



WHITE DESERT

ANTARCTICA



GUEST HANDBOOK

EMPERORS & SOUTH POLE

CONTENTS





1. VISAS, PASSPORTS AND IMMUNISATIONS

There are no visa requirements for visiting Antarctica. White Desert holds a British permit for travel to the continent and our guests will be covered by this permit. There may be additional visa requirements for some nationalities visiting South Africa so please check with your local Government Authority as to what these are, as far in advance of your trip as possible. Please note that you will need a multi-entry visa as you entering into South Africa twice on your holiday. If you need any assistance with invitation letters, please inform Catherine Stott on catherine@white-desert.com. Please also note that all visitors will need two consecutive blank pages in their passports for South African immigration purposes.

You may require vaccinations for South Africa, but none are necessary for Antarctica as it is an inert environment. Please visit [this website](#) for more details.

COVID-19

White Desert has created a comprehensive set of Covid-19 protocols, covering (among other things) guest and staff safety, medical checks, the use of PPE and enhanced cleaning procedures. We are continuing to monitor the situation as the pandemic evolves and are amending our protocols accordingly, which we will communicate to you at least two months before your travel commences.



2. TIMELINE IN CAPE TOWN

You are required to arrive in Cape Town at least two days prior to your scheduled flight to Antarctica. This is to allow flexibility should your flight be brought forward due to weather conditions – something that can, and does, happen!

There is a mandatory safety briefing held the day before your scheduled flight into Antarctica, which you will need to attend. This is usually held between 11am - 1pm.





BRING ALL
HOLD & HAND
LUGGAGE TO
BRIEFING

SAFETY BRIEFING

DATE: THE DAY BEFORE YOUR FLIGHT

TIME: 11AM - 1PM

LOCATION: WILL BE COMMUNICATED CLOSER TO YOUR TRIP



3. SAFETY BRIEFING

Your briefing will begin with a short presentation where we will cover any changes to the flight schedule, and further explain your time on the continent. This is the perfect forum for you to ask any questions; from the washing facilities at camp, to how the daily activities are organised.

Everything is designed with your safety in mind and attendance is a legal requirement. You will also be shown a short video from the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (“IAATO”) explaining our responsibilities whilst on the continent.



KIT REVIEW

At the briefing, we will go through your luggage with you to ensure that you have all the clothing required for your time in camp and during your activities. We will also explain what you need to pack into your hand luggage so that you are prepared for landing in Antarctica.

For those of you wishing to order clothing, you will need to inform Catherine well in advance of the briefing - a kit list and order form will be sent to you separately. We have a third-party clothing supplier in Cape Town who will have a mini 'shop' at the briefing where you can collect and pay for your clothing orders. They will have a range of sizes and colours available so that you can change any items as necessary, but please note that this is limited to the stock available. To avoid disappointment, we highly recommend that vital items (such as ice climbing boots) are purchased in advance to ensure that they are the correct size and of the specification required.

Items will need to be paid for at the briefing using credit card or cash (South African Rand).

During the briefing, we will also fit you for your loan items, including Baffin boots and down jackets.

RULES FOR LUGGAGE IN ANTARCTICA:

Luggage allowance for Antarctic flights:

- 23kg for hold luggage
- 7kg for hand luggage

- Hold luggage must be in **one soft duffel bag**, a requirement from our pilots due to limited hold space on the jet (we do allow duffel bags with wheels).
- Hand luggage must be in a 30 - 40L backpack. This backpack will be used as your daypack during activities in Antarctica, so please do not bring anything smaller than this.

THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT: You will need to bring ALL your Antarctic luggage with you to the safety briefing, both hold and hand baggage. We will be taking your hold luggage from you after the briefing to load onto the plane. You will not have access to it until you reach Antarctica.

PLEASE NOTE: Cape Town airport does not have a separate private jet immigration clearance. As such we will pass through normal airport security in Cape Town and normal hand luggage rules will apply. Please therefore ensure that all liquids are under 100ml and you are not carrying any prohibited items. For any luggage that is to remain in Cape Town, please store with the concierge at your hotel.





