

ANTARCTICA

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

6 Questions to ask before selecting your travel company





Cover photo: © Ralph Lee Hopkins. Above: © Andrew Peacock.

A photograph of a Gentoo penguin standing on a snowy, rocky slope. The penguin is facing right, with its characteristic black head, white face, and orange-yellow flippers. The background shows more snow-covered ground and some dark, craggy rock formations.

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 one of the world's last great wildernesses, providing travelers with the opportunity to experience genuine pristine wildness. And it is inarguably threatened by climate change, providing an 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 since many more travel companies are sending ships there.

A century ago, visiting Antarctica was only possible for explorers and scientists. The first vessel specifically built for the purpose of taking 'citizen explorers' to Antarctica was the ice-strengthened *Lindblad Explorer* launched in 1969. She paved the way for travelers to experience the world's last pristine continent by means of "expedition cruising"—defined by the industry as cruising coupled with education as a major theme. By the late 1980s, four companies were conducting ship-borne tourism to the Antarctic. By 1992 when IAATO (Int'l Assn. of Antarctica Tour Operators, a self-regulating member organization designed to advocate, promote, and practice safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to Antarctica—now in its 28th year) was founded, approximately 6,700 tourists had visited Antarctica. And currently the number of global annual visitors, based on IAATO's 2018/19 estimate, is over 56,000.

IAATO members currently subscribe to voluntary policies, including limiting the number of guests allowable ashore at once. Ships carrying 200 or more passengers are limited to certain sites. And ships carrying more than 500 passengers are restricted to "cruise only" status, with no landings. Despite Antarctica's remoteness and inherent wildness, it is unequivocally possible to safely voyage there, and to have an extraordinary experience—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.



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Tourism to Antarctica is almost exclusively ship-based, and more cruise companies than ever before are offering Antarctic itineraries. Safety remains, as ever, a factor, as does the quality of your experience there. Here are the six most important questions to ask before you decide with whom to book your Antarctic adventure.

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What Kind of Ship is Best?

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

For maximum safety, and to have a more in-depth experience, choose a polar-class vessel with a high ice rating in combination with a veteran ice team noted for superior navigational skills—both essential for safe and rewarding travel. *National Geographic Explorer* and *National Geographic Orion* have a very high, classic ice strength rating. The twin ships *National Geographic Endurance* and *National Geographic Resolution* will be built within the icebreaker category, which allows the ships to penetrate deeper in both the Arctic and Antarctic waters.

The newest vessels in the fleet, *National Geographic Endurance* and *National Geographic Resolution*, will be built at the

same time as a number of new polar-going cruise ships, intended to carry 200-500 or more guests, yet their guest capacity was deliberately limited to 126. *National Geographic Orion* carries a 102-guest community. And *National Geographic Explorer* accommodates 148 guests. The intimate scale of these ships, their low guest count, plus veteran staff and crew, contributes to Lindblad-National Geographic's unique ability to maximize daily opportunities to get off ship and out exploring. Swift and smooth logistics are key so guests are not forced to wait their turn amid a large cohort. The combination of the polar-adapted vessels and the proprietary 'mud maps' Lindblad Captains use (for decades, Lindblad Captains have kept

(continues on page 7)





Top: National Geographic Explorer and National Geographic Orion parked in the early Antarctic season sea ice, allowing guests the thrill of disembarking onto the frozen sea. Above: Artist rendering of National Geographic Endurance, and twin ship National Geographic Resolution, with their patented X-bow design which can cut through waves without reducing speed.



detailed soundings, which are routinely filed with the British Hydrographic Agency to aid other mariners. This level of knowledge enables them to confidently and safely take guests to off-the-beaten-path landings for exclusive encounters)—mean the vessels can anchor in extraordinary locations, closer to shore, to quickly deploy Zodiacs or kayaks from the company's exclusive floating platform, virtually anywhere in the ice, and provide more daily activities to more guests simultaneously.

Based on 50+ years of experience continuously running Antarctic expeditions, Lindblad ships are outfitted with the latest in seafaring technology—see the chart on page 13 for a listing. And each is equipped with an array of tools for

exploration—Zodiacs, kayaks, ROVs, snowshoes, cross-country skis—to enable guests to enjoy active, up-close, personal explorations, and through the efforts of a dedicated onboard undersea specialist, even observe the polar marine world.

Given their high ice ratings, these ships are able to easily and safely penetrate the softer, first-year ice common in Antarctica in the early season, allowing their Captains to accomplish the magic of “parking” the ship in the ice, so guests can disembark onto a frozen sea—to snowshoe, cross-country ski, or simply walk freely about. Tough enough to provide the thrill of crushing through ice, the ships are also nimble enough to navigate safely through the growlers and bergy bits floating in Antarctic waters.

What Safety Features are Vital?

In addition to the inherent ice-worthiness and logistical operations 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. A recent review of the available literature quoted some operators enthusiastically entering Antarctic tourism touting an “on-board physician” as a primary safety feature. While having a doctor aboard is undoubtedly important, there is far more to ensuring guest safety in Antarctica. Here are some of the baseline criteria to use in evaluating your travel provider.





