



Antarctica's White Wilderness

EXTEND YOUR TRIP

Bariloche's Patagonian Andes & Lakes

Iguassu Falls: Thundering Cascades of Argentina & Brazil

Your Travel Handbook

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TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need 2 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Bariloche:** No additional passport pages are needed.
- **Post-trip extension to Iguassu Falls:** You will need 2 additional passport pages, for a total of 4.

Please note: You might not use all of these pages on your adventure (when you return, some may still be blank) but local officials will want to see that you have them.

Visa Required

We’ll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure. In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This information is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **Argentina and Antarctica:** No visas required for stays of up to 30 days.
- **Brazil: Visa required.** A visa is required in advance to visit Brazil.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Travel Protection Required:

For new bookings starting 10/7/25, Overseas Adventure Travel requires all travelers purchase travel protection with Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000, due to the remote nature of your adventure.

O.A.T. Travel Protection:

If you **purchase your Travel Protection Plan** through O.A.T., no further action will be needed, as the Medical Evacuation coverage and Medical Expense coverage meets these requirements.

Your Own Travel Protection:

If you purchase your own travel protection, we recommend you review the plan to ensure Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000 is included. Once you confirm your plan meets the requirements, you will need to email the following information to **TravelCoverage@oattravel.com**:

- Traveler Name(s)
- Reservation Number
- Trip Protection Provider
- Policy Number
- Date of Purchase
- Copy of your Policy Documents

You can also contact our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814** to review this policy. You will be required to provide proof of coverage by 60 days prior to departure at the latest.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency).

Special Forms Required for Antarctic Cruise

In order for your Final Documents to be issued, you will be required to fill out a medical form and have proof of mandatory emergency evacuation and medical insurance.

Mandatory Emergency Evacuation Insurance

Due to the remote nature of Antarctica, all travelers are required to have emergency medical coverage of at least \$50,000.

- Evacuation coverage of \$500,000 per person is included with the ship.
- If you do not purchase travel protection through us, then you must purchase an alternate Plan with the required medical coverage of \$50,000. In addition, **you will need to send evidence of your policy to our Travel Counselors**—either by mailing it in with your medical form (see below)—or by email to **ANTMedicalForms@oattravel.com**. Please include your reservation number. Must receive this information by 90 days prior to your departure in order to ensure there is no delay in the release of your Final Documents.
- The ship will also require that you fill out an online medical form and personal details. This will be sent approximately 20 days prior to your departure by your Trip Experience Leader. You will need to fill out every field yourself, and if they ask you to submit a form signed and stamped by a doctor, you can use the same form sent to O.A.T.

Please be advised that your Final Documents will not be released unless you purchase either our Travel Protection Plan or provide us with proof of alternate coverage (that meets the above requirements) by 90 days prior to your departure.

Confidential Medical Form

For this trip you will be required to complete a medical form. We will send you detailed information on completing this form approximately 180 days prior to your departure. The medical form must be completed, signed, and stamped by a physician to certify that you are physically fit for this trip.

This information is needed from you at least 90 days before your departure in order to ensure there is no delay in the release of your Final Documents. If you also need to send in proof of emergency evacuation insurance (see above), then you should send proof of this coverage with your medical form.

Please be advised that your Final Documents will not be released unless we have received your completed medical form by 90 days prior to your departure.

Keep in mind that this form needs to be based on a physical evaluation given no more than 6 months prior to your departure date. Let your doctor know about any medical condition you have, particularly cardiac or respiratory disease or diabetes, and discuss the details of the trip itinerary as it pertains to your health. Your trip will take you into remote areas, with no nearby medical facilities. For the cruise portion of your trip the ship's physician reserves the right to deny any traveler from boarding if they are deemed unfit for the trip, or if they have a medical condition that cannot safely be managed onboard.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has a maximum group size of 25 travelers with a local Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T. There will be other O.A.T. groups onboard, each with their own Trip Experience Leader

PACING

- 13 days, with 9 nights aboard the *World Traveller*, a two-night hotel stay in Buenos Aires, and a one-night hotel stay in Ushuaia
- International flights from U.S. to Buenos Aires depart around midnight; 2 internal flights of 4 hours each, 1 with pre-dawn wake up
- Air travel time will be 11-17 hours and will likely have at least one connection
- All shore landings and Zodiac cruises will be staggered; travelers will rotate between these activities

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Walk 3 miles unassisted on uneven terrain and participate in 6-8 hours of activities each day; you will need to be able to walk on snow, sand, and pebbles
- Good agility, balance, and strength are needed for this adventure. Unlike traditional cruises, this is an expedition—you will board Zodiac boats daily, plus experience a Drake Passage crossing over the course of 4 days, when rough seas and constant ship motion are common; all landings in Antarctica are “wet landings” and you will be disembarking in the wild
- We require medical forms be signed and stamped by a doctor, as well as medical coverage of \$50,000 and emergency evacuation coverage of \$500,000.
- Throughout the expedition, travelers will be a two-day distance from the nearest medical facility; those using mobility aids or with medical conditions that might require immediate attention or evacuation will not be able to board the *World Traveller*
- The ship’s physician reserves the right to deny boarding to any traveler deemed unfit for this expedition
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group’s experience

- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe.

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Uneven surfaces, including ice, slippery rocks, sand, and snow
- Travel by 170-passenger expedition ship, 45-seat coach, and Zodiac
- All landings in Antarctica are wet landings, so weatherproof clothing is mandatory.
***Please note:** A parka will be provided to all travelers prior to departure. Rubber boots will be provided onsite.*
- Weather and ice conditions and tides may require adjustments to your itinerary to ensure your safety

CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures range from 30-45°F during cruising season
- Expect high winds and rain in Ushuaia and high temperatures in Buenos Aires

THE #1 THING TO KNOW ABOUT THIS TRIP IS: THIS IS AN EXPEDITION, AND THE NATURE OF THIS TRIP REQUIRES A HIGHER LEVEL OF FITNESS THAN THAT OF OTHER CRUISES.

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at www.cdc.gov/travel or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

Vaccines Required Yellow Fever Vaccination: Recommended for Iguassu Falls ONLY

The CDC does NOT recommend the yellow fever vaccination for any of the areas we travel to on the main trip or pre-trip extension. However, they do recommend it for the Iguassu Falls post-trip extension, if your health allows. The vaccination is not for everyone. Please discuss this health recommendation with your doctor, because he or she can offer a suggestion tailored to your personal medical history. If you and your doctor decide the vaccination is not right for you, you are NOT REQUIRED to get it. If you and your doctor decide to move forward with the vaccination, then he or she will issue you a Yellow Fever Card that shows you have been vaccinated.

TIP for travelers on the Iguassu extension: *If you do get the vaccine, we recommend that you bring your Yellow Fever Card with you on the trip. If you don't get the vaccine, then we suggest you bring a letter from your medical provider stating that you cannot receive it for medical reasons. If either Argentina or Brazil (the two countries we visit at the falls) makes a last-minute change to its entry policy before you leave, having one of these documents with you could make all the difference.*

Other Vaccines

At time of writing, there were no required vaccinations for Antarctica or Argentina. (That is, none of those countries require proof a specific vaccination in order to take this cruise.) However, your doctor might feel that there are some basic vaccinations that you should have updated before you travel. Or there may be vaccinations that he or she recommends for you because of your personal medical history. We suggest you consult with your own physician at least 6 weeks prior to departure, and ask about vaccinations at that time.

If you'd like to know more about possible vaccinations for this trip—or just about health in general while traveling—the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a great resource. You can contact them online or by phone.

- Online: We suggest you visit the CDC's website at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.
- By phone: At the CDC's Hotline toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day.

But please keep in mind that the CDC's suggestions may not apply to you! For example, you might already have some of the vaccinations they routinely recommend. So be sure to ask your own doctor. A good insect repellent with DEET is also helpful for this trip, as many diseases in this part of South America are mosquito-borne.

Malaria: Not Present

The CDC says that malaria is NOT present in the places we visit on this trip. However, if you will be traveling independently to other parts of Argentina or Brazil, then keep in mind that malaria may be present elsewhere. Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease, so the most important steps you can take to prevent it are to use insect repellent and to wear clothing that keeps your arms and legs covered. Malaria is also easily treatable by use of a prescription anti-malarial drug.

To confirm that nothing has changed with the CDC recommendations, a quick check of the CDC website will let you know if there have been updates.

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

Tap water is safe to drink in Argentina, but it is processed differently than in the U.S., so it may feel “heavy” if you have a sensitive system. If you prefer bottled water it is readily available and inexpensive, but it is not included in the cost of your tour. On board the ship, safe water is available for you to refill your reusable water bottle.

Food

We’ve carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Be very careful with food sold from vendors on the street, and with uncooked fruit and other foods. Fruits and vegetables are safe to eat in Argentina.

Dental Exam

A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling in a remote area. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip.

