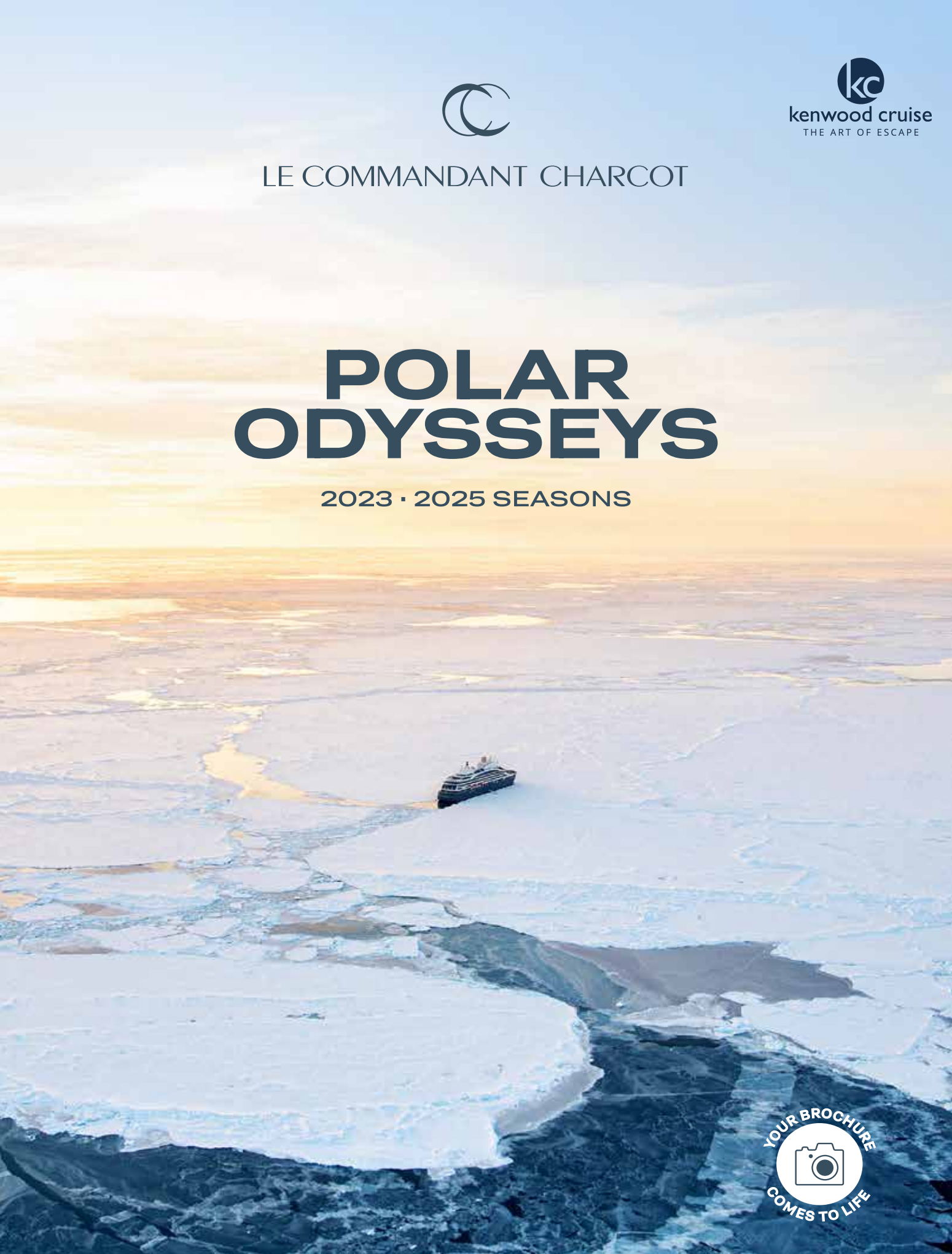




LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT

# POLAR ODYSSEYS


2023 • 2025 SEASONS





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2. Allow the access to your camera.
3. Start the experience by scanning the QR code above, then aim your phone at the brochure cover.
4. Carry on the adventure on pages 21, 67 and 79.



# Why not?



The call of the sea. The horizon as our course. An unknowable path forward. What happens next? This question arose when the idea of building a specialised icebreaker for polar exploration was born in 2015; a ship capable of pushing back the frontiers of the known world in an unprecedented level of comfort. An impossible project for some; a challenge for others. *Le Commandant Charcot* came to occupy many minds until her launch in 2021.

Named after famed French explorer, Jean-Baptiste Charcot, *Le Commandant Charcot* was purpose-built to navigate the polar extremes. From 1904 to 1936, Charcot was an intrepid adventurer, sailing from one vast and remote realm to another in his ship *Pourquoi Pas?*

Translated to “Why Not?”, this phrase was a consistent one in Charcot’s childhood, and certainly followed him as he ventured far off the beaten path time and again.

In the wake of Charcot’s footsteps, *Le Commandant Charcot* has been involved in a vast collection of firsts. The only passenger ship in the world to have reached the Geographic North Pole, she is also the first to have reached the southernmost point of the planet. She perpetuates the pioneering spirit of PONANT, as well as the values of the man whose name she bears. During her first three sailing seasons, nearly 100 researchers conducted scientific analysis in the most remote regions of the globe, thanks to *Le Commandant Charcot*’s two onboard laboratories.

All staff and crew members on board are eager to share their knowledge and expertise with guests at any given time: the expedition team when watching orcas or on a kayaking trip; local guides on a dogsled ride on the ice floe; officers on the bridge, during awe-inspiring sailings past monumental glaciers, and the crew, who pay constant attention to your well-being. Each and every team member is committed to helping you understand your surroundings and to live in harmony with this powerful and bewitching nature.

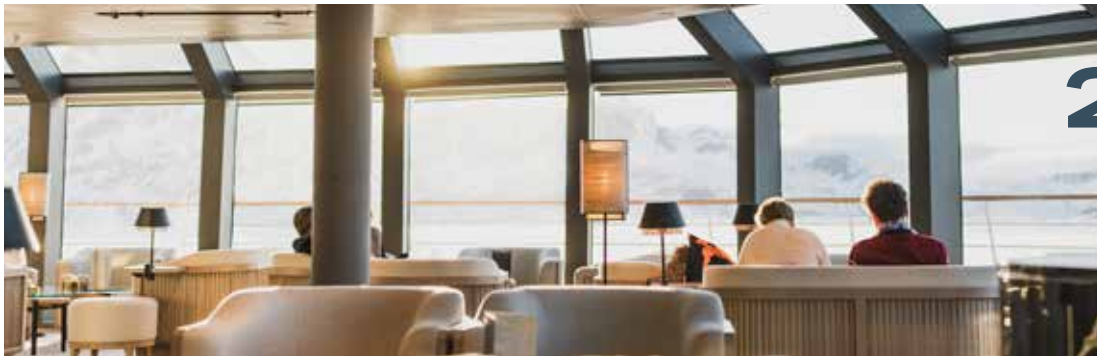
What does this look like for your upcoming trips on board? We invite you to join our iconic itineraries including crossing the Northwest Passage; searching for the Geographic North Pole; or experiencing one of the longest polar explorations ever offered to spend nearly a month discovering the most secret locations in Antarctica. We also have brand-new and exclusive opportunities in store for you, as *Le Commandant Charcot* will, for the first time, remain in the Far North during the winter of 2024-2025: a trans-Arctic journey between Alaska and Svalbard in search of both the Magnetic and Geographic North Poles; a discovery of the ice-covered St Lawrence River when no other ship can navigate it; and a magical Christmas in the company of violinist Renaud Capuçon. So many options that answer, “Why not?”. The words of Jean-Baptiste Charcot as a child were a harbinger of an extraordinary destiny, opening up a world of possibilities.

See you on board soon,

*Hervé Gastinel*  
CEO of PONANT

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## **A UNIQUE SHIP**

**P. 14 to 31**

Combining responsible design and technological prowess, *Le Commandant Charcot* carries you safely and comfortably beyond known lands.

## **LIFE ON BOARD**

**P. 32 to 43**

Sleek design, fine dining, new spaces, new partners and tailor-made services extend and enhance the polar experience.

## **A TEAM OF EXPERTS**

**P. 44 to 55**

Captains, expedition leaders, nature guides, photo ambassadors and renowned guests will bring their polar expertise on your voyage.

## **ANTARCTICA, AN ULTIMATE JOURNEY**

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Follow in the footsteps of the great polar explorers on routes through some of the most isolated regions of the world that are little known and scarcely mapped.

## **A SUMMER IN THE ARCTIC**

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Set sail on an epic journey to the planet's northernmost latitudes, discover fascinating wildlife, and visit the traditional villages of the Greenlandic Inuit people.



## **WINTER IN THE GREAT NORTH**

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Experience the magic of the Far North on a unique journey through the heart of the boreal winter, with itineraries that are absolute firsts.

## **WELCOME ON BOARD**

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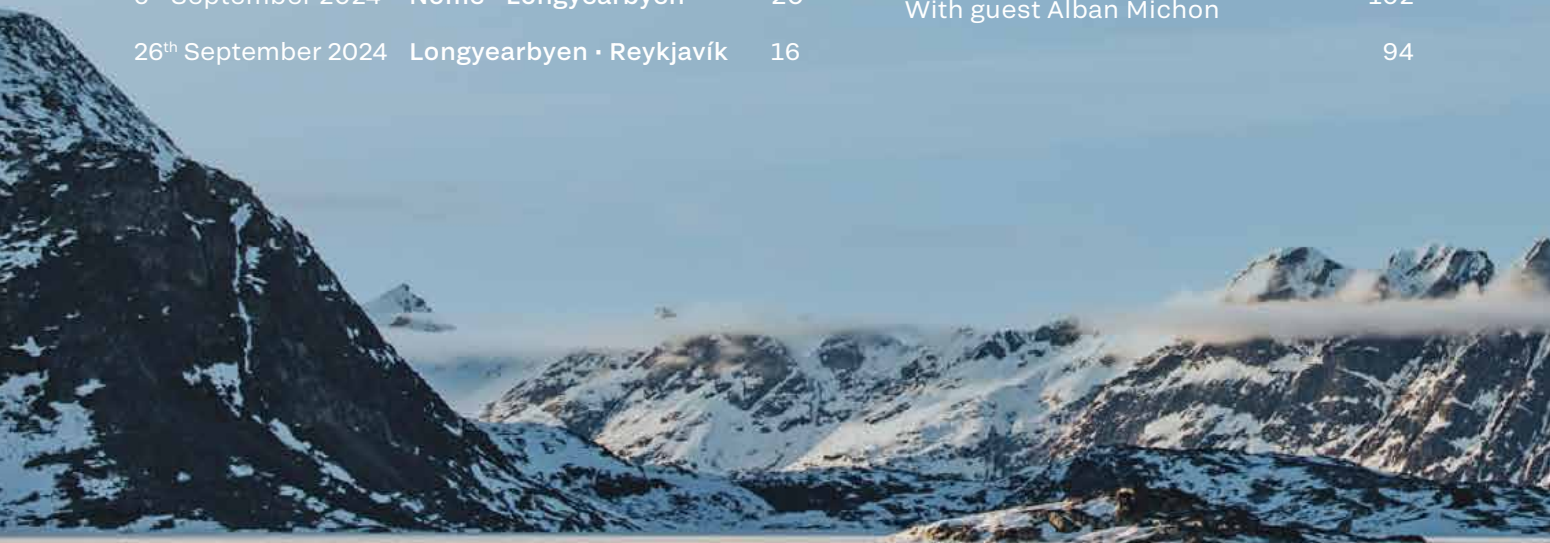
View Deck Plans, Staterooms and Suites.

## ANTARCTICA, AN ULTIMATE JOURNEY

<i>date</i>	<i>itinerary</i>	<i>nights</i>		<i>page</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023	Punta Arenas · Ushuaia	14	New   With guest Mikaa Mered	58
16 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Ushuaia · Ushuaia	12	New   With guest Nicolas Vincent	58
28 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Ushuaia · Ushuaia	14	New   With guest Fridrik Rafnsson	62
12 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	Ushuaia · Ushuaia	14	New   Christmas With Editions Tallandier	62
7 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Ushuaia · Lyttelton	28		68
6 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	Lyttelton · Ushuaia	26		70

## A SUMMER IN THE ARCTIC

<i>date</i>	<i>itinerary</i>	<i>nights</i>		<i>page</i>
16 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Reykjavík · Reykjavík	10		76
26 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Reykjavík · Reykjavík	10		76
6 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Reykjavík · Reykjavík	10		76
16 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Reykjavík · Reykjavík	12		80
28 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Reykjavík · Reykjavík	14		86
11 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	Reykjavík · Reykjavík	14		86
25 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	Reykjavík · Longyearbyen	16		90
26 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	Longyearbyen · Reykjavík	16	With Le Cercle Polaire	94
12 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Reykjavík · Nome	24		98
6 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Nome · Longyearbyen	20	Exclusive With guest Alban Michon	102
26 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Longyearbyen · Reykjavík	16		94



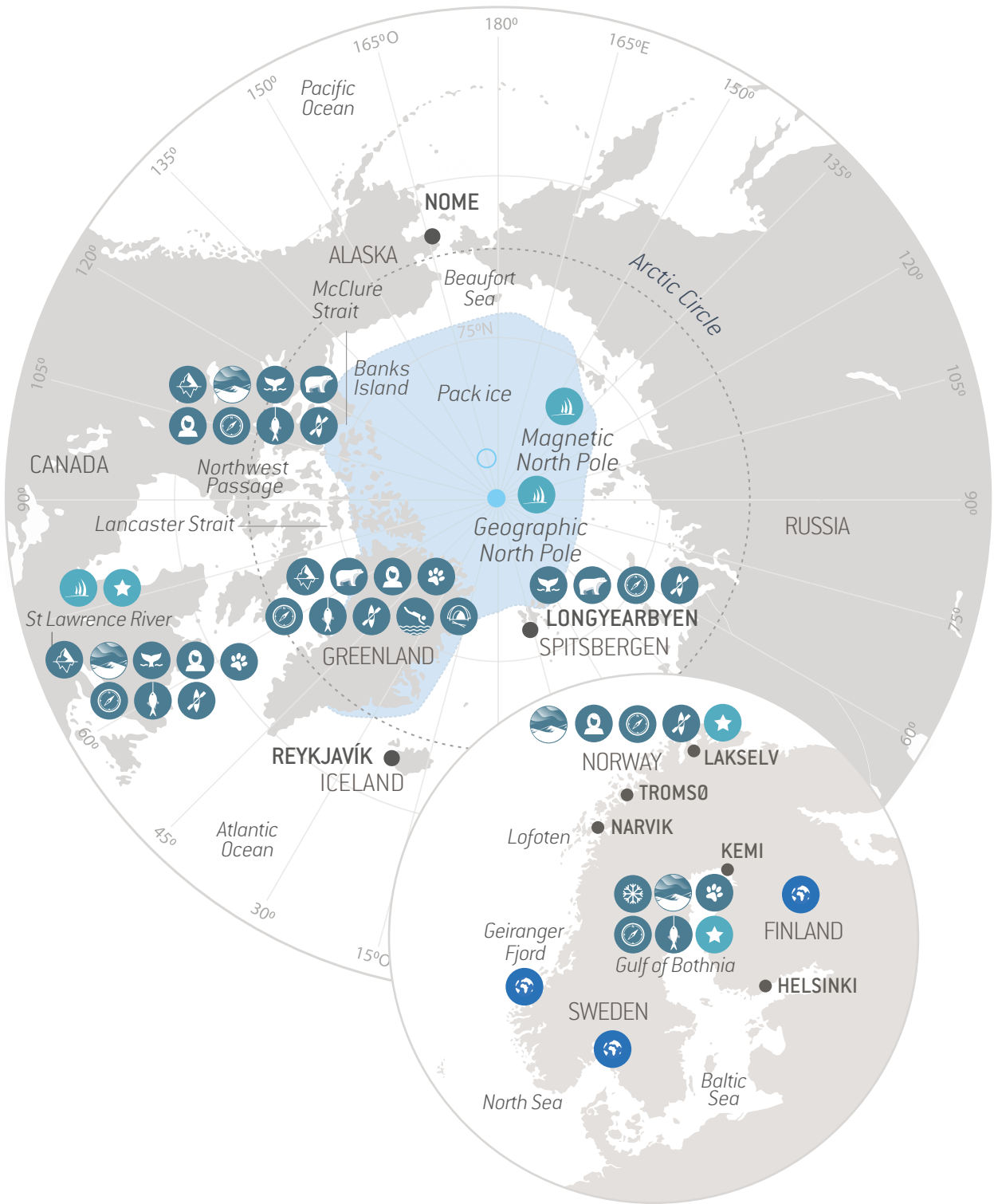
# DEPARTURES CALENDAR

## WINTER IN THE GREAT NORTH

<i>date</i>	<i>itinerary</i>	<i>nights</i>		<i>page</i>
18 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Tromsø · Lakselv	11	New	110
29 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Lakselv · Narvik	9	New	114
7 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Narvik · Bergen	13	New	118
2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2024	Helsinki · Helsinki	9	New With guest Julien Gueslin	122
11 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Helsinki · Helsinki	9	New   Gourmet cruise with Kaviari	122
20 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Helsinki · Kemi	8	New   Christmas With Radio Classique	126
28 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Kemi · Helsinki	8	New   New Year With Radio Classique	126
17 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Saint Pierre and Miquelon · Québec	12	Exclusive	130
29 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Québec · Saint Pierre and Miquelon	12	Exclusive	130
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Saint Pierre and Miquelon · Québec	12	Exclusive	130
22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2025	Québec · Saint Pierre and Miquelon	12	Exclusive	130



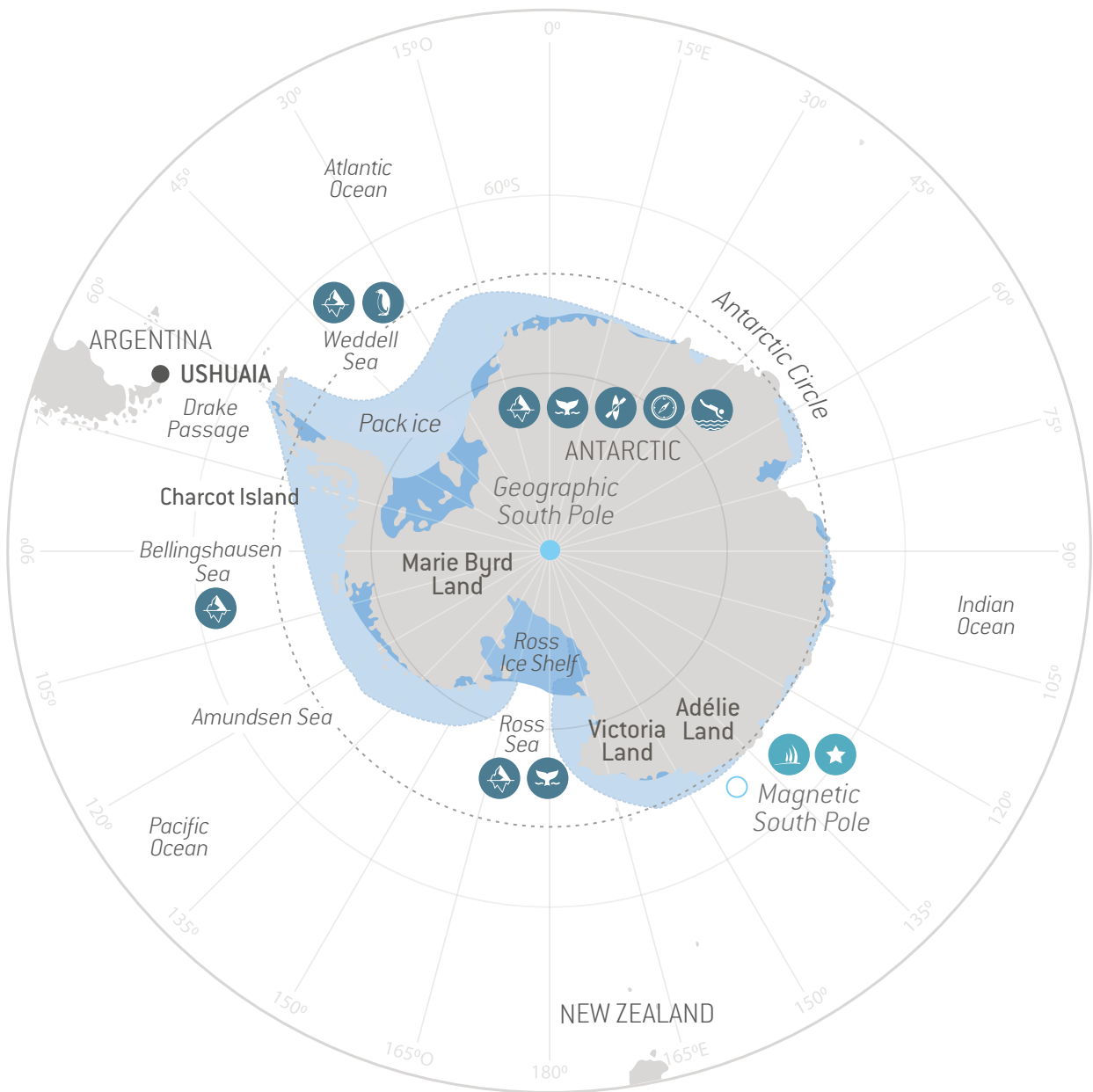
# EXPLORE TO INSPIRE



*The activities and the observation of wildlife are subject to weather and ice conditions as well as sailing opportunities and cannot be guaranteed. For the detailed list of each cruise's highlights, see the pages dedicated to each itinerary.*



## Your appointments with *Le Commandant Charcot* from 2023 to 2025



### HIGHLIGHTS

 Sailing among the ice floes

 Emblematic fauna

 Peoples

 Sea kayak

 Polar trek

 Snow

 Polar bears

 Dogsledding

 Polar plunge

 UNESCO Sites


 Northern Lights

 Emperor penguins

 Ice fishing

 Hiking

 PONANT exclusive

 New ports of call

# 10

EXCLUSIVE  
EXPERIENCES

on board  
*Le Commandant Charcot*



## 1 REACHING THE UNREACHABLE

Embark on an odyssey beyond the Antarctic Peninsula and stake **your claim as one of the only visitors to the region in early November**. You'll observe wildlife including humpback, fin, blue, and minke whales as they migrate south and navigate the ice floes, along with Adélie, gentoo, and chinstrap penguins. Or head north and visit the Inuit villages of Greenland **as early as April, several weeks before any other ship**. Stay in the Arctic in winter and enjoy the magic of the Northern Lights, celebrate the Nordic festivities that mark the end of the year, or cross a frozen St Lawrence River.

A truly powerful ship, *Le Commandant Charcot* can take you on immersive itineraries through some of the world's most remote regions, some of which have never been visited or even mapped. Charcot, Amundsen and Shackleton were among the first explorers to venture into the polar worlds; now, it's your turn.

## 2 THE WORLD'S FIRST AND ONLY EXTREME POLAR EXPLORATION VESSEL

To start, a bit of background: Polar Class (PC) refers to a ship's ability to navigate and break through ice throughout the year. On a scale of 1 - 7, PC1 ships offer year-round operations in all polar waters; PC7 ships are able to cruise through first-year ice in the summer and autumnal months only. With that out of the way, we present to you **the only passenger ship - in the world with a PC2 classified hull**, which allows for navigation through multiyear ice, *Le Commandant Charcot*. An icebreaker, she is built to transport you to the most magical destinations where time seems to stand still, and the vast deserts of ice offer dazzling colours and otherworldly landforms that shift and change before your eyes. Contrary to popular belief, the ice fields are far from featureless. "We're entering another world, hitherto unexplored," explained Étienne Garcia, one of the ship's captains. On board these special sailings, the landscape reveals **remarkable discoveries for the guests**. In these awe-inspiring settings, the true meaning of the Greenlandic proverb "*Only time and ice are masters...*" really comes to life.

## 3 LEADING EXPERTS BY YOUR SIDE

For the past 35 years, PONANT has been creating trips to isolated destinations, guided by nature and a desire to promote cultural enrichment. On board *Le Commandant Charcot*, this translates into a team of **approximately 20 nature guides**, offering guests an unmatched ratio on our expedition cruises. This also means officers on board are given extensive training to skilfully navigate the ice.

## 4 A TRUE, ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME POLAR IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

To really connect with the natural world, join an optional excursion on our expedition cruises to Greenland, and spend **two days and one night off the ship, camping in the heart of the ice**, in the company of Inuit guides. Other activities include the chance to board **kayaks from a patch of pack ice**; get your heart racing on a dog-sled ride through a breathtaking landscape; and **visit traditional villages in the middle of winter** or at the very start of spring and form true connections. These experiences open the doors to an authentic and spectacular setting, well beyond the limits of your imagination.



# 5

## **INSIDE/OUTSIDE: THE INVISIBLE FRONTIER**

The perfect vantage points to admire the **stunning scenery**, the ship's communal areas were designed by world-renowned architects Jean-Philippe Nuel and Jean-Michel Wilmotte, and offer a cosy cocoon in even the most extreme environments. Created to let the outside in, *Le Commandant Charcot* features **unique spaces** that set her apart from the rest of our fleet, such as the Blue Lagoon, an open-air lagoon heated using recovered energy; indoor swimming pool; snow cabin; detox bar within the spa; and Cigar Lounge.

## **THE ONLY ALAIN DUCASSE RESTAURANT AT SEA**

The one and only Alain Ducasse gourmet restaurant at sea, *Nuna* ("Earth" in Greenlandic) features a menu dreamt up by the Michelin-starred chef himself, as well as some of his signature dishes. Delicate flavours are combined with refined tableware to achieve an unparalleled level of excellence in such isolated surroundings. Whenever possible, the onboard chef also offers memorable **PONANT moments** by cooking up the catch of the day from the local villages.