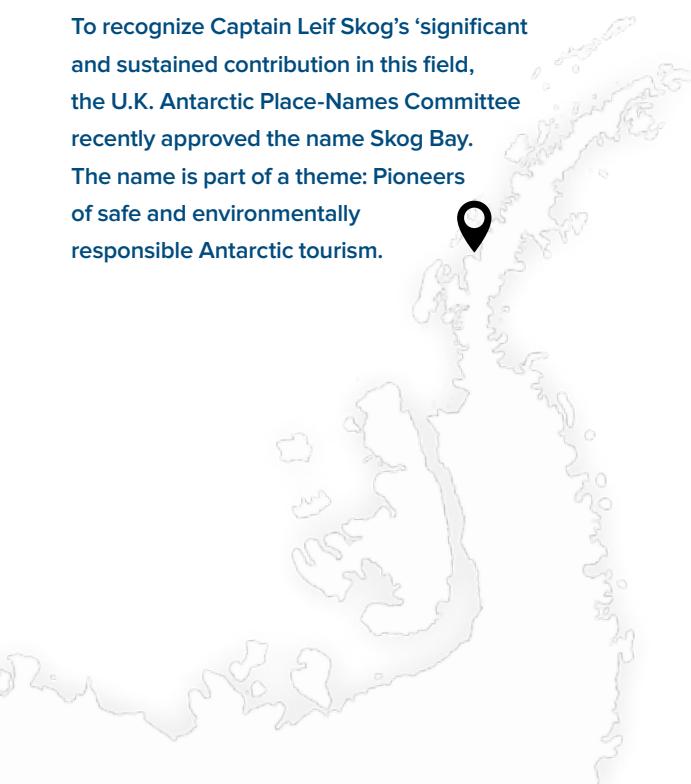
Captain and Crew Experience

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.

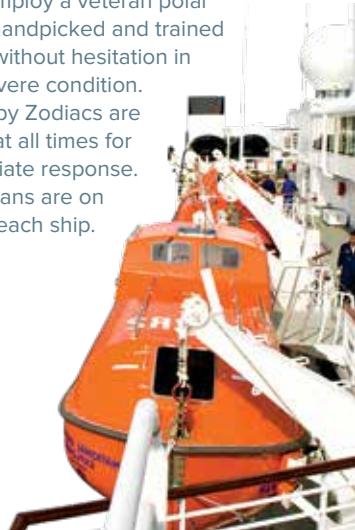
The Captains of the Lindblad-National Geographic fleet have spent decades in the ice. Collectively, they have navigated over 500 Antarctic expeditions, ensuring that they have the crucial knowledge the company demands. And they are extraordinary mariners. For example, before Leif Skog, Lindblad V.P. Nautical 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. And, having earned his stripes as a mariner, he then devoted his next 35 years to Captaining in the much more challenging polar regions.

SKOG BAY (66.53° S, 66.28° W)

To recognize Captain Leif Skog's 'significant and sustained contribution in this field, the U.K. Antarctic Place-Names Committee recently approved the name Skog Bay. The name is part of a theme: Pioneers of safe and environmentally responsible Antarctic tourism.'



Lifesaving Protocol and Equipment aboard the Lindblad-National Geographic Polar Fleet: Enclosed lifeboats (*National Geographic Explorer* pictured below) 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. All lifeboats are equipped with Thermal Protective Aids (TPAs) for each person on board. TPAs provide a layer of protective insulation and are distributed to each person once the boat has been launched. All polar vessels are equipped with personal survival kits as well as comprehensive group survival kits for all aboard. Safety drills beyond standards set by SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) include weekly damage control and testing of damage control equipment drills. All polar ships in the Lindblad-National Geographic fleet employ a veteran polar crew, handpicked and trained to act without hesitation in any severe condition. Stand-by Zodiacs are ready at all times for immediate response. Physicians are on board each ship.



What Safety Features are Vital?

The Icemasters



CAPTAIN LEIF SKOG

Lindblad V.P. Nautical, has been a member of IAATO since 1998 and served as Chairman of the IAATO Marine Committee for fifteen 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 a 2007 distressed vessel incident and resulted in several vessels, including *National Geographic Endeavour*, responding and arriving on the scene to help within a matter of hours.

CAPTAIN OLIVER KRUESS



has been working at sea for over three decades. He has been aboard expedition vessels since 1991, rising to command as a ship's Master in 1995. For nearly 20 years, he has been navigating polar waters, crossing the Antarctic convergence about 140 times, and logging north of the Arctic Circle in the Atlantic and Pacific more than 60 times. In total he has joined nearly 450 expedition cruises worldwide, including 10 years of South Pacific expeditions. An extraordinary mariner, he also has exceptional naturalist skills. He can circle his ship in slow steady arcs to keep a pod of hunting killer whales in steady view, or sight a bear on the Arctic pack ice before the on-duty spotter, making his Bridge a constant hub for guests. Captain Kruess has also served as a representative at IAATO and most frequently captains *National Geographic Explorer*.

CAPTAIN HEIDI NORLING



is the first woman to captain a Lindblad Expeditions' polar ship. She began sailing as a teen in the Stockholm archipelago. Working as a cadet aboard Swedish cargo ships, navigating from the Great Lakes and the North Sea to the Mexican Gulf, her career launched in earnest aboard the expedition yacht, *Hanse Explorer* where she conducted a series of adventurous seasons in Antarctic ice. Back in Visby, Sweden on a break, she spotted her dream ship, *National Geographic Orion* docked in the harbor. Mere months later she came aboard, and has since sailed *National Geographic Orion* to the South Pacific, Antarctica, Arctic, Alaska, and the Russian Far East.

