

Come Explore Antarctica with The Planetary Society!

ANTARCTICA

December 9-21, 2010

SAVINGS of more than \$1,000 per person!

Dear Members:

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to join our voyage to **Antarctica, December 9-21, 2010.**

Our Antarctica Expeditions since 1999 have been a great success, both in the response from Planetary Society members and in the fascinating experiences in Antarctica. We hope you will join us for our Antarctica adventure in 2010 and share the discovery of this magnificent continent.

Considered by scientists and travelers as one of the last pristine regions and one of the Earth's most inhospitable habitats, Antarctica offers the world's most magnificent wilderness with abundant concentrations of wildlife, icebergs sculpted by the sea, and breathtaking scenery.

The southern ocean surrounding Antarctica offers a profusion of wildlife that thrives on the nutrient-rich waters. Here we will find humpback, minke, southern right, and sei whales, along with several species of true and fur seals and tens of thousands of penguins of four species.

Antarctica holds many answers to the world's past climate in the thousands of years of data in the polar cap ice cores. It has been bombarded by meteorites, and some have come from the Moon and even Mars. Inside one of the Martian meteorites, scientists have discovered evidence

suggesting that life may once have flourished on Mars. We will explore this controversy during our voyage.

Days will be filled with expedition landings in zodiacs, cruising amid ice floes and icebergs, quietly watching the antics of the penguins and whales, or bird-watching. Some short walks will give the unique feeling of discovery of the "White Continent."

There will be a program of briefings on the geology and history of Antarctic exploration, marine mammals, penguins, and other topics. There will be naturalists from around the world on board as our expedition guides who have experience in the polar regions.

We will be traveling with an expert from The Planetary Society aboard the 110-passenger M/V Plancius (formerly a Dutch oceanographic research vessel and recently remodeled). We invite you to bring your spirit of adventure and join us on this voyage of a lifetime!

Sincerely,



Dr. Louis Friedman
Executive Director



Itinerary

Day 1 Miami to Buenos Aires.

Fly this morning from Miami to Buenos Aires, Argentina. Arrive in the evening and transfer to hotel.

Day 2 Buenos Aires, Ushuaia & the Beagle Channel.

Brief morning sightseeing will include Argentina's Presidential Palace, Plaza de Mayo, and the historic Cabildo, the Town Hall, and the Cathedral where San Martin is buried. Depart from Buenos Aires for Ushuaia, situated in Argentina's renowned Tierra del Fuego at the southern tip of the country. The flight south is over Patagonia and the breadbasket of Argentina, a land of wheat, corn, alfalfa, and pasturelands. Ushuaia sits on the shore of the Beagle Channel and is the southern-most city in the world. We will have a brief look at the town before boarding the ship. Late afternoon departure eastward toward the Atlantic Ocean. Evening orientation, introductions, and welcome dinner. B,D

Days 3/4 Drake Passage.

As we cruise this historic passage, the on-board naturalists will help with bird and marine mammal identification as well as giving the first lectures. As we near the Antarctic convergence we will begin to sight icebergs, nature's spectacular sculptures. We will also keep a close lookout for whales, as we should have some excellent sightings of these remarkable creatures during our days at sea. B,L,D

Days 5-9 Antarctic Exploration.

Our exploration of Antarctica will introduce us to its unique qualities. It is a continent of physical and biological extremes. Antarctica is the driest continent yet includes 90% of the world's ice and snow. It is the continent with the longest nights and longest days, the greatest amount of water, and the least amount of soil. It is the most isolated continent, yet with a rich history of exploration and discovery. It is the tallest continent in average height, yet relatively flat over much of the interior. It is home to the largest diversity of whales, yet it has the fewest numbers of land species. Penguin colonies are in excess of 100,000 birds, yet less than half the world's penguin species are found there. It is a continent that holds unsurpassed beauty and is equally important for the research scientist. It is one continent, yet administered by many nations in cooperation for the good of humanity. B,L,D



During these days our vessel will make numerous visits to the best locations on the Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands. We will highlight wildlife areas and locations of great scenic interest. Taking into account, on a daily basis, the prevailing weather and ice conditions, we will schedule our program with a strong emphasis on wildlife viewing as well as enjoying the superb scenery of the coastal terrain, the icebergs and magnificent glaciers that the Antarctic Peninsula has to offer. With the long days available during the austral summer, we will have ample opportunities to spend time ashore, to explore in our ship, and in Zodiacs. This will be an active adventure, although you will have the choice to participate in or decline from any of the full schedule of activities.

