

welcome to Antarctica

Adventure

Antarctica's surreal remoteness, extreme cold, enormous ice shelves and mountain ranges, and myriad exotic life forms invariably challenge you to embrace life fully. Everyone – scientist, support worker, government official and tourist alike – who comes to this isolated continent, must 'earn' it, whether by sea-voyage or flight. Ice and weather, not clocks and calendars, determine the itinerary and the timetable of all travel here. Expect experiences unlike any other, whether whale-watching across the open sea, spying a penguin rookery, or framing that perfect photograph of an awe-inspiring ice-form. Today, it's even possible for visitors to climb Antarctic peaks, or

kayak icy waters. But there is nothing quite like the craggy crevasses of a magnificent glacier or the sheer expanse of the polar ice cap.

Wildlife

This continent, preserved by the Antarctic Treaty, is home to some of the world's most extraordinary species, adapted to life in their unique home. Some migrate far and wide, like the enormous whales, others remain close to the continent, like the Weddell seal and the emperor penguin. Millions of seabirds skim the Southern Ocean, the world's most abundant ocean...species like far-flung albatrosses and petrels circle these waters. Antarctic wildlife is generally

GRANT DION / LONELY PLANET IMAGES



No place on Earth compares to this vast white wilderness of elemental forces: snow, ice, water, rock. Antarctica is simply stunning.

(left) Arches, Graham Land, Northern Peninsula.
(below) Penguin chicks.

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unafraid of people. Visitors usually elicit no more than an uninterested yawn from seals and penguins focused on rearing their young and evading predators. The human reaction is, ironically, exactly opposite.

History

The names of explorers and their sovereigns and benefactors are written on Antarctica's shores. Renowned explorers from Cook to Amundsen and Scott all tried to penetrate this vast, mysterious land: each with varying degrees of success. Visitors can follow in their footsteps and imagine what it was like to forge through the pack ice on a creaking wooden boat or man-hauling sledges across the polar plateau.

Some of their huts actually remain, preserved in frozen rime, to tell the story of adventures long past.

Inspiration

Antarctica possesses an unnamable quality. Call it inspiration, call it grandeur...it is simply the indescribable feeling of being a small speck in a vast, harshly beautiful land. A land where striated ice towers float among geometric pancake ice, literally untouched mountains rear from marine mist, and wildlife lives, year in and year out, to its own rhythms, quite apart from human concerns. To let our minds soar in a place nearly free of humankind's imprint: this is magic.