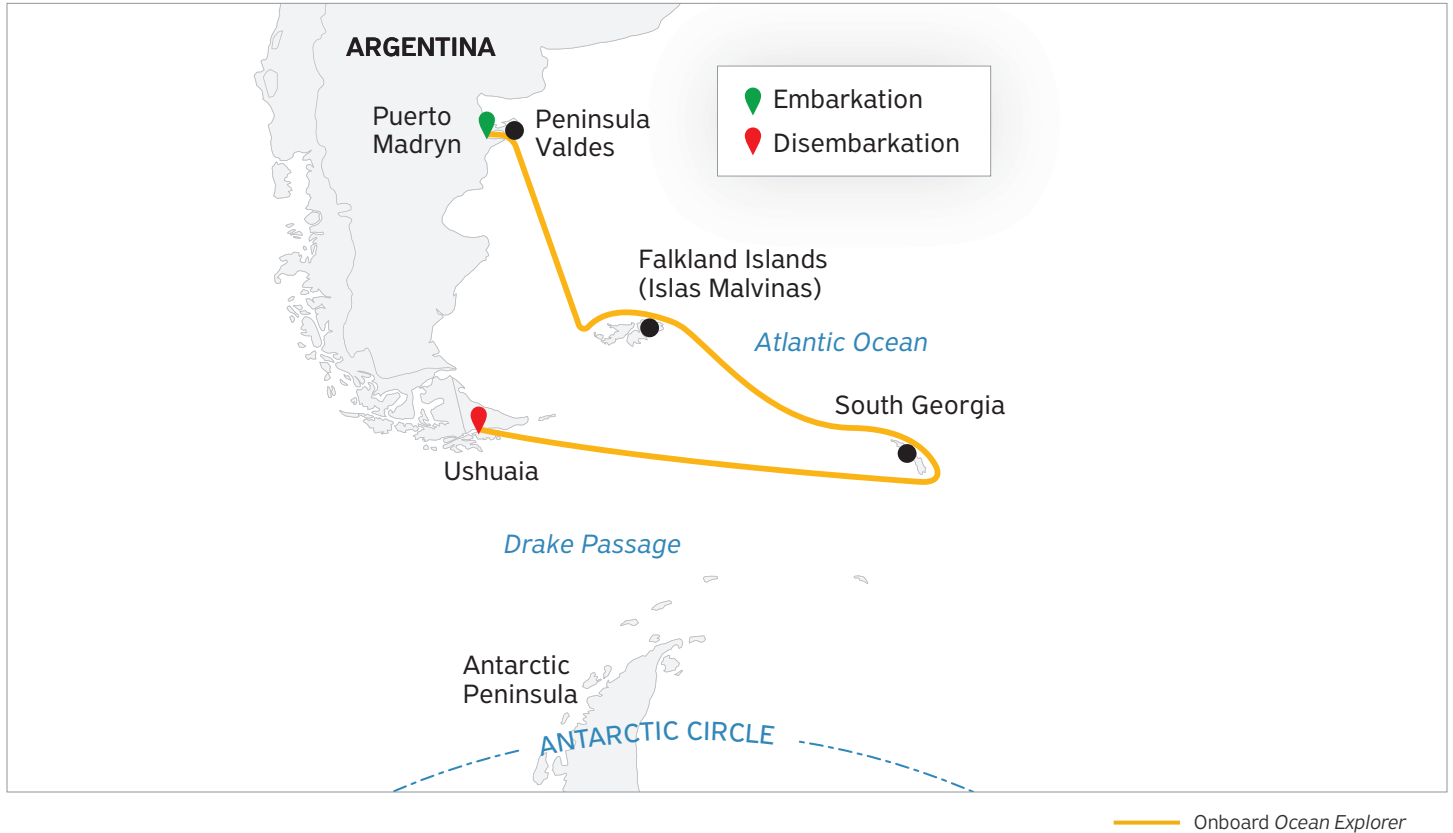


## Dive Deep into the Falklands and South Georgia

A first of its kind for Quark Expeditions: spend more time exploring the Falkland Islands and South Georgia than we've ever offered on our exclusive **20-day Falkland Islands and South Georgia: Wildlife Adventure**. Sailing from the Patagonian coastal city of Puerto Madryn, you'll reach the northwesternmost islands of the Falklands—a rare achievement in expedition travel. Enjoy three days exploring the archipelago, including remarkable sites such as Steeple Jason—the world's largest black-browed albatross colony—and New Island. Then immerse yourself for six full days in wildlife-rich South Georgia—virtually unheard of on any expedition itinerary.