Drink Plenty of Liquids

When you travel, you can easily become dehydrated without knowing it. If your fluid balance is low, you are more susceptible to fatigue and illness. Air travel will dry you out, so drink liquids and avoid alcohol on your flights. During the trip, don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink. Instead, drink by the clock: drink one to two quarts of water or juice each day, in addition to drinks at meals. If you find yourself tired or unwell, and don't know why, it may be that you simply need to drink more. Note that tea, coffee, and alcoholic beverages are diuretics, and do not help maintain hydration. Antarctica is very dry; you will need water bottles when going ashore.

Sun and Heat Exposure

Be sure to wear your hat, and use plenty of sunscreen. Be aware of the signs of heat exposure. Be especially concerned if you feel hot, but are not perspiring. Let us know if you are not feeling well. Most importantly, you must drink plenty of liquids when temperatures are high. In Antarctica, you don't think of sunburns, but due to the thin ozone layer and all the reflection from snow and water, good sunscreen is a must.

Tips for the Drake Passage/Seasickness

The Drake Passage is known for its strong waves and rough seas; it is common for the ship to roll considerably. As it is hard to know in advance how your body will react, it is a good idea to bring a seasickness remedy, if only as a precaution. We recommend that you bring a motion sickness medication, such as Dramamine, to help alleviate any seasickness (please consult with your doctor to determine which medication is right for you). If you prefer patches to a pill, please be aware that motion sickness patches are not available in Argentina, so if you want them, you should bring them with you. Our local staff will advise you on the best time to start taking your medication or wearing your patches to prevent seasickness.

Also, remember not to over eat. The best thing to do for seasickness is to have your stomach full, but with nothing too heavy—crackers, bread, and pasta with light sauce is advisable. Avoid alcoholic drinks the night of embarkation, as you will be in open waters within 3 hours after boarding.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They are hard to exchange and not accepted as payment in Argentina or on board the ship.
- **Bring cash in U.S. dollars.** Depending on the strength of the dollar at the time you travel, you may be able to pay with them without having to exchange money into Argentine pesos. (And if it turns out that you do need pesos, you'll be able to exchange in Argentina.)

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Argentina: Argentine Peso (\$)

Brazil: Brazilian Real (R\$)

How to Exchange Money

Since you might be able to pay with U.S. dollars in some locations, exchanging money isn't as important on this trip as it would be in places like Europe. However, if you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets.

If you would rather exchange money on your trip, the best way to exchange currency is to wait until arrival in Argentina. Your Trip Experience Leader will guide you to an exchange office where you will get the best exchange rate. We advise you bring large U.S. bills in perfect, new, condition. If you exchange currency in the U.S. prior to your departure or get money from a local ATM, you will get it at a lower exchange rate compared to a local exchange office.

To exchange cash, you may need your passport and bills in perfect, almost brand new condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2017) are best. Please note, the exchange rate is best when exchanging \$100 bills, versus \$50 bills or \$20 bills.

All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

Tip: Due to the small amount of cash that you will need for this trip, we recommend that you plan to use your credit/debit card in most places.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card. Many banks will charge a set fee or a percentage fee each time you use a foreign ATM. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart. Don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM. If you are visiting a country that has different expectation for ATMs, they will be listed below.

Argentina: ATMs are available in larger cities like Buenos Aires, but will not be available in remote locations.

Brazil: ATMs are fairly common in larger cities and towns, but may not be readily available in undeveloped areas. Not all ATMs are open 24/7—many are only open from 7 am until 10 pm, and then they shut down overnight. (It can be confusing because they may still be lit, even when closed.) Also, keep in mind that not every ATM will accept foreign cards. You may need to try more than one machine.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. We suggest that you bring one or two, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, as not all are accepted around the world. If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Argentina: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Buenos Aires for major purchases and in shops associated with the tourist trade (souvenirs, museum gift shops, etc.), but may not be accepted by smaller shops or restaurants. Some businesses add a surcharge of 5-10% to use a credit card; look for the word “recargo”. Some restaurants will accept credit cards—but not all—and you cannot leave a tip on a credit card. Visa is commonly accepted, but MasterCard and American Express are not. In November 2022, the government of Argentina added a new financial exchange rate (known as “Dólar MEP” or “Mercado Electronico de Pagos”) for all travelers paying with credit cards issued outside of Argentina. This new exchange rate is higher than the official dollar, but is more convenient for travelers. It is essentially a tax on credit card use for travelers. **We recommend that you check with your Trip Experience Leader as to what would be the best way for you to pay during your trip.**

Brazil: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Brazil, especially for major purchases or in businesses that cater to visitors (hotels, souvenirs shops, etc.). Nonetheless, there are some businesses—street vendors, small “Mom and Pop” stores, some restaurants, and taxis—that are still “cash only”. If you don't see a credit card logo on the door or the cash register, then check with the cashier or server. In undeveloped areas, cash is usually the preferred form of payment.

TIP: Credit card fraud can occasionally be an issue in restaurants in Brazil, especially if the waiter takes your card away to process the payment. You can easily block this scam by not letting your credit card out of your sight. That is why you will see portable credit card machines in many upscale restaurants in Brazil—they bring the machine to you instead of taking your card away. And in restaurants that don't have a portable machine, it is completely OK to walk your card to the register and watch as the transaction is processed.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

On Board Ship: Two Separate Bills Will be Issued

- **Shipboard account:** This bill is for any on board purchases (drinks, laundry, souvenirs, etc.). This bill is payable at the front desk by cash or credit/debit card only. For cash, the ship accepts U.S. dollars. For credit/debit cards, we accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover. Other forms of payment, such as checks or American Express are not accepted.
- **Optional tour account:** This bill is for any optional tours taken during the trip and is calculated in U.S. dollars. This bill is paid with your International Trip Leader (they will have you fill out a form) by credit/debit card only; other forms of payments such as cash and checks are not accepted. For more information on optional tours—including which cards we accept for payment—see the “Preparing for Your Trip” chapter.

Please note: Payments made by credit card may take up to three months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, the charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as “OPT Boston” (depending on your credit card company).

Exchange Services: Policy Update

Due to international banking laws, we are no longer able to exchange money onboard the ship. If you need to obtain local currency, please see the “How to Exchange Money” section for helpful tips and information.

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Housekeeping Staff at Hotels:** We recommend \$1 per room, per night. (This is for hotels only; on the ship Housekeeping are part of crew, so you don’t need to tip them separately.)
- **Taxis:** Tipping is not customary, but many locals will round up the fare and let the driver keep the change. For long-distance drives, or for a long period of hire, a tip may be given according to the service received.
- **Restaurants, cafes, and bars:** In Argentina waiters expect a 10% cash tip when service is good.

Included in Your Trip Price: Gratuities are included for local guides, motorcoach drivers, shipboard crew, and Expedition Team on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Customized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Customization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Customization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our customization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Customization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45-30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Arrival:

- **Arrival in Buenos Aires:** When you deplane from your flight an O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport after you exit Customs and assist you with the transfer to your hotel.

- **Important note on porters:** Airport porters are NOT allowed in the baggage claim area. On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and load it onto a cart, which you will then move through customs. When you exit customs, you'll handle your cart until reaching your transfer vehicle. Your driver will load your luggage into the transfer vehicle.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone is “unlocked”, meaning it can accept a local SIM card. If your cell is “unlocked” then you will be able to purchase a local SIM for it and then buy minutes with “Pay as You Go” cards, so that you have a local contact number for your friends and family.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like FaceTime or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan’s data allowance. Many smartphones- and some tablets or laptops- come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards & 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.). One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Receiving Calls from Home

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one is to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Argentina: +54

Brazil: +55

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The published weight limit on Aerolineas Argentinas is 33lbs for checked bags and 17lbs for carry-ons, but we have arranged a higher allowance of 50lbs for checked bags on your behalf as an exception. While we do not expect any changes to this exception, it is at the discretion of the airline, meaning it could change in future.
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.

TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS
The Bariloche and Iguassu Falls extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.

REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS
<p>One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person.</p> <p>Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p>

Don't forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the *FAQ* section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

- **Travel light:** A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated clothing items that can be mixed to create different outfits. For more packing and luggage tips, you might want to visit www.travelite.org.
- **Pack casual clothes:** Comfortable, informal apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations. At dinner, you will not need to wear "dressy" clothing; men do not need jackets or ties and women do not need fancy dresses. You may want one or two "smart casual" outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you.
- **Learn from previous travelers:** Our travelers' top three comments about packing are "I wish I had brought less," "I should have double-checked the weather," and "You said I'd need (insert something you don't need here) and I didn't." Our suggestions are springboards, not requirements – take them with a grain of salt. Finally, remember the Golden Rule of Packing Light: whatever you think you need at first—take half the clothes and twice the money.
- **Comfortable, supportive walking shoes are essential on the extensions:** You'll be on your feet and walking a lot, sometimes over rough and slippery surfaces, so choose your footwear carefully. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction. You can find especially supportive or light hiking shoes designed for walking.

Expedition Clothing

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, our list suggests several layers of clothing. For the warmer climates you visit (such as Buenos Aires or Iguassu Falls on the optional extension), most of your clothing can be made of cotton or cotton-synthetic blends. For the colder climes, consider long-sleeved underwear made from water-wicking synthetics beneath outer layers of wool-synthetic blends and fleece, to stay dry and warm.