CAPTAIN AARON WOOD



has been working at sea since graduating school, sailing cargo ships, oil vessels, and luxury ocean liners up to 2014, when he received an opportunity he couldn't refuse—expedition cruising with Lindblad Expeditions. Since then, he has navigated his ships worldwide and through the Antarctic Circle and polar waters as Navigation Officer, Safety Officer, Staff Captain, and today, Captain. A certified advanced ice navigator, Captain Wood is now part of the new-build team for Lindblad Expeditions' latest polar ice-class vessel, *National Geographic Endurance*.

CAPTAIN MARTIN GRASER



credits his 27 years of sea service to a long-standing passion for ice navigation and expedition travel, beginning in childhood sailing the North and Baltic Seas aboard his father's hand-built boats. He began his career aboard the expedition yacht, *Hanse Explorer*, where he served from 2006 to 2015. Over the years, he has conducted many adventurous charters, including the 5-week National Geographic Pristine Seas expedition led by Dr. Enric Sala. Captaining *National Geographic Orion* since 2015, he is about to assume command of *National Geographic Endurance*, the most technologically advanced ice-class polar vessel in the world, taking the ship halfway around the world and deep into the polar ice.



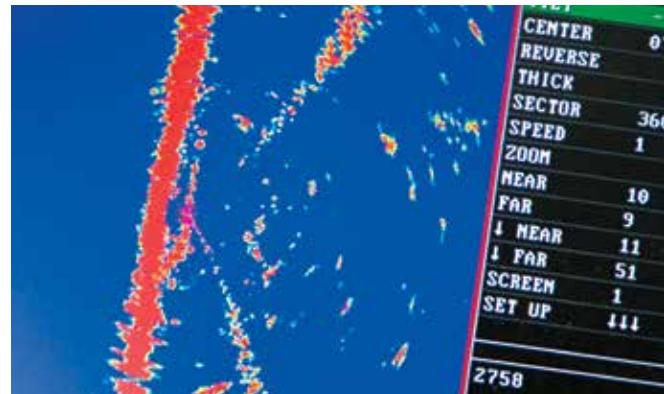
What further qualifies Lindblad Icemasters is the company's 50+ year heritage of record keeping. These Captains have soundings and coastal map records going back to 1966 and the pioneering days of Lindblad Travel. In addition, Lindblad Icemasters are not merely skilled maritime professionals, they have a profound love for the polar geographies, and are as adept as expedition naturalists at spotting wildlife. They dedicate their skills to ensuring that spontaneity remains Lindblad's expedition hallmark. Their seasoned ships' officers are also polar veterans, handpicked, well-trained and committed to optimizing the guest experience.

How Active Will Your Antarctica Experience Be?

Cooperation & Coordination

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 in predictive, navigational, and safety technology further assures your peace of mind and your well-being.

The chart below illustrates the wealth of advanced technology carried by Lindblad-National Geographic fleet ships.



KEY SAFETY FEATURES OF OUR POLAR SHIPS

POLAR CLASS SHIPS	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ENDURANCE	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC RESOLUTION
FORWARD SCANNING SONAR To scan ahead to check for uncharted obstacles (rocks or submerged ice) and the safest way around	✓	✓	✓	✓
DOUBLE WEATHER FORECASTING Two independent weather forecasting companies to receive real-time satellite images	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICE RADAR Provides an adjustable, high def image using data, allowing Captains to choose the safest route through ice	✓	✓	✓	✓
ICE SEARCHLIGHTS Two ice searchlights aid the naked eye in picking up hazardous ice, both in daylight and total darkness	✓	✓	✓	✓
GMDSS (GLOBAL MARITIME & DISTRESS SAFETY SYSTEM) A comprehensive communication system, with multi Iridium satellite phones to completely cover polar waters and to act as a reliable backup system in any emergency	✓	✓	✓	✓
IAATO EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM Developed by Lindblad's Captain Skog to ensure that all IAATO ships keep in daily touch to respond to any incident	✓	✓	✓	✓
DRONE FOR ICE NAVIGATION Facilitates ice navigation to find leads through the ice to open water near the ship	✓	✓	✓	✓

An aerial photograph capturing a vast expanse of dark blue ocean filled with numerous white and light blue icebergs of various sizes. In the bottom right corner, a small boat with several people wearing red life jackets is visible, providing a sense of scale to the massive field of ice.

*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?

Now, 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, or even building, adventure ships to offer Antarctic voyages, too. Given the number of reported ship mishaps in Antarctic waters, it is not hard to conclude many travelers and operators alike may be undertaking this too lightly. Make your selection based on ownership as well as expertise: control matters.

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. The company owns *National Geographic Endurance*, *National Geographic Resolution*, *National Geographic Explorer*, and *National Geographic Orion*, not as a matter of fact, but of faith. The company believes that having ships under their control, and a completely coordinated staff and crew is vital for safety reasons. But equally important, they believe it’s vital for service reasons—to provide an authentically adventurous and meaningful expedition experience.



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.”

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 Lindblad Expeditions. The synergy that exists among the 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 highly rewarding.

What is the Travel Operator's Experience? Experience Equals Safety

On September 20, 1958, Lars-Eric Lindblad, considered to be the “father of ecotourism,” 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 *M.S. Lindblad Explorer* was launched in 1969. With a reinforced hull that allowed it to penetrate the ice, she soon traveled farther north and south than any passenger ship had ever ventured before.