- Enjoy more time in the Falklands and South Georgia than any other itinerary
- Explore spectacular Steeple Jason and New Island, famous for diverse wildlife
- Spot southern elephant seals, up to six species of penguins, and four species of dolphins
- Pay homage at the grave of explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton

# Day by Day Itinerary



## Day 1

### Arrive in Puerto Madryn, Argentina

Arrive in Puerto Madryn and transfer independently to your hotel, which is included in the Charter Flight & Hotel Package. Depending on your arrival time, you may wish to explore this vibrant coastal city, known for its sweeping beaches and rich marine life along the shores of the Golfo Nuevo. Puerto Madryn offers a unique blend of nature and culture, with opportunities to observe diverse wildlife and enjoy the tranquil waters that define this Patagonian gateway.

## Day 2

### Embarkation in Puerto Madryn

Following breakfast at your hotel, you'll board your vessel in Puerto Madryn and begin your expedition. Get ready for an unforgettable adventure ahead.

## Falkland Islands and South Georgia 20-Day Wildlife Adventure

### Days 3 and 4

#### At Sea: Getting to Know Your Ship and Fellow Travelers

From Puerto Madryn we set our course for Islas Malvinas, also known as the Falkland Islands, where we aim to dedicate at least three days to exploration. En route, we will transit rich waters that support an array of wildlife, and in these latitudes—between 42 and 51 degrees north—you may spot avian and marine species you might not see further south. Be sure to spend time on the outer decks taking in the open water, and keep your binoculars handy for any wildlife sightings.

Your Expedition Team will host expert presentations about the Patagonian coastlines and the isolated wildlife hotspots of the Falklands and South Georgia. Time at sea also provides opportunities to slow down and relax, and spend time getting to know your fellow ship mates who have traveled from diverse countries around the globe—and who share your passion for wildlife and adventure. It's not uncommon for guests to make lifelong friends.

As we near the Falkland Islands (also known as Islas Malvinas) sometime in the evening of our second day at sea, you may notice an increase in seabirds, particularly albatrosses. We'll set course for the farthest—and rarely visited—northwest islands in the archipelago. Some of these islands are annual nesting sites for tens of thousands of birds, including the black-browed albatross.

While many eyes may be trained toward the horizon and above in search of birds, stay alert to signs of movement above and beneath the surface of the water. Peale's, Commerson's, and dusky dolphins can be seen here, along with the occasional baleen and long-finned pilot whale.

---

### Days 5–7

#### The Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)

With extended time in the Falklands, we'll seek opportunities to visit seldom explored sites renowned for birdlife and beauty. Our destinations will depend entirely on weather and marine forecasts, as the outer Falklands are exposed to oceanic swells. We'll choose locations that offer the best—and safest—conditions for exploration.

One such site is the small, slender Steeple Jason, one of the most northwesterly islands in the Falklands. Difficult to access, it has been featured in numerous wildlife documentaries for its prolific black-browed albatross colony—the largest in the world, with an estimated 100,000 to 180,000 breeding pairs. It's truly a sight to behold. Their closely packed nests stretch for hundreds of meters along the shoreline, just beyond dense tussock grasses.

Looking west to sea, you'll likely see albatross riding the wind. The walk to the colony crosses uneven terrain and impressive tussock grass, which provides critical habitat for many other bird species. These vivid green grasses, rooted in rocky soil, create a striking contrast with the sharp ridgeline in the background.

Largely untouched by humans, Steeple Jason is home to a small shepherd's outpost and a research field station—overshadowed by vast wilderness. Steeple Jason offers a rare chance to feel truly remote amid a vast ecosystem alive with countless animals.

Our explorations may also take us to New Island, just over thirty nautical miles south of Steeple Jason. A paradise for birders, this small island boasts coves with white sandy beaches sheltered from the open ocean, and is considered one of the most beautiful in the Falklands. Around 25,000 to 30,000 black-browed albatross nest here, joined by Magellanic, gentoo, and southern rockhopper penguins—each with its own distinct nesting style. Other common sightings include songbirds and the formidable striated caracara. Dolphins, including those in shallow waters, are frequently seen in the area, adding to the island's remarkable wildlife encounters.

## Falkland Islands and South Georgia 20-Day Wildlife Adventure

Other wilderness destinations may include bird-rich West Point and Saunders Islands in the western Falklands. Saunders Island will amaze you with its long white-sand beaches, the northern shore stretching for kilometers and facing the open sea. It's almost surreal—particularly if you've encountered penguins in ice-and snow-laden Antarctica on previous voyages—to watch gentoo, Magellanic, and southern rockhopper penguins making their way to the water along sandy stretches. There's also a smaller colony of black-browed albatross nests on a nearby cliff, sharing the gently sloped, grassy island with grazing sheep tended by the warm-hearted Saunders family. Look for Commerson's dolphins, often spotted in the shallow waters near Saunders' sandy beaches.