- **Expedition Gear:** Other than boots, parkas, waterproof pants, and potentially a walking stick or trekking pole, it is not necessary to have expedition gear for this trip. For more on boots, our complimentary parkas, or waterproof pants, please see below.
- **Footwear-Boots are provided:** In order to reach the Antarctic Peninsula, you'll step from the Zodiac into icy water that can be up to 10 inches deep—making protective boots a must. We will provide you with knee-high rubber boots from a stock selection of available sizes (men's sizes 6 to 14; and women's sizes 5 to 12; with a calf circumference of approximately 15.7 inches). The boots will be distributed onboard. You may use them for the duration of your cruise and then return them before disembarkation.
- What if we don't have your size or if you prefer to wear your own boots? In that case the ship staff recommends a pair of waterproof knee-height rubber boots with sturdy soles, such as Rocky rubber mud boots or Wellingtons. Make sure to break in any new footwear before your voyage. All travelers should also bring lightweight boot liners and/or heavy hiking socks for additional warmth.
- **Parkas are included:** We will provide you with parkas for this trip. We will send you an order form so that you may select your size. Your parka will be sent to you before you depart and will be yours to keep.
- **Waterproof pants:** Essential to any layering system is keeping the outer layer dry. You must bring water and windproof rain (or ski) pants to wear over your long underwear/leggings and regular pants to keep warm and dry. These waterproof pants should be worn over your knee-high boots when going ashore. We recommend pants with side zippers on the lower part of the leg; they are easier to get on over your boots.
- Gore-Tex and similar fabrics that are waterproof and "breathable" materials that keep out wind and water without trapping excess heat may be excellent. However, these fabrics are expensive and can be damaged by prolonged exposure to salt water. Gore-Tex should be rinsed in freshwater after exposure to salt.
- **On excursions:** The interior of the ship is heated to a comfortable 70-75° F, but the outdoor environment in the Antarctic summer resembles moderate winter weather in temperate climates. Since the majority of your days during this trip are spent on the Antarctic cruise, part of the list below emphasizes what you will need to dress in layers for this portion of the trip. For an Antarctic shore excursion, a typical layering system consists of long underwear (top and bottom), a warm long-sleeved shirt, warm pants, a sweater, fleece jacket, liner socks plus one to two pair heavier socks for warmth, rubber boots, liner gloves inside heavier outer gloves, warm hat, water- and wind-proof outer jacket, and waterproof outer pants.

Recommended Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. Each travelers packing list may be different depending on the climate you are used to. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Recommended Items

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc.
- Hand and/or body lotion (the cold can dry your skin)
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- Sunglasses and a neck strap
- Hand and toe warmers
- Sunscreen, SPF 45 or stronger (essential for Antarctica)
- Insect repellent with 30–35% DEET (for optional Iguassu extension)
- Washcloth (not always supplied)
- Pocket-size tissues
- Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial “waterless” hand cleanser
- Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb
- Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- Travel money purse, worn under your shirt or jacket; money belt
- Camera, spare batteries, and memory cards
- A waterproof protector for your camera. Please do NOT use a plastic bag for this purpose—they tend to blow away and cause litter.

Clothing for Land Stays

- Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer

- Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- Shoes and socks: comfortable walking, running shoes, or light hikers
- Consider casual good-traction shoes, or sport sandals
- Underwear and sleepwear
- Trousers/jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best for comfort and movement.
- Walking shorts: Long cut for modesty (for Buenos Aires & optional Iguassu Falls extension)
- Cotton sweater or sweatshirt for the air-conditioned bus
- Wide-brim sun hat or visor
- Swimsuit, for hotel pools or if there is any possibility for a polar plunge in Antarctica

Clothing for Your Antarctic Cruise

- Shirts: Several turtlenecks and T-shirts for layering and aboard ship. Woolen, knit, cotton sweaters/tops, or polar fleece tops in medium weight for layering.
- Trousers: Sturdy, warm trousers such as wool-synthetic blends, sweatpants, or quick-dry pants. Bring a pair of warm ski pants if you have them.
- Waterproof outer pants (rain pants): roomy enough to wear over other clothing.
- For layering: wool or fleece sweaters, Polartec fleece jacket
- Scarf or other face protection
- Long underwear (top and bottom): In silk, polypropylene, or similar. Lightweight is best unless you chill easily, in which case bring medium or heavier weight
- Warm hat/cap that protects your ears
- Boots: We will provide boots during your cruise. If you prefer to buy your own, please see the “Expedition Clothing” section on the previous pages.
- Warm socks: High “outer” socks in a natural fiber like wool or cotton, plus thin liner or “inner” socks in polypropylene or other moisture-wicking synthetics.
- Parka: We will provide one onboard the ship.

- Rain jacket/windbreaker: At least medium-weight with a hood in a waterproof/windproof material (like Gore-Tex). For on deck wear.
- Gloves: 1 pair light liner gloves plus 1 pair heavier waterproof gloves

Medicines

- Your own prescription medicines
- Vitamins
- Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- Antihistamine: Benadryl
- Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- Band-Aids
- Moleskin foot pads
- Antibiotic: Neosporin/Bacitracin
- Motion sickness medicine (recommended for Drake Passage cruise, Dramamine is available onboard ship)

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

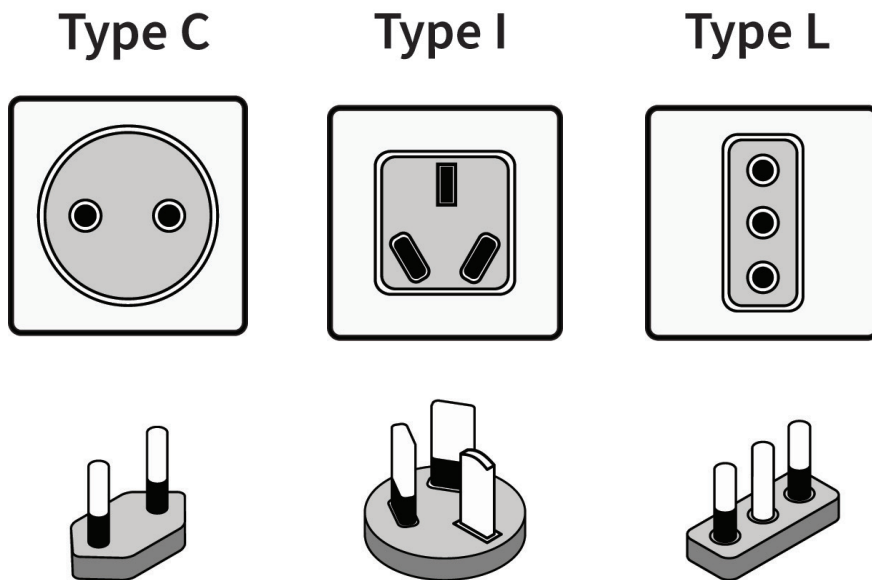
Electricity at hotels in Argentina is 220/240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220/240. But you should check the item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

In hotels, the shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet—Type A, Type B, and so on. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Argentina: I

Brazil: C or L



Availability

A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays. Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) should consider a different trip.

CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Buenos Aires, Argentina: While the official high temperatures in summer (December through February) are usually in the 80s, with the humidity it often feels much hotter. During the winter (June through September), Buenos Aires is cold and rainy, with the average temperature in the 30s but with a lot of humidity. The changeable spring and mild fall of Buenos Aires are similar to those seasons in New York City, but the proximity of the South Atlantic makes winter temperatures milder than New York's comparable months and the possibility of snow almost nonexistent. The almost-constant breezes during all seasons except summer refresh this city's air and renew its skies.

Ushuaia, Argentina: The climate is significantly cooler than in Buenos Aires, but the ocean moderates temperatures and prevents extremely cold or hot weather. The weather here is varied and unpredictable. There is a constant wind from mountains that are snowcapped year-round, which can change from a gentle breeze to a ferocious gale in minutes. The weather on a summer day in Ushuaia can start sunny, turn windy and rainy, return to dazzling sunshine, and then become very cloudy. All the while, temperatures may hold steady around 50–60 degrees F.

Antarctica: When you cruise to the Antarctic Peninsula, even though this is the warmest part of Antarctica, high temperatures on many summer days only reach the high 30s. The weather is unpredictable and highly variable, so can be cold and windy, but it can also be quite pleasant. The Antarctic summer brings very long hours of daylight, which are advantageous for observing the area's wildlife. Temperatures average in the 30s, but the wind chill can make it feel much colder. It is a very dry cold.

Bariloche, Argentina: Technically, the city is named San Carlos de Bariloche, but is known locally as Bariloche. Located in the foothills of the Andes Mountains, the local climate is generally windy, sunny, and cool. In the summer (December to late February/early March) highs are pleasant—in the 60s and 70s—but lows are usually in the 40s. Fall and winter are progressively colder, with snowfall arriving in May and running through September. Spring is mixed—mostly in the 50s, but with an occasional late dusting of snow. It rains variably all year, especially between March–October.