## **SAILING FOR SCIENCE**

The only French vessel capable of venturing deep into the ice, *Le Commandant Charcot* is part of the PONANT Science project. It provides the international scientific community with **two laboratories** equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, which are involved in research in many fields related to the ocean, the environment, and climate change. The results are shared as open data, and are available to the public.

# 6

# 7

### A MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HYBRID ENGINE

*Le Commandant Charcot* utilises the most advanced technologies in order to **reduce her impact on the places she visits**. The hybrid electric/liquefied natural gas engine enables it to considerably reduce its emissions: -25% CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, -85% nitrogen oxides, and -95% fine particles. Cleanship certified by Bureau Veritas - like the rest of the PONANT fleet - *Le Commandant Charcot* has also embraced energy recycling; controlled consumption; waste reduction, sorting, and monitoring; and the elimination of single-use plastics. To find out more, see our sustainable development report below.

### A DEDICATED CONCIERGE SERVICE

The Concierge Service's mission is to **support you from the moment you reach out for information until you return from your trip**. They offer tailor-made services such as private transfers, access to airport lounges, domestic services while you are away, and personalised experiences in port. Your dedicated contact: [conciergerievoyage@ponant.com](mailto:conciergerievoyage@ponant.com).

### THE PONANT ADVANTAGE

Solo travellers, family and friends, honeymooners, couples celebrating wedding anniversaries, adventurers embarking on back-to-back cruises, or people travelling as part of the referral programme or the PONANT Yacht Club loyalty programme: **we offer benefits for every guest**.

Find all our offers on our website: <https://en.ponant.com/ponant-benefits>



Read our sustainable development report

# A UNIQUE





**SHIP**

A UNIQUE SHIP

# *Primus inter pares* – first among equals

Designed to sail the most inaccessible regions of the planet, *Le Commandant Charcot* has already demonstrated its ability to go further, where others don't go.

## 78°44.3'S

The first ship in the world to reach the **southernmost navigable latitude**, in the Ross Sea, in February 2022.

*"We were enclosed by fog when we discovered the furthest point south ever reached by a ship. I didn't know that a fortnight earlier, an American icebreaker had arrived slightly further north, claiming the record. I met its captain a few months later, and he took the news really well!"*

Captain Patrick Marchesseau

## 74°50'S, 102°40'W

In February 2023, *Le Commandant Charcot* became the first passenger ship to venture to **Pine Island Bay**, at the south-eastern tip of the Amundsen Sea, on the first-ever half-circumnavigation of Antarctica. One of the longest expedition voyages ever made, in terms of both distance and time, for which PONANT also holds the record (over 14,400 km covered).

*"It's one of the most beautiful ocean voyages I've ever made. We've been to regions that we've actually discovered, and where, with the exception of a few scientists some 20 years ago, nobody has ever been. Every day, we had the impression that we had reached the pinnacle of what Antarctica had to offer and yet, the next day, it was a new wonder."*

Captain Stanislas Devorsine

## 74°42'N, 117°00'O

The first cruise ship to pass through the **McClure Strait**, at the mouth of the Beaufort Sea in the Canadian Northwest Territories, in September 2022. This historic voyage gave our guests the chance to observe many polar bears.

*"The McClure Strait is regularly impassable, with thick ice, and the weather is difficult to predict in this region. *Le Commandant Charcot* is designed for this kind of challenge, which is a real highlight for me as a sailor."*

Captain Étienne Garcia



### 90° NORTH PARALLEL

The first French vessel to reach the **Geographic North Pole** in September 2021. It took its first guests there in July 2022.



AWARDS

#### Our awards

- Winner of the Jury's prize in the maritime category, awarded at the *Responsible Travel Cesars*.
- 'Best Cruise Ships in the World' awarded by the *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine in its *Gold List 2023*.
- 'Sustainable Practice of the Year' awarded by the luxury travel magazine *Aspire* at the *Aspire Awards 2022*.
- The Arctic on board *Le Commandant Charcot* among the 50 most beautiful places in the world - 2022 *TIME*'s 'World's Greatest Places'.
- 'Cruise ship of the year' awarded to *Le Commandant Charcot* at the 15th edition of the *Seatrade Cruise Awards 2021*.

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#### Our labels and certifications

- 100% of the fleet labelled Cleanship by Bureau Veritas.
- One of the most environmentally friendly cruise companies, according to the German NGO Nabu.
- Signatory to the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative, a United Nations programme to ban the use of single-use plastics.



## “This ship is an extraordinary dream”

*Right from Le Commandant Charcot's design stage, Mathieu Petiteau knew full well that this exceptional ship was destined to become a landmark in the history of exploration. PONANT's Director of New Construction and Research & Development looks back at the way a ship, that was immediately dubbed The Spaceship on the construction site, has also made its mark on his life.*

### **PONANT first unveiled *Le Commandant Charcot's* design in 2015. What were its objectives?**

The idea was to follow in the footsteps of the great French explorers, trace mythical routes and reach the North Pole. All this while taking 200 guests along with us. We therefore contacted Aker Arctic, a Finnish company specialising in the design of icebreaker technologies.

### **What was their first reaction?**

Quite frankly, they thought we were crazy. What followed? Six months of research on data from the previous 10 years about environmental conditions, temperatures, ice evolution and concentration. It was thus established that the future ship, *Le Commandant Charcot*, would need to be able to navigate in 2.5 m thick ice at -25°C, or cross ice sheets more than 10 m wide.

### **Of course, this was a huge challenge...**

In more ways than one, since our intention was also to reach these remote areas with a limited

footprint. It is with this in mind that we decided to go for natural gas operation – stored in a 4,500m<sup>3</sup> tank – and to integrate a hybrid element via a 4.5 MWh battery pack so we could be prepared for any eventuality. PONANT also wanted to give science pride of place on board, by providing researchers with modular laboratories where they could study the regions and polar phenomena as a whole.

### **In hindsight, do you now consider, from a personal point of view, that you have participated in something that could be considered the project of a lifetime?**

Putting pride aside, working on a ship as iconic as *Le Commandant Charcot* is clearly a huge achievement, an extraordinary dream. We have achieved a technological and operational feat calling for a level of investment and passion so high that it is hard to return to normal at project-end. I still remember the feeling I had on board the first time the ship entered the ice. We were sailing at 9-10 knots and there was no vibration. It felt as though we were on a carpet flying over the sea ice.



### **In three years of surveying the poles, how has this ship made its mark?**

*Le Commandant Charcot* was the first French-flagged ship to make it to the North Pole, and remains the most southerly ship in the Ross Sea. And let us not forget the CSR [corporate social responsibility] dimension, which is one of our watchwords and which we cultivate, in particular, by supplying local populations. And what will be her next challenge? The winter season 2024-2025, which she will spend entirely in the North, on cruises that have never before been offered, especially along the St Lawrence River in Canada (see pages 106-135).

### **What about PONANT's future?**

It's no secret that our goal is to create a zero-carbon emissions ship.

#### **IN DETAIL**

**Length:** 150 m  
**Width:** 28 m  
**Draft:** 10 m - *twice as high as other vessels of this size*  
**Average cruising speed:** 15 knots  
**Number of staterooms and suites:** 123  
**Crew members:** 215  
**Installed electrical power:** 42 MW  
**Year of delivery:** 2021

# “Our destination: a more sustainable future”

This trajectory, announced by Hervé Gastinel, CEO of PONANT, reflects the company's objective to decarbonise towards net zero by 2050.

*Le Commandant Charcot* is a benchmark in terms of equipment, designed to reduce the impact on the environment.

## RECYCLED ENERGY

Blue Lagoon baths and benches on the promenade deck heated by recycled energy generated by the ship's propulsion

## DRINKING WATER

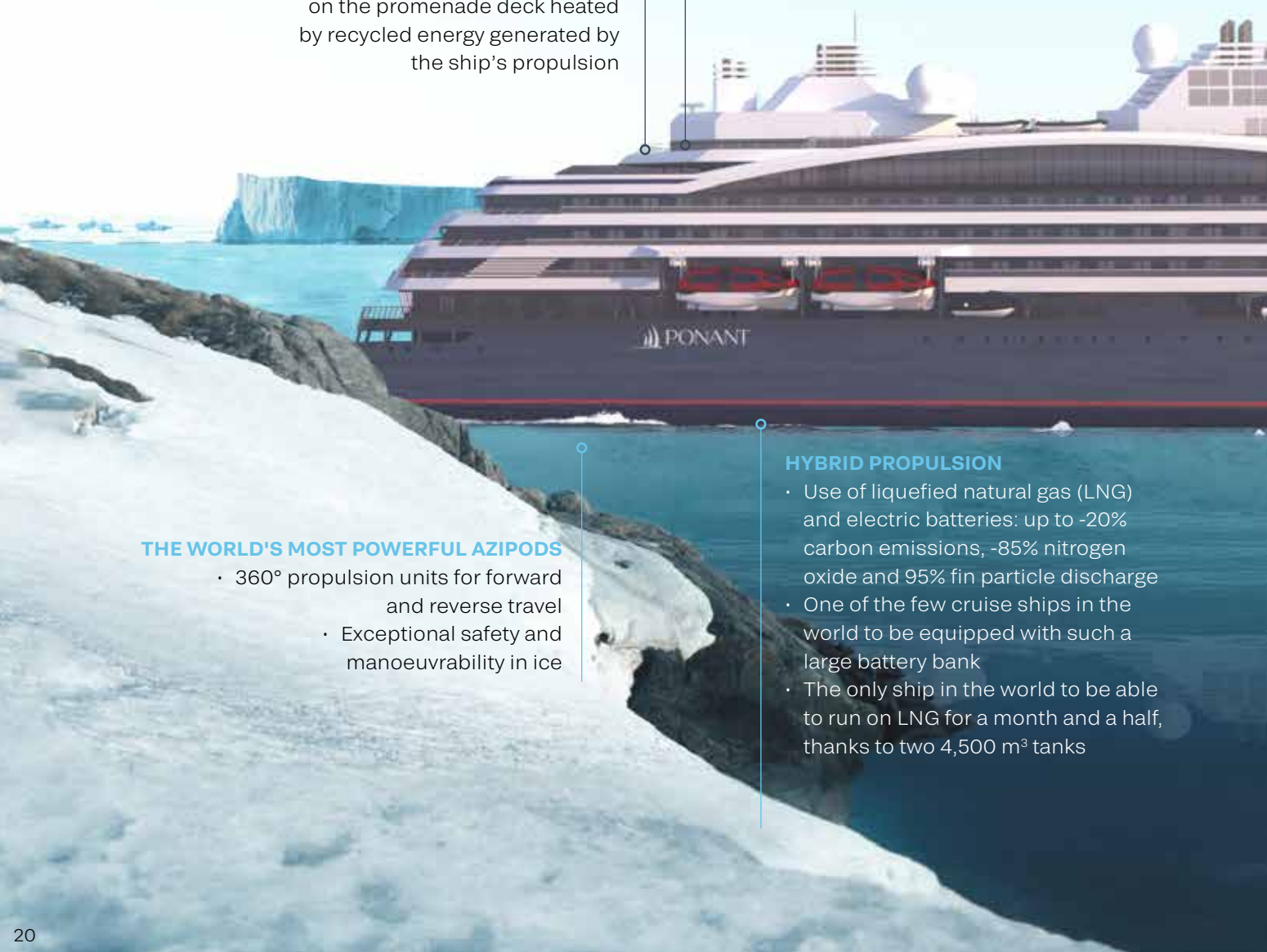
Drinking water is produced directly on board using Nordaq technology, which enables bottling in glass containers

## THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL AZIPODS

- 360° propulsion units for forward and reverse travel
- Exceptional safety and manoeuvrability in ice

## HYBRID PROPULSION

- Use of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and electric batteries: up to -20% carbon emissions, -85% nitrogen oxide and 95% fin particle discharge
- One of the few cruise ships in the world to be equipped with such a large battery bank
- The only ship in the world to be able to run on LNG for a month and a half, thanks to two 4,500 m<sup>3</sup> tanks





#### VIRTUAL REALITY

Explore the ship in 3D and browse more content about the onboard technologies.

#### CONTROLLED ENERGY CONSUMPTION

##### Propulsion:

- Optimisation of navigation routes thanks to custom-developed software
- Energy management systems
- Ship speed limitation

##### Hotel:

- Use of LED bulbs: -75% reduction in energy consumption

#### RECYCLING AND TRACEABILITY

- Glass, cardboard, hard plastics and metal compacted, kept in cold storage, unloaded and processed by specialist companies
- Seawater treatment and recycling

#### AT DOCKSIDE

Use of dockside batteries to avoid atmospheric emissions

#### RESPECTFUL TOWARDS MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

- Bottom and sea creature detectors
- Electronic positioning system without the need for anchoring in protected areas
- Ballast water processing
- Reduced noise and vibrations

#### PC2 HULL

The only passenger ship in the world with a PC2 polar-class hull, ensuring safe passage through ice, inaccessible to other expedition ships. The most powerful ships are classed as PC1 (no passenger ships are included) and can operate in ice-covered waters throughout the year.



# A popular visitor with the Greenlanders

*Le Commandant Charcot*, the only ship capable of reaching certain areas during the winter period, sometimes doubles as a supply ship for local communities. This role is part of PONANT's approach to sustainable development.

And suddenly, the influx. The silhouette of an approaching boat always creates a stir in Tasiilaq. Especially when it's the first such appearance for many months. It is usually ships bearing the Royal Arctic logo that arouse the enthusiasm of the 2,000 or so people living here in this little town on Greenland's east coast. Between October and July, however, Tasiilaq is surrounded by ice, and the ships of the Greenland-based company are unable to deliver supplies by sea. It's then that *Le Commandant Charcot* puts on another hat. *"Having deliveries in May, which is more than two months earlier than usual, is something undreamt of for the local people,"* states Captain Patrick Marchesseau, who was at the helm of *Le Commandant Charcot* when it first delivered supplies – free of charge – to Tasiilaq and Ittoqqortoormiit in May 2023.

Also present that day was Justus Hansen, who remembers a welcome from his people that went beyond merely warm. *"At this time of year, foodstuffs generally arrive by plane, which drives up prices. You can expect to pay €3 for an apple for example, whereas they cost around 50 centimes when delivered by ship,"* explains the man who, as a local elected representative, is one of the initiators of the project.

## ALWAYS A "HAPPY DAY"

The logistics involved are now running like a well-oiled machine, with goods (fruits, vegetables and dairy products) arriving at the port of Reykjavík by lorry. Packaged on pallets, these tonnes of foodstuffs are then loaded into the holds of *Le Commandant Charcot*, which serves as the link to Greenland. *"This gives this ship an even greater sense of purpose,"* says Captain Patrick Marchesseau, who never tires of watching the flurry of snowmobiles and the many people busying themselves helping with the unloading; taking care, as they do so, to only take with them the minimum amount of plastic needed to keep things preserved. A few hours later, the first supplies are on sale in the local supermarket. Here too, the impact will be felt the moment the store opens. *"A real day of celebration,"* concludes Justus Hansen.

## A STORY TO BE WRITTEN OVER THE LONG TERM

- First supply of provisions to **Tasiilaq**, 5 May 2023: **10 pallets** delivered – almost **four tonnes** of food.
- Second supply of provisions, 15 May 2023: **24 pallets** delivered.
- On 25 May 2023, **25 pallets** are unloaded, this time in **Ittoqqortoormiit**. A second delivery took place there on 8 June 2023.
- **And the future?** The project is set to continue for the next few seasons in periods when Royal Arctic is unable to deliver supplies. It will also be extended to other communities, notably in western Greenland.



1. Le Commandant Charcot in Tasiilaq Bay, May 2023.  
2. Justus Hansen, local community representative (Tasiilaq).

3. Captain Patrick Marchesseau.  
4. Unloading in Tasiilaq, 5 May 2023.



*“Because the circle of life is of crucial importance for us”*





# Jaakusaaq Sørensen, nature spirit

In May 2023, PONANT launched a programme to train young people from the Inuit villages it visited to become expedition guides. The first to give it a go, Jaakusaaq Sørensen, shared the history and culture of the Inuit people with the guests of *Le Commandant Charcot*. For them, it was a way of experiencing their trip from a different perspective. For him, it was an opportunity to shed light on his community's philosophy and traditions.

On first meeting him, you get the impression of an adult who is somewhat ill at ease in his tall, slim body. Yet his shyness and reticence disappear when your eyes meet his, with their piercing gaze that unwaveringly holds that of everyone he speaks with. It's easy to forget that Jaakusaaq Sørensen is barely in his twenties. And you listen to him. Reverently. Thus it was that this biology student had the opportunity to don an expedition guide's tunic and convey his messages to both guests and crew of *Le Commandant Charcot*: *"For me, being here is important. And above and beyond the precautions to take when visiting our region, I like to explain the history of our land and the way we live, our way of life."* The backdrop to this is his commitment to Inuitism, a cause to which he admits being a latecomer, despite the denigration to which he was subjected during his youth when he was already rejecting a Christianity with which he did not identify.

## FOR PONANT, A PRESENCE THAT COUNTS

To better understand the man who has lived all his life in Tasiilaq, we need to understand the significance of a spirituality that is undeniably centred on nature. And which reveals its full meaning when he recounts the legend of Imap Ukua: *"Promised to a stranger, this young girl soon realised that a raven was in fact hiding behind his*

*mask. She then fled in a kayak with her father who, realising that it was impossible to escape from this creature, cut off his daughter's fingers as she clung to the boat to keep from sinking."* Welcomed by the Ocean, Imap Ukua became the 'mother of the sea', recognisable by her very long hair. *"When we behave badly, her hair turns into nets that keep animals captive, thus depriving humans of food,"* recounts Jaakusaaq Sørensen. The message: nature is the most precious thing on Earth, and we owe it to ourselves to show it respect and humility. The budding guide defends these values and does his utmost to perpetuate them. Sørensen advocates responsible hunting where even the bones must be reused, *"because the circle of life is of crucial importance for us"*.

And what about *Le Commandant Charcot's* passage through his home town? *"More than a nice gesture from PONANT and the fresh supplies it brings [read our article on page 22], above all it brings people, meaning there's a presence here earlier in the year,"* he says with satisfaction. And in turn, the ship's expedition leader, Steve Moir, takes a positive view of Jaakusaaq Sørensen's presence: *"It's important to have young Greenlanders on board. It's a way of paying tribute to the communities we visit."* And of continuing to deliver powerful messages.

# THE TRAVELLER'S CODE OF ETHICS

Each of us can contribute to building a better world. Travelling aboard *Le Commandant Charcot* means committing to leaving a minimal footprint, in line with the values we defend and share in this code of ethics. In polar regions, the expedition team will provide you with guidance for ensuring compliance with the IAATO and AECO regulations, the organisations that govern these regions.



## BEFORE THE TRIP

- ✓ Take an interest in the destination and find out about its inhabitants – their customs and practices – its wildlife, culture and history, setting aside all prejudices and preconceived ideas
- ✓ Only pack the essentials
- ✓ Ensure compliance with the prohibition on the import of forbidden products

## DURING THE TRIP

### Leave no lasting signs of your visit

- ✓ Do not leave litter on site
- ✓ Do not move anything or remove anything from the places visited (sand, stones, bones, plants, etc.)
- ✓ Do not carve on rocks, ruins or buildings
- ✓ Avoid trampling on the vegetation

### Do not disturb the wildlife

- ✓ Keep conversation low and move slowly
- ✓ Comply with the minimum distance guidelines
- ✓ Leave all food on board the ship
- ✓ Give right of way to the animals when they're on the move and accessing water



### Show respect to the communities

- ✓ Behave in an open manner
- ✓ Adapt to the local customs
- ✓ Certain populations, in the tropical regions, wear little clothing: avoid inappropriate staring
- ✓ Ask before taking photographs
- ✓ Do not walk in the gardens, cemeteries, remains or other archaeological sites, and do not look into the windows of dwellings unless invited to do so
- ✓ Contribute to the local economy by purchasing craft souvenirs (unless they contain feathers, fossils, bones, plants and stones: ask the naturalist guides for advice)

### Comply with the security guidelines

- ✓ Listen carefully to the instructions issued by the crew and the expedition team
- ✓ Stay on the signposted footpaths
- ✓ Follow the group
- ✓ Do not interact with guides responsible for bear watching
- ✓ Dress appropriately for the climatic and landscape conditions
- ✓ Know and respect your physical limits

### AFTER THE TRIP

- ✓ Share your experience with others
- ✓ Raise the awareness of your friends and family and encourage them to get involved
- ✓ Continue to keep up to date on the regions visited

# POLAR SCIENTISTS

From its inauguration in September 2021, *Le Commandant Charcot*, with its two laboratories, has set sail with teams of researchers to fulfil the specific ambition of the PONANT Science programme: to further scientific knowledge of the polar regions. Vladislav Sidorenkov-Duprez, programme coordinator, and Éric Dupont, Science Officer, take stock of the first three seasons.

## Understanding to inspire

*"Do you know the company motto? Explore to Inspire. I often tease my colleagues by saying that exploring is fine, but understanding is even better,"* Éric Dupont quips. *"It's possible with a ship like this. The PONANT Science project is playing an important role in furthering our knowledge of these remote territories and raising awareness of our impact on the planet."*

## 102

square metres on board *Le Commandant Charcot* are allocated to research, including "a wet laboratory (with water intakes in the hull to take water samples), a dry laboratory and a computer server room", Vladislav Sidorenkov-Duprez details. *"This is probably the only ship in the world to offer this kind of service on a regular, ongoing basis. It visits locations that are difficult to study due to a lack of terrain data. An opportunity for scientists,"* adds Éric Dupont, who coordinates the scientific projects on board. Researchers are keen to talk to guests, and their stays on board are often notable for laboratory visits, theatre lectures and informal discussions.



## Did you know?

The European association ARICE (Arctic Research Icebreaker Consortium), funded by the European Commission, is leading the calls for projects initiated by PONANT. Made up of experts from the international scientific community, it assesses applications according to two main criteria: the quality of the project and the associated scientific research programme, and also the impact on

society. *"We send them our itineraries, departure dates, the number of staterooms available and ARICE has almost carte blanche"*, explains Vladislav Sidorenkov-Duprez. As the seasons go by, a common thread emerges, namely the study of climate change. *"Of the 96 scientists on board, some are part of the IPCC"*, says the coordinator of the PONANT Science project.

## 34 projects!

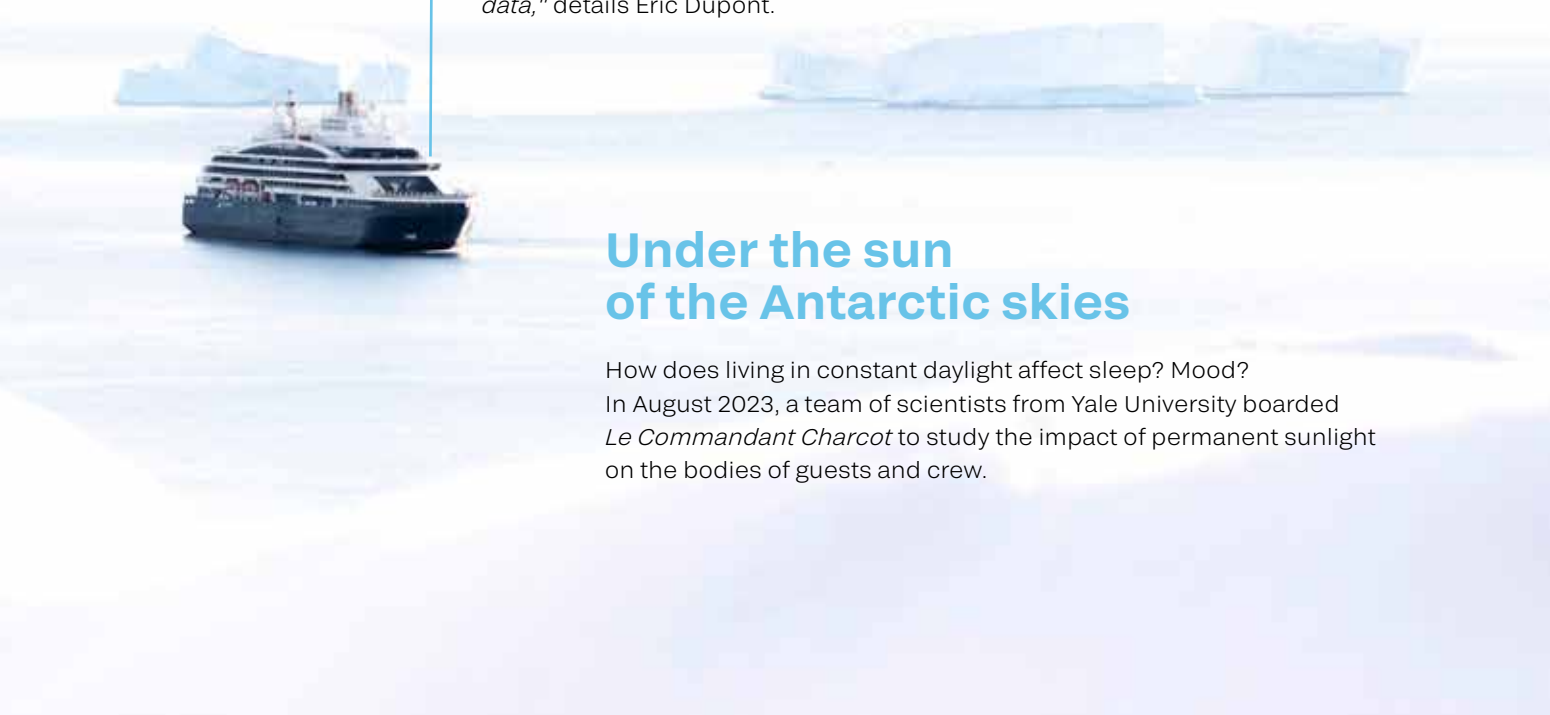
Between its launch in 2021 and August 2023, *Le Commandant Charcot* provided the opportunity to host no fewer than 34 projects, bringing together from the four corners of the planet 96 scientists with diverse specialisms, including microbiology, climatology, palaeoclimatology, social sciences and others. What do they have in common? The polar regions. *"The first publications, currently being prepared, concern the presence of nano-plastics at the North Pole, and antibiotic pollution in penguins,"* Vladislav Sidorenkov-Duprez explains.