West Point Island is another Falkland gem, with vibrant green vegetation and blooming spring flowers. From the rocky beach, a gentle walk (with slight elevation) leads through a picturesque meadow to a cliff where black-browed albatross nest. West Point Island is home to 2,000 breeding pairs. We'll visit a small section of the colony for intimate views of albatross in their nests and soaring above the waters. The walk passes through grassy fields dotted with wildflowers, blending the domestic with the wild. Energetic hikers may tackle Mt. Ararat for sweeping views, while others can travel by 4X4 to the colony and overlooks. Peale's dolphins, Falkland steamer ducks, and striated caracara are often seen here.

Carcass is also an exciting destination. Like Saunders and New islands, Carcass boasts stunning white-sand beaches meeting the cold, blue waters of the South Atlantic. Magellanic and gentoo penguins nest here, and the tussock grasses are especially impressive. Look overhead for peregrine falcons soaring high above.

No visit to the Falklands is complete without a stop in its largest community—Stanley. Highlights include the museum (admission covered) and the striking arch monument built from the jaws of blue whales. Pop into a local restaurant or traditional British pub for Falkland fish and chips, or a pint while chatting with locals about life on this windswept sub-Antarctic island. Stanley has a distinct boundary—where residential streets end and open wilderness and sheep meadows begin to stretch into the horizon. We'll set sail in early afternoon, allowing plenty of time to cover the 700+ nautical miles to our next destination: South Georgia.

---

### Days 8 and 9

#### At Sea: Traversing the Antarctic Convergence

While at sea, we may become aware of our transit over the Antarctic Convergence, or Polar Front. This biological boundary marks where the South Atlantic meets the Southern Ocean, and we'll notice the change as we cross it. Below the Convergence, the water is much colder; where it meets the warmer Atlantic, cloudy or foggy conditions often form. This mixing of currents creates an ideal foraging ground for a variety of birds and marine mammals.

We'll likely be accompanied by albatross, petrels, and shearwaters, and may spot whales—some species more often than others. Far from shore, we might see Antarctic fur seals. Seeing prions (part of the petrel family) and shags in greater numbers indicates we're approaching South Georgia.

## Falkland Islands and South Georgia 20-Day Wildlife Adventure

### Days 10–15

#### South Georgia: Galapagos of the South Seas

After enjoying South Georgia from a distance, we'll head toward its numerous beaches to find a bay for your first excursion. Landing sites are varied and largely determined by weather conditions. The sites you visit will deliver wildlife encounters unrivaled anywhere else on Earth. Biodiverse South Georgia—often described as the Galapagos of the South Seas—is one of the most fertile breeding grounds in the world for sub-Antarctic wildlife, with beaches blanketed with penguins and seals.

It won't take you long to realize that you are in a birder's paradise, as burrowing seabirds, albatrosses, and petrels can be seen in abundance. You'll find that South Georgia, once a popular base for whalers and sealers, is also scattered with abandoned relics and evidence of human activity from centuries gone by. Your Expedition Team will help bring those days to life when you visit old whaling stations and enjoy presentations on South Georgia, then and now.

One of the most significant sites you will visit on South Georgia is Grytviken. This settlement was one of the first whaling stations established in sub-Antarctic waters. Grytviken has a special appeal largely because it is the site of the grave of Sir Ernest Shackleton, one of the most famous Antarctic explorers. Guests and Expedition Team members uphold a cherished tradition at the Grytviken cemetery, raising a toast to one of the greatest polar heroes.

Mid-October and early November are exceptional times to visit South Georgia, especially for wildlife enthusiasts. At this time of year, male elephant seals battle for control of sections of beach, securing breeding rights to females entering their territories. These bouts are fought in bursts, with rest periods between clashes. As the largest pinniped species on the planet, watching these giants spar is a true spectacle.

With extra time in South Georgia, we'll have greater flexibility to explore more sites. If conditions allow, we may visit King Haakon Bay and the very beach where Ernest Shackleton and his party aboard the *James Caird* landed after their perilous journey from Elephant Island. If not, we'll spend more time along the island's leeward coast, aiming to visit its massive king penguin colonies.

The largest of these colonies is St. Andrew's, which—by conservative estimates—is home to more than 150,000 breeding pairs. We'll also seek out macaroni penguin colonies, conditions permitting, as these birds favor rugged, exposed coastlines. Possible sites include Hercules Bay, Royal Bay, and Cooper Bay. Expect to encounter some of the island's millions of petrels and prions.

For those craving some active off-ship adventure, we plan to offer, weather permitting, an extended hike along the final stretch of the route taken by Ernest Shackleton, Frank Worsley, and Tom Crean to the Stromness whaling station in May 1916.