Iguassu Falls, Argentina & Brazil: Iguassu Falls experiences a humid subtropical climate. Temperatures are hot year-round – around 90° (and sometimes feel hotter than they really are because of the humidity). Rainfall is distributed fairly evenly throughout the year. The average humidity most mornings is more than 90%, but it lessens in the afternoon.

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	87 to 69	86 to 47	4.2
FEB	84 to 67	89 to 52	4.0
MAR	80 to 63	90 to 54	4.0
APR	73 to 57	91 to 59	3.3
MAY	66 to 51	89 to 60	3.1
JUN	60 to 46	89 to 62	2.1
JUL	59 to 45	89 to 62	2.3
AUG	63 to 48	88 to 57	2.3
SEP	66 to 50	87 to 53	2.4
OCT	73 to 55	88 to 56	4.0
NOV	78 to 61	86 to 53	3.6
DEC	83 to 65	86 to 48	3.3

USHUAIA, ARGENTINA		
Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
59 to 42	79	13
57 to 41	79	13
54 to 38	81	14
50 to 36	83	12
43 to 32	83	11
40 to 30	82	12
40 to 30	84	12
43 to 30	83	11
48 to 33	79	13
52 to 36	75	12
55 to 39	74	12
56 to 41	74	11

ABOARD YOUR SHIP: CABIN FEATURES, DINING & SERVICES ON BOARD

M/S Indochine II

Cabin Amenities

Your cabin features a private bathroom with shower (shampoo and shower gel are provided), a hairdryer, a TV, in-room heating, an in-room safe, and a mini-refrigerator.

Cabin Assignments

You will receive confirmation of your deck and/or cabin category upfront in writing; it will be on your invoice and online in My Planner at www.gct.com/myplanner. However, your cabin number may not be assigned until you arrive onboard the ship. (This is normal procedure for many small ships.) If there's no cabin number on your invoice or online, you can presume it will be assigned later and communicated to you when you board.

Dining

All meals are taken in the ship's dining room which serves three meals per day. Breakfast and lunch are typically buffet-style while dinner will be a traditional plated meal. Complimentary soft drinks, juice, and water are available at all three meals; coffee and tea are included, or specialty coffee drinks are available for purchase; house beer and wine are served with dinner. Other premium beverage choices may be charged to your shipboard account. Prices will vary by vintage, starting at approximately \$30 per bottle of wine. Because of the remote locations that you'll be visiting on this trip, alcohol is typically imported which means that you will likely experience higher prices than what you would typically find at home. (No outside alcohol may be consumed onboard the *World Traveller*.)

If you require a special diet, please request this in advance, you may do so by contacting one of our Travel Counselors (please note, kosher meals are not available on the *World Traveller*). Dining times will vary according to the scheduled daily activities.

Electricity

Cabins on the *World Traveller* are equipped with 220-volt outlets which use a Type C plug (also known as the "Euro plug"). Please be sure to check the voltage of all your appliances. Most modern devices are dual-voltage, meaning they can run on both 110 and 220 volts. If you have any appliances that are 110 V, we recommend that you bring a converter. For more details on electricity, please see your Travel Handbook.

Getting Ashore

Getting from ship to shore during an ocean-going voyage is not the same experience as on a river cruise—it requires more balance and agility, plus there are more formalities.

- **Balance and agility are needed:** To get ashore, we will use the ship's own fleet of Zodiacs, which are small but sturdy open-air boats holding 8-10 people each. To get into one of the Zodiacs, you'll need to go down a steep staircase—which can be wet and slippery—and then crew members will assist you as you step from the *World Traveller* into the Zodiac.
- **“Wet” landings:** Your landings will be “wet,” which means you'll need to step into cold water up to ten inches deep and wade ashore. We will provide you with rubber Wellington-type boots for the duration of your cruise from a stock selection of available sizes. Please see your Travel Handbook for more details.
- **Clothing note:** Since the Zodiacs are small open-air boats, they are more susceptible to being splashed by water. It is essential that you bring waterproof pants to protect your clothing while transferring from ship to shore.

Important Note: Due to guidelines set by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO), on Antarctic expeditions there are limits to the number of travelers who are able to go ashore at the same time. This may mean that you will enjoy a zodiac cruise while other travelers are ashore, and vice versa. To learn more about the IAATO and their mission to promote environmentally responsible tourism in Antarctica, please see your Travel Handbook or visit their website at www.iaato.org.

Headsets

Please note that headsets are not available on this expedition.

Internet Access and Email

Complimentary wireless Internet service is available in public spaces, but is not available in individual cabins. If you want to use the wireless Internet connection you'll need to bring your own device—a laptop, tablet, MP3 player, smart phone, etc.—because the ship does not rent or loan these devices. Please keep in mind that the wireless Internet access onboard is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume onboard will affect connectivity and speed. Given the remote locations to which we will be traveling, you should expect that there will be times when the wireless Internet is either slow or not available.

Laundry Services

Laundry services are available on the *World Traveller* for a fee (a price list for laundry services will be provided on board). There will be forms and laundry bags provided in your cabin which are collected every morning. Your laundry will be returned to you in 48 hours.

Medical Services

There is an English-speaking doctor onboard, as well as all of the basic First Aid supplies. All physician's fees will be payable directly to the doctor. All specific medicines are the responsibility of each traveler, therefore we recommend that you bring a sufficient supply of any prescription medications. Should you have any medical problems while aboard the ship, the doctor will refer to your medical forms.

Public Spaces

The *World Traveller* features a lecture room, a bar and lounge, an observation deck with a panoramic lounge, a spa and gym, reception area and gift shop, a pool and jacuzzi and a dining room, in addition to extensive open decks.

Shipboard Payments

Payment for shipboard expenses can be made using U.S. dollars, debit cards, or credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard. All prices are in U.S. dollars and you will not need a PIN to use your credit card onboard. Personal checks and Discover are not accepted onboard.

Ship-to-Shore Communications

The ship has satellite telephone connections which allows you to call anywhere in accordance with the current local tariffs. Calling costs will be advised on board.

Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited on board, with the exception of a designated smoking area. Please see your shipboard crew to be directed to the smoking designated area.

Wheelchairs

The ship is not built to accommodate wheelchairs.

Ship Specifications

World Traveller

- **History:** 2022
- **Size:** 413x62 ft
- **Capacity:** 170 passengers
- **Layout:** 86 cabins, 8 decks; Elevator-yes

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Argentinian and Antarctic Culture

Since most modern-day Argentinians are descendants of Spanish and other colonists, Argentinian culture has often been described as European with a Latin American flair. While Argentina was once dominated by indigenous groups with distinct languages, customs, and cultural traditions, native influences aren't very strong, as Argentina's indigenous peoples were almost eliminated by the Spanish.

Spanish colonization began in Argentina in the early 1500s, and within a century, about 90% of Argentina's indigenous populations had been eradicated at the hands of colonialists. The gauchos, however, remain a proud symbol of Argentinian culture. These iconic cowboys of mixed European and indigenous descent began roaming the Pampas grasslands of Argentina on horseback beginning in the 18th century.

Due to centuries of Spanish rule and other European influences, Argentina developed into a majority Roman Catholic nation. Catholic holidays are observed and celebrated and there are countless churches spread throughout the country. Gregarious by nature, Argentinian culture often revolves around *mate*, a bitter tea that is shared by all. They love talking tango and football, but anything about the Perón era and the Falkland Islands remain highly sensitive topics with Argentinians.

While Antarctica may lack permanent residents and a unique culture, the region does have a strong culture of science. With the first sighting of Antarctica in 1820, this ice-bound continent saw over a century of conquest and exploration before the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 was signed into effect. At the time, seven countries had made claims to different parts of the region: New Zealand, Australia, France, Norway, the United Kingdom, Chile, and Argentina. This new treaty neither recognized nor rejected these countries' claims but forbid any assertion of new claims. Essentially, the treaty reserves the entire continent for peaceful purposes and scientific research. Since the signing, a total of 38 countries have joined the treaty and a new era of conservation and science has started in Antarctica.

Today, permanently manned research stations are maintained by several countries. In the summer months, there are up to 5,000 staff working, and, in the winter months, this figure drops to only 1,000 staff. Life for residents is extremely monotonous in this Arctic tundra. Staff live and work very closely with each other, and food supplies are rationed per person, per year.

Scientific knowledge and advances in this region have been instrumental to helping the world understand our planet. The Special Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), a politically independent body, has helped coordinate research activities in Antarctica, as well as Antarctic programs that relate to worldwide projects, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In fact, it was at the British Halley research station that the hole in the ozone layer was discovered in 1985. It was this discovery that brought ecology to the forefront of the international political agenda.

Taking Photographs

When taking photos of people in most countries, be polite and ask permission to take a close-up. In many countries, you should not be taking photos of children or older women without permission. Do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

Please obey any signs regarding photos at museum or sites; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room – use a room safe as needed. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt.

Argentinian Cuisine

How to sum up Argentine cooking in just a few words? Probably: Meats, Italian-style pasta, and coffee.