## 120,000 nautical miles

*Le Commandant Charcot* covered 120,000 nautical miles in two years. That is the same as the number of data points collected by the autonomous measuring devices operating continuously on board (see details on page 30). *"Le Commandant Charcot is impressive because it is capable of going everywhere. It can withstand 10-metre waves, 65 knots of wind, and even make its way through ice... This allows researchers to launch their probes into areas where there is no field data,"* details Éric Dupont.

## Under the sun of the Antarctic skies

How does living in constant daylight affect sleep? Mood? In August 2023, a team of scientists from Yale University boarded *Le Commandant Charcot* to study the impact of permanent sunlight on the bodies of guests and crew.



# Sounding the oceans 24 hours a day

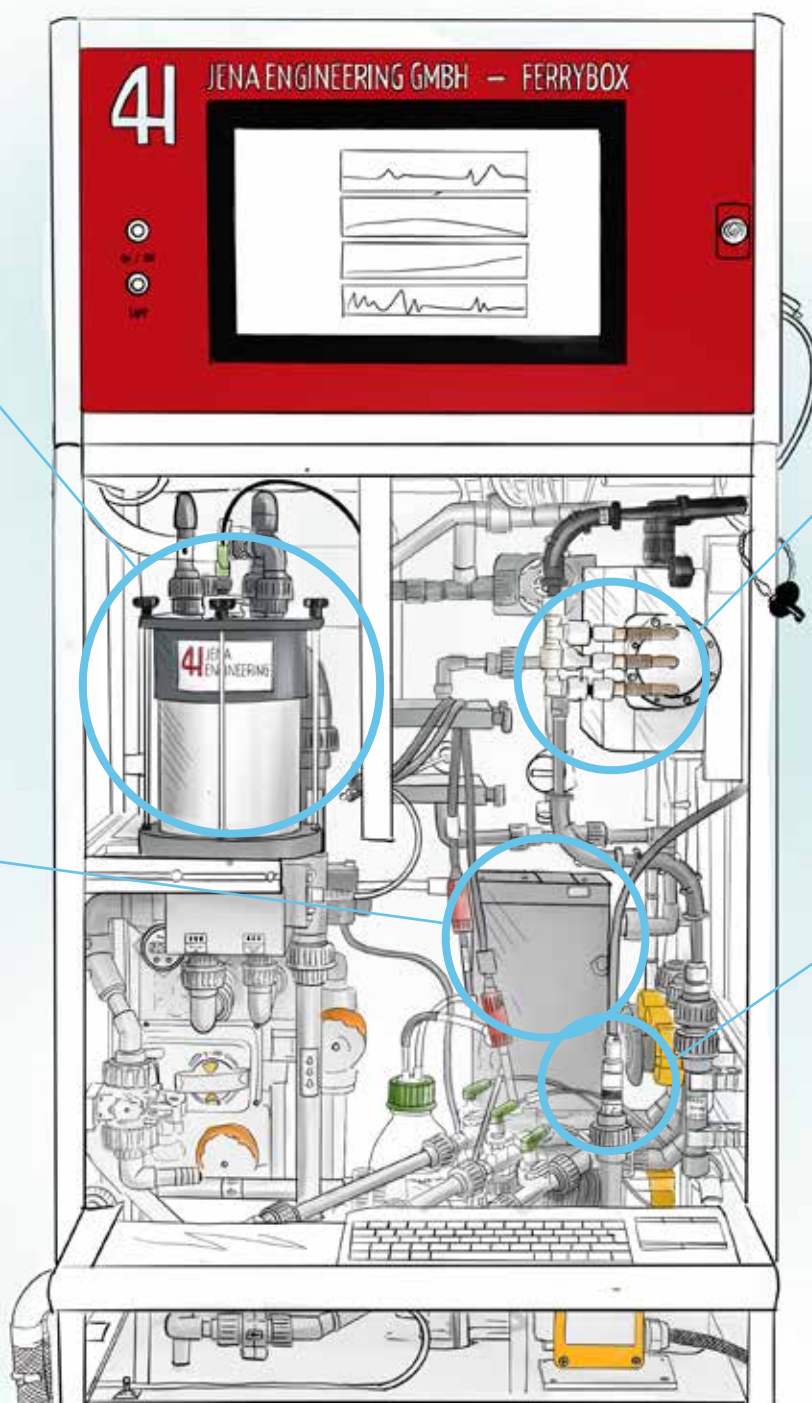
A Ferrybox, a sophisticated system in the bowels of *Le Commandant Charcot*, constantly analyses the surface seawater through which the ship sails. The information gathered provides information on the evolution of the oceans and the climate. Valuable data for the work of the international scientific community. Geoffroy de Kersauson, onboard scientific coordinator, explains the workings of this machine.

## DISSOLVED OXYGEN PERCENTAGE SENSOR

This probe is assisting scientists to refine their knowledge of the amount of oxygen present in the waters through which the ship passes. This is an essential piece of data that is being closely scrutinised by the international community. The loss of oxygen upsets the crucial balance of marine life.

## THERMOSALINOGRAPH

This element measures both the temperature and salinity of the waters crossed by *Le Commandant Charcot*. The aim is to study the 'thermohaline circulation', an oceanic movement on a planetary scale resulting from differences in the density of seawater. This in turn depends on temperature and salinity. In the North Atlantic Ocean, this circulation is well known, namely the Gulf Stream!



## WHAT HAPPENS TO THE DATA COLLECTED?

During its first two years of travel, *Le Commandant Charcot* covered 120,000 nautical miles, with the same number of data points collected. As soon as the vessel is at sea, the Ferrybox system turns on automatically and the information collected is stored on a local server. At the end of each voyage, the data is extracted and archived on a server on land.

## CO<sub>2</sub> DETECTOR

Particular attention is paid to CO<sub>2</sub> and ocean pH in Antarctica. The ocean has always played a role in regulating the climate, in particular by capturing and storing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. The problem is that the absorption of increased quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> by the world's seas is altering the marine carbonate cycle, which has an impact on the acidification of seawater.

## PH SENSOR

At present, seawater has an average pH of 8.1. This has been declining since the mid-19th century. This acidification is amplified at the Poles. We are not sufficiently aware of how well organisms can adapt to this phenomenon. This unknown is a major issue for human beings since, in the long term, if plankton populations collapse, for example, it could have consequences for the amount of oxygen in the air we breathe.

## Three questions for Geoffroy de Kersauson

### What is your role as onboard scientific coordinator?

With the PONANT Science programme, we welcome scientists on board *Le Commandant Charcot*, and they devote their time with us to intensive data collection. My role is to mediate between the laboratories and the bridge. I take stock of the researchers' needs on a daily basis and talk to the Captain so that we can give them as much help as possible. For example, if they need to launch a probe, the ship has to be stopped for an hour. Is this compatible with the guest programme? When and where?

### The wet laboratory contains a machine that is constantly running... Can you tell us more about it?

The laboratory where the researchers take their samples also houses our Ferrybox. The Ferrybox takes its name from the first machines of this kind installed on ferries making the same journeys every day in northern Europe. The objective is to observe the changes in ocean data over time. The fact that *Le Commandant Charcot* is travelling the same routes in Antarctica and the Arctic is of enormous interest. This equipment provides a greater understanding of local dynamics and trends thanks to five data sets, known as the 'essential ocean variables'.

### Who can access this data?

The whole point of PONANT Science is to ensure that as much of the data as possible acquired in these remote areas is made available not only to the scientific community, but also to the general public. The company is currently setting up a mirror server on land so that the public can consult all the data from the Ferrybox, as well as the GPS, the devices that measure roll and pitch, the ice thickness measurement system, and so on. This is what is meant by open data.



# LIFE ON BOARD



The design of *Le Commandant Charcot* – conceived by Studio Jean-Philippe Nuel and Wilmotte & Associés architect's offices – reflects one guiding principle: to invite the polar environment on board. The result is spaces that are cosy yet open to the outside world, creating a feeling of wellbeing enhanced by the meticulous detailing that arouse all the senses.



Enjoy a unique experience on board  
with its crew-to-guest ratio.






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## OUTSIDE

- Laze in the warm waters of the Blue Lagoon outdoor pool (heated to 27-37°C via energy recovery technology) and enjoy the breathtaking views.
- Settle into the outdoor bar *Inneq* ('fire', in Inuit) to relax with a hot drink on the heated chairs.
- Stroll the end-to-end promenade deck, which allows you to make a complete tour of *Le Commandant Charcot* - a rare feature on a passenger ship.
- Take a break on one of the heated benches and observe the wildlife through Swarovski Optik spotting scopes.





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## INSIDE

- Enjoy a moment of relaxation in the Grand Salon in a warm, relaxed atmosphere.
- Access the Cigar Lounge, one of the ship's most exclusive areas, and indulge in a selection of fine cigars and premium spirits.
- Leaf through some of the many books dedicated to travel available in the *Anori* Observatory bar ('wind', in Inuit) while looking out at the white immensity.
- Sit in the *Kita* ('let's go', in Inuit) theatre, a place to come together for music or dance performances, or lectures led by naturalist guides and experts, or distinguished guests.
- Stay in shape thanks to the top-of-the-range equipment in the fitness room and an onboard sports coach.

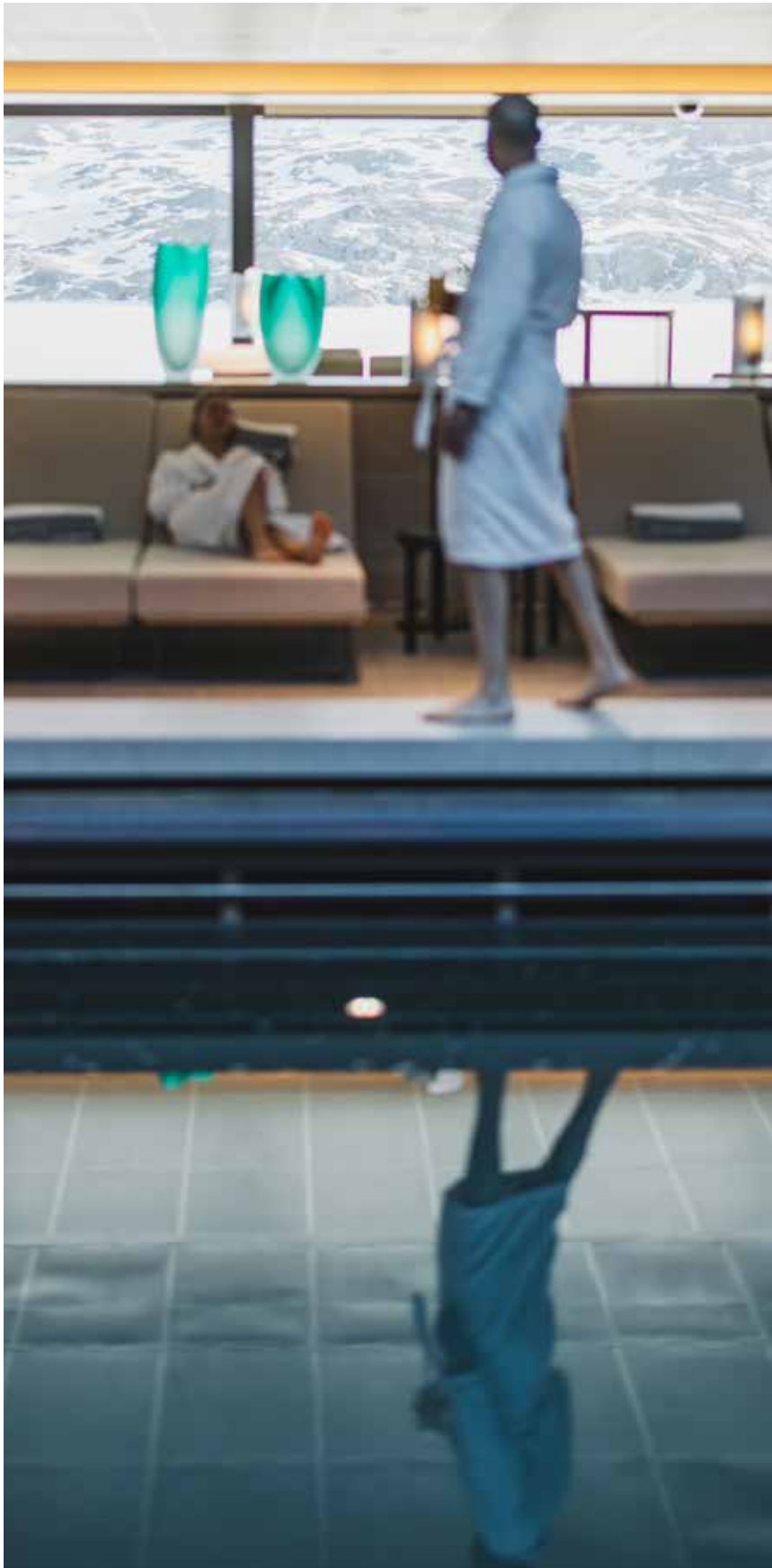




## An onboard museum

Onboard, some 300 works by around 40 artists from a wide variety of backgrounds adorn different areas of the ship. Sculptures, blown glass, ceramics, photographs, paintings, digital art... All the works are inspired by the materials and settings of the polar landscapes to bring you a truly immersive experience. From 2024, 50 of them will be integrated into the digital museum, accessible via the PONANT app. By scanning them, you can learn more about the creative processes and the biographies of the various artists represented.








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## WELLNESS & RELAXATION

- Enjoy the benefits of the cold in the Snow Cabin *Siku* ('snow', in Inuit) following a treatment at the Spa *Nuan* ('well-being', 'happiness') or the Sauna *Ikuma* ('burning heat').
- Relax by the indoor pool *Imaq* ('sea water') and contemplate the polar landscapes through the panoramic windows, all while enjoying a fruit cocktail from the Detox Bar.
- Take advantage of the personalised services offered by the hair and nail salon that overlook the horizon.

Biologique Recherche offers a personalised skincare methodology. Each treatment is unique. On board, you'll be offered follow-up care throughout your journey, with specific treatments tailored to skin weakened by extreme temperatures.

The products are pure, concentrated, almost raw, blended into complex formulas to renew, soothe and repair your skin.

1. Jérôme Lacressonnière  
et le chef exécutif Florent Delfortrie.
2. Service à l'assiette au restaurant Nuna Alain Ducasse.
3. Langouste au beurre blanc, au restaurant buffet Sila  
(le « Ciel », en inuit).

# Gastronomy

The one and only Alain Ducasse gourmet restaurant at sea, *Nuna* ('Earth', in Inuit) takes you on a voyage to extreme environments with a menu of excellence specially designed by the Michelin-starred chef, as well as some of his signature dishes. In addition to this range of fine gastronomy, there is also a second restaurant and grill offering a daily selection of deliciously refined and healthy cuisine.

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## THREE SEASONS OF HAUTE CUISINE ON BOARD

with Jérôme Lacressonnière,  
Director of Ducasse Conseil

### How would you sum up the first three seasons of *Le Commandant Charcot* in terms of gastronomy?

Gastronomy on board *Le Commandant Charcot* is fascinating because we go to extreme destinations: the Arctic and the Antarctic. Through a combination of our experience, the lessons we have learned, the new products we have discovered thanks to the Inuit communities, and the guest feedback we have taken into account, we have been able to evolve certain recipes, create new ones, and use new products, always carefully sourced, to bring innovation and variety to our guests.







### **What are the values of this partnership that inspire you?**

PONANT and Ducasse Paris share the same values of excellence, simplicity and audacity. For example, guests can savour a salmon caught in Greenland, enhanced by know-how

and techniques in conjunction with the kitchen, dining room and bar teams, to bring something new to the table and create a unique PONANT moment.

### **What are you doing in terms of offering excellent cuisine that also meets sustainable development criteria?**

From the moment we create our recipes, we are conscious of the need to avoid wasting food. It's also important to offer guests fresh, local produce, thanks to the relationships we've been able to build with the communities themselves over the last three seasons. To take Greenland as an example, we can offer halibut or redfish caught locally and bought directly

from the fishermen. We then work with these products on board and introduce them to our guests. It's important to appreciate this land, it is part of our DNA. Sharing this 'glocal' vision means first and foremost having a global understanding of the standards set up between the Ducasse Paris and PONANT teams, but always with a local interpretation.

# A complete package

Aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, discover the secrets of French *savoir-vivre*. Allow yourself to be carried away between moments of relaxation, adventure and discovery, thanks to all the services reserved for you on board.

## SERVICES INCLUDED

- All inclusive from arrival to departure
- Fine dining in all the restaurants *Sila* and *Nuna*
- All drinks in restaurants, bars and minibars (excluding premium card)
- 24-hour room service
- Butler service for certain suites: Owner's Suite, Duplex Suites, Privilege Suites and Grand Prestige Suites
- Group classes given by a fitness and well-being coach: fitness, Pilates, yoga, active walking on the promenade deck, meditation, aquagym (list to be confirmed on board)
- Free and unlimited Wi-Fi service on board
- Parties, shows and other activities
- Conferences delivered by naturalist guides and guests of honour
- Sports activities (depending on departure dates)
- Taxes for national parks and conservation areas
- Tailor-made and fully customisable services with the Travel Concierge service

## ON AN EXPEDITION CRUISE

Specific support includes additional services such as:

- Zodiac outings and landings
- Most of the excursions
- Conferences and information sessions on board with naturalist guides
- Parkas provided and rental of rubber boots (except on certain departures)







# A TEAM

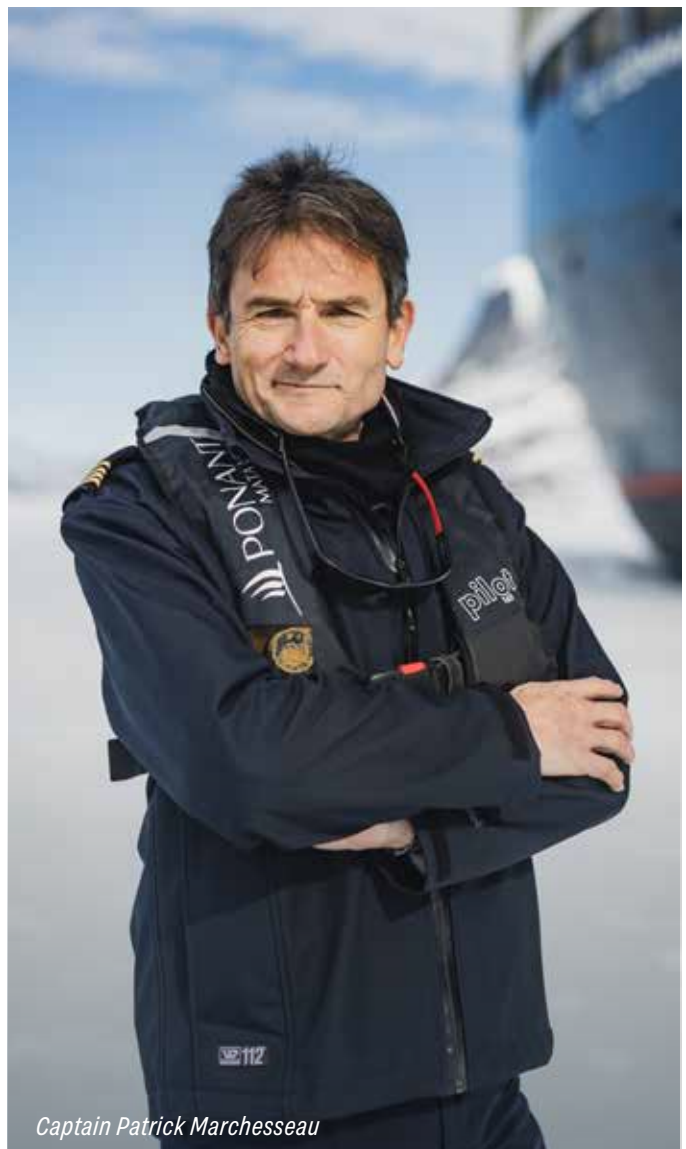
# OF EXPERTS



# WORDS FROM THE CAPTAINS

They alternate at the helm of *Le Commandant Charcot*. With a wealth of experience in polar environments, their expertise comes with a touch of magic. Their sensitive and entertaining commentaries will punctuate your travel days. Captains Garcia, Marchesseau and Devorsine are already at the microphone to provide you with an introduction to your upcoming adventures.

*"In the summer of 2024, we'll be heading for the North-West Passage via the Northern route, this time a little earlier in the season: it will certainly be more icy, which is perfectly suited to the capabilities of Le Commandant Charcot, the only ship able to offer such itineraries. In December 2024, the ship will head for the Gulf of Bothnia and capital cities of the Baltic Sea, for ideal family cruises full of Christmas spirit. In March-April 2025, we'll be heading for the west and still icy coast of Greenland, where we'll be forging links with Inuit communities as an extension of what we're currently doing in the east of the country."*



Captain Patrick Marchesseau

*"Ice is a dynamic system, so every journey is different. Le Commandant Charcot is in tune with each season, tracking the break-up of the sea ice. In Antarctica, in November 2023 - earlier than ever before - we'll be going in search of nesting emperor penguins. Our gentle approach gives us hope of observing the colony as closely as possible, in accordance with environmental regulations. Understanding what polar winter means: this is the theme for next winter, in 2024-2025, which will be dedicated to exploring the first ice in the Arctic."*



*Captain Stanislas Devorsine*



*Captain Étienne Garcia*

*"By remaining in the Northern Hemisphere during the boreal winter of 2024-2025, Le Commandant Charcot will become a 'winter ship' and offer some great itineraries, from the Baltic Sea to Quebec. The Northern Lights, Scandinavian countries under the snow, St Lawrence River under ice... All these experiences are new to me too. It's a dream come true, and I'm really looking forward to it."*

# Passion, responsibility and commitment: expedition in the blood



As a child, Florence Kuyper dreamed of becoming a farmer or an explorer. Steve Moir was a farmer. For a while. Adventure has always been part of his DNA. Both expedition managers for PONANT - the first for a decade, the second for a year - share their vision of the profession, which is as exhilarating as it is demanding.

**Would you describe your profession as a passion?**

**Florence Kuyper:** Being an expedition leader is first and foremost a question of skills, experience and responsibility. That said, if you ask me how I came to be in this profession... the word passion certainly comes into play. In my case, it's even plural: a passion for people and a passion for the polar regions.

**Steve Moir:** It's almost a vocation, acquired at a very young age. My childhood was one big open-air adventure.

**Tell us about your first experience with the ice.**

**F. K.:** Ever since my first experience of Antarctica, over 20 years ago, I've been irrevocably in love with its landscapes. Ice in all its forms, colours and textures makes for the purest art I can imagine.

**S. M.:** Growing up in Canada, I was always surrounded by ice. Blue is my favourite colour, but not just any shade: iceberg blue.

**What is the attraction of the poles for you?**

**S. M.:** For me, the South Pole is the last truly isolated and wild territory on this planet. While I find the communities and cultures of the North Pole truly fascinating.

**F. K.:** Attraction is often difficult to define; it's a latent feeling, like an intuition... A few things come to mind though: the beauty, so far removed from anything we know; the emblematic animals; the extreme conditions, so out of proportion, and the challenge they represent for us humans.





**How do you prepare for the expeditions of *Le Commandant Charcot* when heading to unexplored (or least explored) regions?**

**F. K.:** I carry out research, both on land and on site. I talk to our teams: the 20 naturalist and activity guides are a considerable asset. Managing a team of 20 people also means knowing and recognising the knowledge and skills of each individual. I'm in almost constant contact with the bridge, the Captain. And above all, once I'm on board, I'm in tune with nature! Planning is all very well, but sometimes plan A has to be abandoned.

**S. M.:** You have to be flexible, open-minded and naturally curious. To keep up to date, I read a lot of articles, watch conferences and, above all, I focus on sharing experiences, those of other guides and passengers alike. We are fortunate to welcome on board unique individuals, whose professions and interests are an invaluable resource.

**Do you have any memories you'd like to share?**

**S. M.:** We were in a zodiac under the midnight sun when suddenly the fins of 20 beluga whales appeared on the surface. We switched off the

engines to take in this aquatic ballet. It was incredible.

**F. K.:** One of the elders of an Inuit community we met had spent the winter knitting and making small objects. When the day came, she asked 10 women to join her and offered them what she had made. She took pleasure in giving these gifts. It was moving and a culturally rich moment. This kind of meeting represents a unique opportunity to break out of the ethnocentrism of our Western societies.

**What do you hope guests will take away from these expeditions?**

**S. M.:** In my opinion, the best explorations are possible when we have a state of mind that is specific to childhood, one that arises when we are driven not by the quest for performance, but by natural curiosity. I hope to be able to pass that on.

**F. K.:** Our guests often reconnect with nature, with a certain sense of wonder, and with their childhood memories. To best defend what we know and love, I hope they will get involved and become ambassadors for our planet and the polar regions.

# MISSION: HELPING YOU TO DISCOVER THEIR WORLD

The fact that PONANT has made the creation of unique experiences its signature, is largely thanks to their know-how and knowledge of the regions and communities whose doors they know how to open. These are the tourist correspondents, also known as incoming agencies. Take a closer look at these key link-creators.