Over the subsequent 50+ 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. The company systematically continues the surveying practices Lars-Eric began in 1966. In recent years, they’ve continually recorded routes by satellite positioning and overlaid each position with the water depth taken by the crew at that spot to create “safe tracks,” enabling Lindblad ships to return to exciting, off-the-beaten-path spots. And their on-paper survey archive, dating back to the original *Lindblad Explorer*, has enabled the company to accumulate considerable data on safe anchorages—data the company regularly shares with the British Hydrographic Agency. Under the direction of Lindblad V.P. Nautical, Captain Leif Skog, the company has initiated a crowdsourcing project, enlisting other polar travel operators in sharing sea floor data, historic and present, to maximize knowledge in the interest of maximizing polar travel safety.

After so many consistent years of surveying and recording, Lindblad officers have more data at their fingertips on the Bridge than many government hydrographic agencies. In 1996, the U.S. 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.”

Since Lars-Eric’s day, Lindblad Expeditions has remained committed to owning and operating their own expedition ships. Their pioneering history and years of experience, including having safely introduced thousands of exhilarated guests to the wonders of Antarctica, provides a profound advantage in providing travelers with a genuinely exploratory experience.

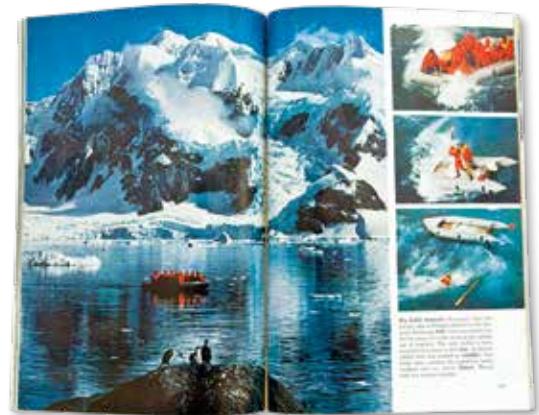
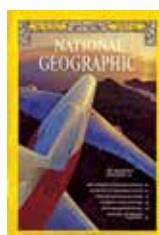


Lars-Eric Lindblad in the 1970s. Once common, dog teams were banned in the 1991 Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty.

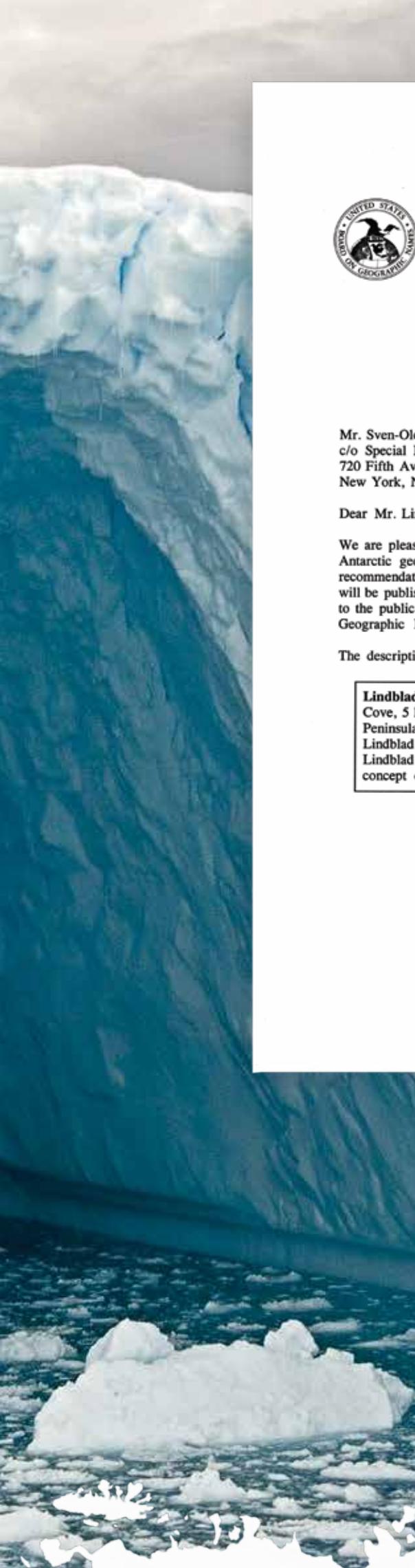


National Geographic Magazine, August 1977

"In 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 50-plus years of annual voyages." — Sven Lindblad







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 E. Hayne
Executive Secretary
U.S. Board on Geographic Names



LINDBLAD COVE 63°51'S, 59°27'W

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.



At left, cross-country skiing on the fast ice in the early season, if conditions permit. Opposite: A chinstrap penguin greeting committee.

How Active Will Your Antarctica Experience Be?

Antarctica is a place of extraordinary natural beauty. Someone traveling there on a 2,500-guest ship can enjoy a glimpse of the same scenery as guests aboard nimble expedition ships, but most else would be lost. Because Antarctica is not mere scenery, it is a place to be experienced, an ecosystem that delights upon closer inspection. It seems obvious that the experiences of a guest on an agile, 126-guest or 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 traveling with a dedicated expedition company and other small ship operators. Investigate how engaged you will be able to be, what you'll be able to do, and how often.