Beef, or *bife* (beef-eh), is the staple of Argentina and the golden El Dorado of her economy. Somewhere around 51 million Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle graze in the pampas and, thanks to the gauchos, provide locals with abundant, tasty fare. Restaurant menus everywhere in the country feature some type of beef selection, and lamb is popular too. For lighter fare—or for vegetarians—look for the many pasta dishes on offer, a legacy of decades of immigration from Italy. And at the end of your meal enjoy a strong cup of European-style coffee served as an espresso, latte, or cappuccino. Some dishes to look for are:

- **Asado:** Argentine-style BBQ, usually beef or lamb grilled over the coals or roasted on an open fire.

- **Parrillada:** A mixed grill platter that includes a bit of everything—*chorizo* (sausage), *costillas* (ribs), and either *carne* (beef) or *pollo* (chicken). This may also include cuts that are less familiar to Americans, such as *chinchulines* (small intestines), *mojellas* (sweetbreads), or *morcilla* (blood sausage).
- **Steak (*bife*):** Various cuts are available, but be warned that if you don't specify how you want it cooked, it will likely come medium to well done. Surprisingly, it can be hard to get rare or medium rare; it is just not common to order it that way here.
- **Chimichurri:** A spicy sauce with an olive oil base, good on everything, especially *empanadas*.
- **Empanadas:** Fried or baked pastries stuffed with meat and vegetables. Often served as a bar snack or appetizer, but order a few different kinds and you'll have a meal.
- **Chozipan:** *Chorizo* (sausage) served in a bun.
- **Dulce de leche:** A milk caramel topping that Argentines eat with all sorts of desserts and is used as the filling in *alfajores* cookies. There are so many different kinds, that you may see shops selling nothing but this sweet treat.
- **Mate:** A type of caffeinated herbal tea, often drunk socially from a gourd-shaped cup with a special straw.
- **Wines:** Argentina is known for its red wines, which pair well with all the beef, steak, and lamb on the menu. *Torrontes* in particular is a renowned local grape.

And finally, one note of precaution: Argentines thoroughly salt almost everything, particularly meats and even salads sometimes. If you dine out, you may want to request unsalted food. When you order, simply tell the waiter *no use* (oo-say) *sal, por favor*.

Brazilian Cuisine

Brazil's cuisine varies from region to region, due to its mixed population of native Brazilians and immigrants, as well as its large size. The cuisine sees heavy influences from the Europeans who colonized much of South America, from the Africans who were brought over as slaves, and from the other nearby Amerindians. Common ingredients utilized by native Brazilians are cashews, *cassava* (a shrub with a starchy root, often called *yuca*), *guarana* (a climbing plant with fruit and seeds), *acai* (a fruit often compared to blackberries and unsweetened chocolate in taste), *cumarú* (a flowering tree with a bitter seed), and *tucupí* (a yellow sauce from the manioc root in the Amazon). As more Europeans settled into the country, they added wheat, wine, leafy vegetables, and dairy to the diet. Other common ingredients used include tropical fruits like coconuts, papayas, mangos, pineapples, oranges, and passion fruits. In popular dishes, you are likely to find rice, beans, cassava, or cornflour listed as a main ingredient, as they are firm staples of the cuisine. Dishes to try are:

- **Feijoada:** A stew with heavy Portuguese influences, made of black beans and pork, with garlic rice, cassava flour, collard greens, and vinaigrette

- **Feijao tropeiro:** Popular in southeastern Brazil and made with collard greens, eggs, beans, bacon, pork, and cassava flour
- **Acaraje with vatapa:** A dish popular in the northeastern region with west African influences, it is made of deep-fried ball of peeled back-eyed peas, onions, and salt, filled with *vaatapa* – a paste of shrimp, coconut milk, bread, ground peanuts, and palm oil, that was brought over by West Africa slaves.
- **Escondidinho de frango com mandioca:** A northeast region dish of chicken hidden under cassava puree
- **Moqueca:** Best known as the Brazilian Fish Stew, this dish is most popular in the northeast, with the ingredients different per region. Common made with some variation of seafood, like shellfish, shrimp, fish, etc., and served with rice
- **Pastel:** A popular street food of flat fried dough filled with melted cheese and minced meat
- **Empada:** Little pies filled with chicken, fish, *palmito* (heart of palm, a vegetable from the inner core of palm trees such as coconut or acai trees), or chocolate
- **Mousse de maracuja:** A dessert mouse made from passion fruits
- **Beijinho:** Originally from Portugal, these truffles were adapted away from almonds to the more local coconut. This dessert is made with sweetened condensed milk, coconut flakes, butter and caster sugar

Brazil also offers its own style of barbecue: *churrascaria*, where a server comes to your table with skewers of many varieties of meat and cuts it off directly onto your plate. Or for an inexpensive meal try a *comida por kilo*, self-service buffets where you pay by weight.

Travel in South America

Part of the adventure of this trip is the possibility that things may change. Local influences may make it impossible for us to follow the planned itinerary exactly and the sequence of sites visited may change. Rest assured that we have considerable experience at responding to changing circumstances on the spot. Our goal is always to offer you the best travel experience and the most memorable explorations of this intriguing land.

Complex, multi-layered cultural traditions and stunning natural geography make South America a fascinating destination. To get the most enjoyment out of your trip, remember that many South American countries are still considered developing nations, and be aware that you may be approached to buy crafts or solicited by children to take photographs.

In restaurants, hotels, and at cultural sites, everything works according to a slower sense of time than what you are used to. It's best to wind down and adjust to the local pace and philosophy.

Regional Flights in South America

In South America, it is simply a fact of life that schedules for internal flights often change on short notice. When this happens, our air travel experts strive to get you on new flights as close to the original schedule as possible, but limited availability of seats may require us to use early-morning flights or change the day of the flight. If schedule changes make it necessary, we may have to rise before dawn on some days where early-morning wake-ups are not mentioned in your printed itinerary.

Responsible Travel in Antarctica

We do our best to have a minimum negative impact on local cultures and the natural environment in every country where we operate trips. Our goal is to leave no trace on the natural environment, or to leave places better than we find them. As you travel in Antarctica, your ship's expedition staff will follow strict guidelines to protect the environment. Please cooperate enthusiastically, and make it your own priority to keep this uniquely unsullied wilderness intact in all its pristine beauty. Here's what we ask of you as part of this effort.

The #1 rule is: Follow all instructions given onsite faithfully.

Protect the Wildlife

Taking or harmful interference with Antarctic wildlife is prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by a national authority.

- Do not feed, touch, or handle birds or seals, or approach or photograph them in ways that cause them to alter their behavior. Special care is needed when animals are breeding or molting.
- Do not damage plants, for example by walking, driving, or landing on extensive moss beds or lichen-covered scree slopes.
- Do not bring non-native plants or animals into the Antarctic.

Respect Protected Areas & Scientific Research

- Know the locations of areas that have been afforded special protection and any restrictions regarding entry and activities that can be carried out in and near them. Observe applicable restrictions. (Your Expedition Staff will tell you which areas are protected and what to do during the trip.)
- Do not damage, remove, or destroy Historic Sites or Monuments or any artifacts associated with them.
- Do not interfere with scientific research, facilities or equipment.

Be Safe

Be prepared for severe and changeable weather and ensure that your equipment and clothing meet Antarctic standards. Remember that the Antarctic environment is inhospitable, unpredictable, and potentially dangerous.

- Keep a safe distance from all wildlife, both on land and at sea.
- Take note of, and act on, the advice and instructions from your leaders; do not stray from your group.
- Do not walk onto glaciers or large snow fields without the proper equipment and experience; there is a real danger of falling into hidden crevasses.
- Do not enter emergency refuges (except in emergencies). If you use equipment or food from a refuge, inform the nearest research station or national authority once the emergency is over.
- Respect any smoking restrictions, particularly around buildings, and take great care to safeguard against the danger of fire. This is a real hazard.

Keep Antarctica Pristine

Antarctica remains relatively pristine, the largest wilderness area on Earth. It has not yet been subjected to large-scale human perturbations. Please keep it that way.

- Do not dispose of litter or garbage on land. Open burning is prohibited.
- Do not disturb or pollute lakes or streams. Any materials discarded at sea must be disposed of properly.
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks or buildings.
- Do not collect or take away biological or geological specimens or man-made artifacts as a souvenir, including rocks, bones, eggs, fossils, and parts or contents of buildings.
- Do not deface or vandalize buildings or emergency refuges, whether occupied, abandoned, or unoccupied.

International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

Founded by seven tour operators in 1991, the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) aims to promote environmentally responsible private sector travel to Antarctica. Over the years, the organization has grown to include more than 100 outfitters – including us. Members establish and adhere to procedures, restrictions, and guidelines that ensure visitors have a safe and enriching experience. Though participation is entirely voluntary, and Antarctic tourism continues to grow, IAATO has enjoyed unprecedented success. By observing the following principles, tour operators have not only supported Antarctic research, but have also had no discernible impact on the environment.