Some of the locations we'll choose from include Deception Island, Cuverville Island, Paradise Bay, Port Lockroy, Lemaire Channel, Peterman Island, and more. B,L,D

Days 10/11 Drake Passage.

Today we turn north and head back across the Drake Passage, and again we will have the opportunity to watch the majestic albatross and many other seabirds as they follow the slipstream of our ship. We will also keep a lookout for whales and have the chance to see the last of the icebergs as we draw away from the Antarctic Peninsula. Our on-board naturalists will complete their lecture program, and we will use this time at sea to recap our wonderful experiences during the voyage. B,L,D

Days 12/13 Ushuaia to Buenos Aires & Home.

Disembark this morning in Ushuaia and have a look at the town. Transfer to the airport for return to Buenos Aires and connect with flights to Miami, arriving on Day 13. B/-

About the Ship

M/V Plancius is the newest vessel in Oceanwide's fleet. It was a Dutch oceanographic vessel until 2004 and has been beautifully rebuilt and refurbished. In January 2010 it began taking passengers on expedition voyages to Antarctica.

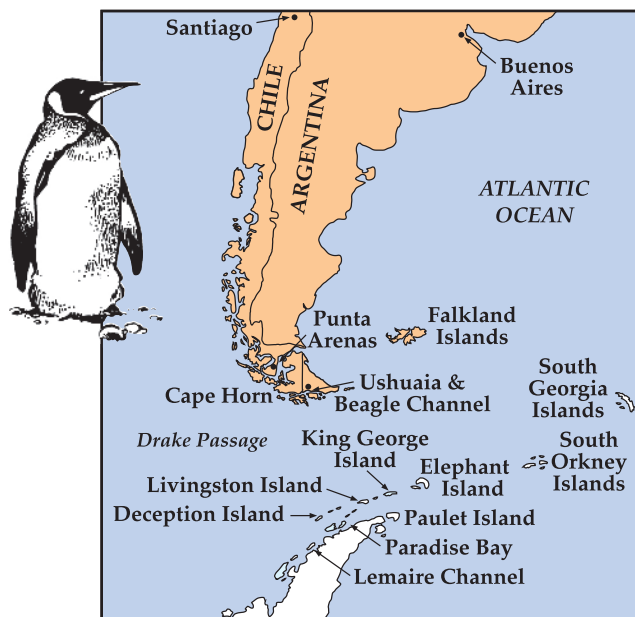
M/V Plancius accommodates 110 passengers in 53 outside passenger cabins with portholes or windows, and private toilet and shower. There are 4 triple cabins, 39 twin cabins (ca. 15 square meters) and 10 twin superior cabins (ca. 21 square meters). All cabins offer lower berths (either two single beds or one queen-size bed), except for the 4 triple cabins (bunk beds and 1 lower bed).

The vessel has a restaurant/lecture room on Deck 3 and a spacious observation lounge (with bar) on Deck 5 with large windows, offering a full panoramic view. *M/V Plancius* has large open deck spaces (with full walk-around possibilities on Deck 3), giving excellent opportunities to enjoy the scenery and wildlife.

The ship is equipped with ten Mark V zodiacs, including forty HP 4-stroke outboard engines and two gangways on starboard side, guaranteeing a swift zodiac operation. It complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety Of Life At Sea).

M/V Plancius sails in the Arctic and Antarctic regions on exploratory expedition voyages, spending as much time ashore as possible. Optional kayaking and on-shore camping are available at additional cost.

The vessel is equipped with a diesel-electric propulsion system which reduces the noise and vibration of the engines considerably. The 3 diesel engines generate 1.230 horse-power each, giving the vessel a speed of 10-12 knots. The vessel is ice-strengthened and was specially built for oceanographic voyages and is manned by 17 nautical crew, 18 hotel and expedition staff, and 1 doctor.



Reservations

#1157

Yes! I/We want to explore **Antarctica, December 9-21, 2010**, offered by **The Planetary Society**. Please reserve ___ space(s) on the expedition. As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$ _____ (\$1,500 per person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s): _____ Age ___ Sex ___

_____ Age ___ Sex ___

Address: _____

City _____ State ___ Zip _____

Phone: H(____) _____ W(____) _____

Email: _____

Member of: ___ Planetary Society ___ AAAS ___ Sigma Xi ___ ACS

Accommodations aboard the *M/V Plancius* are per person based on share of cabin + air from Miami (indicate 1st, 2nd, 3rd choice).