*"PONANT approached us in 2022 to ask what activities we could offer at a time of year when no boats could get to Tasiilaq. At first, I was surprised. And then... I saw Le Commandant Charcot and realised that this ship is different to the others. The company has a real desire to offer its guests something out of the ordinary, and it is with this shared objective that we work together. Our aim is to involve people from the region. It's important to us that visitors have the opportunity to meet*

*them and find out about their daily lives and unique culture. Travelling by dog sled is one of them, and is bound to be a memorable experience. The fact that the people of Tasiilaq are able to visit Le Commandant Charcot is a highlight that means a lot to them, and I hope that this opportunity will come round again."*

Line Kristiansen,  
founder of Sermilik Adventures in Greenland

*"PONANT will be offering the first cruise on the St Lawrence River in winter, aboard Le Commandant Charcot. In fact, the whole programme of activities we've devised for the company is totally exclusive! By calling at the five ports of Gaspé, the Magdalen Islands, Saguenay, Sept-Îles and Quebec City, we are opening the doors to the First Nations and the communities that live there, such as the Mi'kmaq and the Innu, who really delight in sharing. The guests who travel with us will have the opportunity to try out canoeing and*

*ice fishing, see Montmorency Falls, the Valley of the Ghosts and even chat with the Innu over caribou heart soup before, for some, sleeping in a tent. These are moments when time seems to stand still. Being able to share these magical experiences is thanks to the local teams working in the various ports."*

**Annie Lalande,**  
Director of Operations  
for Destinations North America in Canada



# Get away from it all – challenge yourself and prepare to be thrilled

Snowy white expanses to be explored, a breathtaking view of cathedrals of ice, a dive into the polar waters, a bay where you can consider the magnificence of icebergs: throughout your voyage, we offer you experiences supervised by our qualified experts. Here's a selection.



## HIKING OR SNOWSHOEING ON UNSPOILT ROUTES

Explore the shores and icy expanses on foot or in snowshoes, accompanied by our naturalist guides, or take a longer trek with our certified mountain guides to make a connection with the authentic soul of the poles. As you move further away from the ship, the feeling of being alone in the world increases. To trek in places where people have scarcely ever set

foot is a sobering experience. There, in an immaculate paradise, in a natural environment unmarked by anything but animal tracks, the feeling of freedom is immeasurable.

*Up to 20 cruise guests per outing - Arctic/Antarctic.*

*Equipment provided: boots, hiking poles and snowshoes.*

**PHOTO AMBASSADORS TO HELP YOU CREATE  
YOUR MOST TREASURED MEMORIES**

How to take great photos with your mobile phone? How to capture those fleeting moments when observing the marine wildlife or the amazing light?

On many of our sailings, take advantage of the advice and workshops offered by our Photo Ambassadors, renowned photographers specialising in the polar regions, to help you take a great shot every time.



**DOG SLEIGH RIDE THROUGH THE WHITE VASTNESS**

The runners of your sleigh scrunch over the icy expanse. Carried along by the dogs and their musher (dog sleigh driver), you cleave through the vastness with no other noise but that of the team and its course through the snow or over the ice. The landscapes are revealed from an entirely new

perspective. In Greenland, the walks are led by local Inuit guides - a genuine link with the community.

*20 to 30 cruise guests per session - Arctic.*



### **KAYAKING AMONGST ICEBERGS**

Climb into a kayak and experience an ancestral tradition at first hand, sail close to a patch of sea ice, amidst the waves or among the icebergs... Kayaks originated in Greenland over 4,000 years ago: aboard, you will be following in the wake of countless generations of Inuit. With a streamlined shape and shallow draught, kayaks glide through the polar waters and remain stable despite the wind and waves. An outing where you get up close and personal with the elements, at water level, supervised by our certified guides.

*20 cruise guests per outing - Arctic/Antarctic.  
Equipment provided: double kayak and paddles, drysuit,  
life jacket, waterproof bag.*

### **ICE FISHING: A COMBINATION OF MEDITATION AND ARCTIC TRADITIONS**

Ice fishing or hole fishing, is an age-old tradition. Your local guide will use all their knowledge and experience to find the right place to drill a hole. Above the water, from the icy expanse, silence reigns. Time runs its course. Keeping a low profile, paying close attention to your line in the hope of catching an Arctic grayling or Greenland halibut becomes an invitation to deep thought. Your introduction to this ancient art awaits you in an ephemeral, multicoloured fishing village, right on the sea ice, in Quebec's Saguenay Bay.

*10 cruise guests per outing - Arctic.  
Equipment provided: fishing rod, bait.*

### **POLAR PLUNGE: THRILLS AND THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE**

Take up the challenge of plunging in polar waters to push your boundaries and become one with the wilderness... The contact with cold water offers incomparable benefits, particularly for the skin and blood pressure. The effect is invigorating. This immersion is as much a challenge as it is a symbiosis with an extreme environment.

*One person per dive - Arctic/Antarctic.  
Equipment provided: harness attached to a survival rope  
Electrocardiogram mandatory.*

### **NORDIC DELIGHTS IN THE DEPTHS OF THE NORTHERN WINTER**

In 2024-2025, *Le Commandant Charcot* will sail in the Northern Hemisphere for the first time in winter: a season packed with surprises for you. Depending on the region, prepare for the magic of our adventure activities: thrills and spontaneous joy are the key words. The poetry of the now, of transience and wonder, as you hunt for the northern lights; skijoring; snowshoeing, snowmobiling, dog- or reindeer-drawn sleigh rides, as majestic forest landscapes or the snow-covered expanses of the northern lands unfold around you. These are all opportunities to experience the thrill of adventure, in contact with nature which is as fragile as it is magical, where land and sky meet.

*Activities included or optional, subject to availability. All the activities described in this brochure are subject to weather and ice conditions and sailing opportunities, are subject to change and cannot be guaranteed. For a list of activities available during your stay on board, see the pages dedicated to each itinerary or go to [www.ponant.com](http://www.ponant.com). Some activities must be pre-booked and/or are subject to strict conditions of participation; please consult our Concierge service as well as the formalities to be completed.*



## THE EXPLORERS CLUB: THE PIONEERS OF TODAY, THE LEGENDS OF TOMORROW

Founded in 1904 in New York by a group of leading explorers, The Explorers Club is dedicated to the scientific exploration of land, sea, air and space, and supports research and education in the physical, natural and biological sciences.

The members of The Explorers Club are responsible for a series of famous firsts: the first man to reach the North and South Poles, the summit of Mount Everest, the deepest point in the ocean, and to orbit the Moon.

On some itineraries, English- and French-speaking members of this prestigious organisation will be giving talks and hosting activities away from the ship.



# ANTARCTICA



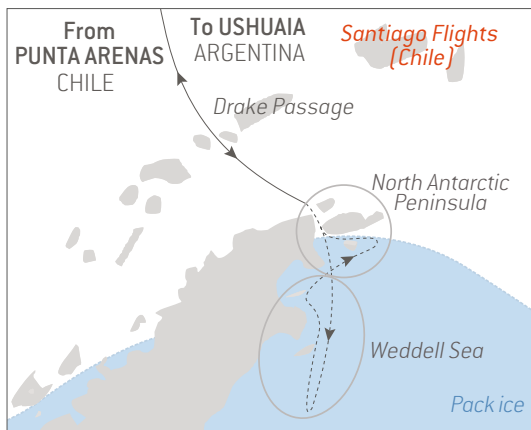




# AN ULTIMATE JOURNEY



## The emperor penguins of Weddell Sea



Mysterious and difficult to access, the Weddell Sea is an immense icy desert, home to extremely rare wildlife, including emperor penguins; majestic endemic birds that are rarely seen. At the very start of the southern spring, you may witness a magical sight: the world's largest penguins walking on the sea ice, or the young birds learning to swim. A priceless moment. Driven by the winds of Drake Passage, enter this extreme and fascinating sea for an intense voyage of exploration. Enter an extraordinary world where you'll encounter sea ice as far as the eye can see, and enormous tabular icebergs offering a breathtaking backdrop that creates a remarkable environment for colonies of Adélie penguins. It is an absolute privilege to observe them, and a sight that is as fascinating as it is emotional.



### Punta Arenas • Ushuaia

2nd November 2023

16 days / 14 nights on board

### Ushuaia • Ushuaia

16th November 2023

14 days / 12 nights on board

**From €26,900 <sup>(1)</sup>**

2nd November departure: with featured guest Mikaa Mered, geopolitologist, writer, university lecturer and public speaker specialised in the Polar-Climate-Hydrogen nexus.

16th November departure: with featured guest Nicolas Vincent, a deep ocean and underwater intervention expert.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- An immersion in the heart of ice and its different states in the Weddell Sea.
- Landscapes: immense glaciers, table top icebergs, immersion in the heart of the ice floes.
- Wildlife: the possibility to observe emperor penguins and Ross seals; Adélie, chinstrap and gentoo penguins; leopard, Weddell and crabeater seals; humpback, Minke whales and orcas.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Many activities: kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing, polar plunge.

Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: return flights Santiago/Punta Arenas or Santiago/Ushuaia depending on departure, the night in Santiago before embarkation, transfers.

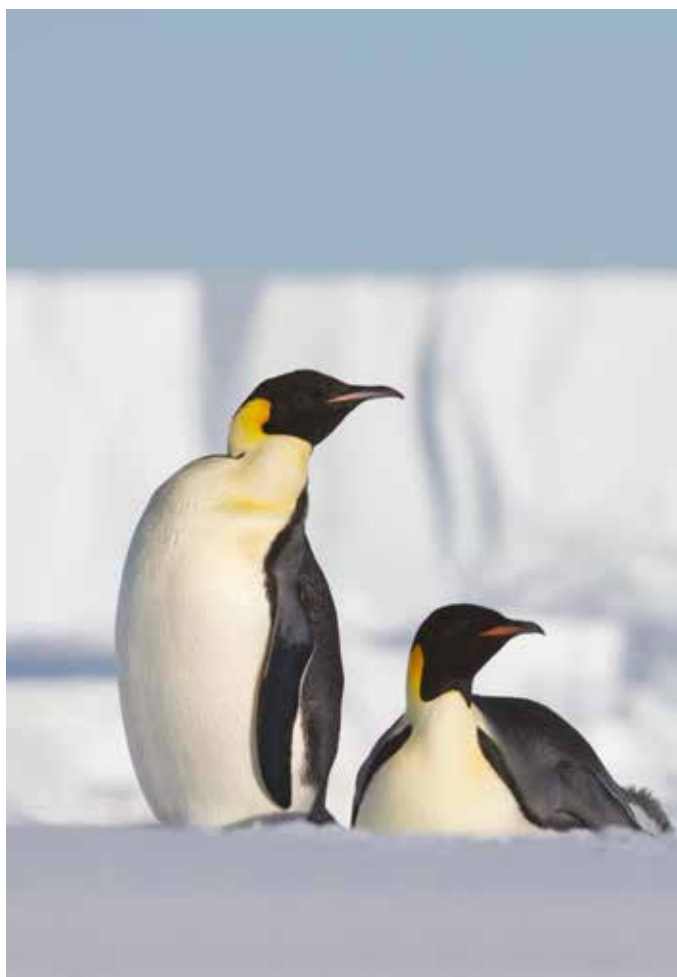
# THE SENTINEL OF ANTARCTICA

## AQUATIC FEATS

Emperor penguins are spectacular marine predators, capable of diving to depths of up to 500 metres and remaining underwater for up to 30 minutes, and using their wings as fins and their feet and tail as a rudder.

## SURVIVAL CHAMPION

The emperor is equipped with four layers of feathers shaped like scales, a thick layer of blubber and a blood system that provides exceptional thermal insulation, maintaining body temperature at 38°C.



## A WHOLE YEAR IN ANTARCTICA

While other animal species leave the continent during the winter, and other birds breed in the spring or at the beginning of the austral summer, the emperor penguin is the only animal species to breed in the middle of Antarctica's austral winter. This strategy allows the young penguins to break away from their parents at the beginning of the summer, when food is abundant.



## VOCAL ACROBATICS

Each emperor penguin has its own singing style. This voice signature allows members of the same family to recognise and find each other in the middle of a colony made up of tens of thousands of penguins.

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Emperor penguins can be seen on the itineraries detailed on pages 58-59 and 62-63.

## PERSONAL DETAILS

### Name:

Emperor penguin  
*Aptenodytes forsteri*  
(from the Greek words *apteron*, 'wingless', and *dytes*, 'diver')

### Geographic breakdown:

Antarctica

### Height and weight:

between 100 and 130 cm  
between 23 and 38 kg

### Life expectancy:

20 years

### Colours:

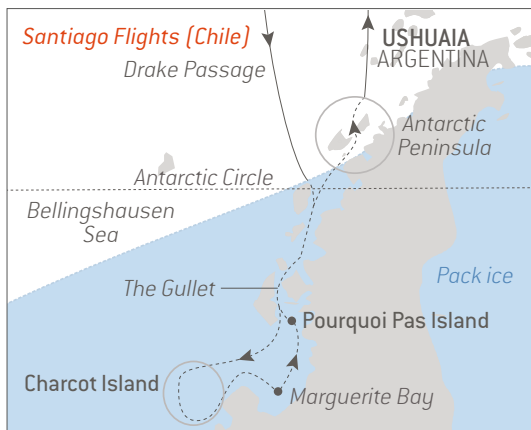
white, black, orange and yellow

### Food:

fish, cephalopods  
and crustaceans (krill)



## In the wake of Jean-Baptiste Charcot



At the start of an adventure that will take you to the very edge of Antarctica, set off in the footsteps of the greatest expeditions to the scene of the heroism of few pioneers. From the peninsula of the White Continent to the Bellingshausen Sea and its little-known islets, *Le Commandant Charcot* will take you to the Far South, following the legendary man to whom it owes its name. More than a century ago, Jean-Baptiste Charcot made his first expedition aboard *Le Français* and began his own legend. On board, our team of passionate experts join you in retracing the story of these historic exploits and share their knowledge of the ecosystems you are travelling through. On your way to the Bellingshausen Sea, ice fills the horizon, with seemingly endless sea ice and majestic icebergs. The approach to Charcot Island promises an intense experience and a rare privilege.



### Ushuaia • Ushuaia

28th November and 12th December 2023

16 days / 14 nights on board

From €21,710 <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>



28th November departure: with featured guest Fridrik Rafnsson, writer and specialist on Jean-Baptiste Charcot.

## Tallandier

12th December departure, in partnership with the French publishing house Editions Tallandier, with featured guest the writer, journalist Dominique Le Brun, specialist in maritime and polar issues. On this departure, experience a magical Christmas in Antarctica.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Cross the Arctic Circle and the exploratory approach of the distant Charcot Island.
- Landscapes: surreal glaciers, monumental icebergs, immersion in the heart of the ice pack.
- Wildlife: Adélie, chinstrap and gentoo penguins; leopard, crabeater and Weddell seals; humpbacks, Minke whales and orcas, and the possibility of observing emperor penguins and Ross seals.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Many activities: kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing, polar plunge.

Included in your cruise <sup>(3)</sup>: return flights Santiago/Ushuaia, the night in Santiago before embarkation, transfers.

# Jean-Baptiste Charcot, "knowledge guided by courage and curiosity"



*The legends, the discoveries, the crew... The founder of the Charcot Museum – near Reykjavík in Iceland – Fridrik Rafnsson is also an academic, translator, certified guide and honorary member of the association The Friends of Jean-Baptiste Charcot. He knows all the secrets of the man who has represented the link that has united Iceland and France for more than a century.*

## **What does Jean-Baptiste Charcot mean to you?**

Jean-Baptiste Charcot has always fascinated me. My family talked to me about him from a very early age; he was a legend in Iceland. In 2005, I helped a friend and professor of marine biology at the University of Iceland found the Charcot Museum to honour the memory of the Commandant and his crew. For this project, my experience as a French-Icelandic translator was very useful; I was the point of contact between historians, scientists, and the Commandant's family, right up to his great-granddaughter, Anne Manipoud-Charcot, who is now the standard-bearer for the French association dedicated to the explorer.

I'm opening a new chapter by going to the Antarctic with PONANT. I can't wait to explore the places where the crew used to spend the winter, and all those associated with Jean-Baptiste Charcot, and to be able to describe these extraordinary landscapes through his story. It promises to be a very moving and touching trip!

## **What is the Commandant's legacy today?**

His legacy is as much scientific as it is cultural, because he was a very ambitious person who was also very human. His multidisciplinary expeditions were very modern for the time, and his research is even more valuable today for the comparative understanding and study of meteorological and biological change. He greatly loved animals and life itself, and treated everyone as his equal. Just imagine the feat of sailing to the Antarctic from Le Havre in 1903 and again in 1908, using extremely primitive technology. He and his crew proved their tenacity during expeditions and when overwintering. Through the association *The Friends of Jean-Baptiste Charcot*, we are trying to pass on the Commandant's philosophy, that of the scientist but also of the man: knowledge guided by ambition, courage, and curiosity.





*The Gullet, a channel that was first explored by Jean-Baptiste Charcot's expedition in 1909.*

**What advice would you give to the guests who will be sharing this adventure with you?**

By travelling in the footsteps of Jean-Baptiste Charcot, we are visiting the places where he made his discoveries, but we are also following in the wake of his expeditions and the spirit with which he undertook them. That's why I think it's important to come with an open mind, and to be fully involved.

I would also advise guests to immerse themselves in the world of Jean-Baptiste Charcot by reading his expedition account, *Towards the South Pole Aboard the "Français"*.



# STANISLAS DEVORSINE – DREAMS OF ICE



At the helm of various PONANT ships since 2018, the Nantes native enjoyed the waves and adventures from an early age. An insatiable passion that he has nurtured, among other adventures, during semi-circumnavigations of Antarctica onboard *Le Commandant Charcot*. Profile of a child of the seas.

*“You’ll understand why it is impossible for me to remember.”* When we ask him how he felt the first time he boarded a ship, Captain Stanislas Devorsine stays quiet. Which is logical since he was barely two months old when his parents introduced him to being rocked to sleep by the waves on the family sailboat. The rest of his life so far points to a passion developed from a very young age. From the first emotions on board an optimist - *“these incredible soapboxes for learning and in which we make real decisions from the age of 6”* - to the thrill of sailing with a keelboat purchased with his brother as an adolescent, to a fascination with polar explorers (Nansen, Amundsen, Shackleton), whose tales he lapped up, the young sailor always looked further ahead. After training with the merchant navy, he developed an eclectic profile for himself as a sailor with a position as a crew member on *Pen Duick VI* aboard which he discovered ice at the same time as the canals of Patagonia, a Jules Verne Trophy achieved in 64 days



## VIRTUAL REALITY

Unmissable stopovers, polar history, photos from the ends of the earth: experience an authentic immersion in the most confidential places of Antarctica.

with *Géronimo* alongside Olivier de Kersauson or even work on *L'Abeille Flandre*, a tugboat known for its help during the sinking of the oil tanker *Erika*. Stanislas Devorsine then spent a decade as Captain of *L'Astrolabe*, a French polar ship, where he broke his first ice and served a science that he continues to nurture today with PONANT and now *Le Commandant Charcot*. *"I joined PONANT in 2018 to share my experience of this type of ship and to design - among other things - ship safety equipment such as survival suits and polar shelters."*

### THE ANTARCTIC, A WONDER CONTINENT

Several years and many cables later, his marvel at the handling of the PONANT hybrid-electric polar

expedition ship still remains: *"I am not used to having the ability to sail through the impassable with such ease. In this respect, Le Commandant Charcot continues to surprise me."* An impetuosity that makes the 7,500 nautical miles (almost 14,000 km, the equivalent of a quarter of the globe's circumference travelled in 28 days) of semi-circumnavigations of the Antarctic even more *"staggering. This route between Lyttelton and Ushuaia involves sailing through some very remote areas. Visual contact with the shores of Antarctica offers a majestic variety of landscapes. Even more than the journey, we are in a permanent state of contemplation"*. Finally, it is perhaps this waking dream that Captain Devorsine has been thinking about since his cradle on the sea.

### "SOMEONE WHO HAS TAUGHT ME A LOT"

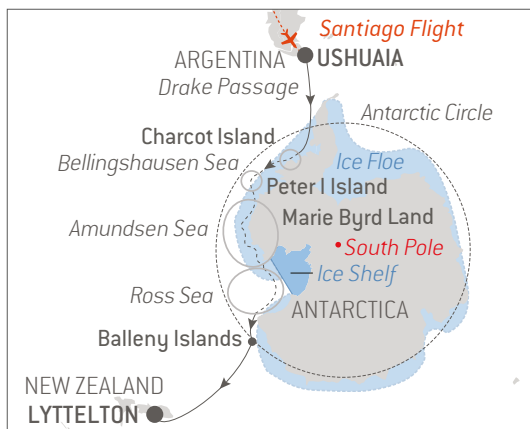
*"Stanislas has sailed around the world and has experience of the Southern Ocean. His bold route makes him a very adventurous sailor. We often speak as part of the Polar Pod project, for which I feed off his insights, his recommendations. He is always willing to give advice, and is very honest and generous. This is all essential for the project. I hope to have the chance to sail by his side one day."*

**Jean-Louis Étienne, explorer**





## Unexplored Antarctica between two continents



The Drygalski Glacier, the Ross, Wilkins and Getz Ice Shelves, Mount Erebus... Set sail for a semi-circumnavigation from the southernmost tip of the American continent to New Zealand, a voyage to the edge of the known world, amidst the icy landscapes of Antarctica. Follow in the footsteps of some of the greatest names in polar exploration: Charcot, Bellingshausen, Dean, Fisher, Ross, Amundsen. Sail across the legendary Bellingshausen and Amundsen southern seas like a true explorer, until you reach Marie Byrd Land, one of the last unclaimed territories - or *terra nullius* - on our planet, before attempting to reach Charcot and Peter I Islands, draped in a covering of ice. A hotspot for exploration of the Far South, the Ross Sea is also the world's largest marine sanctuary, home to Antarctic petrels, whales, orcas, seals, and penguins, offering a wealth of opportunities for observation and wonder.



### Ushuaia · Lyttelton

7th January 2024 - 30 days / 28 nights on board

From €41,660 <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- The half-circumnavigation of the Antarctic with the crossing of three mythical and icy southern seas.
- The least known islands in the world: Charcot Island, Peter I Island and the Marie Byrd Land islands.
- The landscapes: ice shelves – including that of Ross –, surrealist glaciers, monumental icebergs, immersion in the heart of the ice floe.
- Wildlife: crabeater, leopard and Weddell seals; Adélie penguins; humpback whales and orcas.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Activities and lectures by an expert from The Explorers Club.
- Many activities: kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing, polar plunge.

Included in your cruise <sup>(3)</sup>: single flight Santiago/ Ushuaia, the night in Santiago before embarkation, transfers.



## From Dumont d'Urville to Mawson: retracing Heroic Age expeditions



Follow in the footsteps of the first discoverers of Antarctica on a polar odyssey filled with spellbinding landscapes of ice, and wildlife that is as rare as it is exceptional. Set sail for a semi-circumnavigation of the White Continent. Following in the footsteps of Sir James Clark Ross, you will attempt to reach the Magnetic South Pole, a legendary and shifting point. The attraction of pristine territories and their history is more keenly felt in Adélie Land, where Paul-Émile Victor established the Dumont d'Urville scientific station, while the Australian Douglas Mawson was the first to study Victoria Land. In the Ross Sea, the world's largest marine sanctuary, keep a sharp lookout for petrels, cetaceans, seals, and penguins. Marie Byrd Land, untouched by human conquest, is still a *terra nullius*, or unclaimed territory. From the ice cathedrals of the Amundsen Sea to the frozen coverings of Charcot and Peter I islands, the wilderness will never cease to captivate you.



## Lyttelton • Ushuaia

6th February 2024 - 27 days / 26 nights on board

From €38,280 <sup>(1)</sup>

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Half a circumnavigation of Antarctica crossing five southern seas.
- The approach to Adélie Land, home to the Dumont d'Urville scientific station, and to Victoria Land.
- The quest of the Magnetic South Pole.
- The least known islands in the world: Charcot Island, Peter I Island and the Marie Byrd Land islands.
- Set off in the footsteps of the famous Sir Ernest Shackleton and Robert Falcon Scott on Ross Island, which still guards vestiges of the time they spent there.
- Landscapes: ice shelves, surrealist glaciers, monumental icebergs, immersion in the heart of the ice floe.
- Wildlife: crabeater, leopard and Weddell seals; Adélie penguins; humpback whales and orcas.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Many activities: kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing.

Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: flight Ushuaia/Santiago, transfer after disembarkation.

# A SUMMER







# IN THE ARCTIC

# Jean-Baptiste Charcot – a Greenlandic passion



On the edge of the Arctic, the illustrious French explorer left an immeasurable legacy in his wake, guided by a passion for the world, a taste for passing on knowledge, and the grace of great men, as recounted by French expedition guide Cécile Manet.

At Ittoqqortoormiit, a village of 500 souls at the mouth of Scoresby Sound – the world's largest fjord system (see page 88) – the memory of Jean-Baptiste Charcot is still alive. Around the corner of a house, a French-language inscription pays tribute to this pioneer of polar navigation and to his comrades who disappeared off the coast of Iceland in 1936, after 10 years of a formidable odyssey to discover the shores of Greenland. The Inuit community was first established here nearly a century ago by Danish explorer Ejnar Mikkelsen who, in 1926, sailed to the Faroe Islands aboard the *Pourquoi Pas?*, the valiant three-masted ship of his colleague and friend Captain Charcot. Having just been elected to the Academy of Sciences, the sailor, bitten by a nostalgia for the

ice, set off on a mission to the land of Jameson, which he reached with Mikkelsen's help via the island of Jan Mayen. He became the first Frenchman to reach the east coast of Greenland. *"His main objective, apart from science, was to sail along the coastline and carry out hydrographic work to make explorations safer,"* explains Cécile Manet, expedition guide and lecturer at PONANT.

