

## New Zealand's Sub Antarctic Islands Dunedin to Dunedin 14 Nights on Board Le Soleal December 23, 2021 – January 6, 2022

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This 14 night voyage visits the spectacular Fiordland region of New Zealand's South Island, Australia's Macquarie Island and the New Zealand Sub Antarctic islands. The Subantarctic Islands are among the last unspoilt environments on Earth. Almost half of the world's albatross and penguin species reside here, and The Snares Island alone boasts more nesting seabirds than the entire realm of the British Isles. For nature lovers, birders, photographers, and travellers wishing to venture where few have gone before, these UNESCO World Heritage Sites provide a truly privileged glimpse into a unique world

Join your expert expedition team, selected for their knowledge and experience, to explore these unique destinations by zodiac and guided walks ashore.

On this voyage you will visit destinations that have less visitors than make attempts at the summit of Mount Everest, making them truly unique. Join Le Soleal for a remarkable journey available to only a select few.

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### **Expedition Highlights:**

- Every destination on this voyage is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The opportunity to see 11 of the world's penguin species.
- The opportunity to see at least 10 species of Albatross.
- The Snares Island alone boasts more nesting seabirds than the entire realm of the British Isles.
- Populations of New Zealand, Antarctic and Subantarctic Fur Seals, New Zealand Sea Lions and Southern Elephant Seals.
- Landscapes on a breathtaking scale.
- Glacial fiords 100,000 years in the making.
- Ancient forests untouched since the dawn of time.
- Guided walks on Enderby, Campbell and Macquarie Islands.
- Gain an insight into the History and the diversity of flora and fauna from your expert expedition team.



## Day 1. Dunedin, New Zealand. Embarkation,

Dunedin is New Zealand's oldest city and is often referred to as the Edinburgh of New Zealand. This city of the south, wears its Scottish heritage with pride. The city contains some of the best preserved Victorian and Edwardian architecture in the Southern Hemisphere. The picturesque Silverpeaks hinterland to the North West provides a picturesque backdrop and The Otago Peninsula, which lies within the city boundaries, has internationally renowned wildlife reserves, including the only mainland breeding colony of Northern Royal Albatross.



Le Soleal will be alongside the inner city wharf and embarkation will be between 1600 and 1700hrs

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## Days 2 – 14. Exploring Fiordland and the Sub Antarctic Islands.

The Sub Antarctic Islands are remote outposts in the Southern Ocean. A flexible Itinerary will allow us to maximise our opportunity to visit these unique locations. In the true spirit of expedition cruising each day the Captain and Expedition leader will continually update the voyage plan taking into account the weather and sea conditions to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all guests.

Below is a list of the destinations we may visit during our time in this remarkable region.



## Ulva Island, New Zealand.

Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara is the largest of 20 islands within Paterson Inlet, Stewart Island with an area of approx. 270 hectares. The island has never been logged and was declared pest free in 1997, becoming one of the few predator-free sanctuaries in New Zealand. The island is now a haven for many species of birds and plants that are rare, or have died out, on the mainland of New Zealand. Bird species regularly encountered include; the flightless Stewart Island Weka, South Island saddleback, yellowhead and Stewart Island robin. Ulva island is not only a bird enthusiast's paradise, it is also one of the few offshore islands with a largely undisturbed podocarp forest. Well-maintained tracks offer easy walking for most people providing a unique opportunity to see rare birds and plants at close quarters in a safe environment.



### **Milford Sound, New Zealand.**

Arguably New Zealand's best-known destination and described by Rudyard Kipling as the eighth Wonder of the World, Milford Sound is a place of dramatic beauty. Its vertiginous peaks rise from the dark waters of the sound creating a spectacular backdrop that captivates even the most seasoned of travellers. Milford Sound is breathtaking in any weather. After rain the two permanent waterfalls of Stirling and Lady Bowen multiply with magnificent effect. Guests will have the opportunity to view the spectacular scenery from the outer decks of Le Soleal. If time and weather permit, we may have an opportunity to explore the fiord with our fleet of zodiacs.



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### **Doubtful Sound, New Zealand.**

Referred to as the Sound of Silence, there is a secluded serenity that surrounds Doubtful Sound in contrast with the better-known Milford Sound. Lieutenant James Cook named 'Doubtful Harbour' in 1770 as he was uncertain if it was navigable under sail. Doubtful Sound is the deepest of the fiords with a maximum depth of 421 m. It contains three distinct 'arms' and several outstanding waterfalls in the area from Deep Cove to the open ocean. Le Soleal will spend time navigating around Secretary Island through both Thomson and Doubtful Sounds. Guests can enjoy the spectacular scenery from the outer decks.



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### **Dusky Sound, New Zealand.**

One of the remotest fiords in the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area, Dusky Sound was named by Captain James Cook in 1773. Cook spent five weeks at Astronomer's Point where a temporary observatory was set up to fix the position of New Zealand to test the accuracy of Larcum Kendall's copy of John Harrison's chronometer H4. Dusky Sound is rich in flora and fauna, New Zealand Fur Seals and one of the world's rarest penguins – The Fiordland Crested can be seen on the small islets at the entrance to the fiord. Guests can enjoy the spectacular scenery from the Outer decks of Le Soleal as she sails through the fiord. If time and weather permit, we may have an opportunity to explore the fiord with our fleet of zodiacs.