4. ANTARCTIC KIT

The below list is the clothing you should bring to Antarctica. A White Desert Kit List will be sent to you separately with images of each item, as well as an order form included. Should you wish to purchase your kit through White Desert, you will need to return this order form in advance of your trip. Please note that items are only available through this channel whilst stocks last.

Layering correctly is the key to staying warm in Antarctica. A combination of the following layers can be worn depending on the temperature. It is just as important to take a layer off if you start to feel too warm, and by wearing several thin layers it means that you have options. It can take time to get used to regulating your temperature with this system, but please remember, our guides are always happy to help and give advice.

When relaxing at camp, you can dress in normal winter clothes that you feel comfortable in (i.e. shirts, thick jumpers, sturdy boots etc) as it is a short walk from your pod to the dining room and lounge. However, when you leave camp for any type of activity or flight, it is imperative that you dress in technical clothing that is specifically created for extreme temperatures.

ICE CLIMBING BOOTS	These are used for all ice-related activities and are a requirement for this trip. These must be firm-soled boots with ankle support that are crampon-compatible. Eg. La Sportiva Nepal Cube Gortex / Boreal Triglav Mountain Boots. Please ask if you have questions regarding your boots as it is vital that you have the correct footwear for your daily excursions. You will be walking on ice and as such, inadequate equipment will lead to you being unable to join particular activities.
HIKING BOOTS	A good, strong pair of winter hiking boots are useful as 'approach' shoes. These can be used when hiking over rocks to reach the ice activities as they offer more comfort and flexibility when walking
BASE LAYER	Thermal top and leggings
MID-LAYER	Lightweight stretch fleece top and bottom
INSULATION LAYER	Mid-weight fleece or synthetic jacket
WINDPROOF LAYER	Gore-tex jacket with a hood and Gore-tex pants
OUTER LAYER	800g or more fill down jacket with a hood and pants*
HEAD	Very dark sunglasses and goggles (ideally with polarized lens), hat that covers your ears, neck gaiter or buff, balaclava. Please ensure your beanie will fit under a helmet (i.e. no bobbles)
HANDS	Thin-liner gloves, fleece gloves with windstopper fabric and a pair of large waterproof, lined gloves. Down over mittens will be provided by White Desert if necessary.
FEET	Thin liner socks, thick ski socks. Climbing boots (as above) and additional footwear such as regular hiking boots or trainers for use around camp. Baffin boots*
SKIN	Lipbalm and sunscreen with minimum SPF50
LUGGAGE	30-40 litre rucksack for hand luggage (cameras etc, and any carry on Antarctic clothing you will change into on the flight). 90 litre soft duffel bag for all hold luggage.

* This kit can be loaned from White Desert for the duration of your stay in Antarctica along with an Antarctic-rated sleeping bag. These items, with the exception of the Baffin or similar polar boots, are generally only used on the South Pole section of the trips. All loan items will be handed out to you at the safety briefing for return at the end of your stay with White Desert.



White Desert
Gulfstream G550

5. ANTARCTIC FLIGHTS

INBOUND (CAPE TOWN - WOLF'S FANG RUNWAY)

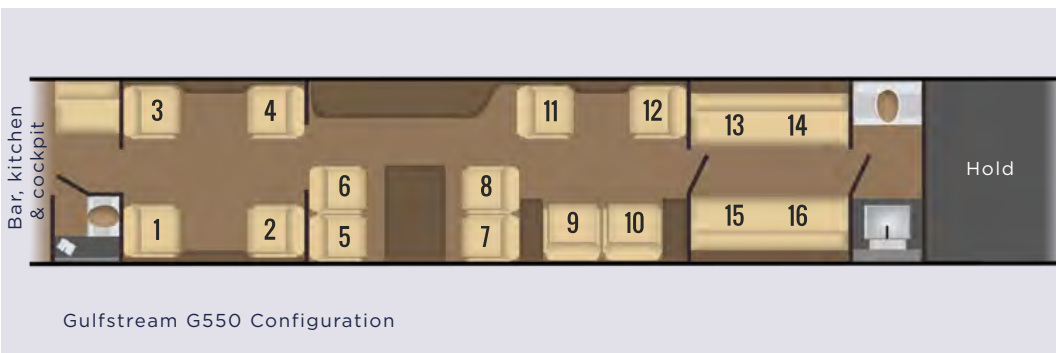
ALL UP-TO-DATE FLIGHT INFORMATION WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO YOU AT YOUR SAFETY BRIEFING.