Working within the Antarctic Treaty System

Established in 1961, the Antarctic Treaty designates the continent as “a natural reserve, devoted to peace and science.” Today, nearly 50 countries have adopted the treaty, resulting in a global partnership governing Antarctic activities. The treaty aims to reduce human impact in three primary ways, all of which we strictly adhere to on our voyage:

- Limits the size of expedition ships so that no vessel exceeding 500 passengers can land in Antarctic
- Requires tour operators to coordinate with one another so that no two organizations land at the same location at the same time
- Limits the size of groups so that no more than 100 travelers are allowed onshore at once

Highlighting Education Through Travel

IAATO members believe that a trip to Antarctica should be more than just an epic journey to the bottom of the world – it should be an opportunity for visitors to learn more about the complex natural forces and environmental issues that shape this incredible continent. Our role as a tour operator is to foster a better understanding of Antarctica and highlight its value through lectures and firsthand experience. By instilling travelers like you with this knowledge, we give them the resources to be ambassadors for the continent upon returning home.

Encouraging Citizen Scientists

Antarctica is an unparalleled scientific resource – and the information you gather during your visit can be part of the inquiry. For example, by submitting photographs of the wildlife you encounter on your trip to researchers, you could provide invaluable data about their movement, behaviors, and evolution – all of which is still relatively scarce.

How Does This Impact My Expedition?

As a member of the IAATO, we coordinate our Antarctic landings with other tour operators in order to limit our impact on the environment. Your actual expedition itinerary will depend not only on the availability of landing sites, but also on constantly changing weather, ice conditions, and wildlife-viewing opportunities. Your safety is our top priority; your Captain and Expedition Leader will assess conditions throughout your journey to determine the best route and landing opportunities.

Buenos Aires in Brief

City Layout and Details

The real heart of downtown Buenos Aires is only about a 16- by 10-block rectangular area. Outside of that hub, the city sprawls for mile after mile in all directions. Within this central zone you'll find the city's major commerce, shopping, and nightlife spots. The streets you'll need to know to

get around on your own are Avenida de Mayo, Avenida 9 de Julio, Avenida Corrientes, and Calle Lavalle—plus Calle Florida, a lively shopping thoroughfare that runs from Plaza San Martín to Avenida de Mayo, near Plaza de Mayo. Florida and Lavalle streets are closed to vehicles.

Avenida 9 de Julio is so wide that each side has its own name—Carlos Pellegrini on the near (east) side and Cerrito on the far (west) side. The central portion is called 9 de Julio. The Plaza de la República, marked by a 220-foot-high obelisk, is on 9 de Julio. It fringes the entertainment and theater district that thrives particularly on two parallel streets—Calle Lavalle and Avenida Corrientes. These two streets represent the “Broadway” of Buenos Aires. The area bustles day and night.

Buenos Aires’s “in” area is Recoleta, home of many posh restaurants and clubs and a popular meeting place, as well as Puerto Madero, located near the dock area. San Telmo is the oldest part of town and Caminito is the colorful main street of La Boca, an old picturesque Italian section.

Newspapers and Magazines

English-language newspapers and magazines are available in Argentina, including the locally-published Buenos Aires Herald, some U.S. newspapers, and some British publications. But keep in mind that English-language materials will usually be available only in large cities like Buenos Aires.

Post Office

The main post office is at Sarmiento 151. It is open from 8 am to 6 pm and closed Saturdays and Sundays.

Things to Do

If you prefer to do some advance research, here are a few popular neighborhoods for exploring during free time that you can look up in a guidebook or online.

- **City Center:** Wander through the city’s main square, the Plaza de Mayo, and take in views of the Casa Rosada (literally “the Pink House”; Argentina’s version of the White House). Nearby sights include the Museo Bicentenario, which covers Argentina’s history from a political viewpoint, and the Cathedral. There are also several shops and cafes in the area.
- **San Telmo:** A historic neighborhood with cobblestone streets that was once the home of bohemian artists and still retains an artsy-chic vibe. This is a good destination for a Sunday visit when a busy antiques market fills the neighborhood’s main square, Plaza Dorrego. There are also several museums nearby, such as the Museum of Modern Art (nicknamed “Mamba”) and the National History Museum; plus an archeological site called El Zanjón de Grandos, which features underground tunnels dating back to 1730.
- **Recoleta:** This upscale area offers more than just the famed cemetery. It is also the home of the city’s most prestigious art collection at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes. (Amongst other things, this fine arts museum is known for its collection of Impressionist works.) On weekends it hosts the Feria Artesanal street market.

- **Puerto Madero:** This dockside area is a popular destination for tourists and business travelers alike. Visit museums and art galleries, such as the De la Carcova Museum, try a local steakhouse, or marvel at the impressive new skyscrapers.
- **Palermo:** Shoppers, caffeine junkies, and nature lovers will all want to check out this area, which is known for hip boutiques, abundant cafes, and open-air parks—including a Japanese garden. But if you'd like to explore in Palermo, there's one important thing to note: Palermo is a large area that encompasses several smaller neighborhoods like Palermo Hollywood and Palermo Soho. Ask our local staff which of these sub-neighborhoods he or she recommends for your interests.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Argentina

Argentina is world-famous for its leather goods and you'll find them readily available in Buenos Aires. Popular buys include belts, jackets, boots, shoes, skirts, pants, briefcases, and purses. These come in a rainbow of pastels and vivid colors, and a variety of textures from rough suedes to soft leathers. Other items worth considering include wool sweaters, clothing made of the Argentine equivalent of cashmere, ponchos, wine, mate cups, and antique silver gaucho accessories. Top-quality jewelry is also sold, with the best buys being items made with Inca Rose or rhodochrosite. Argentina is one of the few places in the world where this is found and it is used in everything from jewelry to carved figures.

Bargaining: Argentina does not have a bargaining culture; prices in shops are fixed. The only place you may be able to bargain is in the open-air markets. If you try to bargain at a market, keep in mind that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

Brazil

Brazil is a shopping bonanza. Traditional handicrafts like wooden carvings, masks, ceremonial figures in wood or clay, and handmade lace or textiles complete for your attention with modern brands like Havaianas flip-flops, and Granado beauty products. To make your own caipirinha cocktails at home, bring back a bottle of the local sugarcane liquor called cachaca. Or for a non-alcoholic option, chose a bag of Brazilian coffee. Other items for sale include soccer memorabilia and props for the yearly carnival festival.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Argentina

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 1,073,518 square miles
- **Capital:** Buenos Aires
- **Languages:** Spanish is the official language. English is widely spoken in major cities and tourist centers.
- **Location:** Argentina is bordered by Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile
- **Geography:** Located in the South and West Hemisphere, Argentina features a diverse landscape ranging from the ice fields of Patagonia to the fertile pampas to the Andes Mountains.
- **Government Type:** Republic
- **Population:** 46,044,703 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 92%, Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 4%.
- **Time Zone:** Argentina time (ART) is 3 hours behind Coordinated Universal Time. Generally Argentina is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Time in the U.S. So usually, when it is 6am in Washington D.C. it is 7am in Buenos Aires. But Argentina doesn't use daylight saving time like the U.S. does, so from November to March there is a 2 hour difference—6am in D.C. is 8am in Buenos Aires.

National Holidays: Argentina

In addition to the holidays listed below, Argentina celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Carnival, Holy Friday, and Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

03/24 Memorial Day

04/02 Day of the Veterans

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

05/25 National Day/May 1810 Revolution

06/20 Flag Day

07/09 Independence Day

3rd Monday in August General San Martin Day

2nd Monday in October Columbus Day

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

Argentina: A Brief History

Little is known about societies that occupied prehistoric Argentina, though fossil records indicate a presence in the region of today's Patagonia as early as 11,000 B.C. The Spanish arrived in Argentina early in the 16th century and would rule the country for the next 300 years. Spain's grip on Argentina began to loosen during events that began in 1806, when the British overpowered Spanish military forces in Buenos Aires and attacked the Malvinas Islands (later known as the Falkland Islands). When word arrived in Argentina that Napoleon had conquered cities in Spain and overthrown the Spanish king, the people of Argentina were inspired to rule themselves, which brought about independence in 1816.

With the help of an influx of immigrants late in the 19th century, Argentina's economy began gathering strength. Its continued growth in the initial decades of the 20th century was often at the expense of the working class. Juan Perón, who was elected president in 1946, recognized the plight of workers and sought to empower them by increasing union membership and expanding social and educational programs. When Argentina's economy declined in the early 1950s, he became increasingly authoritarian. After the death of his first lady in 1952, the charismatic Eva "Evita" Perón whom the workers loved, Juan began losing support and was eventually overthrown in a violent coup in 1955. Forced into exile by the military, Juan Perón fled to Paraguay and then settled in Spain in 1960.

Continuing to wield influence from afar, Perón returned to power in 1973 in a special election, with his new wife Isabel, an Argentinian dancer he married in 1961, becoming his vice president. But Juan's return was short-lived when he died in 1974, which resulted in Isabel becoming Argentina's new president—someone who was resented by millions of Argentinians still devoted to Evita. With the country now entering a downward spiral due to the Arab oil embargo and other factors, Isabel was deposed in a military coup in 1976. The right-wing military junta that took power ruled Argentina brutally for the next several years, killing some 20,000–30,000 revolutionaries or sympathizers. The country's downward spiral continued, and after Argentina lost the Falklands War (in Spanish, the *Guerra de las Malvinas*) to the British in 1982, the military's credibility was finished, leading to the next free elections.