### **The Snares, New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands.**

Amongst the islands of the Southern Ocean, The Snares have the distinction of being the only forested group without introduced mammals, not even mice. Consequently, it is a remarkable haven for wildlife. The Island boasts more nesting seabirds than the entire realm of the British Isles. Over 2 million Sooty Shearwaters breed here in the summer months. Four species of Albatross are listed as breeding on the Snares along with 35,000 endemic Snares Crested Penguins. There are also approximately 1000 New Zealand fur seals and 500 New Zealand Sea Lions. Landing on the Snares is prohibited. If time and weather permit, guests will have the opportunity to explore the coastal environments and view the prolific wildlife from our fleet of zodiacs.



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### **Enderby Island, Auckland Islands. New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands.**

Enderby Island is situated off the North Eastern tip of Auckland Island and is the second largest Island in the group. The eradication of introduced species in 1994 has seen a significant increase in the abundance of the native flora and fauna compared to the main Auckland Island. It has become a stronghold for the rare yellow-eyed penguin and the primary breeding location of the New Zealand Sea Lion. Guests will head ashore and have the opportunity to undertake a guided walk on the Northern Cliffs track as well as spend time viewing the New Zealand Sea Lion colony. There is also the opportunity to undertake a zodiac tour around the coastline of Enderby Island in search of the Auckland Island Teal and other endemic species.



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### **Musgrave Inlet, Auckland Islands. New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands.**

The Auckland Islands are the largest, highest and biologically richest of the five groups of Subantarctic Islands. They have been identified as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International as they hold important seabird breeding colonies. The flora of the Auckland Islands is fascinatingly diverse with over 233 species of vascular plant. Musgrave Inlet is a picturesque bay on the eastern side of Auckland Island. Its sheer cliffs have protected the endemic flora from the introduced species, providing one of the best floral displays in the entire Island group. Landing in Musgrave Inlet is prohibited. If time and weather permits, guests will have the opportunity to view the spectacular flora and fauna from our fleet of zodiacs.



### **Campbell Island, New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands.**

Campbell Island is the most southerly of the five New Zealand subantarctic groups. Described by the English botanist Joseph Hooker as having a "flora display second to none outside the tropics." It is known for its megaherbs, herbaceous, perennial wildflowers characterised by their great size, with huge leaves and very colourful flowers, which have developed as an adaptation to the harsh weather conditions on the islands. Campbell Island is also home to six species of albatross, and several critically endangered endemic birds including the Campbell Island teal and snipe. Guests have the opportunity to undertake a guided walk on the Col Lyell Saddle boardwalk as well as undertake a zodiac tour around the coastline of Perseverance Harbour.



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### **The Antipodes, New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands.**

The volcanic islands of the Antipodes Island group lie 860 km to the southeast of New Zealand. The group consists of one main island, Antipodes Island, Bollons Island to the north, and numerous small islets and stacks. The islands are home to a wide variety of sea and land bird species including two species of parakeet. The seabirds range from the tiny storm petrel to the Antipodean wandering albatross, one of the largest flying birds in the world. There are also significant populations of erect-crested and rock hopper penguins. Landing on the Antipodes is prohibited. If time and weather permit, guests will have the opportunity to explore the coastal environments and view the prolific wildlife from our fleet of zodiacs.



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### **ANARE Station, Macquarie Island. Australia**

Long celebrated as one of the wonder spots of the world, the Macquarie Island is an island of great beauty and outstanding natural diversity, a breeding place for more than 3.5 million seabirds, most of which are penguins. There are four species breeding on Macquarie Island; Royals, Kings, Gentoos and Rock Hoppers. There are also three types of fur seals and one seventh of the world's population of elephant seals breeding on the Island. In 1948 The Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) established its expedition headquarters on Macquarie Island. Guests will have the opportunity to undertake a guided walk around the ANARE Station to view the facility and the prolific wildlife that resides here.



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### **Sandy Bay, Macquarie Island. Australia**

Macquarie Island, or “Macca” as it is colloquially known, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1997 as a site of major geoconservation significance, being the only island in the world composed entirely of oceanic crust and rocks from the mantle. It is an island of unique natural diversity and one of the truly remarkable places on earth. Sandy Bay is located on the East Coast of the Island and is home to significant Royal and King Penguin rookeries as well as a breeding colony of Southern Elephant Seals.



Guests will have the opportunity to land ashore in Sandy Bay to view both the King and Royal colonies as well as the other prolific wildlife in the Bay.

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### **Day 15. Dunedin, New Zealand. Disembarkation,**

Dunedin is New Zealand's oldest city and is often referred to as the Edinburgh of New Zealand. This city of the south, wears its Scottish heritage with pride. The city contains some of the best preserved Victorian and Edwardian architecture in the Southern Hemisphere. The picturesque Silverpeaks hinterland to the North West provides a picturesque backdrop and The Otago Peninsula, which lies within the city boundaries, has internationally renowned wildlife reserves, including the only mainland breeding colony of Northern Royal Albatross.



Le Soleal will be alongside the inner city wharf and disembarkation will commence after breakfast.