How Active Will Your Antarctica Experience Be? Tools for Exploration

One could have a perfectly wonderful time in Antarctica seated in a deck chair with a pair of good binoculars. But genuine encounters with beauty, wildness, and the seldom seen are the difference between wonderful and extraordinary. The Lindblad-National Geographic fleet ships travel with meaningful tools for that reason: to enable extraordinary up-close and personal experiences. Ask yourself if you're willing to settle for seeing Antarctica from a window, or even from an outside deck, when it is possible, by choosing your operator wisely, to get out and explore. To inhabit the magnificent vastness. Hear the silence. Have leisurely encounters with penguins—without being forced to leave because others are waiting their turn. Walk, hike, climb. Try a polar plunge if you're inclined (and many are). Learn about the geology, the climate forces. And see beneath the sea.

Equipment

The following is a list of the equipment capable of transforming your experience of Antarctica to a personal encounter with the wildlife, geology, and fantastic varieties of ice in this astonishing ecosystem.

ZODIACS AND ZODIAC DEPLOYMENT SYSTEM

Zodiacs are key to your ability to get out and about on 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. The Lindblad-National Geographic ships each carry a fleet of 11-13 Zodiacs, depending on guest count. But more importantly, the ships are designed for swift deployment. In fact, Zodiac deployment 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. Efficiently designed loading bays on each vessel make 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 the company’s veteran expedition leaders and Captains gave the idea a “green light.” Now each ship is equipped with a fleet of 24 to 36 stable double kayaks, not a token number, enough so everyone interested can paddle. In addition to being innovative about “personal” polar exploration, Lindblad has invented ingenious deployment protocol, designed and manufactured by the company’s engineering team. It’s a proprietary staging platform that enables the expedition team 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, without reliance on beaches, docks, or other infrastructure.



CROSS-COUNTRY SKIS & SNOWSHOES

November is known as the early season. It often provides optimal conditions for parking the ship in the fast ice (see photo on page 6). If ice conditions permit, we take the opportunity to descend on to the fast ice with cross-country skis or snowshoes, exploring this unique aspect of Antarctica’s thrilling vastness.



Helicopters: Much Ado About Nothing, or Valuable? There is a trend currently among some Antarctica cruise operators to equip their ship with helicopters. This is likely quite good for marketing as it is attention-grabbing. Whether it adds to the guests’ experience is debatable. Lindblad has carefully researched the prospect and decided against it. The company believes helicopters are disruptive to the wildlife, and to the quality of the silence that is so fundamental to the authentic Antarctic experience. Accommodating the number of guests potentially interested in the excursions would require continuous noisy shuttling in the case of helicopters, and only a small subset of the guests could be served, while the remainder might be disadvantaged.

How Active Will Your Antarctica Experience Be?