2 HOURS PRIOR TO YOUR CONFIRMED FLIGHT, WHITE DESERT CARS WILL PICK YOU UP FROM YOUR HOTEL AND TAKE YOU TO THE EXECUJET PRIVATE JET LOUNGE.

YOU WILL NEED TO BRING:

- Passport with two consecutive blank pages. South African immigration can be very strict and have been known to refuse entry.
- Any medication you require plus some spare.
- Your hand luggage, containing your Antarctic clothing that you will have been advised to pack during your safety briefing (along with any items such as laptops, cameras etc.) We will cover all of this in the safety briefing in more detail. The main bulk of your Antarctica kit (i.e. your hold luggage) will have been taken from you after the safety briefing.
- Please ensure you have proof of your return flight ticket (from South Africa back to your country of origin) with you. Customs may need to see this when we fly back into Cape Town after Antarctica.

Please be aware that the exact timing of the flight is entirely dependent on the prevailing weather in Antarctica. This means that there may be changes to the schedule and you will need to be flexible in terms of your travel arrangements and hotel bookings. You will be informed with as much notice as possible if there is a delay to your flight, and also informed of the next possible window to fly. With this in mind, please ensure you are contactable at all times whilst in Cape Town.



ESTIMATED FLIGHT TIME TO ANTARCTICA: 5 HOURS

TOTAL DISTANCE FLOWN (CPT TO ANTARCTICA): 4,150KM

Please understand that flying to one of the most remote locations in the world is a complicated procedure. Changes to the exact schedule, delays and, on rare occasions, even the aircraft type are a reality. Last-minute changes do happen and above all, safety is our primary concern.

Our Gulfstream 550 can accommodate 12 guests, accompanied by White Desert staff. The flight time to Antarctica is approximately 5 hours and during the entire flight, our crew are in constant communication with the runway regarding the weather conditions. You will be served a meal, snacks and drinks on board. Seating will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis with groups and travelling companions placed together wherever possible.

All flights operate a no smoking policy and in case of misconduct, our pilot has the authority to remove passengers from the plane, or to send them directly back to Cape Town without any refund.

Approximately 1 hour before landing you will be directed to change into your Antarctic clothing. Please don't forget to apply sunscreen on the aircraft as the sun is exceptionally strong in Antarctica.

Once in Antarctica, you will land at Wolf's Fang runway and be shown to your camp by our on-ice staff.



CAPE TOWN



5hrs



WOLF'S FANG



10mins



WOLF'S FANG EXPLORER

FLIGHT BACK TO CAPE TOWN:

You will retrace this route when travelling back to Cape Town

On arrival at Cape Town International Airport, White Desert staff will meet you and guide you through the airport terminal, ensuring that you are collected by your private car for the drive back to your hotel. If you wore any loan items onto the plane, please ensure these are left on the jet.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

If changes to your schedule occur which result in your departure to Antarctica being moved forward or pushed back (due to weather or associated logistics), the date of your flight back to Cape Town **will not be altered**, which could result in your time in Antarctica being shortened or lengthened accordingly. Your day-to-day itinerary once in Antarctica is also contingent on weather and your flight date to the South Pole or Emperor Penguins will vary entirely according to the pilot's assessment of safe operating conditions.