While the decades that followed military rule have seen Argentina's fortunes rise and fall dramatically, the country's hard-won democracy has endured.

Events that Shaped the 20th Century:

Argentina's Dirty War Against Socialism

When Vice President Isabel Peron succeeded her husband, Juan Peron, as the Argentinian President following his death in 1974, she inherited a country in turmoil. As the less-liked third wife of the well-loved Juan Peron, the former dancer faced many challenges she was not prepared for, including skyrocketing inflation, party in-fighting, and terrorism.

Isabel managed to hold her office for almost two years, however, establishing authoritarian laws that slowly stole away the rights of the Argentinian people and purging leftist-minded politicians from positions of power. Her main advisor, Lopez Rega, was known for his fascist ideals and his right-wing paramilitary force, the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance (Triple A), which claimed responsibility for over 300 murders by the end of 1974.

Isabel was removed from her position in a military coup on March 24, 1976, and Argentina spend the next seven years under a civic-military dictatorship, led by Jorge Rafael Videla, Emilio Eduardo Massera, Roberto Eduardo Viola, and Leopoldo Galtieri, who graduated from the controversial U.S. Army School of the Americas where they were taught anti-communist counterinsurgency training, including the use of torture. Those years were known as the National Reorganization Process, or the "Dirty War".

Under the Videla regime, the Triple A were given carte blanche to hunt down and kill political dissidents in death squads, specifically targeting anyone associated with socialism and leftist activism. This list included high school and university students, writers, journalists, trade unionists, artists, and militants, who were believed to be associated with guerilla leftist groups, such as the Montoneros.

Over the course of seven years, a Dirty War was waged between the National Reorganization Process and the leftist guerilla groups, with thousands of civilians caught in-between. In the Night of the Pencils, on September 16, 1976, 10 high school students were kidnapped by agents of the Videla regime and tortured for information about the Montoneros. Most of the missing students taken were likely executed, with only four surviving to testify against their torturers.

As leftist guerrilla groups continued to assassinate politicians and commit acts of terror, the Videla regime became more determined to stamp out the threat, with "enforced disappearances" (almost 30,000 people, including young students, were secretly taken, tortured for information, and killed) and "death flights" (where dissidents, many of them people who were secretly taken, were drugged then loaded onto an aircraft and thrown to their deaths while in flight over the Atlantic). In response to the 30,000 missing, the Mothers of the Plaza, a group of mothers who had lost children and grandchildren to the Dirty War, began a decades-long campaign to call attention to the plight of the desaparecidos ("disappeared persons") and bring the murderers of their children to justice.

The actions of the regime were supported by the United States government at the time, with the Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, congratulating the regime for their efforts against terrorism and expressing his approval of their methods. Under the Ford administration, and with Kissinger's support, the United States government provided \$80 million in security assistance and military aid to the regime. This support continued into the Carter administration until September 1978, when the aid was stopped under section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act, prohibiting security assistance, including arms sales, to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights

The regime fell apart under heavy public disapproval, with the military defeat in the Falkland Islands in 1982, when Argentina failed to seize the land from the United Kingdom, taking away the last of the military's credibility. When free elections were allowed once more, Argentina elected Raúl Alfonsín, who, within days of taking office, initiated cases against the leaders of the civic-military dictatorship, as well as the leftist guerilla groups. While he allowed the lower ranks of the military to claim "command responsibility" as they were just following orders, most of the military leaders were tried and sentenced for crimes against humanity and genocide.

The military leaders of the National Reorganization Process were later pardoned by Alfonsín's successor, President Carlos Menem, in 1990.

Antarctica

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** Approximately 5,500,000 square miles; an area twice this size is covered by ice in winter
- **Capital:** None
- **Languages:** None
- **Location:** Antarctica is the southernmost continent in the world. It is completely surrounded by water.
- **Geography:** Antarctica is a land of rugged superlatives: the coldest, windiest, driest, and highest (on average) of the world's large land masses. Its highest point is the Vinson Massif, a mountain 16,864 feet high. Antarctica's lowest point is at the Bentley Subglacial Trench, 8,200 feet below sea level, where the overlying ice is nearly 10,000 feet thick. The Antarctic icecap holds the majority of all fresh water on earth.
- **Governance:** Since 1961, Antarctica is protected as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science by the Antarctic Treaty, which was signed by 45 nations, including the U.S. and all other countries with Antarctic research stations.
- **Population (estimate, south of 60°S):** Approximately 1,100 year-round residents (scientists and supporting staff); about 4,400 residents during the Antarctic summer
- **Time Zone:** Bases in Antarctica typically observe the time zone of their home country or supply line.

National Holidays: Antarctica

There are no national holidays in Antarctica.

Antarctica: A Brief History

Although Antarctica was not formally discovered until the early 1800's, its existence was speculated on as early as the 2nd century AD, when the Greek cartographer Marinus of Tyre coined its name. With the Age of Discovery in the 15th and 16th centuries, it became accepted belief that a southern land, acting as a counterweight or "balance" to Europe and the Arctic must exist, but there was wide uncertainty as to how this land fit into the world at large. Many early explorers theorized that the Terra Australis Incognita (southern unknown land) must simply be an extension of Africa or South America. It was only with the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope in 1487 and Cape Horn in 1615 that is theory was disproved.

With the sighting of Australia by the Dutch in the 1600s, it seemed for a brief time that the southern land had been discovered. But further explorations showed Australia was an island unattached to the fabled southern continent. But the discovery of large islands like Australia and Tasmania in the Pacific Ocean led new expeditions to search for Antarctica from the South Pacific. Thus British captain James Cook, who today is known for being the first European to land on the coastline of Australia and the Hawaiian Islands, was actually looking for the South Pole.

But Cook was the first European explorer to sail south of the Antarctic Circle, which he did around 1773, though he never saw the continent. It was not until the 1840s that French, British, and American sailing expeditions confirmed for the world that Antarctica is indeed a continent and not simply a cluster of large islands in the Pacific. The first person whose landing on the Antarctic Continent is firmly documented was the Frenchman Jules Dumont D'Urville, in 1840.

The exploration of Antarctica has continued to be an international effort. One of the most famous expeditions is certainly that of Ernest Shackleton in 1914, with its incredible drama of surviving a shipwreck. Other renowned explorations included those engaged in the race to the South Pole—the Norwegian Roald Amundsen, who reached the Pole in 1911, and Englishman Robert Scott, who perished in the attempt.

Brazil

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 3,286,470 square miles
- **Capital:** Brasilia
- **Languages:** Portuguese is the official language; English is also spoken
- **Ethnicity:** White 47.7%, biracial 43.1%, black 7.6%, Asian 1.1%, indigenous 0.4%
- **Location:** Brazil is bordered by Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana 1, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

- **Geography:** Brazil is geographically divided into highlands and plateaus in the south and the Amazon River Basin in the north.
- **Population:** 210,147,125 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 64.6%, other Catholic 0.4%, Protestant 22.2% (includes Adventist 6.5%, Assembly of God 2.0%, Christian Congregation of Brazil 1.2%, Universal Kingdom of God 1.0%, other Protestant 11.5%), other Christian 0.7%, Spiritism 2.2%, other 1.4%, none 8%, unspecified 0.4%
- **Time Zone:** Brazil has four time zones. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 7am in Rio de Janeiro.

National Holidays: Brazil

In addition to the holidays listed below, Brazil celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter, Carnival, and Corpus Christi To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

04/21 Tiradentes Day

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

09/07 Independence Day

10/12 Our Lady Aparecida / Children's Day

11/02 All Souls Day

11/15 Republic Proclamation Day

12/25 Christmas

Brazil: A Brief History

Modern day Brazil was inhabited as far back as 8,000 years ago by migrating hunters who traveled from Asia by land or coastal sea routes. The Portuguese, who eventually settled much of this land, did not arrive until the 15th century. Motivated by competition with Spain, and inspired by advances in navigation, Portugal first sailed toward Brazil in search of a path to the Far East. They were granted land rights below a north-south line through an agreement with Spain known as the Treaty of Tordesillas. An expedition commanded by Pedro Alvares Cabral then formally claimed the land on behalf of the King of Portugal. Brazil was finally settled in 1532 by São Vicente. Later, a system of twelve "captaincies" united it under Tome de Souza.

As the new colony began to prosper, interest grew from other European countries. In 1630, the Dutch occupied the northeast, and the city of Recife flourished under Count Maurits, but the Dutch were eventually driven out. Settlement in Brazil remained heavy on the east coast until a boom beckoned people from all over the country to move inland in search of gold and, later, diamonds. A group of bandeirantes (colonial scouts) pushed west in search of riches and slaves; they established outposts where many of today's Brazilian cities still exist.

Throughout the next two centuries, Portugal benefited from Brazil's prosperity through a series of taxes and restrictions that were common for the time. In 1788, Jose da Silva Xavier led an unsuccessful movement for independence from these practices. That independence came years later, after Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Portugal and the Portuguese royal family fled to Brazil.