## EXPLOITS AND SOLIDARITY

While his expeditions were not necessarily marked by spectacular events, they represented an impressive accumulation of data. During his previous expeditions to Antarctica, almost 3,000 km of coastline were surveyed, as well as an abundant collection of fossils, which contributed to the geographical and geological knowledge of the polar regions. Today, many of these archives (manuscripts, drawings, photographs, objects, etc.) form a treasure trove that is carefully preserved by the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris. *"His courtesy, solidarity with his peers, dedication to his crews, and respectful attitude towards local populations earned him the reputation of the Gentleman of the Poles,"* Cécile Manet points out. In 1928, during his second expedition to Greenland, he interrupted his work and sailed the Arctic seas to take part in the rescue of the seaplane Latham 47. He searched for the missing crew, which included the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen – one of his most famous contemporaries – to no avail.



*Ammassalik region, May 2023.*

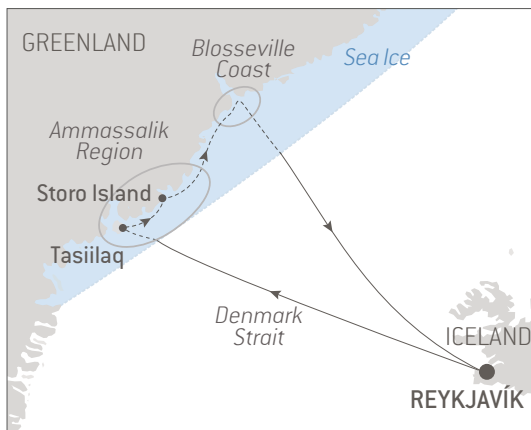
One of his major achievements was the establishment of the Scoresby Sound scientific station as part of the 1932-1933 International Polar Year. Charcot and his men took part - with the help of the Danish authorities and the indigenous populations - in the reconnaissance of the terrain and the organisation of operations, enabling France to maintain its place in the great tradition of exploration and scientific development. *"When I'm on board and I talk about him, I feel very small,"* says the expedition guide. *"I feel a particular emotion when I visit the places he explored, imagining the conditions he faced. His self-sacrifice and the endurance of his crew have all my admiration."*

#### **"MY LITTLE ONE, I'M TAKING YOU WITH ME"**

Alongside Jean-Baptiste Charcot, the name of Paul-Émile Victor has become part of the legend of France's great polar explorations. It's the story of a happy crossover of destinies, between the illustrious navigator and the fiery ethnologist, 40 years apart. In 1934, Charcot, attracted by Victor's dynamism and determination, saw in him the next generation of scientists and took him on board his ship to set up the young man's first ethnographic mission in Greenland; a passing of the torch and the last elegant gesture of the 'Gentleman Explorer' before taking his leave.



## Inuit spring of Ammassalik



In Greenlandic, there is no future tense. Are you ready to embark on an adventure where only the present matters? As the polar night comes to an end, be the first travellers of the season to explore the remote areas of the Eastern coast of Greenland in the spring sunshine: the legendary regions of Blosseville and Ammassalik, their shores still covered in a thick layer of ice. In these lands, which are still inaccessible to traditional ships this early in the year, time and space seem to stand still. Take the time to marvel at these fascinating landscapes, icebergs trapped in sea ice, emerging glaciers, or hummocks made more beautiful by the play of light. Share authentic moments with the Inuit communities who live to the rhythm of the seasons and the ice, carrying on their traditions, such as hunting by dog sleigh. There, on the sea ice, amidst the icy vastness, the only thing that counts is the intensity of the experience, with others and with oneself.



### Reykjavík · Reykjavík

16th, 26th April and 6th May 2024

11 days / 10 nights

**From €15,190** <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Discovering the spring traditions of the Inuit people of the Ammassalik region and being transported during a dog sled outing, an activity designed with our hosts.
- The opportunity to take part in a polar trek, a PONANT exclusive (view p. 78).
- Exploring the Blossville Coast.
- Travelling across the Denmark Strait.
- Exploring the region of Ammassalik, on board or on the ice floe.
- Landscapes including ice cap, fjords, icebergs caught in the ice, calving glaciers, patches of ice floe drifting from the North Pole and compression ridges, broken-up ice floe.
- Wildlife including the best conditions for observing polar bears in their natural environment; blue and humpback whales, seals and sea birds.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- 16th April departure: activities and lectures by an expert from The Explorers Club.
- A wide range of activities: dog sledding kayaking, hiking and snowshoeing, ice fishing and polar plunge.

# Nordic skiing polar trek, an immersion in the heart of Greenland

Because PONANT's heart beats to the rhythm of the polar worlds and their inhabitants, our teams have come up with a unique immersive experience in the remote extremes of Greenland. Enjoy the opportunity to explore the authentic soul of the people of the 'Land of the Midnight Sun'.

- Two days of Nordic ski trekking and one night in a tent
- 10 passengers accompanied by Greenlandic guides and a high mountain guide
- A unique opportunity to immerse yourself in Inuit culture
- An intense emotional experience in the immensity and sheer beauty of the wilderness, at a time of year when only *Le Commandant Charcot* is present on site

**Price: €990 per person**

Join the polar trek from the departure points on pages 76-77.

*To take part in the polar trek, good physical fitness is required. There will be a compulsory ECG before departure, as well as a consultation with the on-board doctor. For more information, contact our travel concierge service.*





#### VIRTUAL REALITY

Video: behind the scenes of the first full-scale polar trek.

#### Our teams rose to the challenge

*"The group grows stronger by the hour, as reflected by the anecdotes, songs and smiles. We take our time to appreciate this moment suspended in time, here in North-East Greenland, several thousand kilometres from the landmarks we know. We are near the last inhabited village on this isolated coast. We share some very special moments with our Greenlandic guide, even though we don't speak the same language. I returned to the ship disorientated and shaken up by this expedition that took me outside my comfort zone, but enriched by this authentic human adventure, and above all, nourished by the powerful nature I encountered. It is a reminder that we are just passing through, that we need to adapt, to make ourselves small, and allow it to welcome us for a short while."*

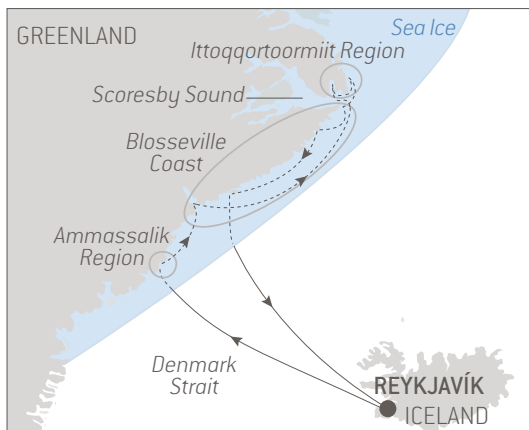
Diary of **Mégane Di Stefano**,  
Product Content Manager at PONANT

#### A small step on skis, a giant leap for the adventurer...

*"Nordic skis allow the wearer to glide, so the effort of walking is much smoother and softer. One step on a ski is almost the same as two steps walking. Like a snowshoe, Nordic skiing slightly increases the load-bearing surface. This means that you don't sink in as much, as a result of which, you can move more smoothly on snow-covered terrain."*

**Ludovic Gaboriaud**,  
high mountain guide at PONANT

## Inuit spring at the edge of Scoresby Sound



What if you had the chance to be among the first to explore one of the most isolated wilderness regions in the world? From the Blosseville coast to the Ittoqqortoormiit region, we welcome you to the East coast of Greenland, at the end of the long winter night. Explore its still-frozen shores as spring heralds the midnight sun. Hypnotic landscapes are revealed: jagged summits with dark strata, majestic glaciers, icebergs trapped in the sea ice. At the entrance to Scoresby Sound, the world's largest fjord system, the colourful houses of the northernmost Inuit village on Greenland's East coast stand out against the vast pristine expanses. Here, nature reigns supreme, and encounters with landscapes and living things are experienced in the present. Share rare moments with the last hunters of the pole on a dog sleigh ride, an ancient means of transport, and savour the exhilaration of the moment, amidst the icy infinity, before the ice breaks up later in the season.





### Reykjavík · Reykjavík

16th May 2024 - 13 days / 12 nights on board

**From €18,230** <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Discovering the spring traditions of the Inuit people of the Ittoqqortoormiit region and being transported during a dog sled outing, an activity designed with our hosts.
- The region of Ittoqqortoormiit, where the last hunters of the polar region live, at the entrance to Scoresby Sound, the world's largest network of fjords.
- Exploring the Blossville Coast.
- Travelling across the Denmark Strait.
- Landscapes including fjords, glaciers, icebergs, polar ice cap, patches of ice floe drifting from the North Pole and hummocks.
- Wildlife including the best conditions for observing polar bears in their natural environment; blue and humpback whales, seals, Arctic foxes and sea birds.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Activities and lectures by an expert from The Explorers Club.
- A wide range of activities: dog sledding kayaking, hiking and snowshoeing, ice fishing and polar plunge.



*An intense emotion. After crossing the Denmark Strait, we reached the pack ice. In the heart of the ice, everything seems much quieter, and the human world far away. Arriving opposite Tasiilaq, very close to the Arctic Circle, seems unreal. The ship arrives silently, facing the village and its colourful cottages; tones that contrast with those of a raw and implacable nature. A man, who looks as if he has just returned from a long walk across the frozen land, pulls his pulka... All is calm and peaceful.*

## Tasiilaq – spring awakening

After the first few miles on the pack ice,  
*Le Commandant Charcot* stopped off in Tasiilaq to immerse  
guests in the local life of an isolated village in East Greenland.  
A guest's diary.



*Very quickly, a lively atmosphere developed around this ship. It has to be said that we are the first visitors of the year to disembark in Tasiilaq, which has been isolated for several months. Unloading fresh produce [see page 22], a tour of the ship for the locals and a tour of the village for the guests, traditional show on board: it's a real immersion in Greenlandic Inuit culture.*

## PORTFOLIO



*Tasiilaq, a village of almost 2,000 souls, wakes up to the spring sunshine. In the shop promoting local crafts, a dozen or so women and men are busy in the dust. They are cutting, carving and sanding reindeer antlers or seal bones. In just a few hours, they produce statuettes, some of which – tupilaks – are an integral part of Greenlandic folklore. In the past, these polymorphous figurines inspired by polar animals such as bears, seals and walruses were created by shamans and had the power to destroy a targeted individual.*

*The next day, a few kilometres from the village, we wake up to the sound of barking. An endemic species, Greenlandic dogs have been used for centuries in teams to hunt bears and seals. Today, they offer us an immersive ride between snow-covered mountains and ice deserts. As teenagers, the Inuit are given several dogs by their father or uncle to look after. It's a sign of trust and a lifelong commitment.*





*Ice fishing is also an age-old activity, and continues to provide fresh fish to the people who live on the pack ice for much of the year. An auger, a fishing rod, a lot of patience and that's it! On the menu: halibut, which will be cooked by the onboard chef.*

## Northeast Greenland's unexplored sea ice



Let us guide you to one of the most inaccessible regions of the Far North. As spring draws to a close, while the ice and snow are still omnipresent in the early Arctic summer, you will explore particularly inhospitable areas, getting closer to their unspoiled shores. Like a polar treasure hunter in a kayak or on snowshoes, your eyes will scan the mountainous terrain, identify jagged ridges, the pinkish sparkle of the ice crystals, and marvel at the immaculate landscapes you have crossed. Beyond the Ittoqqortoormiit region, the solid powerful sea ice controls visitors who dare to venture so far. As you head for northeast Greenland, you'll be sailing through drift ice. The blue-tinged crests of the icebergs are revealed in the light, and, if you're lucky, you may catch a glimpse of the graceful outline of a blue whale at the mouth of a fjord.



### Reykjavík · Reykjavík

28th May and 11th June 2024

15 days / 14 nights on board

From €21,260 <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Exploring the coast of Blosseville and the north-east of Greenland, untouched remote region in the early Arctic summer, amid the ice carried along the Transpolar Drift.
- 28th May departure: experiencing dog sledding, at the heart of Inuit culture, an activity designed with our hosts.
- Travelling across the Denmark Strait.
- Exploring the region of Ittoqqortoormiit, where the last hunters of the polar region live, at the entrance to gigantic Scoresby Sound.
- Landscapes including fjords, glaciers, icebergs, polar ice cap and hummocks.
- Wildlife including the best conditions for observing polar bears in their natural environment; blue and humpback whales, narwhals, seals, muskoxen, Arctic foxes, orcas and sea birds.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- 11th June departure: activities and lectures by an expert from The Explorers Club.
- A wide range of activities: kayaking, hiking and snowshoeing, ice fishing and polar plunge.

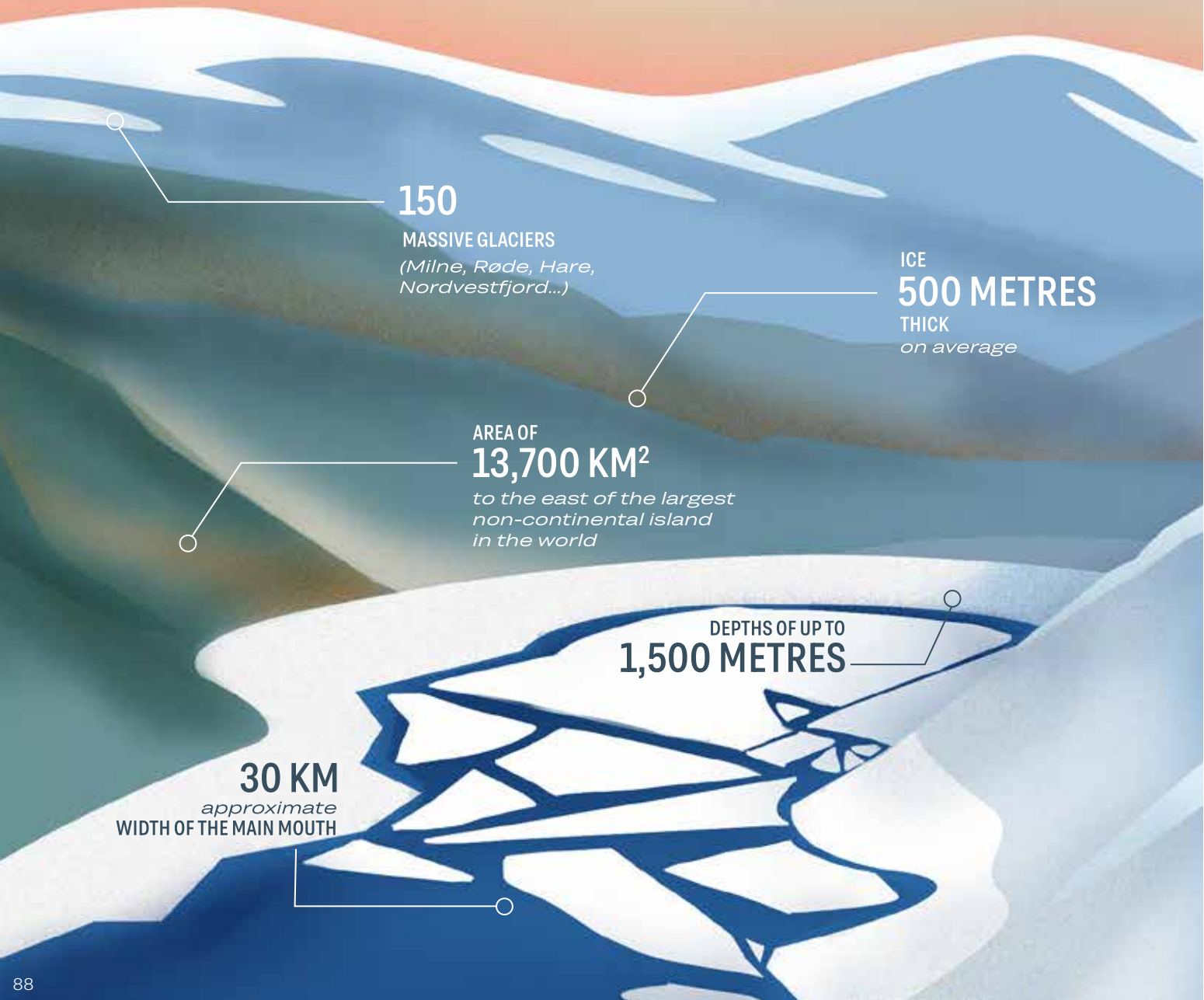
# SCORESBY SOUND

## A UNIQUE ECOSYSTEM AT A LATITUDE OF 70° NORTH

Known as the largest fjord system in the world, Scoresby Sound owes its name to the English scientist William Scoresby, the first explorer to map this desert of ice, in 1822. Focus on this extraordinary Greenlandic environment.

### AN EXCEPTIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

With its vastness, geological diversity and climatic conditions, Scoresby Sound is a place unlike any other in the world. This is reflected in its characteristics:



**150**

**MASSIVE GLACIERS**  
*(Milne, Røde, Hare,  
Nordvestfjord...)*

**ICE  
500 METRES  
THICK**  
*on average*

**AREA OF  
13,700 KM<sup>2</sup>**

*to the east of the largest  
non-continental island  
in the world*

**DEPTHS OF UP TO  
1,500 METRES**

**30 KM**  
*approximate*  
**WIDTH OF THE MAIN MOUTH**





## WEATHER FACTS

Temperatures normally fluctuate between **-15°C and 5°C** throughout the year, but the fjords of Scoresby Sound have been known to undergo significant temperature variations, ranging from **-37°C to +21°C**.



Paris: **2.161 million inhabitants**  
Ittoqqortoormiit: **345 inhabitants**



## LONG DISTANCE

Distance between Paris and Ittoqqortoormiit: **2,725 km**  
*Almost six times the distance between Paris and London.*



## DARKNESS AT NOON

Located at the entrance to Scoresby Sound, at a latitude of more than 70° North, the town of Ittoqqortoormiit is plunged into a long polar night and does not see daylight for more than five months of the year. Daylight re-establishes itself here, culminating in the "midnight sun" from May onwards, when *Le Commandant Charcot* takes you there.

## AND WHY NOT?

Being fascinated by the Arctic, the French explorer Jean-Baptiste Charcot visited Scoresby Sound eight times between 1925 and 1936. He explored the entire eastern coast of Greenland aboard his three-masted schooner, the *Pourquoi Pas?* (Why Not?). Following in the footsteps of William Scoresby, he continued and expanded the mapping of the fjords. His work contributed to our understanding of the geography, wildlife and culture of the region, including towns such as Ittoqqortoormiit.



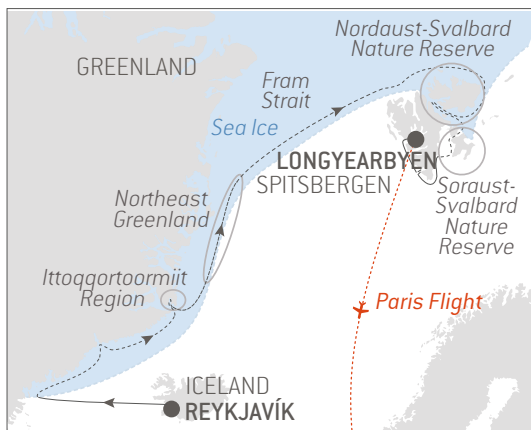
## THE SOUND OF THE GLACIERS

During an expedition to Scoresby Sound in 2016, geophysicists set up a method based on acoustic and seismic studies, to understand the flow and melting mechanisms of glaciers in the light of global warming. The installation of geophones - devices that convert ground movement (velocity) into voltage - has made it possible to record and measure the hydrological activity of glaciers. The scientists found that the energy measured by frequency correlates closely with ice melt, depending on weather conditions - sunshine or cloud cover.



Approach the immensity of Scoresby Sund during the itineraries presented on pages 80-81, 86-87, 90-91 and 94-95.

## In the ice of the Arctic – from Greenland to Svalbard



Push the limits of polar exploration and head for the ice of northeast Greenland, inaccessible to traditional ships in early summer, before reaching the Arctic tundra of Svalbard. Following in the footsteps of the polar adventurers, you will pass through legendary places such as the Ittoqqortoormiit region and some of the most remote and fascinating landscapes of the Arctic. Against a backdrop of snow-capped mountain peaks, you will sail past ancient fjords and cathedral icebergs, and cross the floes drifting from the North Pole. The constantly shifting sea ice reveals different facets enlivened by subtle plays of light. Heading eastward, you will reach Svalbard and its breathtaking polar scenery: from Nordaustlandet, the site of Europe's largest ice cap, and the majestic fjords of the Hinlopen Strait, glaciers, and basalt cliffs. You will also visit the nature reserve in southeast Svalbard home to numerous birds, Svalbard reindeer, and cetaceans.



## Reykjavík · Longyearbyen

25th June 2024 - 17 days / 16 nights on board

From €27,210 <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>

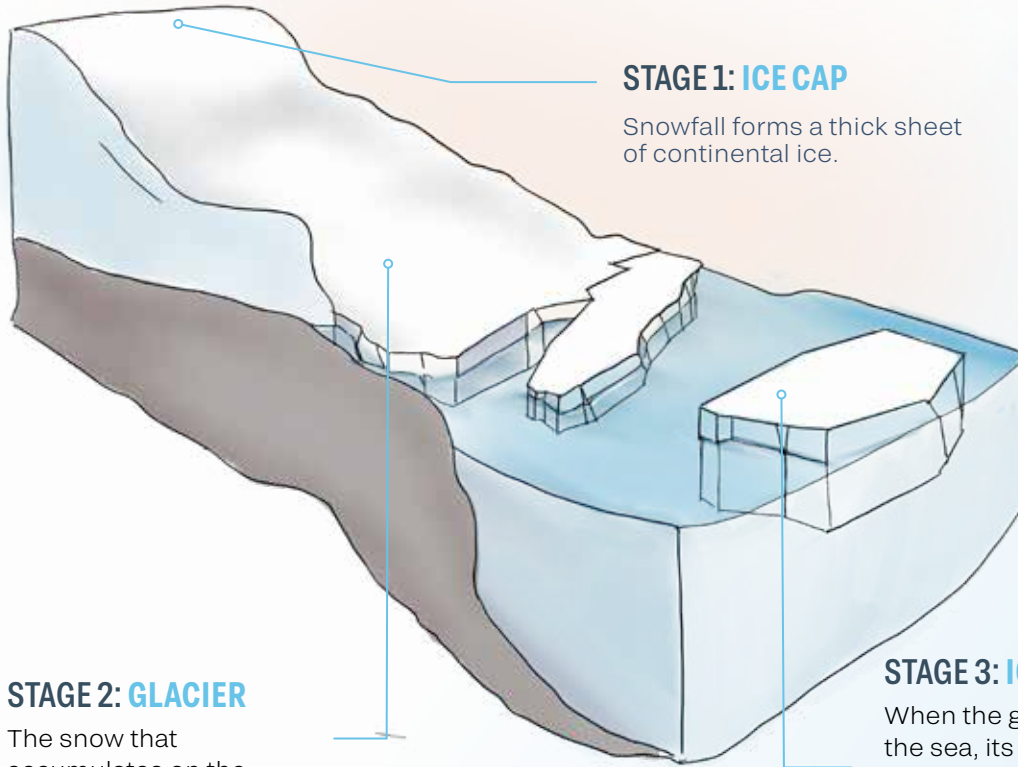
### HIGHLIGHTS

- Exploring the ice to the north-east of Greenland, inaccessible to traditional ships in late spring.
- Enjoying the Sørøst-Svalbard Nature Reserve, the second largest protected area in Norway.
- Sailing in the Hinlopen Strait, infiltrated by ice, from Spitsbergen to Nordaustlandet, Europe's largest ice cap.
- Landscapes including mountains patterned with multi-coloured strata, fjords, glaciers, icebergs, ice floes and tundra.
- Wildlife including polar bears, walruses, Arctic foxes, Svalbard reindeer, whales and sea birds.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Activities and lectures by an expert from The Explorers Club.
- A wide range of activities: kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing and polar plunge.

Included in your cruise <sup>(3)</sup>: transfer from port to airport after disembarkation and flight Longyearbyen/Paris.

# ICE IN ALL

## THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE ICEBERG



### STAGE 1: ICE CAP

Snowfall forms a thick sheet of continental ice.

### STAGE 2: GLACIER

The snow that accumulates on the slopes of the ice cap forms glaciers.

### STAGE 3: ICEBERG

When the glacier reaches the sea, its fragments, made up of fresh water, break off and head out to sea. This process, known as calving, is caused by constant seismic movements within the ice.

**99%** of the Earth's ice is concentrated in the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets – glaciers with a surface area of more than 50,000 km<sup>2</sup>.



### THE ANTARCTIC ICE SHEET

Area: **14 million km<sup>2</sup>**  
Up to **4,000 m** thick  
**70%** of the earth's fresh water

### THE GREENLAND ICE SHEET

Area: **1.7 million km<sup>2</sup>**  
Up to **3,000m** thick  
**10%** of the world's fresh water

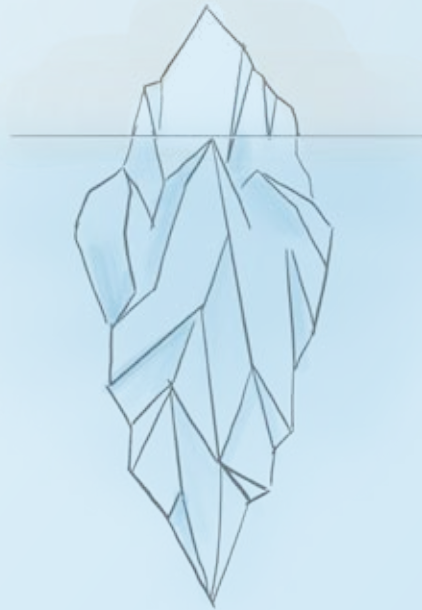


# ITS STATES

## 4,000 KM

That's how far icebergs formed in the Arctic can travel at sea,

the equivalent of a journey from France to Bermuda.



**90%**  
of an iceberg's  
mass is below  
the surface

## THE ORIGIN OF PACK ICE

### STAGE 1: FRAZIL

Water crystallises below 0°C.

### STAGE 2: PANCAKE ICE

The waves form patches of broken ice.

### STAGE 3: FLOES

The patches fuse together to create slabs of solid ice.