Due to this, we request that you book your hotel room for the night of your scheduled flight into Antarctica, in case your flight is pushed back. We also ask that you ensure you have fully flexible plane tickets in case changes need to be made due to a delay coming out of Antarctica. Wherever possible, White Desert will assist you in changing any tickets or liaising with your chosen travel agents and hotels. Please bear in mind that it is ultimately your responsibility to re-organise tickets in the event of any delay.

Although rare, it is possible that you may not reach the South Pole or Emperor Penguins during your stay. The South Pole especially is a complex flight involving three different landing locations, however we have an excellent track record of our trips reaching this destination. In the unlikely event that it does not happen, we offer a refund for that portion of the trip. Details can be found in our Terms & Conditions under Clause 10.



6. WEATHER IN ANTARCTICA

Antarctica is technically the world's largest desert, averaging only 166mm (6.5in) of precipitation per year. On most parts of the continent the snow rarely melts and is eventually compressed to become glacial ice which makes up the ice cap.

At our camp on the coast of Droning Maud Land, the ambient temperature is usually between -5°C to -8°C (23°F to 17°F). The main factor to your comfort is wind and high winds can dramatically lower the temperature – called 'Wind Chill'. As always, our guides will be on hand to help and advise you on how to dress appropriately and what to do to stay warm. Katabatic winds (regular winds governed by daily temperature changes) mean that afternoons at camp can often be still with the wind rising in the evening.

The weather in Antarctica can be extreme to the point that it is prohibitive to organise activities outside the camp. Although rare, in such cases you will have staff available to you to ensure you are safe and comfortable at all times.

For those travelling to the South Pole, you are venturing onto the High Polar Plateau where the ambient temperature drops significantly. You will experience temperatures of approximately -25°C to -35°C (-13°F to -31°F), but often there is much less wind at the South Pole. We will go into further detail about how to manage these temperatures later in this document and prior to your flight once in Antarctica.

As a general rule, the weather in Antarctica can be highly variable and conditions can change quickly. This means that activities and flights can be delayed or rescheduled at the last minute. As such, please be patient and accept the advice of your highly qualified guides.



7. CAMP AND SAFETY

ARRIVAL AT WOLF'S FANG EXPLORER

Wolf's Fang Explorer is our brand new adventurous sister camp to the infamous Whichaway, based a short flight away on the Schirmacher Oasis. Opened for our 21/22 season, you will be amongst the first to ever stay at our newest offering.



Retaining the comfort and luxury synonymous with White Desert, this camp comprises seven individual sleeping Alaskan Structure tents and one large communal tent housing the the open plan living and dining room areas.

The heated shower facility is located at the end of the guest sleeping area and contains a shared vanity area with over-sink mirrors and an electricity point for hairdryers. There are two modern shower rooms (with changing area) offering complete privacy to one side of the vanity and two restrooms to the other.



Each sleeping tent is heated and equipped with an en-suite wash area and toilet facility (located in the alcove of your tent). The wash area has a sink which is supplied with warm water via a thermos.

The sleeping tents are configured with twin beds which can be separated by a privacy partition if required. A hot water bottle is available on request. There is a power bank in each bedroom for charging phones and smaller devices via USB and a large multi-charging station in the guest communal area. There is a selection of plug adaptors at camp, however we do recommend that you bring your own adaptors with you for convenience.



The communal lounge/dining area is a warm and inviting space which is always open for use. Hot and cold drinks and snacks are available day and night whilst three hot meals are served during the day. The lounge area provides a comfortable space to relax after a day's activities, whether reading a book from our Antarctic library, watching a lecture by one of our knowledgeable staff or simply enjoying the peace of your surroundings.

Water is a precious resource at camp with all our water being hand shovelled and melted in one of our industrial ice melters before being transferred to our shower facility. We would therefore ask that guests are mindful of their consumption throughout their stay on the continent.