When the war was over and they returned home, their son, Pedro, declared independence and later became Emperor of Brazil. He later abdicated to his five-year-old son, Dom Pedro II, who officially took over at the age of 15 and led Brazil through a period of progress and expansion. After freeing all slaves in Brazil in 1888, Dom Pedro II was overthrown in favor of a new republican government.

The Republic saw Brazil through World War I and the Great Depression, but was overthrown by a military junta. Getulio Vargas outlawed the elected government and replaced it with the Estado Novo. Vargas instituted nationalist policies, developing the country's vast resources and uniting Brazil with the Allies during World War II. After Vargas, a series of military-appointed presidents followed until 1985, when a civilian was again elected to the presidency. Brazil then entered a period of economic prosperity and, in 1989, returned to a democratic government with the election of Fernando Collor de Mello (often simply referred to as "Collor").

Unfortunately, the election did not result in the political stability that Brazilians had hoped for. In 1994, a former Minister of the Treasury, Fernando Henrique Cardoso was elected president. President Cardoso's administration put a strong emphasis on improving Brazil's economy and reaching out the international community at large. Despite some setbacks, he was re-elected in 1998, and managed to somewhat control the rampant inflation that had been an issue for Brazil in the past. Lula was re-elected for a second term, and in 2009 was faced with his biggest challenge: the world financial crisis. Although the Brazilian economy was impacted, certain tax measures and investments in industry and manufacturing helped the country bounce back. In 2010 Dilma Rousseff was elected as Brazil's first female president; one of her first challenges was preparing the country to be a host of both the World Cup Finals (in 2014) and the Summer Olympics (in 2016). She has also instituted new programs designed to reduce poverty, especially childhood poverty. Rousseff was charged with criminal administrative misconduct and disregard for the federal budget during her second term and suspended on April 17th, 2016, with her Vice President Michel Temer taking over her duties as Acting President until her formal impeachment on August 31st, 2016. In the 2018 elections, Jair Bolsonaro, the first president of the Republic to graduate from the Armed Forces since the end of the Military Regime, was elected. That same year, during the Senate elections, Rousseff ran for office in Minas Gerais. She placed fourth.

Bolsonaro's policies focused on domestic issues, including recovery from the 2014 economic crisis. While the economy recovered slowly under Bolsonaro, his other policies caused controversy, notably his decisions to remove protections for Indigenous groups, facilitate the deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest, and downplaying the lethal consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, Bolsonaro lost re-election to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who previously served as the 35th president of Brazil. Bolsonaro and his supporters claimed the vote was invalid and attempted a coup, storming federal buildings.

For his part in the attempt, the Superior Electoral Court banned Bolsonaro for attempting for re-election again until 2030. President Lula, since he was instated in office on January 1st 2023, has pushed for peace in the Russian invasion of Ukraine and has pledged to end illegal logging and minimize the deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Argentina

The Ministry of Special Cases by Nathan Englander (2009, Historical Fiction) Set in Buenos Aires's Jewish community during the 1970s, the author's well-received first novel blends a family story with the tragic "dirty war"—a time when citizens were made to disappear.

False Calm: A Journey Through the Ghost Towns of Patagonia by Maria Sonia Cristoff (2005, Non-fiction) Although the author left her tiny, remote town in Patagonia, she later returned to interview the people who stayed. Part memoir, part reporting, and part travelogue this beautifully written book gives you a great sense of the isolation of Patagonia.

And the Money Kept Rolling In (and Out) by Paul Blustein (2005, Economics/History) A currency crisis isn't usually a page-turner. But Blustein manages to do just while he digs into what role the World Bank, the IMF and Wall Street played in the spectacular collapse of Argentina's economy in 2001.

Enduring Patagonia by Gregory Crouch (2001, Non-fiction) This is the gripping true adventure story that documents the successes and failures of seven climbing expeditions in the Patagonian Andes.

Evita: The Real Life of Eva Peron by Nicholas Fraser and Marysa Navarro (1996, Biography) Considered to be one of the best-researched and most balanced accounts of the woman behind the myth.

Antarctica

The Storied Ice: Exploration, Discovery, and Adventure in Antarctica's Peninsula Region by Joan N. Boothe (2011, History) Recommended by our travelers and members of our expedition team for its dramatic recounting of Antarctica's Heroic Age (1897-1917).

Swimming to Antarctica by Lynne Cox (2004, Memoir) The life and daring triumphs of a world champion long-distance swimmer. Her most famous exploits include a mile-long swim in icy waters off Antarctica.

Below the Convergence: Voyages Toward Antarctica 1699-1839 by Alan Gurney (1997, Exploration) Gurney provides a wealth of information about the discovery of a new continent and the life of the everyday sailors who made it possible.

The Crystal Desert: Summers in Antarctica by David Campbell (1992, Natural History) The author's account of the three summers he spend at a research station include a wealth of information on the continent's natural history, especially its marine life.

The Last Place on Earth: Scott and Amundsen's Race to the South Pole by Roland Huntford (1975, Biography) A dual biography of two very different polar expeditions—one well-planned and one doomed—but both admirable in their own way.

Brazil

Brazil by Michael Palin (2012, Travel Narrative) What would it be like to travel Brazil with a cultured and funny travel enthusiast who happened to be a member of the famed British comedy group Monty Python? This book tells you.

Brazil: Five Centuries of Change by Thomas E. Skidmore (2009, 2nd Ed., History) It's hard to condense 500 years of history into roughly 250 pages, but this useful volume on Brazil's colonial history and post-independence era mostly succeeds. (For more recent history, you could pick up ***The New Brazil*** by Riordan Roett or ***The Throes of Democracy: Brazil*** since 1989 by Bryan McCann.)

Brazil by Errol Lincoln Uys (2000, Literature) A massive and sweeping historical novel that follows the lives of two families across multiple generations, set against the backdrop of historical Brazil. Reminiscent of Alex Haley's *Roots* or *Shogun* by James Clavell, but this time set in South America.

The Brazilians by Joseph Page (1995, Culture) A useful review of how Brazil's people, history, economy and politics have shaped its modern-day culture.

Suggested Films & Videos

Argentina

Operation Finale (2018, Drama/History) In 1960, Israeli spies travel to Argentina to undertake a daring mission to capture notorious Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann and bring him to justice.

Blessed by Fire (2005, Drama) A film about the Falklands War (Malvinas War) and its aftermath, as told from the point of view of an Argentinean soldier looking back at his experiences two decades later. In Spanish with subtitles.

The Motorcycle Diaries (2004, Biopic) This nicely done coming-of-age film follows a 23-year-old Che Guevara (played by Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal) and his friend Alberto Granado (played by Argentine actor Rodrigo de la Serna) on a motorcycle journey across South America. Spanish with subtitles.

The Official Story (1985, Drama) As Alicia searches for more information about her adopted daughter's birth mother, she begins to uncover the history and extent of "the Disappeared"—political prisoners held captive by Argentina's ruling military government. In Spanish with subtitles.

Antarctica

Penguins by Disney Nature (2019, Nature/Family) A cute family-friendly documentary featuring a feisty Adélie penguin named Steve.

Whiteout (2009, Drama) When Antarctica's first recorded murder takes place at a lonely research station, the U.S. marshal on duty (Beckinsale) races to solve the crime before the sun sets for six months.

Encounters at the End of the World (2007, Documentary) Explores the lives of the scientists who live at McMurdo Station, the U.S.'s largest research center in Antarctica.

March of the Penguins (2005, Nature) A stunning nature documentary about the incredible hardships that face emperor penguins in Antarctica during courtship, mating, and the birth of their chicks.

The Great White Silence (1924, Documentary) The British Film Institute Archive's restoration of Herbert Ponting's official film record of Captain Scott's tragic expedition to the South Pole. The restored tint, photographs, simple animation, and excerpts from Scott's diary afford a time-traveling element to this silent film.

Brazil

The Mechanism (2018, Political Drama) Netflix TV Show, loosely based on true events. A scandal erupts in Brazil during an investigation of alleged government corruption via oil and construction companies.

Favela Rising (2005, Documentary) A documentary about the work of Anderson Sa, a reformed drug trafficker who formed a non-profit group that promotes music and education in the favelas (shantytowns) of Brazil.

City of God (2003, Foreign) The film follows a group of friends from the 1960s through the 80s as they grow up in a Brazilian shantytown—ironically named “the City of God”. The film deals frankly with violence, drugs, poverty, and other topics that can be hard to watch, but was considered an instant classic by critics. The original title is *Cidade de Deus*.

The Mission (1986, Historical Drama) This visually stunning period drama (with Robert De Niro) is about a group of Jesuits trying to convert indigenous tribes by Iguassu Falls. But suddenly, everything they have worked for is thrown into disarray when the land their mission stands on goes from being Spanish territory to Portuguese.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

www.iaato.org/home

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps or Maps.me

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber or Bolt or Grab

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App or Skype or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo or FLuentU or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

Chirpey

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more

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