### STAGE 4: ANNUAL ICE PACK

Every winter, a layer of ice one to two metres thick is formed.

### STAGE 5: MULTI-YEAR ICE PACK

In some polar regions, the ice persists season after season and can be up to ten metres thick.

### Did you know?

The pack ice, whose density is lower than that of salt water, receives a buoyancy force that keeps it afloat.

## + 250%

Between September and March, the surface area of the pack ice increases by a factor of 3, from 4 million to 15 million km<sup>2</sup>.



## The Geographic North Pole & Scoresby Sound



Fascinating, legendary, mysterious, extreme, remote, inspiring... There's no shortage of adjectives to describe the mythical Geographic North Pole. A patient quest, a slow ascent through landscapes frozen by the extreme cold, this voyage, inaccessible to traditional ships, is a major challenge! From the outside decks or the Observatory lounge, however, emotions and enthusiasm underline your discoveries. Following in the footsteps of Frederick Cook, Robert Edwin Peary and Roald Amundsen, be one of the chosen few to dare to adventure towards the elusive - 700 km from land. Descending from the Pole, you will reach the east coast of Greenland in the Ittoqqortoormiit region. In the village of the same name, situated at the entrance to Scoresby Sound, which is the largest fjord system in the world, you'll receive a warm welcome from the Inuit community and discover their traditions during authentic interactions.



### Longyearbyen • Reykjavík

26th July and 26th September 2024

17 days / 16 nights on board

From €38,470 <sup>(1)</sup>



26th July departure: a cruise in partnership with the French think tank Le Cercle Polaire, as part of the 'Women at the Poles' operation, with the exceptional presence of its president and founder Laurent Mayet and of renowned explorers Daisy Gilardini and Emmanuelle Périé-Bardout.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Being among the few people in the world to go in search of the Geographic North Pole.
- Enjoying the unique experience of sailing through the heart of the ice floe and discovering the endless variety of forms and states of the ice.
- Exploring the Scoresby Sound, the world's largest network of fjords.
- 26th September departure: the possibility of observing the phenomenon of the Northern Lights.
- The landscapes: ice floe, hummocks, striped mountains, fjords, glaciers, icebergs, jagged mountains, steep-sided valleys, sheer cliffs.
- Wildlife including whales, polar bears, seals, Northern fulmars, ivory gulls.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- A wide range of activities: kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing and polar plunge.



Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: flight Paris/Longyearbyen and transfer before embarkation.



# "Science is the brain, where photography is the heart"

*Each season, PONANT welcomes several female adventurers of the poles aboard, as part of the 'Women at the Poles' project, led by the think-tank Le Cercle Polaire. An interview with Daisy Gilardini, a photographer who will be heading for the North Pole in July 2024.*

## **How would you sum up your relationship with the polar environment?**

I grew up with the dream of one day being able to see seals in their natural environment, and my first expedition to Antarctica in 1997 totally changed my life. The beauty, diversity of flora and fauna, isolation and immensity of the polar regions are quite simply unique and have stolen my heart. Twenty-six years on, I have been on more than 90 expeditions to the polar regions.

## **What does this voyage aboard *Le Commandant Charcot* in July 2024 mean to you?**

Photographing the polar regions carries with it a certain responsibility; it is a privilege to witness what happens there. So I feel it's my duty to capture the beauty of endangered species and raise public awareness through the universal power of images. Science is the brain, while photography is the heart. And we need both to reach people's hearts and minds, to spur them into action.

## **As a photographer working in extreme climatic conditions, is being a woman an extra challenge?**

Wildlife photography is generally a male-dominated field, but that has never put me off or scared me. If you're passionate about what you do,

there's nothing that can stop you from achieving your goals. The challenges of the terrain are mainly those caused by the extreme environment, as the cold challenges the equipment as much as the body! Hence you need to take care of yourself, particularly by protecting your extremities, but you also need a robust, reliable and fast camera.

**Emmanuelle Périé-Bardout**, French sailor and deep-sea diver, will be heading for the North Pole alongside Daisy Gilardini. For the past 15 years, she has co-directed the *Under The Pole* expeditions. The story of a singular feat.

*"Under The Pole was born out of our fascination with the polar regions and the underwater world. Our first expedition to the Geographic North Pole in 2010 came back with an exceptional account of the hidden face of the ice pack. Beneath our flippers, at a depth of 3,000 metres, cathedrals of ice plunge into crystal-clear water... I was never driven by the desire to be the first woman to achieve a feat, but I never wanted that to limit me. Every time something seemed to be an obstacle to achieving my dreams, I decided to invent the path to get there myself."*





**'Women at the Poles', a strong commitment to equality by Le Cercle Polaire**

The 'Women at the Poles' initiative is a project designed to promote the commitment of women in an environment long dominated by their male counterparts and little known to the public. In a move to promote equality, the Le Cercle Polaire association aims to spread on an international scale the word and experiences of female experts in polar environments: *"These women with very authentic and unconventional career paths are trailblazers for life. They have such unique personalities and are driven by such a passion for the poles, that they are a real source of inspiration!"* enthuses Laurent Mayet, president and founder of Le Cercle Polaire.

Founded in 2006, Le Cercle Polaire has the wider aim of raising awareness of the political, environmental and legal issues surrounding the polar regions: *"The ambitious idea has always been to develop a global awareness of the fragility and beauty of the polar regions,"* explains Laurent Mayet. *"By travelling to these magical regions, a form of shared sensibility is created."*

Since 2009, PONANT has been working alongside the association, organising themed cruises to promote these shared values.



## The Northwest Passage



Experience an extraordinary polar odyssey: take a virtually unexplored sea route through the legendary Northwest Passage. Like a modern-day explorer, follow in the footsteps of Roald Amundsen, who was the first person to successfully traverse this long-sought-after passage between the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific. *Le Commandant Charcot* will take you on a magnificent journey up Greenland's West coast to Disko Bay, between iconic glaciers, a procession of monumental icebergs, and warm encounters with the Inuit people. The Northwest Passage is approached through the ice of the Lancaster Strait. In this constantly changing icy world, the seemingly unending sea ice offers a magical play of light and shade as you make your way to Banks Island. In the Beaufort Sea, the exploration of landscapes inaccessible to traditional ships offers an unforgettable sensory experience.



### Reykjavík · Nome

12th August 2024 - 25 days / 24 nights on board

From €38,870 <sup>(1)</sup>

No single supplement <sup>(2)</sup>

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Crossing the Northwest Passage by a unique maritime route, long coveted by the great explorers, only accessible thanks to *Le Commandant Charcot*.
- Meeting the Inuit communities of the west coast of Greenland and discovering its capital, Nuuk.
- Landscapes including monumental icebergs (Disko Bay, a UNESCO site), icy channels, fjords, vast expanses of ice floe, myriads of jagged islands, blue-toned glaciers, mountain chains and tundra.
- Wildlife including polar bears pacing up and down the ice floe, Arctic foxes, sea birds, belugas, bowhead whales, walruses.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Activities and lectures by an expert from The Explorers Club.
- A wide range of activities: kayaking, hiking and snowshoeing, ice fishing and polar plunge.

Included in your cruise <sup>(3)</sup>: flight Nome/Seattle and transfer.

# A legendary passage

## Two complementary adventures

In August 2024, *Le Commandant Charcot* will offer a mythical adventure to its guests. As it enters the Lancaster Strait, the ship will make its way through the pack ice, a route inaccessible to traditional ships, thanks to the prowess of its ice-breaking technology. It will immerse travellers in a thick blanket of white, amidst the sea ice, and close to the largest population of polar bears in the Arctic. PONANT's Sisterships are following a different route, in the footsteps of John Franklin and Roald Amundsen. Let's take a closer look at some different but equally inspiring itineraries.



### **Beechey Island**

Wintering place of the Franklin expedition in 1845-1846. There are four tombs there, three from the expedition, and one - the 'ghost tomb' - that historians believe was erected in the name of Joseph-René Bellot, a French explorer lost at sea.

### **Gjoa Haven**

A historic hamlet on King William Island, where Amundsen chose to overwinter from 1903 to 1905. There, he lived with the Inuit, learning to lead sleigh dogs and build igloos, and spent time studying the passage to better tackle the ice. The village still exists and boasts a large statue of the explorer.

### **Fort Ross (on Somerset Island)**

This former trading post, established by the Hudson's Bay Company whose store can still be visited today, was operational from 1937 to 1948. It was abandoned because extreme ice conditions made access too difficult.

### **Bellot Strait**

This 35-km-long passage, named after the French lieutenant Joseph-René Bellot, was discovered by the Kennedy expedition when searching for Franklin. Navigation here is particularly difficult. At its far end is Zenith Point, the northernmost point on the American continent.

### **Disko Bay**

Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this bay is home to the largest icebergs in the Northern Hemisphere and offers a breathtaking natural vista.

### **Aappilattoq**

An Inuit community of just over a hundred inhabitants, located in the Prins Christian Sund region, it is inaccessible by land.

### **Prince Leopold Island**

A haven for the region's birds, with wonderful opportunities for observation.

### **Banks Island**

A place to meet the Canadian Inuit. You may also spot foxes, musk oxen, and the occasional walrus.

### **Lancaster Strait**

Its waters are teeming with Arctic cod and marine mammals such as narwhals, beluga whales, and harp seals.

### **Smoking Hills**

It was John Franklin who discovered these smoking hills during his second polar expedition. This geological curiosity, caused by deposits of sulphur-rich rock that have been burning continuously for centuries, creates spectacular landscapes.

## *A story of conquest*



### **FEARLESS EXPLORERS**

The three Johns, among those who have attempted the North-West Passage at risk to their lives: Parry, Ross, Franklin



### **CREW**

John Franklin :  
100 men  
Roald Amundsen:  
6 men



### **AMUNDSEN EXPEDITION**

Pitfalls: fires and lack food supplies.  
Better preparation: a ship with a shallow draught, voluntary wintering for two years.



### **17<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 1905**

Roald Amundsen opens the way to the Northwest Passage, a milestone in the history of Arctic expeditions.



### **1600 KM RETURN**

The distance travelled by Amundsen's crew to reach the nearest telegraph station to announce the news at last!

## Transarctic – the quest for the two North Poles



Enjoy a unique experience at the top of the world! Following in the footsteps of Umberto Nobile, who was the first to cross the Arctic by air almost a century ago, experience a trans-Arctic voyage on a never-before-taken sea route, inaccessible to other ships. On board *Le Commandant Charcot*, a ship of scientific opportunity, you will sail alongside a multidisciplinary international team on a polar research mission. From the legendary Bering Strait to the ice-covered lands of Svalbard, your ship will clear its way through the mesmerising sea ice, amongst the sculpted ice of the Beaufort Sea and through open water channels in an attempt to reach the elusive Magnetic and Geographic North Poles. Alongside our expert naturalists, you will discover unique ecosystems, gain a better understanding of the polar landscapes and the challenges of their transformation, and become an informed witness to their beauty and fragility.



## Nome • Longyearbyen

6th September 2024

21 days / 20 nights on board

From €41,340 <sup>(1)</sup>

With featured guest Alban Michon, a modern-day adventurer and explorer who has taken part in some exceptional expeditions: reaching the Geographic North Pole, diving under the ice floe, kayaking in Greenland...

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Being among the first people in the world to undertake a transarctic crossing and setting off in search of the Geographic and Magnetic North Poles.
- Discover the research work of an on-board international scientific mission, comprised of more than 20 researchers, during lectures and round tables.
- Depending on the weather conditions, the possibility of observing the phenomenon of the Northern Lights near the Bering Strait.
- Exploration of Svalbard, from Europe's largest ice cap on Nordaustlandet (North East Land) in the Sørøst-Svalbard Nature Reserve, the second-largest protected area in Norway.
- Wildlife including polar bears, walruses, Arctic foxes, Svalbard reindeer and whales.
- Landscapes including icy shores, ice floes, mountains patterned with multi-coloured strata, fjords, jagged mountains, glaciers, icebergs, sheer cliffs, polar ice cap, tundra.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.

Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: the outward flight Seattle/Nome, the return flight Longyearbyen/Paris as well as transfers.



# Transarctic – a scientific adventure

**In September 2024, *Le Commandant Charcot* will embark on a unique itinerary, never before achieved by sea: crossing the Arctic Ocean via the Geographic North Pole. No fewer than 20 researchers will be on board to experience this historic exploration. Learning about the research projects of the onboard scientific mission will be core to the voyage.**

On 6 September 2024, *Le Commandant Charcot* will embark on a historic voyage to cross the Arctic Ocean via the Geographic North Pole. A world first. At the highest latitudes, the ship of scientific endeavour will attempt to unlock some of the secrets of the regions it crosses. "*We're building a journey where the process is reversed somewhat in that, here, science will become a vector, a driving force even,*" assures the man who will take command of it, Étienne Garcia. "*Normally, Le Commandant Charcot takes up to four researchers on board. For this exploration, there will be around 20 of them,*" explains Vladislav Sidorenkov-Duprez,

coordinator of PONANT Science, a department developed by the company to take part in international scientific and ethnological programmes. A team selected by an independent, international conglomerate of experts. "*ARICE [Arctic Research Icebreaker Consortium], funded by the European Commission, is leading 95% of calls for projects initiated by PONANT. They select applications primarily on the basis of the quality of the proposed project and the expected impact of the associated scientific research programme,*" he adds.

In mid-June 2023, ARICE launched a major call for projects. "*Rather than separate teams coming on board, it will be a single multidisciplinary project bringing together multiple specialisms,*" explains Vladislav Sidorenkov-Duprez. The data collected during the exploration will be freely available for consultation, in accordance with the open data principle governing the dissemination of research on board. Another special feature is that "*For the first time, PONANT will be asking experts to lead one talk a day to help spread the scientific knowledge,*" says the coordinator of the PONANT Science programme.





*96 scientists have been welcomed on board since 2021.*

### **A JOURNEY GUIDED BY SCIENCE**

While this transarctic route is creating emotion in high scientific circles, it is also sharpening the minds of the sailors. *"A route never taken, a total ice itinerary... We're preparing for some surprising conditions. You can't rest on your laurels, you have to be prepared to constantly reassess the passage ahead,"* explains Étienne Garcia. He will be accompanied at the helm by Captain Patrick Marchesseau, his colleague and friend, *"an indispensable duo on a compelling voyage during which we will all gain experience together. One of us will have to be on the bridge at all times."*

During the crossing, Captain Garcia will set out in search of the two North Poles, Geographic and Magnetic. *"A real challenge, even with such a ship,"* he enthuses. *"The Geographic North Pole, the*

*emblematic 90 °N, extreme point, is relatively stable, being the axis of the earth. The Magnetic North Pole, meanwhile, is on the move, as it is linked to the Earth's magnetic field."* The itinerary, shared with scientists, will also have to deal with the concentration of ice. *"Nothing can be taken for granted in this particularly dynamic environment. We're going to have to plan our route using satellite maps and optimise it according to the natural channels of open water. We'll be sailing through the drifting ice pack. This means that the ice is in constant motion and closes up almost immediately behind us,"* says the Captain. Sailors and researchers approach this crossing of the Arctic with the same humility: *"We cannot sail arrogantly in these areas. We realise how small we are in relation to our environment,"* says Étienne Garcia.

# WINTER





# IN THE GREAT NORTH

# Welcome to the heart of the boreal winter



The glaciated Far North is generally out of bounds to visitors during the winter season. José Sarica, Expedition Experience Director at PONANT, has helped design some ground-breaking voyages and tells us about his first scouting trip on the St Lawrence River, in Quebec, in the middle of a boreal winter. A close encounter with a fantastic adventure of discovery for the winter of 2024-2025.

## **How did the idea of exploring the Far North in winter come about?**

We are lucky enough to have the unique capabilities of *Le Commandant Charcot* to call upon, which fully comes to the fore in the ice. In particular, it is capable of travelling to this part of the world that is usually inaccessible to passenger ships during the winter, because of the conditions of the ice, being the only one able to tackle it safely. This allows us to open the way to a new form of exploration and to highlight isolated communities.

## **What kind of itineraries can we expect in winter aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*?**

Our mission was to find places where it wasn't too cold, where the polar night still gave light, and where the outside temperatures remained tolerable so that guests could make the most of the adventure. We've designed itineraries with

shorter distances and stopovers over one or more nights, making it possible to take things slowly, feel free, and to contemplate, while also reducing our carbon footprint by 30%. We'll visit the Norwegian fjords, Finnish Lapland, the Baltic Sea or the Gulf of Bothnia, and of course Greenland and Quebec, in the heart of the ice pack.

## **You know Quebec well, having lived there for 18 years. What is it about the St Lawrence River region that left a particular impression on you?**

The province of Quebec has two very contrasting faces, and between the colours of the Indian summer and the thick white coat of winter, I totally lost my bearings. It was a magical experience. I realised that the true richness of the region becomes prevalent in winter, when nature takes over – and to which we have to humbly adapt.

## **What immersive experiences will be offered to travellers in this region?**

We offer ice fishing (with, if the fishing is good, a *ceviche* tasting on the ice floe), guided hikes (on snowshoes, cross-country skis or snowmobile) through immense boreal forests, dog-sledding and kayaking excursions. Also, an overnight stay in a chalet, at the summit of Mount Valin, or in a tent, with the Innu community of Sept-Îles. You can also expect the experience of a complete change of scenery through contact with local communities, with whom guests can share life experiences that are deeply moving.



**What do you consider to be the key moments of this trip?**

Saguenay is the cornerstone of this exploration. *Le Commandant Charcot* settles in the ice, guests disembark right on the fjord's pack ice and from there set off to enjoy a multitude of experiences with the locals.

**How can you ensure an authentic experience that benefits both travellers and local communities?**

It's the dialogue and exchanges that make all the difference. Our role is to prepare guests to leave their comfort zone and rid themselves of preconceived ideas. With the local communities, we discuss our mutual needs and desires, always with the utmost respect, and together we devise itineraries that will shed light on the incredibly rich environments, customs and people. The arrival of *Le Commandant Charcot* in winter in this region is of such importance to the locals that some festivities will even be postponed by a few weeks to accommodate us.

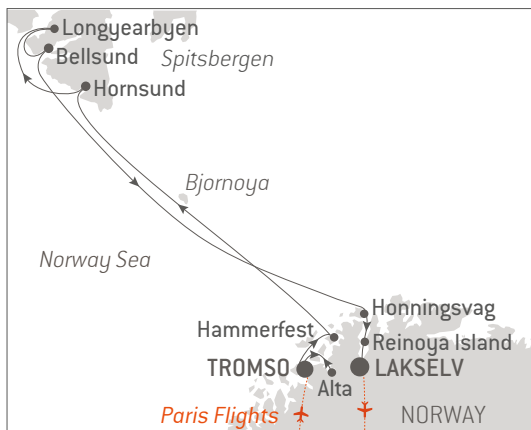
**What moved you most during the adventure?**

This trip is a compendium of emotions. I remember laughing and even crying, experiencing near-meditative moments in the face of the grandeur of the elements. It was above all the encounters and, in particular, the one with an Innu hunter [*read page 132*] that touched me deeply. Sharing a caribou heart by the fire, in a tent in the middle of the snow-covered landscapes we'd just crossed, made me feel extremely privileged and grateful.

**If you had to sum up this trip in one sentence, what would you say?**

In Quebec, we have a saying: "*there's not many places in the world where you can experience the cold with such warmth*". That perfectly sums up the spirit of the trip.

## From the Northern Lights to the Polar Night



Experience time as never before beyond the Arctic Circle! Close to the legendary North Cape, Lapland offers amazing scenery, including fjords, unspoilt islands of dolomitic rock, snow-capped peaks and beautiful coastal towns. Meet with one of Europe's last indigenous peoples, the Sámi, on their own lands, as they welcome you and share their traditions and stories of their life as reindeer herders. When night falls, go in search of the Northern Lights or savour that magical moment from the stylish cocoon of your ship. Then, head north towards the icy coasts of Spitsbergen. As twilight descends, explore majestic fjords and ancient glaciers surrounded by mountainous terrain. There, near the top of the world, the sun takes its leave, and you welcome winter with delight beneath the stars of the polar night.



### Tromsø · Lakselv

18th October 2024 - 12 days / 11 nights on board

From €12,150 <sup>(1)</sup>

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- An unprecedented journey above the Arctic Circle.
- A unique experience in complete communion with the surrounding scenery.
- Reach the North Cape, an emblematic site and the northernmost point of Europe.
- The opportunity to observe the enchanting spectacle of the Northern Lights.
- Bid farewell to the sun in the fjords of Spitsbergen, before the long polar night.
- Typical winter activities (to be pre-booked before departure): kayaking, encounters and discovering Sámi culture and communities, visiting a fishing village, chasing the Northern Lights, and more.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassador, renowned to help you get all the best shots.

Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: flights Paris/Tromsø and Lakselv/Paris as well as transfers.



*Camille Bignan, PONANT Product Development Officer, who specialises in Norway.*



# And far to the north – the reindeer people

The Sámi people may seem unfamiliar to the modern world, but this indigenous community, one of the last in Europe, has an inspiring history and a way of life in perfect harmony with nature. Discover ancestral customs in the heart of the vast northern landscapes, where reindeer are at the centre of everything.

Wisdom and resilience. These are the watchwords that seem to guide the Sámi, who are determined to preserve their customs despite the changes in the world. This indigenous community, based mainly in Lapland – which stretches between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia – leads a day-to-day lifestyle intimately linked to nature. This people, which once followed the reindeer migration, have now settled in villages of just a few thousand inhabitants. They raise reindeer on various plots of land, making clothes from their skins, handicrafts and traditional shoes filled with dry straw to protect from the winter cold.

At Christmas, the Sámi welcome the curious public and offer reindeer sleigh rides as a way of raising awareness of their existence and sharing with them the colours of the world through their eyes.

You can recognise them by their colourful outfits, where the electric blue and bright red of the Sámi flag mingle with fringed scarves and embroidered sleeves. On their thick belts, they hang mugs and tools, and display their marital status – whether they're a married couple or single. Their traditional songs called *joiks* – inherited from fairies according to certain legends – celebrate the spirits of nature. Their heritage has been handed down from generation to generation, and their way of living in harmony with the elements is a rich lesson. Aware of the fragility of the ecosystems that surround them, the Sámi pay tribute to them in every aspect of their daily lives. Despite economic pressures, the exploitation of resources and the challenge of global warming, they continue to assert their culture, threatened with extinction, and their sacred lands.

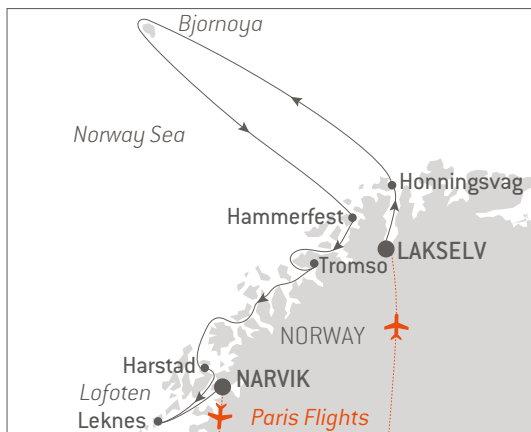
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## "A magical encounter that gives meaning to the journey"

For Camille Bignan, Product Development Officer PONANT, who specialises in Norway, the time spent with the Sámi community is undeniably one of the highlights of this trip: *"Eating a pot-au-feu in a tent and chatting with them in the special atmosphere of the twilight that envelops us and the crackling*

*wood fire creates a moment of magic. All the elements are there for passengers to be completely immersed in the Sámi way of life. The language barrier no longer exists when we share glances, gestures, smiles and laughter, even at innocent misunderstandings."*

## Polar Lights from North Cape to the Lofoten Islands



From early morning to dusk, the hours of daylight shorten as winter approaches near the Arctic Circle. Explore the unspoiled shores of the North Cape and the sumptuous Lofoten Islands at the beginning of winter and enjoy a rare sensory experience in the waning light. On board, from the Observatory lounge, or on land during a snowshoeing trek or dog-sleigh ride, savour the pleasure of connecting with the elements and the beauty of the landscapes you are crossing. From majestic fjords to archaeological sites, from fishing villages to northern forests, Lapland reveals its fascinating secrets. Take the opportunity to meet the Sámi on their lands, and learn about their life as reindeer herders, truly in touch with nature. Finally, head for the unspoiled Lofoten Islands: what better place could there be to see the Northern Lights? When a natural wonder reveals itself, the magic of the moment will never leave you.



### Lakselv • Narvik

29th October 2024 - 10 days / 9 nights on board

From €10,330 <sup>(1)</sup>

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- An unprecedented event, for the first time in winter, on the shores of Norway, from North Cape to the Lofoten Islands.
- Discover the Lofoten archipelago, between wild nature and Viking heritage.
- The opportunity to observe the Northern Lights.
- Typical winter activities (to be pre-booked before departure): kayaking, the Lofoten Islands on horseback, tastings of local produce, encounters with Sámi communities, hiking, chasing the Northern Lights, and more.
- Reach the North Cape, an emblematic site and the northernmost point of Europe.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassador, renowned to help you get all the best shots.

Included in your cruise <sup>(3)</sup>: flights Paris/Lakselv, and Narvik/Paris as well as transfers.



# SPOTLIGHT ON THE AURORA BOREALIS

The first written record of an *aurora borealis* dates back 3.000 years. Since then, from one century to the next, from one culture to the next, these strange celestial lights have never ceased to fuel imaginations, myths and legends. These enchanting, luminescent tapestries that undulate across the northern sky are 100% natural.

## NORTHERN LIGHTS

Solar wind particles colliding with the Earth's magnetic field

### 4 DAYS

The time needed for solar particles to travel the 150 million km separating the Earth from the Sun at an average speed of 450 km/s.