SAFETY

Due to the remote nature of the camp and the extreme environment, guests must **ONLY leave the camp when accompanied by a guide**. This is the most important rule of our camp. It is easy to become disorientated in such a landscape, and the visibility can change rapidly. Distances around camp can also be highly deceptive

Please be aware that alcohol can reduce your ability to deal with the cold. The entire camp is based on snow and ice which means it can be slippery under foot and more difficult to navigate when under the influence. Whilst we fully acknowledge that your visit to Antarctica is a holiday and designed to be highly enjoyable, please note that White Desert cannot be held responsible for any reckless behavior. Alcohol consumption is not permitted on the Basler plane or during the South Pole and Emperor Penguin visits.

TRANSPORT AROUND THE OASIS

The main method for transport around camp and to the daily activities is the specially modified 4x4 and 6x6 trucks. All vehicles carry communication equipment, a small medical box, safety equipment and GPS in case of reduced visibility.

ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE

Antarctica is a pristine environment and staff and guests are obliged to protect it during their time on the continent. White Desert goes well beyond the legal requirements for waste management and instead strives towards a 'zero impact' policy. This is something we pride ourselves on and we would ask you to help us achieve this goal and become 'Antarctic Ambassadors'.

Please do not leave anything behind, all litter must be collected and kept on your person until you are able to dispose of it at camp. Do not remove any rocks or samples to take home with you.

Please see further information on the **IAATO Antarctic Guidelines we follow on page 26**.

We separate urine and solid human waste for responsible disposal and ask that guests always use a designated urine toilet at camp. There are full toilet facilities in each of your tents.

Smoking inside tents presents a serious fire hazard and is strictly prohibited. There are ashtrays and designated smoking areas around camp which our staff will point out to you. Please ensure all ash and cigarette butts are collected and disposed of safely and responsibly.





8. COMMUNICATION IN ANTARCTICA

As the world's most remote holiday destination, we would like to manage your expectations in terms of communications – in a word, it is limited.

Wolf's Fang Explorer has an Iridium dome satellite system, which can provide a data connection of 128kb per second. This is used operationally by our Camp Manager to communicate by email with Cape Town and Wolf's Fang runway.

Guests can send and receive text-only emails via the White Desert iPad. We have created a guest email account address and for your use through which text-only emails are sent and received every morning and evening, with service charged at US\$1 per sent or received email. Attachments can be sent or received by request at an additional charge of US\$5 per Mb. There is no web-browsing internet access available at Wolf's Fang Explorer to staff or clients.

GUEST EMAIL: WFRGuest@white-desert.com

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS NOT A PRIVATE ACCOUNT BUT IS SHARED WITH THE OTHER GUESTS. PLEASE ASK SENDERS TO TYPE YOUR FULL NAME IN THE SUBJECT TITLE SO THAT IT CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS YOUR MAIL.

For voice calls in camp, you can purchase phone credit and use one of our satellite phones in camp. Credit will be charged at US\$60 for 45 minutes. If clients would like to make calls on the satellite phones when out of camp then we ask that this is requested in advance (for example: when at the South Pole). Please note that these phones are used for communication between camps by our team and will only be available when not in use for such.

TIME ZONES IN ANTARCTICA

Antarctica effectively encompasses all the lines of Longitude, so we could theoretically choose our time zones! The international bases often make use of the time zones from their relevant countries in order to aid communication. White Desert works on **Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)**.



9. ACTIVITIES AROUND CAMP

Each day, our field guides will suggest a number of excursions and activities for you to choose from depending on the weather. They can be easy and relaxing, or adrenaline-charged... it's entirely up to you.

We always have a high ratio of guides to guests at Wolf's Fang Explorer Camp, so experiences can be tailored.

At camp you will have the opportunity to spend time exploring the surrounds on foot, bike, ski or skidoo. The nearby activities vary in length, technicality and difficulty depending on your ability and level of fitness. There is the option to scale local nunataks, have a go at ice climbing, abseil from dizzying heights or even summit one of the peaks of the Drygalski range.