## Falkland Islands and South Georgia 20-Day Wildlife Adventure

### Days 16–19

#### At Sea: Starting the Journey Home

To say that South Georgia is remote would be an understatement, and as such, we'll need to invest the necessary time to travel the more than 1,000 nautical miles on our return to South America. We'll begin our westward journey through the Southern Ocean, crossing back over the Antarctic Convergence and passing near Burwood Bank—a shallow underwater plateau surrounded by deeper waters. All three of these dynamic regions can provide opportunities for bird-watching and marine mammal sightings, and we'll feel the gradual shift from the chillier ecological Antarctic to the somewhat warmer environments of Tierra del Fuego.

If the skies are clear and visibility is good, we might catch our first views of the South American mountains on the horizon well before nightfall. As with other regions we've visited, the shelves near the continent can be rich with birdlife and occasionally marine mammals—but the journey isn't over quite yet. After dinner, we will sail west through the famous Beagle Channel on our approach to Ushuaia, Argentina.

---

### Day 20

#### Disembark in Ushuaia

Once the ship has docked in Ushuaia, you will bid farewell to your Expedition Team and shipmates before completing your disembarkation. You are then free to continue your onward journey.

# Arrival and Departure Details



\* Arrive anytime on Day 1 or earlier. Day 1 includes an optional briefing.

International flights are not included in the cost of the voyage.



## Day 1

### Arrival and Hotel Night in Puerto Madryn

- Hotel night in Puerto Madryn

You may arrive in Puerto Madryn at anytime on Day 1 of the itinerary and make your way to the included hotel.



## Day 2

### Embarkation in Puerto Madryn

- Your luggage will be collected from the hotel lobby after breakfast
- You may have additional time to explore Puerto Madryn

On the morning of Day 2, your luggage will be collected from the lobby of your hotel, transferred to the ship, and stored in your cabin. Ship embarkation will occur on Day 2 of your itinerary. You and your fellow travelers will meet in the lobby of your hotel and board the waiting transfer to the ship. Information about transfer timing will be provided in your final pre-departure documents.



## Final Day

- Your ship arrives in Ushuaia in the morning after breakfast
- Book your onward flight from Ushuaia as late in the day as possible—or on a following day

### Disembarkation in Ushuaia

Your ship is scheduled to arrive at the pier in Ushuaia, usually during the morning. Once the ship has docked, you will bid farewell to your Expedition Team and shipmates before completing your disembarkation, which takes about one hour.

Weather conditions can always change our arrival times, and airline schedule changes have also been known to occur in Argentina. Please book your flight home from Ushuaia to depart as late in the day as possible or at a date after the end of your expedition. If you have booked a flight that departs before noon on the date that your expedition ends, you will be at risk of missing your flight. Quark Expeditions staff in Ushuaia will reconfirm your domestic flight 48 hours prior to disembarkation, provided you give your information to our team ahead of time.

# Falkland Islands and South Georgia 20-Day Wildlife Adventure

## Airport Transfers

- A ship-to-airport transfer is included if you depart on the final day of the itinerary.

A group departure transfer is included from the ship to the Ushuaia airport on the final day of your itinerary. If your flight is later in the day, you may opt to transfer to our luggage storage facility instead and enjoy further activities in Ushuaia on your own. Access to luggage storage is available until 6 p.m. on the disembarkation day only. You will need to arrange your own transfer to the airport if you do not take advantage of the included transfer or if you are leaving Ushuaia after the disembarkation day.

In order to facilitate your transfers, we request that you provide your flight details to Quark Expeditions at least 30 days prior to traveling.

## Luggage Restrictions

- Travel with one checked bag and one carry-on only.

### Charter Flight Luggage Limit

This expedition includes charter flights. Your package includes one checked bag and one carry-on bag. Luggage weight restrictions on these flights are typically lower than those on international carriers. There is no option to pay for additional luggage. Specific weight limits will be confirmed in your final travel documents.



Photos captured with a telephoto lens from a responsible distance, following regulatory IAATO guidelines.



# Book Your Next Adventure

Contact your travel professional or a Quark Expeditions Polar Travel Advisor.

**Toll free and local numbers:**

**North America**  
(Toll Free) 1 888 332 0008

**U.K.**  
Tel +44 203 514 2712  
(Toll Free) 0 808 120 2333

**Australia**  
Tel +61 2 72580333  
(Toll Free) +61 1800 953518

**France**  
Tel +33-1 80 14 01 05  
(Toll Free) 08 05 08 66 46

**Photo Credits:** Acacia Johnson; David Merron; Nicky Souness; Samantha Crimmin; Sam Edmonds; Michelle Sole; Cindy Miller Hopkins; Gajan Balan; Jonas Fellenstein; Brad Flowerdew; Nicolas Singh; Adobe Stock.

Updated June 9, 2026

P O L A R

O B S E S S E D

S I N C E

1 9 9 1