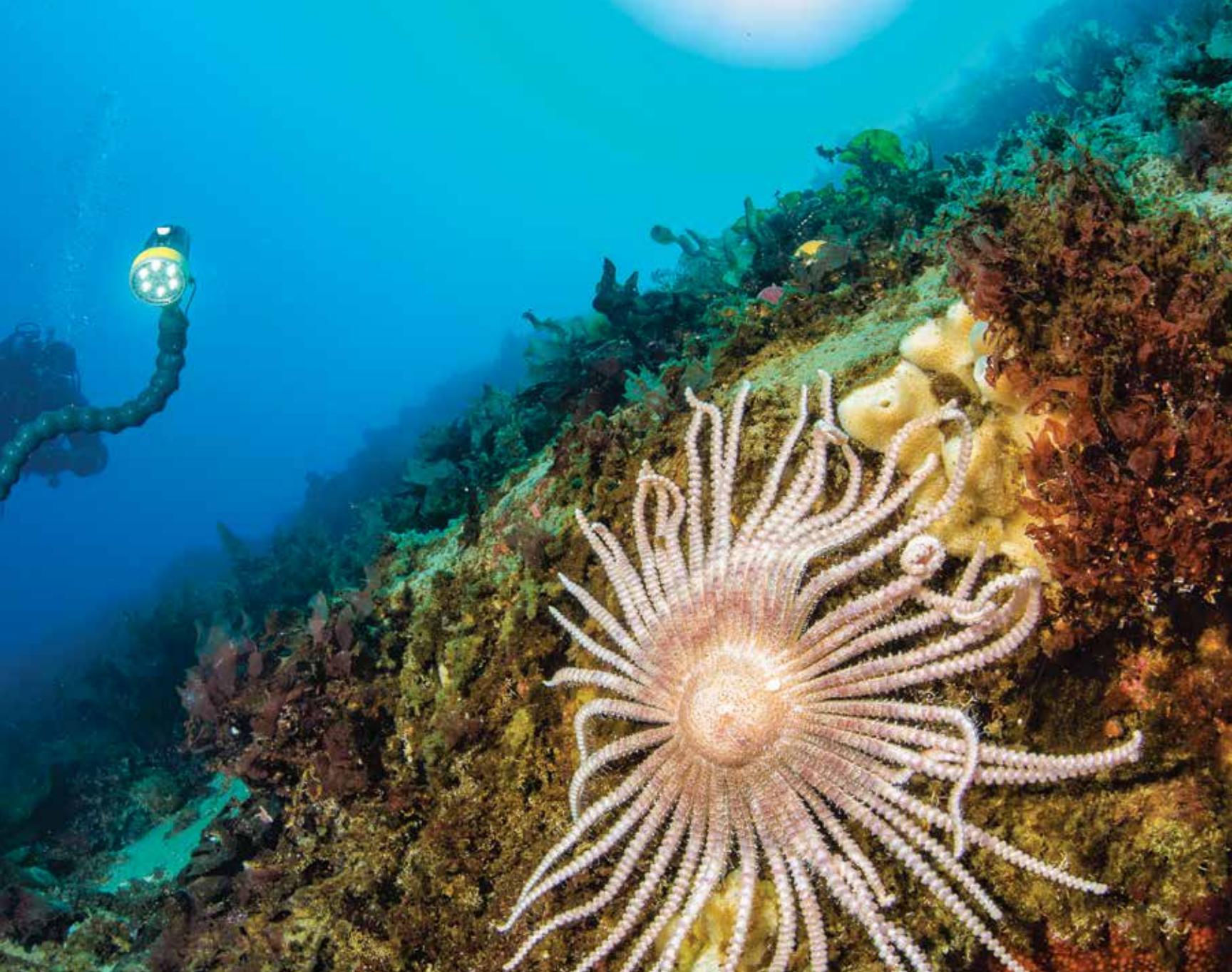
Undersea Exploration

Far from cold, gray and lifeless, the polar sea is vibrant, colorful and remarkably full of life. Inspired by Jacques Cousteau, Lindblad-National Geographic is the only travel company operating in Antarctica with an extensive undersea program. Key to the program is employing an undersea specialist—he or she dons layers of dive gear, including an insulating dry-suit, plus an array of video tech in order to remain below long enough to capture HD video of the vivid life within these frigid waters.

As a result, Lindblad-National Geographic travelers can explore the polar ocean, sitting in the warmth of the ships' lounges. Seeing fish with anti-freeze in their blood, or swimming, plant-like crinoids—can fundamentally change the way travelers view the ocean. Some of the animals the undersea specialists have recorded on expeditions, like a large-scale worm discovered in the Weddell Sea, are so rare or unusual that even Antarctic biologists can't identify them. Lindblad-National Geographic ships also voyage with ROVs able to operate up to 1,000 feet below the surface, far below what any human diver can reach. Often when Lindblad specialists deploy the ROV, it is filming areas no one has ever seen before.

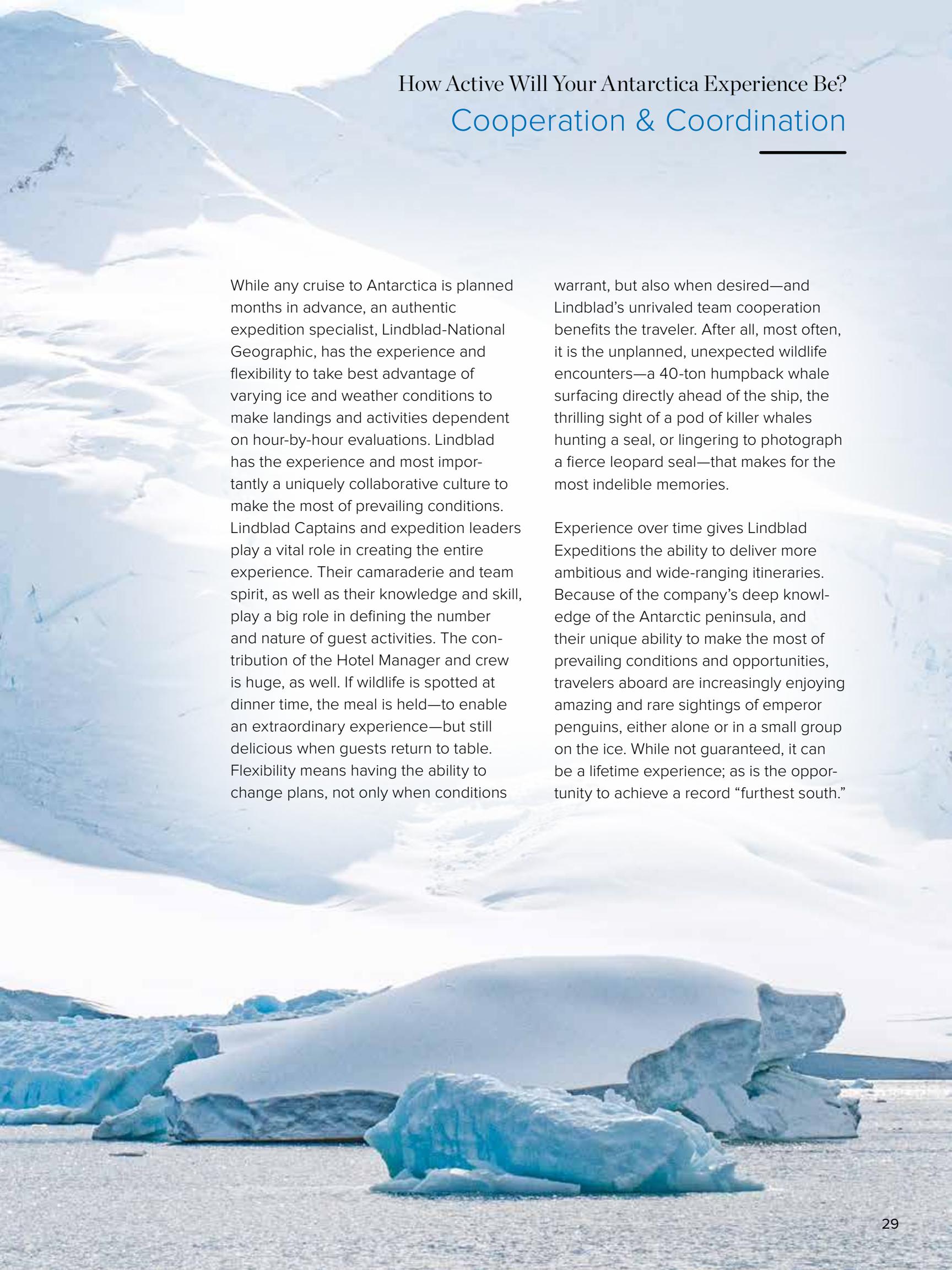
Lindblad ships also act as platforms for scientists to conduct research. From taking DNA samples from Antarctic killer whales to enabling James Balog to set his Extreme Ice Survey cameras on Antarctic and South Georgia's glaciers, Lindblad-National Geographic is reconceiving the vital role expedition ships, and the intelligent, curious travelers aboard can play in advancing polar science.