At all times, you are accompanied by a qualified White Desert Field Guide who has planned the route in advance, carries GPS, compass, Sat phone, VHF radio, medical supplies and is fully briefed in emergency procedures. White Desert guides are all aware of any ASMAs in the area and are careful to avoid trekking through them, or in any way disrupting scientific experiments.

Obtaining permission to fly your own drone in Antarctica is extremely complicated and only possible for commercial outfits.

During extreme weather you may not be able to venture outside the camp. Our staff will liaise with you to ensure you are safe and comfortable at all times, as well as provide in-camp entertainment. This may be in the form of a presentation by one of our guides, either about a facet of Antarctica or one of their ground-breaking expeditions, or perhaps a movie night. There are also a number of books and board games available in the communal tents.

MEDICAL SUPPORT AND FACILITIES

White Desert have a qualified medical doctor on the staff team. Guides and other staff members have also received medical training ranging from basic to advanced. The doctor will accompany clients on South Pole flights as well as on other excursions when required. We have a fully stocked medical kit in camp and mobile kits for excursions and overnight trips.

Additional medical assistance is available at our runway as well as our Whichaway Camp where we also have a medic on site. There are also a number of local national stations nearby which can be accessed for emergency medical treatment. Our team of guides are skilled at remote location and mountain rescue, however, clients should be aware of the environment and their capability when undertaking an activity in order to minimise the potential for injury. Our guides are trained to support you in challenging and new activities no matter what your level of fitness.



10. EXCURSIONS

EMPEROR PENGUINS

(If you would like more information on this trip please [CLICK HERE](#))

FLIGHT TIME: 2.5HRS IN BASLER BT-67
ROUTE: WOLF'S FANG SKIWAY - ATKA BAY

Depending on the location of the colony on the day, this visit may require a short walk to the penguins. Alternatively, we have skidoos on site which can be used to transfer guests on sleds. On approaching the penguins, visitors must never move closer than 30 meters to a colony or 5 meters from a lone bird. You will stay at the colony for as long as the pilot's flying hours allow, before returning to Wolf's Fang Explorer.

Snacks and hot drinks will be available during your time at the penguin colony as will basic toilet facilities. Please do not attempt to feed the birds or remove any feathers or fragments of egg from the colony.

You will be given a full briefing before your flight to Atka Bay where the IAATO guidelines will be given in detail.

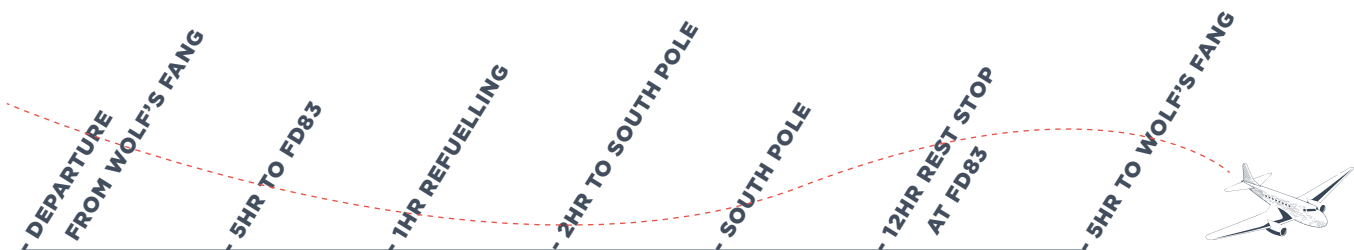


THE SOUTH POLE

(If you would like more information on this trip please [CLICK HERE](#))

FLIGHT TIME: 7HRS IN BASLER DC3
ROUTE: WHICHAWAY SKIWAY - FD83 - SOUTH POLE

Departing from Wolf's Fang Skiway, we fly to our fuel depot (Fuel Depot 83° or "FD83") 5 hours to the South of camp to refuel the aircraft. Refuelling takes approximately 1 hour, during which time you can have a warm drink and stretch your legs. We then continue another 2 hours to the Geographic South Pole (90° South).