___ **Triple cabin** with private bath \$5,650

___ **Twin cabin** with private bath \$6,120

___ **Superior cabin** with private bath \$6,995

Roommate Preference:

___ Twin ___ Single ___ Twin Share ___ with a friend *or*

___ Nonsmoker ___ Smoker ___ assign a roommate

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail To: Planetary Antarctica, Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

Costs & Conditions

Expedition Fee: Per person for 13 days, based on share of cabin on board *M/V Plancius* plus air fare from Miami of \$1,195 + fuel surcharge + tax.

___ Triple cabin with private bath	\$5,650
___ Twin cabin with private bath	\$6,120
___ Superior cabin with private bath	\$6,995

Optional kayaking

Optional camping (per night)

Singles: We encourage singles to register on a "twin share" basis (excluding Superior cabins). Your twin share rate on board ship is then guaranteed, and we will assign a roommate for you. Should you desire single accommodations, single occupancy is 1.5 times the per person cruise fare. Any passenger in a single only in hotel accommodations must pay the supplement of \$150.

Air Fare: The air fare from Miami is \$1,195 per person plus tax and fuel surcharge. Group air bookings, ticketing, and invoicing will be handled by Betchart Expeditions Inc. If travelers do not take the group air and use frequent flyer miles to reach Buenos Aires, the in-tour air flights Buenos Aires/Ushuaia/Buenos Aires are approximately \$550, round trip. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

What to Expect: This expedition is planned for the travel enthusiast who would enjoy exploring Antarctica aboard the comfortable 110-passenger ship, *M/V Plancius*. This expedition allows you to discover first-hand the world's most remote region, without disrupting its delicate balance of wilderness and wildlife. The typical low and high temperatures in December are 24°F to 42°F on the Antarctic Peninsula, and the weather can change rapidly. In Buenos Aires the temperatures range from the 60's at night to the mid-80's or 90's during the day.

Walks during the shore excursions are short but may be over wet and uneven terrain. You may encounter rough seas and wind while crossing the Drake Passage. We will adhere to the planned itinerary as closely as possible, but please note that the itinerary is subject to



changes that may arise due to weather/sea/ice conditions beyond our control.

The ship's captain has the final word on any decision made with regard to the vessel's itinerary, and it is understood that such decisions will be made in the interest of the safety of the vessel and all passengers on board. With this in mind, you will have a once-in-a-lifetime voyage of discovery and adventure.

Expedition Fee Includes: Group transfers in Buenos Aires; one night hotel in Buenos Aires and breakfast; Buenos Aires sightseeing en route to airport; all meals, accommodations, lectures, Zodiac excursions on board the *M/V Plancius* from dinner on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 12; baggage handling; leadership, administration.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare from Miami to Buenos Aires and Ushuaia, Argentina, round trip; tips to ship's crew or naturalists; some meals; fuel surcharge; any personal items such as alcoholic beverages or soda; radio communications while on board ship; laundry, independent transfers; passport; visa fees (if any); travel insurance; or foreign airport departure taxes.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments: Please contact **Betchart Expeditions Inc.** to reserve a space:

Telephone: (408) 252-4910 (international calls)
or (800) 252-4910 (USA)
Fax: (408) 252-1444
Email: taunya@betchartexpeditions.com

Mail the completed reservation form and a deposit check of \$1,500 per person to: **The Planetary Society Antarctica Expedition, Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

All reservations will be acknowledged in the order received. Final payment is due August 9, 2010.

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable up to 120 days before departure, less a handling fee of \$700 per person. There is no refund for any cancellation after the 120-day period. Trip cancellation insurance will be offered. No refunds are made for unused services.

Responsibility: *Betchart Expeditions Inc. and The Planetary Society act only as agents in booking passengers on this cruise program and with respect to transportation and hotels, and exercise every care possible. Operation of the ship is solely the responsibility of Oceanwide Expeditions. Betchart Expeditions Inc. acts only as agent for the suppliers providing air and other transportation and land services and assumes no responsibility, however caused, for your personal or property loss or damage in connection with any service. Betchart Expeditions Inc. and The Planetary Society can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, terrorism, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or to cancel any tour prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.*

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Photographs by Oceanwide Expeditions and David Morrison.