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. Above: Images captured by the Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV): anemone, seastar.





How Active Will Your Antarctica Experience Be?

Cooperation & Coordination

While any cruise to Antarctica is planned months in advance, an authentic expedition specialist, Lindblad-National Geographic, has the experience and flexibility to take best advantage of varying ice and weather conditions to make landings and activities dependent on hour-by-hour evaluations. Lindblad has the experience and most importantly a uniquely collaborative culture to make the most of prevailing conditions. Lindblad Captains and expedition leaders 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. The contribution of the Hotel Manager and crew is huge, as well. If wildlife is spotted at dinner time, the meal is held—to enable an extraordinary experience—but still delicious when guests return to table. Flexibility means having the ability to change plans, not only when conditions

warrant, but also when desired—and Lindblad's unrivaled team cooperation benefits the traveler. After all, most often, it is the unplanned, unexpected wildlife encounters—a 40-ton humpback whale surfacing directly ahead of the ship, the thrilling sight of a pod of killer whales hunting a seal, or lingering to photograph a fierce leopard seal—that makes for the most indelible memories.

Experience over time gives Lindblad Expeditions the ability to deliver more ambitious and wide-ranging itineraries. Because of the company's deep knowledge of the Antarctic peninsula, and their unique ability to make the most of prevailing conditions and opportunities, travelers aboard are increasingly enjoying amazing and rare sightings of emperor penguins, either alone or in a small group on the ice. While not guaranteed, it can be a lifetime experience; as is the opportunity to achieve a record "furthest south."

Does the Travel Operator Offer Top Staff and Onboard Experts?

Most travel companies operating in Antarctica claim to have knowledgeable experts onboard. It can be hard, therefore, to determine how to assure yourself of the most authentic, engaging, and informative experience. One metric may be to consider how the staff backgrounds match up with your personal interests. A generous ratio of staff to guests is another empirical gauge to use in judging an operator. A small number of guides can mean both fixed assignment to a group, and/or larger groups.

Over the 50+ years, Lindblad Expeditions' history, their veteran staff, and the quality companionship they provide, has established their reputation. From expedition leaders to naturalists, their staff is expert, 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; and all the naturalists are able to establish context and answer questions in their specialty. Equally important, Lindblad invests significantly in a large number of naturalists, to keep an excellent guest to expedition staff ratio of 10:1, or better. Guests are not herded around in large groups, but can gravitate naturally to the staffers they're most interested in, or opt to head out with different individuals on each day's activities.

And since 2004, the Lindblad-National Geographic alliance offers valuable resources, as well—top-tier National Geographic photographers accompany every voyage. Whether you are a camera-phone user, or an advanced photographer, you'll have

unprecedented opportunities to get tips and on-site guidance from top pros—in the field where it counts. And the presence of National Geographic researchers and explorers aboard the fleet, plus the Global Perspectives Guest Speaker program on *National Geographic Explorer*, provide guests with insights from varied, interesting, fellow guest explorers. Whether it's a National Geographic photo editor sharing how she puts together a magazine story; three former astronauts satisfying their yearning to explore new corners of the planet; or research scientists able to conduct field tests simply because Lindblad-National Geographic provided a platform, travelers aboard the fleet get insider stories and views.

Passion and enthusiasm are endemic, and guests often comment how the staff seems just as excited as they are over a pod of killer whales hunting for seals on ice floes, or the antics of a penguin pecking at a boot. They are active participants in the traveler's experience, not just passive lecturers, and are always willing to engage, to continue the conversation over a drink in the lounge, over dinner, or on the Bridge.





What Is Their Commitment to Conservation?

Established in 1991, IAATO (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators) was formed to develop, adopt, and implement operations and safety standards that mitigate potential environmental impacts. IAATO is comprised of more than 100 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 accompanied the *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. With increased tourism to Antarctica, IAATO members including Lindblad are self-regulating, limiting visits to certain sites during peak wildlife breeding periods of the season. In addition, in 2019 all members voluntarily put forth and approved a new policy intended to mitigate any possibilities of whale strikes in high-traffic zones along the Antarctic Peninsula.