### THE BEST 'OBSERVATORIES'

Greenland, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Alaska, Canada

### THE SOUND OF LIGHT

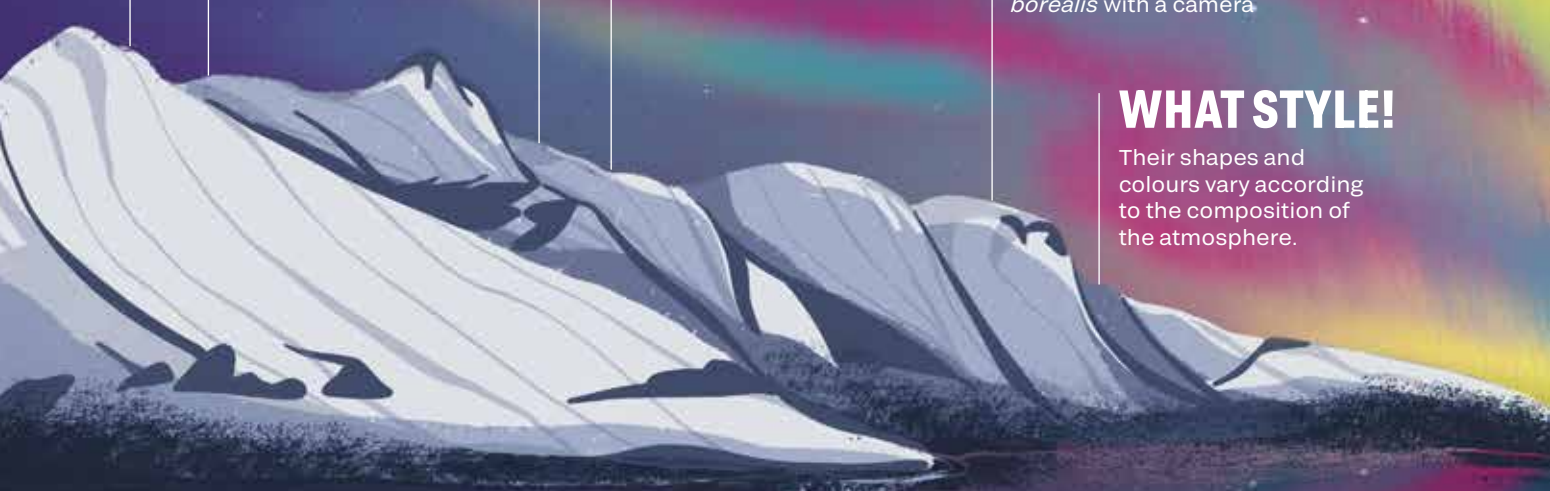
Auroras that dance... and sing! They are said to produce almost imperceptible sounds, ranging from 'whistling' to 'crackling'.

### 10 TO 25 SECONDS

The exposure time needed to capture an *aurora borealis* with a camera

### WHAT STYLE!

Their shapes and colours vary according to the composition of the atmosphere.



## FIRST "NORTHERN LIGHTS"

Whether the Italian astronomer Galileo in 1620 or the French philosopher and theologian Pierre Gassendi in 1649, who was the first to mention the *aurora borealis*? The issue remains divisive. However, it was in the 17th century that these mysterious luminescent phenomena came to be known as the *aurora borealis*. It was not until the aptly named Age of Enlightenment that the first elements of serious scientific analysis were introduced.

## "ARCTIC ARTIST"

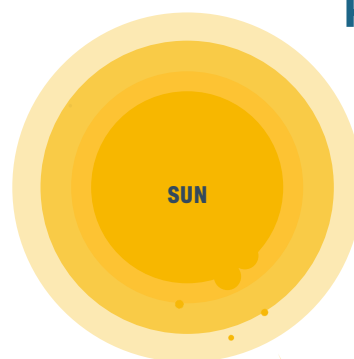
That's how she liked to define herself. Captivated by the beauty of the Norwegian archipelago of Lofoten Swedish painter Anna Boberg (1864-1935) spent more than 30 years here, summer and winter. Glaciers, the midnight sun and the Northern Lights featured among her favourite subjects, such as her *Northern Lights. Study from North Norway* exhibited in Sweden's National Museum, in which the aurora borealis becomes a marvellous, poetic celestial symphony.

## THE VALKYRIES RIDE

Luminous arches guiding the dead to the afterlife for the Inuits, fiery foxes running across the sky for the Finns, signs of ill omen for the Sámi, and for the Vikings, the Northern Lights were a reflection of the Valkyries' armour. These fearsome warriors were sent to Earth by Odin to recruit the best warriors and lead them to Valhalla for Ragnarök, the final battle and the promise of a new era.

Northern Lights can be seen on itineraries detailed on pages 110-111, 114-115, 118-119 and 130-131.

## A FASCINATING NATURAL PHENOMENON



**1.** During **strong solar flares**, large quantities of **particles are ejected into space**.

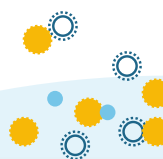
**2.** While most are **deflected by the Earth's magnetic field**, some are **attracted to the poles**.



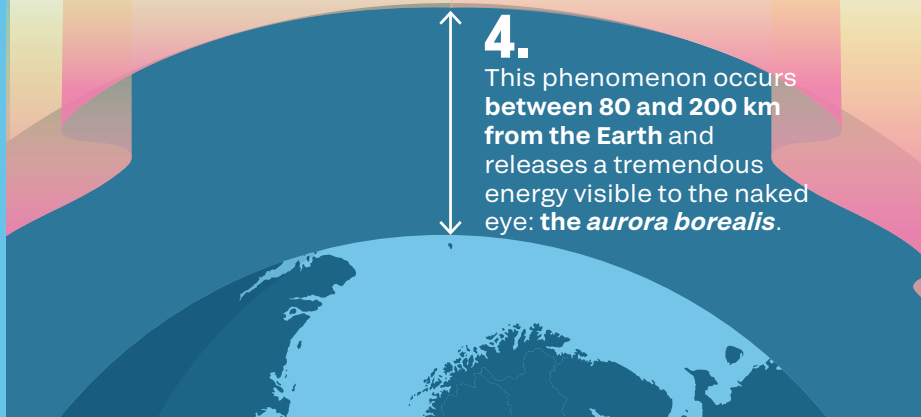
To the north of the globe, this zone lies around and above the Arctic Circle, particularly in the Svalbard and the most northerly part of Norway.

**3.** In the atmosphere, solar particles **come into contact with ozone, oxygen or nitrogen, creating different colours**.

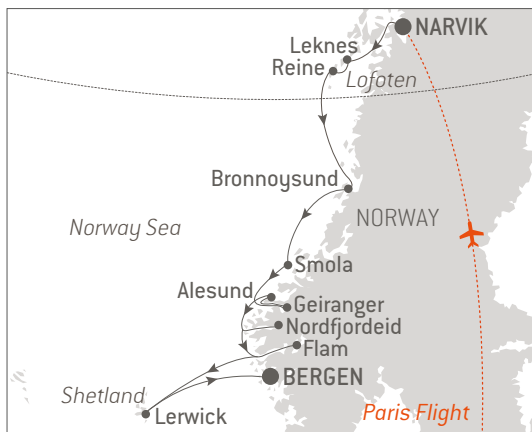
ATMOSPHERE



**4.** This phenomenon occurs **between 80 and 200 km from the Earth** and releases a tremendous energy visible to the naked eye: **the aurora borealis**.



## Autumn splendours from Lofoten to the Norwegian Fjords



The fragile, patiently crafted edge of Norway's coastline is revealed with incredible landscapes and priceless treasures, shaped over time by the repeated assaults of the sea and wind. Like the Norwegians, enjoy *friluftsliv* – being close to nature without harming it – a philosophical concept that has been elevated to a way of life. In the soft light that heralds the arrival of winter, lose yourself in the Lofoten archipelago and observe its wild contours and fascinating scenery of rock, sand and plains amidst the sea; immerse yourself in nature in the stunning fjords surmounted by snow-capped peaks; discover its Viking heritage, its coastal towns bathed in light and its fishing villages along the shores. Under a magnificent seasonal twilight, sea-spray accompanies your journey right into Norway, among *sker* (rocky islets) and the sea.



## Narvik • Bergen

7th November 2024 - 14 days / 13 nights on board

From €11,310 <sup>(1)</sup>

### HIGHLIGHTS

- For the first time in winter with PONANT, discover the treasures of Norway, between the Lofoten archipelagos, fjords and outstanding cities.
- Discover the Lofoten archipelago, between wild nature and Viking heritage.
- The opportunity to see the Northern Lights.
- The fjords of Geiranger, a UNESCO site, and Songerfjord, the second largest fjord in the world.
- Discovering emblematic Scandinavian architecture: Bryggen, the Hanseatic district of Bergen (a UNESCO site), the Art Nouveau district of Ålesund and the *rorbuer*, dark red fishing huts.
- Typical winter activities (to be pre-booked before departure): kayaking, the Lofoten Islands on horseback, ice fishing, chasing the Northern Lights, and more.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassador, renowned to help you get all the best shots.

Included in your cruise <sup>(3)</sup>: outward flight Paris/Narvik, and transfer.

# Live to the rhythm of the fjords

PONANT has long been offering summer visits to the Norwegian fjords and for the first time, in 2024, we're taking you there as winter dawns. At this unique time of year, when the region is adorned in warm colours and nightfall comes very early, the sensations on offer are intense. The landscapes and scenery unveil their full mystical quality, and the Viking epics come to life.

## Autumn, all alone in the world

In the fjords of Norway, nature reigns supreme. The steep mountains, a legacy of ancient glacial valleys, plunge down into the turquoise waters of an ocean that penetrates inland. When sailing here in autumn, the scenery is spectacular. The colours of October and November, with the broad-leaved trees golden, orange, green in places, and deeply red in others, are simply magical. For a moment, you might think you're in Canada, but that impression quickly

fades. *"Twilight enveloped us in the middle of the day and plunged us into a mystical, incomparable atmosphere,"* remembers Camille Bignan, PONANT Product Development Officer, who specialises in Norway. *Le Commandant Charcot* offers guests the unprecedented experience of sailing through the country's most beautiful scenery during this season, from Lofoten to Bergen.







## A life in the outdoors

Norwegians are taught from an early age to enjoy life in the outdoors. It's a philosophy known as *friluftsliv*, which is rooted in the local culture and complemented by the concept of *kos*: the simple, basic idea of having a good time. So whatever the season or the vagaries of the weather, the locals get together to hike, camp, ski, explore the lakes and forests around them, and form a bond with the landscapes, which contributes undeniably to their mental equilibrium. It's a way of living more serenely, and has even resulted in a law named *friluftsløven*. This gives people free access to the country's natural areas, with very few restrictions. In short, nature belongs to everyone.

## In the shoes of a Viking

If you perfectly picture the sails of a Viking ship appearing in the distance and imagine battle cries echoing in the hollows of the mountains as you contemplate the surrounding views from *Le Commandant Charcot* when visiting Nordfjordeid, the sensations become all the more vivid. *"The cruise guests are transported hundreds of years back in time thanks to an impressive reproduction of the largest ship of the era designed with every last detail in mind, right down to the sculptures that would have once adorned it,"* explains Camille Bignan. It's a way of both enriching the adventure with concrete images and of understanding the valour of these people, who were courageous enough to make such raw, natural spaces their own.



## Scandinavian wonderland and Christmas markets



As winter sets in on the Baltic Sea, the first cold weather heralds that magical season as Christmas approaches. Rediscover the great Baltic cities in a new seasonal setting with PONANT: the bitter cold of these ancient strongholds does not detract from the magic of the illuminated neighbourhoods or Scandinavian traditions. The unmistakable scent of gingerbread wafts through the Christmas markets, creating a welcoming atmosphere as you wander through the brightly lit streets. From the stylish cocoon of your ship, opening onto the outside world, you will witness enchanting scenery, fascinating natural landscapes and stunning urban vistas. In the morning light or under the festive lights, the cobble streets echo here, the Art Nouveau style. There, the fortifications that structure the thoroughfares, while elsewhere Gothic and Baroque architecture mingle with modern buildings: bathed in the winter glow, Baltic cities are awe-inspiring.



### Helsinki • Helsinki

2nd and 11th December 2024

10 days / 9 nights on board

**From €7,650** <sup>(1)</sup>

2nd December departure: with featured guest Julien Gueslin, historian and expert of Baltic countries.



11th December departure: Jacques Nebot, founder of Kaviari and a leading caviar specialist, and in the presence of a Michelin-starred chef.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The emblematic cities of the Baltic Sea for the very first time with PONANT in the heart of winter.
- Get ready for Christmas with family and experience the magic of winter Scandinavian way of life.
- Visit traditional Christmas markets and learn about local crafts and gastronomic treats.
- Unique landscapes during fascinating cruises, including one to the Stockholm archipelago.
- The enchantment of Scandinavian cities outside high season as you wander through these thousands of festive lights.
- A magical overnight stay opposite the old town of Stockholm.



# Nordic traditions: an enchanted winter

The wintry landscapes of the Nordic countries celebrate the enchantment of Christmas. You can imagine the dense forests carpeted with snow, the towns and villages decked out in their most beautiful lights, the icy lakes, and skies with their distinctive glow. In the background we hear whispers of enchanted stories from the region, where traditions honour nature, and nature brings traditions to life. Once upon a time...



## *The Troll Christmas...*

There's a kind of magic in the air, and it's taking hold of people's hearts: Christmas is here. Hidden in the heart of the Scandinavian mountains, covered in a thick white blanket, the trolls are bursting with curiosity. Fascinated by this traditional festival, they decide to head for the neighbouring village to observe the festivities. As they approached, discreetly so as not to be caught out, they discovered houses decorated with a thousand sparkling garlands, huge fir trees adorned with countless ornaments and various objects... A bauble here, a wooden moose there. Through the large windows, they watch families exchanging gifts and sharing a

feast. They feel an indescribable warmth, despite the cold of the season, and are overwhelmed. So is Christmas all about love and sharing? They want to take part too! And so, with hearts full of innocence, they prepare their gifts - mainly small natural treasures gathered from the land over the years. They leave them outside the houses and indulge in a few pranks. Suddenly, snowflakes twirl through the air, and snowmen metamorphose into other creatures. It's their way of bringing an extra ounce of magic to the Christmas season for humans, who will feel their presence with wonder as they admire the enchantment of nature.





## ... and the *Nisses*, iconic creatures of Scandinavian folklore

While trolls are undoubtedly part of the Scandinavian imagination when it comes to Christmas, there is another key creature, even more important than Father Christmas. We're talking about the *Nisse*, in Norwegian, a sort of elderly elf, dressed in red and recognisable by his long beard and pointed cap, but capable of taking on other forms according to the tale.

Every year, as the festivities approach, families leave a bowl of milk outside to thank the *Nisse* for its protection. This fairy character is known for looking after farms and homes, so that the inhabitants can sleep soundly. They have nothing to fear for their children or their land, the *Nisse* watches over them and preserves everything in the heart of winter.

## A winter punctuated by traditional festivals

Scandinavian fairy tales all have two things in common: the presence of unusual creatures and a tribute to nature. The traditional festivities of these northern countries also share this spirit, and bear witness to the rich culture that enlivens the winter season and makes the cold more enchanting than anywhere else. Each one is an opportunity to celebrate family, nature and the simple things in life. In Finland, for example, they begin at the beginning of November with the *Kekri*, huge banquets punctuated by dances and rituals to honour ancestors and ensure a good harvest

for the coming year. Then, for the Swedes, comes Saint Lucia's Day, a symbol of hope, when a young girl dressed in white is crowned with candles and a procession is organised to call for light and combat the darkness of winter. Then comes the *Jul*, Christmas and all that surrounds it, throughout Scandinavia, and in mid-January the decorations are taken down for *Tjugondag Knut*. You can meditate, savour traditional pastries and admire the sleepy landscapes that have been preserved all year round.

## Winter magic in the Gulf of Bothnia



**PORTRAIT**  
Renaud Capuçon,  
a violinist at sea



To celebrate the festive season, enjoy a family getaway to the Gulf of Bothnia and experience the enchantment of a Scandinavian winter and its traditions. Whether aboard the ship or on land, the magic of the festive season lends a special atmosphere to the joy in the ship's public areas, the Scandinavian cities lit up in the early twilight, Rovaniemi – the home town of Santa Claus – and the Christmas markets scented with spicy mulled wine. Fascinating scenery is revealed along the way, cities of history and character, secret archipelagos and the landscapes of Lapland and Finland with their untamed shores and northern forests. Awaken your inner child and experience the joys of winter through the exhilaration of a walk in the snow, or the ephemeral splendour of the Northern Lights. In the Gulf of Bothnia, the enchantment can also be seen in the light in your eyes.



### Helsinki • Kemi

20th December 2024 - 9 days / 8 nights on board

### Kemi • Helsinki

28th December 2024 - 9 days / 8 nights on board

From €9,220 <sup>(1)</sup>



Two musical cruises in partnership with RADIO CLASSIQUE, with the exceptional presence on board of Alain Duault. 20th December departure: **Christmas magic with Renaud Capuçon**, with the presence of Laurence Ferrari, journalist. 28th December departure: **Musical New Year in the Gulf of Bothnia**, with the exceptional presence of violinist Augustin Dumay and cellist Camille Thomas.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- A brand-new journey in the Gulf of Bothnia.
- Sailing in the High Coast archipelago in northern Sweden, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and in Stockholm archipelago.
- Discover the magic of the Christmas markets and the wonderland of Scandinavian towns illuminated for the winter.
- Towns with exceptional heritage: Rauma; the church-town of Gammelstad, a UNESCO site (visiting from Luleå); and the neoclassical city of Oulu.
- Kid Explorers Club in partnership with MAUD FONTENOY FOUNDATION: an educational voyage with workshops designed for children.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Typical winter activities (to be pre-booked before departure): snowshoeing, dog sledding, reindeer rides, lantern walks, ice fishing, children's activities, Christmas markets, and optional activities: snowmobile rides, visits to Rovaniemi – Santa's village.

Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: flights Paris/Kemi or Kemi/Paris as well as transfers.

# Northern stopovers – the charms of winter

**Winter magic in the Gulf of Bothnia.** This itinerary leads guests through coastal towns, from Finland and Sweden to Lapland, each with its own unique character and proud architectural heritage. These picturesque towns are great places to stroll around and soak up the Christmas spirit. Focus on three brand-new calls.

*A taste of history with Jean-Louis Joret,  
a Scandinavian specialist*



## **LULEÅ, THE CHARM OF OLD SWEDISH VILLAGES**

Located at the end of the Gulf of Bothnia is Luleå, one of Sweden's most iconic ports. Facing it is an archipelago of hundreds of islands, creating a sublime panorama. Leaving the ship to explore the city is to fall under the spell of the streets of its historic centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The red-painted wooden houses with a church in the centre of the picturesque Gammelstad is an illustrious example of the traditional Scandinavian villages of the time, known as *church villages*. While walking through its streets, alive with Christmas carols and displaying winter colours,

it is not uncommon to meet hikers, returning from a snowshoe walk or a dogsled outing.

*"The position of the present-day town dates back to the end of the 17th century. (...) The earth's crust rose as a result of the retreat glaciers, (...) the town and port had to leave Gammelstad, and settle on today's coastline."*





### RAUMA, A MEDIEVAL BREAK

A change of scenery is guaranteed when you disembark at Rauma, a small coastal town on the eastern shore of the Bothnian Sea whose medieval atmosphere is enhanced by winter illuminations. Explore one of Finland's best-preserved pieces of history while strolling through the cobbled streets of the old town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, founded in 1442. The shimmering facades of the 600 Nordic-style wooden houses plunge us into another century. This journey back in time is to be enjoyed to the full in the passages of the

Christmas market, or while wrapped up under a blanket on a café terrace. With the traditional mulled wine, *glögi*, in your hands, the spicy aromas instantly warm your heart and cheeks.

*"The Old Town was partially bombarded by the Franco-British fleets during the Åland War, around 1853 during the Crimean War conflict."*

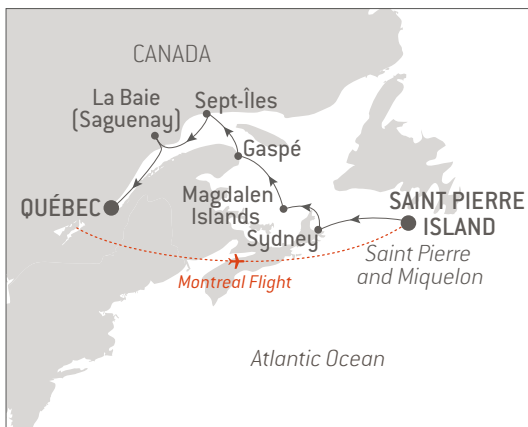


### OULU, A MORE MODERN BREAK

Almost in Lapland, the enchanting atmosphere of Christmas is taking hold of the inhabitants and passersby of the town of Oulu, the capital of Ostrobothnia. In this major Finnish cultural and university hub, the streets in the centre boast neoclassical architecture that is enhanced by festive lights. Families from all over the world come to ski the region's magnificent slopes and meet up at cafés to share a meal, a story or a song. On the market square, you can admire the library, the locally famous statue of a curvaceous policeman, and the ice skaters figures. In a warm atmosphere, it's the perfect stop-off to capture all the sweet essence of winter.

*"This city of Swedish origin was founded in the early 17th century, for an economic purpose, because of pine tar. Since the Viking era, this material was used for the building of ships."*

## The St Lawrence River in the heart of the boreal winter



### DOCUMENTARY

Surprises, emotions, wonder: the scouting carried out by our teams in Québec, to offer you an extraordinary experience, exclusive and unprecedented.



Embark on an exclusive odyssey along the River Saint Lawrence: a PONANT exclusive voyage in the middle of the Canadian winter when the river remains inaccessible to traditional ships. From the cosiness of the ship, you can navigate through different types of ice and follow the changes in the enchanting landscapes, where nature reigns supreme: northern forests of immaculate conifers, snow-covered valleys, a sea of ice. On land, you can enjoy winter activities such as ice fishing, snowshoeing and dog-sleigh rides and, if you're lucky, you may spot the emblematic caribou, elks or black bears in their natural habitat. The bright colours of the fishermen's houses stand out against the harshness of winter. Whether it's the Québec welcome or encounters with the Innu community, according to the Saguenay proverb, there *"aren't many places where you can experience the cold with so much warmth"*.



### Saint Pierre and Miquelon • Québec

17th January and 10th February 2025

13 days / 12 nights on board

### Québec • Saint Pierre and Miquelon

29th January and 22nd February 2025

13 days / 12 nights on board

From €19,985 <sup>(1)</sup>

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the St Lawrence in winter, a PONANT exclusive: a journey uniquely possible aboard *Le Commandant Charcot*, capable of sailing in the sea ice of the river in this season.
- Privileged encounters with Quebecers, the Innu and Micmac indigenous communities.
- The opportunity to witness the Northern Lights.
- Unforgettable overnight stays to take the time to contemplate the spectacle before you.
- Landscapes including great open spaces, fjords, immaculate boreal forests, sea ice, snow-covered valleys.
- The expert support of a reinforced team of nature guides throughout the cruise.
- Workshops and conferences with our Photo Ambassadors, renowned to help you get all the best shots.
- Typical winter activities kayaking, ice fishing and raw redfish tasting, dog sledding, fat biking, meeting the Innu, local tastings, polar hiking on foot or snowshoes. Optional activities: polar climbing, ice canoeing, horseback skiing. 10th and 22nd February 2025 departures: the chance to watch whitecoats calving in the Magdalen Islands, the only place in the world where you can observe this unique spectacle.

Included in your cruise <sup>(2)</sup>: the flight from Saint Pierre and Miquelon to Montreal or vice versa, and the transfer.



# The Innu people: the thousand-year-old soul of Québec

Originally from the Labrador region and north-eastern Québec, the Innu people now number more than 27,000. Although little-known, they have existed for thousands of years. For the first time, guests on *Le Commandant Charcot* will get to know the Innu community of Sept-Îles during the winter of 2024-2025. José Sarica, Director of the PONANT Expedition Experience, went to meet them when he was scouting the area. Immersion.

To get to Sept-Îles, in the northern Gulf of St Lawrence, José Sarica and his teams first travelled by snowmobile through the unusual landscape of the boreal forest. *"We were surrounded by thick snow. The air was very fresh and dry. It gave us the sensation of feeling even more alive,"* he explains. But it was the contact with Chrystal Fontaine and her community that made the experience the most memorable: *"I realised at the age of 30, facing a caribou, that I was made to hunt,"* says this Innu woman, who learned to hunt with her husband. Thanks to him, Chrystal was able to be sure that she belonged to the Innu people, although she initially thought of herself as Métis, another of Canada's Indigenous nations. *"I am Innu, my children are Innu, this is now fully part of our*

*identity,"* she says, pointing to the white leather canvas spread out in her tent. The caribou, an animal of vital importance to her culture, represents not only a means of keeping warm, but also a foodstuff. *"We were served caribou heart soup, a very precious food, and there was something comforting about it,"* clarifies José Sarica. *"We were touched and truly living in the moment!"*

## HARMONY AND SHARING

Rich in history and know-how, the Innu people are keen to preserve their traditional way of life, in which nature plays an essential role: *"The smell of balsam fir as soon as you enter the small shelter pervades the senses, the warmth of the wood fire warms the soul, and the dawning northern lights make the moment even more magical,"* remembers José Sarica. The wonder and the harmony, and the full awareness of this being a special moment suspended in time, are the emotions felt unanimously by the PONANT scouting team, in the face of stories imbued with humility and the connection felt in these very human encounters. These sentiments are warmly shared by the Innu: *"We are happy to know that the world is interested in us, that we can showcase our culture. It's the best sign we could receive,"* says Chrystal, who plans to install tents to welcome PONANT's guests waiting to live this immersive experience. An exclusive winter stopover that promises to stir the emotions!



# *Le Commandant Charcot* continues to surprise you...

Behind the scenes at PONANT, we're always keen to offer you new experiences.

Our 2024-2025 winter season is being finalised. In addition to the voyages offered in this brochure, we invite you to explore the boreal regions of Greenland and Canada very early in the season, during new, forthcoming itineraries.

Between monumental icebergs trapped in the pack ice, immaculate landscapes and meetings with Inuit communities, the Arctic is endlessly changing, offering you a thousand territories to dream about.



# Complement your trip

Take in a change of scenery before and after your cruise by exploring fascinating landscapes and iconic places and awaken all your senses. Enjoy unique moments and let the spirit of the journey carry you away little by little.

## ON THE CHILEAN WINE ROUTE

*From Santiago*

Enjoy a Chilean getaway before your cruise by visiting the towns and vineyards for which the country is famous. Discover the Maipo Valley, its history and its vineyards on two guided tours of the Concha y Toro and Matetic estates, including a tasting session and lunch. You will then travel to Valparaíso. Discover the creative power of the city that inspired Pablo Neruda, between the hills overlooking the Pacific Ocean and the colourful facades of the UNESCO-listed historic quarter. You will be seduced by the romantic atmosphere of the city and explore *La Sebastiana*, the writer's house and the murals, for which the city is renowned.



3 nights

Price: €4,330



3 nights

Price: €4,370

## ADVENTURE AT THE DOOR OF THE ARCTIC

*From Longyearbyen*

Immerse yourself in the world's most northerly archipelago, Svalbard. In Longyearbyen, you can visit the museum and a coal mine, as well as soak up local life at the Svalbard craft brewery. The archipelago's fascinating landscapes are revealed on a trip in a dog-drawn cariole or by speedboat in Borebukta Bay, inhabited by walrus and surrounded by glaciers. You'll discover a former Soviet mining colony in magnificent Isfjorden, at Colesbukta. Then, during an evening at Camp Barentz, under the midnight sun, you will learn about the history of the archipelago discovered in 1956. A moment out of time.



## PARISIAN GETAWAY AND LUXE À LA FRANCAISE

*Paris, before and after your cruise from and/or to Tromsø, Lakselv, Narvik, Kemi, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, and Longyearbyen.*

Le Meurice is an inspiring place in the heart of Paris, shaped over time by the artists who stayed there and drew inspiration from it. Following on from its talented residents, from Dalí and Zola to Warhol and Dylan, take time out for a delightful pause and savour the comfort of the palace, located in the heart of historic Paris. This palace is a blend of eighteenth-century splendour and contemporary comfort, embodying both peaceful elegance and creative

power, a veritable living art gallery. You will also have the opportunity to enjoy the delicacy of the dishes at Chef Alain Ducasse's Table and to take part in one of the cultural experiences on offer in the heart of the City of Light (optional).

3 nights

**From €1,970**



*Subject to availability, price per guest, based on double occupancy. You can find the complete list of our programmes and the corresponding prices 12 months before departure on our website or from our travel consultants. These programmes must be booked before departure.*



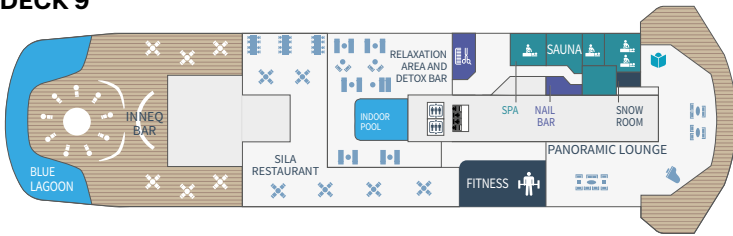
**WELCOME  
ABOARD**

Familiarise yourself with the ship,  
its guest areas and its various Staterooms  
and Suites.

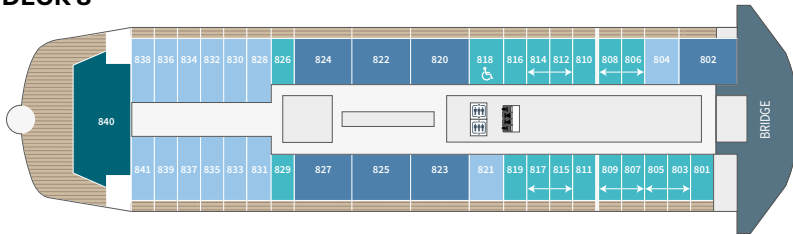


# Deck Plans

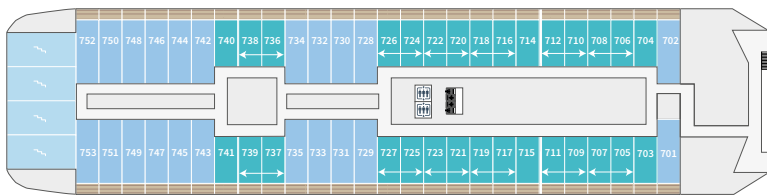
## DECK 9



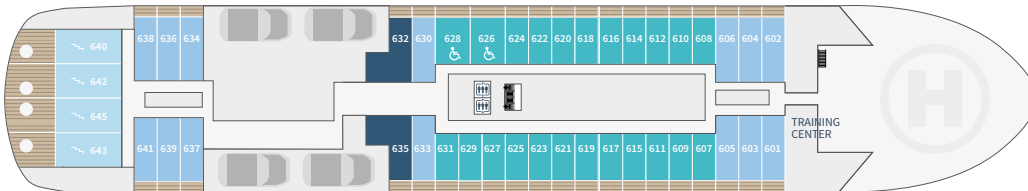
## DECK 8



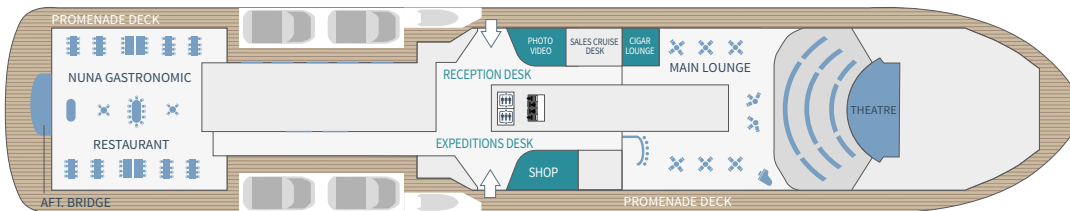
## DECK 7



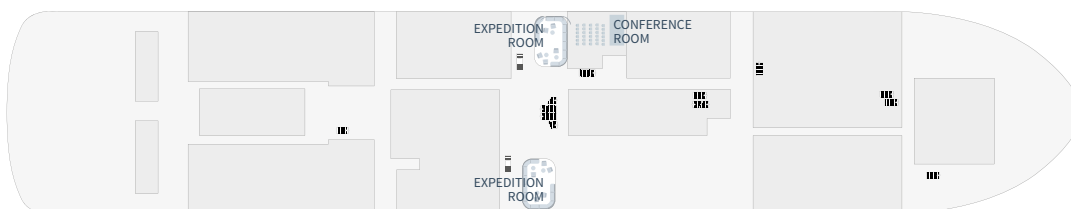
## DECK 6



## DECK 5



## DECK 3



- Owner's Suite
- Duplex Suites
- Privilege Suites Deck 8
- Grand Prestige Suites Deck 6
- ↔ Prestige Suites Decks 7 - 8
- Deluxe Suites Decks 6 - 7 - 8
- Prestige Staterooms Decks 6 - 7 - 8



A virtual 360° tour of *Le Commandant Charcot*



*Reception area*



*The Illu ('house' in the Inuit language) boutique*



*The Atrium, a digital creation by Miguel Chevalier*

#### **DECK 9**

Sila Restaurant – Panoramic Bar and Lounge – Fitness – Biologique Recherche Spa (Snow-Room – Massage Rooms – Sauna – Nail Shop) – Hair salon by Davines – Detox Bar – Pools (one heated indoor pool and one heated outdoor lagoon pool) – Inneq open-air Bar – Library

#### **DECK 8**

Owner's Suite – Deluxe Suites – Privilege Suites – Prestige Staterooms (including one for person of reduced mobility and Prestige Staterooms convertible into five Prestige Suites) – Bridge

#### **DECK 7**

Deluxe Suites – Prestige Staterooms (including Prestige Suites convertible into Prestige Suites)

#### **DECK 6**

Duplex Suites – Grand Prestige Suites – Deluxe Suites – Prestige Staterooms (including two Prestige Staterooms for person of reduced mobility)

#### **DECK 5**

Nuna Gastronomic Restaurant – Theatre – Main Lounge – Cigar Lounge – Shop – Reception Desk – Expedition Desk – Image & Photo Desk – Cruise Sales Desk – Promenade Deck – AFT. bridge

#### **DECK 4**

Medical centre

#### **DECK 3**

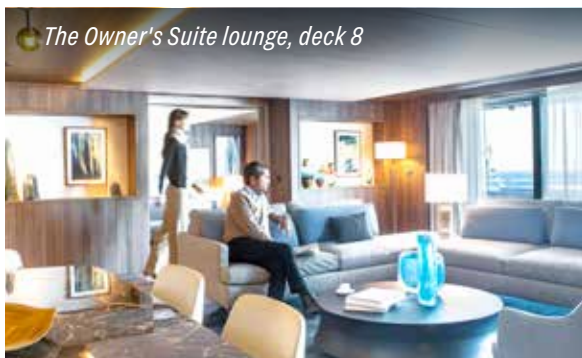
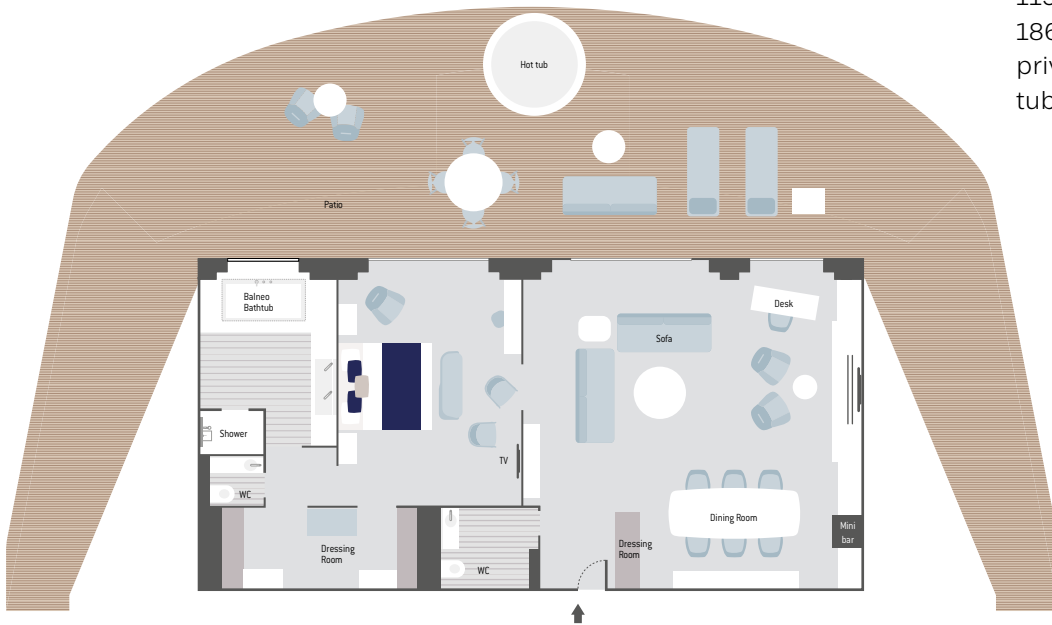
2 dedicated expedition boarding and disembarking rooms to port and starboard – Conference room

# Discover your Stateroom

## ● Owner's Suite

115 sq.m/1,237 sq.ft +  
186 sq.m/2,002 sq.ft  
private terrace with hot  
tub - balneo bathtub

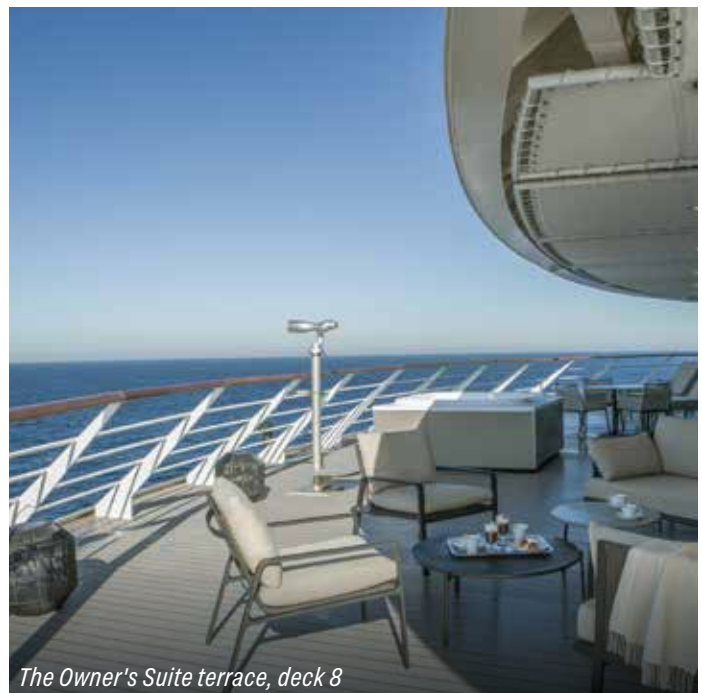
360° TOUR



*The Owner's Suite lounge, deck 8*



*The sleeping area of the Owner's Suite, deck 8*



*The Owner's Suite terrace, deck 8*

**360° TOUR** - Explore each Stateroom and Suite by aiming your camera at the corresponding QR code and picture yourself on board.



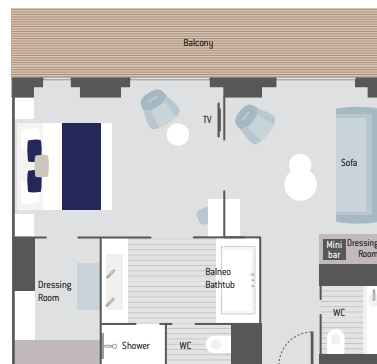
### ● Duplex Suites

94 sq.m/1,011 sq.ft +  
26 sq.m/279 sq.ft private  
terrace with hot tub -  
balneo bathtub

360° TOUR



360° TOUR



### ● Privilege Suites

48 sq.m/516 sq.ft +  
12.5 sq.m/134.5 sq.ft private  
balcony - balneo bathtub



*The sleeping area of the Duplex Suite, deck 6*



*The lounge of the Privilege Suite, deck 8*



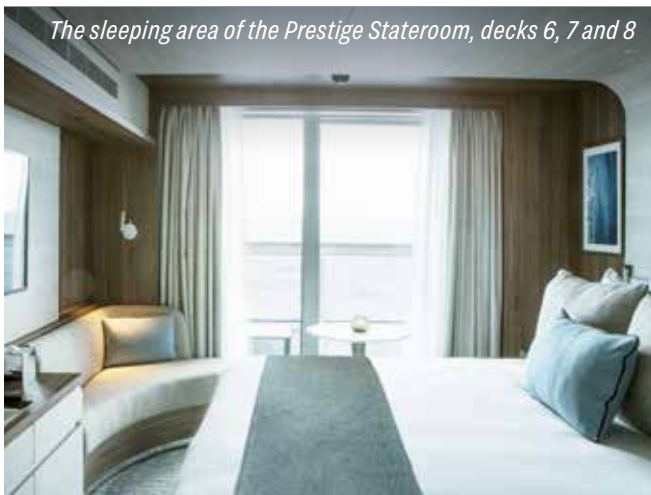
*The Duplex Suite lounge, deck 6*



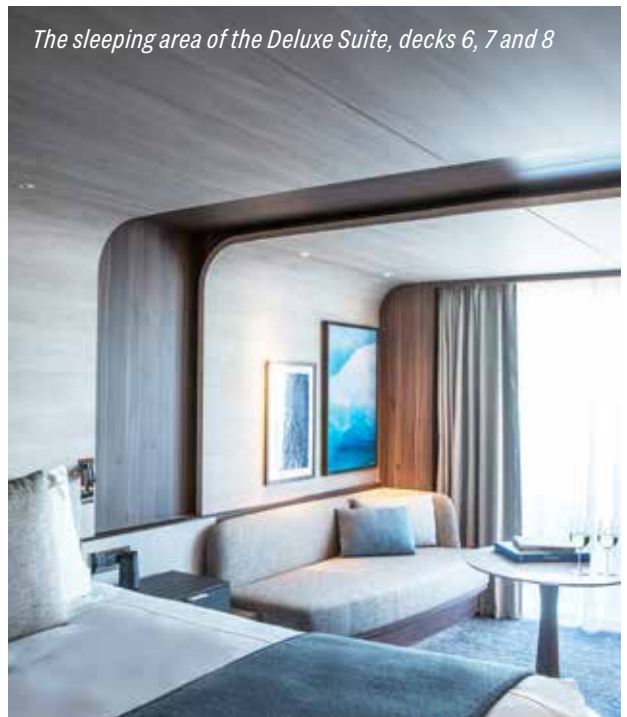
*The Grand Prestige lounge, deck 6*



*The sleeping area of the Prestige Suite, decks 7 and 8*



*The sleeping area of the Prestige Stateroom, decks 6, 7 and 8*



*The sleeping area of the Deluxe Suite, decks 6, 7 and 8*



### Grand Prestige Suites ●

42 sq.m/452 sq.ft +  
5 sq.m/54 sq.ft  
private balcony

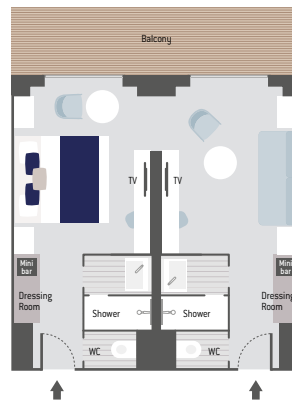
360° TOUR



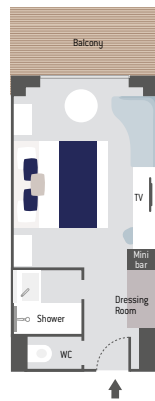
### ➤ Prestige Suites

40 sq.m/430 sq.ft + 10 sq.m/107 sq.ft  
private balcony

360° TOUR



360° TOUR



### Prestige Staterooms ●

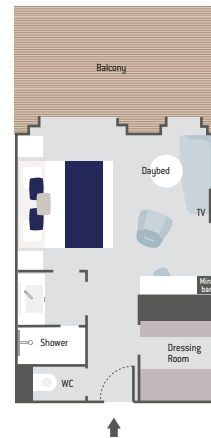
20 sq.m/215 sq.ft  
+ 5 sq.m/53 sq.ft private balcony



### ● Deluxe Suites

28 sq.m/301 sq.ft + 5 sq.m/53 sq.ft  
private balcony

360° TOUR



## AMENITIES

- Private balcony for all our Stateroom and Suites
- Terrace for the Duplex Suites and the Owner's Suite
- Butler service and priority boarding: Owner's Suite, Duplex Suites, Privilege Suites and Grand Prestige Suites
- Individually controlled airconditioning
- Stateroom layout: king-size bed, or twin beds, communicating staterooms available, children welcome
- Minibar - 24hr room service
- Satellite TV channels (availability dependent on navigation); selection of videos on demand
- Bose™ Bluetooth speaker
- Safe
- Selection of Diptyque Paris top-of-the-line bath products
- Dressing table, bath robes, hairdryer
- Direct line telephone
- 110V American (two flat pins)/220V European (round sockets with two round pins)
- Internet access Wi-Fi\*

*\*Depending on the navigation area, Wi-Fi may be inaccessible for reasons beyond our control.*

# FORMALITIES

## For all cruises

The information below is current but subject to change at any time without advance notice from government authorities. Please consult your respective government agencies for visa and health information.

Passport valid for at least six (6) months beyond the completion of your trip. Passport must contain at least two completely clear, blank, unused visa pages for each visa required, not including any amendment pages.

Visa pages with stains or ink from other pages in the passport are not usable. Guests who deviate from the scheduled embarkation or disembarkation port should research the foreign entry requirements for the port country. Due to government regulations, regrettably, PONANT will have to deny boarding to any guest who fails to obtain the appropriate travel documentation for this trip.

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## Specific formalities

### ARCTIC

**Reykjavík • Reykjavík** 16th and 26th April, 6th, 16th and 28th May, and 11th June 2024 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Reykjavík • Longyearbyen** 25th June 2024 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Longyearbyen • Reykjavík** 26th July and 26th September 2024 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Reykjavík • Nome** 12th August 2024 <sup>(1) (3) (4)</sup>

**Nome • Longyearbyen** 6th September 2024 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Saint Pierre and Miquelon • Québec** 17th January and 10th February 2025 <sup>(3) (4) (5)</sup>

**Québec • Saint Pierre and Miquelon** 29th January and 22nd February 2025 <sup>(2) (4) (5)</sup>

### ANTARCTICA

**Punta Arenas • Ushuaia** 2nd November 2023 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Ushuaia • Ushuaia** 16th and 28th November, and 12th December 2023 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Ushuaia • Lyttelton** 7th January 2024 <sup>(4)</sup>

**Lyttelton • Ushuaia** 6th February 2024 <sup>(4)</sup>

(1) **USA**: depending on your nationality, an ESTA or Visa may be required. Please contact USA consulate website for details. A copy of your visa or ESTA must be sent to PONANT at the very latest 45 days prior to your cruise date. In case the ESTA is sufficient to enter the USA, we also ask you to keep a copy of your ESTA with your passport throughout the duration of your trip.

(2) **Canada**: entry (or transit) by air. The eTA is required for Australian and British citizens, US citizens are exempt. Other nationalities, please contact Canada consulate website for details: <http://www.canada.ca/en/index.html>. A copy of your visa or eTA must be sent to PONANT at the very latest 45 days prior to your cruise date. In case the eTA is sufficient to enter Canada, we also ask you to keep a copy of your eTA with your passport throughout the duration of your trip.

(3) **Canada**: travel by sea. The eTA is not required for US, Australian and British citizens. Other nationalities: a visa may be required, please contact Canada consulate website for details: <http://www.canada.ca/en/index.html>

(4) Please note that for **polar plunge**, an EKG (electrocardiogram) by your general practitioner in addition to the PONANT medical questionnaire will be required. For persons under 18, we will require a sworn statement from the parents or legal guardians that they are able to swim. A parent or legal guardian must be present at the time of the activity.

(5) **Kayaking in polar region**: for persons under 18, we will require a sworn statement from the parents or legal guardians that they are able to swim. A parent or legal guardian must be present at the time of the activity.

## Important information

To guarantee your entry into one or several countries, you must ensure that you comply with the formalities and health requirements specific to each destination. In just **a few clicks on our online search engine, find all the formalities you must complete prior to your departure** (visas, entry authorisations for each country, vaccinations, etc.): <https://en.ponant.com/formalities>.

**The international situation can change rapidly, so be sure to check this information regularly prior to your departure.** However, please note that we always recommend our guests contact the relevant national immigration and customs and border control authorities directly to find out what rules apply to their specific situation. PONANT is not responsible for any decisions made by guests based on the information provided by the online search engine.

**Visas:** before departure, please check carefully that your visas are valid for the right date and time spent in the countries in order to avoid unpleasant situations.

**List of items prohibited on board:** find here the full list of items prohibited on board: [https://l.ponant.com/CGV\\_EN](https://l.ponant.com/CGV_EN). Should you have one of these products or objects in your possession, they will be confiscated immediately and will not be transported on the ship. When an

item transported aboard is considered illegal, the relevant authorities will be notified systematically.

**Boarding conditions and passenger travel abilities:** we invite you to read our boarding conditions and passenger travel abilities at the following link: <https://l.ponant.com/ErQG>. Any new reservation implies the acceptance of these conditions.

**Warning about the use of drones:** the use of drones aboard PONANT ships, whether they are sailing at sea, at a port of call or anchored, is strictly forbidden. The use of drones on land in the Arctic and Antarctic regions is also strictly forbidden by international polar regulations. In other regions, it may be possible to use drones on land if permission has been obtained from the relevant authorities of each country and each region travelled through, as well as a pilot's licence that should be obtained from your home country. Guests are responsible for obtaining these permits; they should be able to present them at all times. Guests who do not obtain these authorisations expose themselves to the risk of legal proceeding.

**Medication:** if you have a medical condition, do not forget your prescription.



## Polar expedition cruises

For all cruises marked with the logo 'parka gift', a PONANT polar water-resistant parka is offered (adult sizes only; in case of consecutive cruises, only one parka per person).

Boot rental will be offered onboard (for adults only) on expedition cruises where the logo 'free boot rental' appears.

Ports of call, activities, visited sites, outings and landings will depend on weather conditions, position of ice, winds and the state of the sea. These can force a change of plans at any time. The captain and the expedition leader may at any time cancel or stop any activity, or even modify the itinerary. The final itinerary will be confirmed by the captain, who will take into account the touristic quality of the sites and above all, the safety of the guests. His decision will be based on advice from experts and authorities.

Travelling to polar/isolated regions is an exhilarating experience in remote areas: please remember that you are far from modern hospitals with full medical facilities, thus evacuation is extremely expensive. Without adequate medical coverage, all expenses will have to be immediately paid with your personal funds. We urge you to subscribe to

full coverage insurance, choose your insurance company very carefully, be extremely vigilant and ensure your insurance is fully comprehensive, especially if you are insured by your credit card. PONANT offers an insurance contract with extensive guarantees, please contact us for more information.

**Physical conditions for Nordic Skiing Polar Trek:** participants need to be adult, to provide an EKG carried out less than 6 months prior to the departure and to be approved by shipboard doctor. Good physical condition is precondition. Participants should be in good physical shape: they have already practiced winter sports (skiing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing) and are capable of walking 10 to 15 kilometres (around 6 to 9 miles) per day.

Discover the general and particular conditions of sale by scanning this pictogram.









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RELEASE DATE: JULY 2023



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[www.ponant.com](http://www.ponant.com)  
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