Many of today's guidelines, designed for sensitive areas where limitations needed to be established to protect wildlife colonies or historical sites, were written by Lindblad's V.P. Nautical and Master of *National Geographic Explorer*, Captain Leif Skog and Lindblad expedition staff. The head of the IAATO Marine Committee for fifteen years, Captain Skog developed the safety and emergency procedures for all IAATO vessels. Currently he, Lindblad Port Captain Prash Karnik,

Jen Martin, Lindblad Director of Field Staff & Expedition Development, and Lindblad Operations Manager Shaun Powell are Lindblad-National Geographic representatives to IAATO. Captains Skog and Karnik are on the Marine Committee, and Shaun Powell is on several steering committees, such as the Field Operations Committee, the Managing for Growth Committee, the Ship Scheduler Committee, and the Ross Sea Committee.

Over the last decade, IAATO has continued to evolve, reflecting the ever-changing pressures on the fragile Antarctic environment. Every year, IAATO members and the IAATO Secretariat bring forth initiatives designed to adapt policies and procedures with the knowledge that visitor numbers to the Antarctic continue to increase. This form of management is an essential part of being able to continue to bring guests to this phenomenal destination, by maintaining tourism in a sustainable way.

Lindblad Expeditions' continued presence as a founding member of IAATO ensures responsible tourism to the White Continent. It is at the forefront of their operations and all visitors who travel on their ships will leave with a greater understanding of the fragility of this incredible environment, and our responsibility to protect it.

What is Their Commitment to Conservation?

Responsible Tourism

To encourage greater awareness and understanding of issues impacting the regions where they travel, Lindblad Expeditions—in partnership with the National Geographic Society and their guests—initiate and support innovative projects around the world. The goal is simple: to positively impact the natural systems in the places explored and the human communities living nearby. Their belief is that responsible tourism can make a big difference in the places explored, and they share this belief with guests, inviting them to join efforts through the Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic Fund (LEX-NG Fund).

The company has made a bold commitment to the ocean. Funds raised aboard *National Geographic Explorer*, *National Geographic Orion*, *National Geographic Endurance*, and *National Geographic Resolution* support National Geographic's Pristine Seas, whose mission is to explore, survey, and help protect the last wild places in the ocean. Since this global initiative began, Pristine Seas has led 30+ expeditions and inspired the creation of 21 marine reserves. LEX-NG travelers have donated more than \$3 million to support Pristine Seas since 2014 and—thanks in part to these donations—more than 5 million square kilometers of ocean are now safeguarded so marine life can thrive.

Travelers also support the next generation of conservation heroes to become leaders in their fields through National Geographic's Early Career Grants. Shipboard donations made in Antarctica—and across the LEX-NG fleet—support up to 40 of these \$5,000-\$10,000 grants annually. Since 2018, LEX-NG traveler donations have supported 74 Early Career grants totaling more than \$622,000, funding bold and innovative projects spanning the fields of conservation, education, research, storytelling, and technology.

Another reason to feel good about traveling with Lindblad Expeditions is their ongoing commitment to sustainability. [In 2019 Lindblad became a carbon neutral company](#), offsetting the carbon emissions of their fleet, employee travel worldwide, offices in New York and Seattle, all land-based operations, and beyond. Lindblad has eliminated single-use plastics, including cups, stirrers, and more aboard ships, and they're requiring their supply chain to develop alternatives to plastic packaging. Onboard menus feature sustainably caught seafood, and sustainably sourced meats and produce, locally-sourced wherever possible.

This is an ongoing commitment; the company takes every opportunity to lead by example, and promote responsible tourism around the globe.

Clockwise from top: This reusable water bottle is provided for guests in every cabin and suite fleet-wide, a reminder to protect pristine places worldwide; Lindblad ships and their Antarctic teams made it possible for James Balog's Extreme Ice Survey team to place their glacier-monitoring cameras in the Southern Ocean region and on the 7th continent; Responsible tourism means respectful interactions with wildlife. Guests have time to savor the experience, but remain at an always appropriate distance from wildlife.





Efforts for responsible tourism have been recognized internationally. Here are only a few of Lindblad Expeditions' awards:

2019 / Ensemble Travel Group Purpose Award:
Caring for Community, Environment and Protecting Local Heritage

2018 / AFAR VANGUARD Award: Sven Lindblad

2018, 2013 / Virtuoso Sustainable Tourism Leadership

2015 / World Travel Awards: World's Leading Green Cruise Line

2013 / Travel + Leisure Global Vision Award for Leadership

2013 / Condé Nast Traveler World Savers
“Doing it All” Award



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 select wisely, and 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.

In any comparison between the various travel operators offering voyages to Antarctica, Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic will inevitably emerge the clear best choice, albeit not the least expensive. Whether you select based on fleet qualifications, the tenure and safety record, or the caliber and commitment of the expedition teams, you can confidently expect Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic to provide you with an experience that will exceed your every expectation. Enjoy the fruits of your thoughtful research—a spectacular Antarctica experience.



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PHOTOGRAPHY

All the photographs in this book were taken by National Geographic photographers and/or Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructors or guests traveling aboard Lindblad-National Geographic ships. To find out more about Photo Expeditions and photo opportunities on Antarctica expeditions, call to speak with a Lindblad Expeditions Specialist, or call your travel advisor.

PHOTO CREDITS

Alexandra C. Daley-Clark, Stewart Cohen, David Cothran, Adam Cropp, Kyle Furey, Eric Guth, Peter Hanneberg, Justin Hofman, Ralph Lee Hopkins, James Hyde, Matthew Kennedy, Sven-Olof Lindblad, Jeff Litton, Flip Nicklin, Michael S. Nolan, Andrew Peacock, Rich Reid, Susan Seubert, Brooks de Wetter-Smith.