We fly in an unpressurised plane at approximately 3,000-4,000 meters in altitude. Our guides will give you a full safety briefing in Antarctica explaining the potential effects of altitude sickness and how best to cope with it. Our doctor will be on this excursion to assist you at any point during the journey. You will make use of your White Desert loan items - down jacket and Baffin boots - to stay warm in this extreme environment, which is much colder than camp. We will also issue you down trousers for this portion of the trip.

We will camp at FD83 to allow our Basler pilots to take their statutory rest period (to ensure they do not exceed their daily flying hours). FD83 is situated at a lower altitude to the South Pole, which makes the camp more comfortable for an overnight stay. It is also one of the most remote locations on the planet and will give you a taste of what it is like to live as an Antarctic explorer! This rest stop will last for 10-12 hours and can occur on either leg of the flight, depending on weather conditions.

Your FD83 camp consists of two-man "Varanger" tents with cot beds and arctic sleeping bags, specially created for extreme cold. Given the effect of solar radiation, your tent will feel a great deal warmer than the outside temperature. There is also a small, heated communal tent area where meals are generally taken in the form of dehydrated food, which is supplemented by snacks which are available throughout the trip.

Given the technical nature and importance of good weather for this flight, White Desert prioritises the South Pole over other excursions. For your information, weather needs to be clear for both departure and arrival in three different locations for the excursion to take place - our camp, the fuel depot en-route, and the pole itself.



11. FEMALE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Here is a compilation of information and tips that ladies often find useful.

- When flying into Antarctica, remember that you need to change into your Antarctic clothing on the flight. A good idea is to wear your thermal layers under your normal clothes, so getting into polar gear is easier on the plane.
- Electricity is an issue in Antarctica, so we ask that you do not use hairdryers.
- White Desert provides biodegradable soap, shampoo and conditioner. You are welcome to bring your own products if you would like, but please ensure that you bring biodegradable products.
- Your moisturisers and other products won't freeze as the tents are heated. There are also hot water bottles available for extra warmth.
- There are toilet facilities in each tent. However, during menstruation women are asked to use a product such as a mooncup, sanitary pad or tampon which can then be emptied or disposed of in the sanitary bin provided in your room.
- There are a number of female staff at camp who will be happy to assist you with any questions that you have.



12. TIPPING SUGGESTIONS

TIPPING SUGGESTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

PORTERS:	R3 - R5 PER ITEM OF LUGGAGE
RESTAURANT BILL:	10% - 20%
RANGER:	R100 - R200 PER DAY PER COUPLE
GENERAL STAFF:	R1,250 PER DAY

TIPPING SUGGESTIONS IN ANTARCTICA

Camp Personnel: Should you wish to reward our staff for outstanding work, we would suggest a trip gratuity of US\$150 per staff member. Given a camp team of 12, this would equate to US\$1,800 in total per guest. Please hand your envelope containing this gratuity to the camp manager at the end of your stay. **Please note that this is for guidance only, gratuity is solely at your discretion.**

CASH IN ANTARCTICA

Please note you need to bring cash to pay for any purchases at our Wolf's Fang Explorer camp shop, any purchase of Iridium Dome email, satellite phone usage, drone footage and tips. US Dollars are the recommended currency.



WHITE DESERT

ANTARCTICA



FURTHER INFORMATION



A. INTERNAL FLIGHTS IN ANTARCTICA

BASLER FLIGHTS

Internal flights in Antarctica are flown in an aircraft called the BT-67 Basler with turbo propeller. These aircraft are designed and especially equipped for Antarctic conditions. Whilst our Baslers have undergone extensive makeovers, their emphasis is on reliability, durability and safety.

Each aircraft will be equipped with survival bags, including tents and sleeping gear, food for crew and all passengers. There are toilets on board the Basler.

These internal flights are entirely dependent on weather and scheduling, so please be aware that they do not stick to a rigid daily schedule.

This plane can seat up to 18 passengers, depending on payload and distance flown.



B. EMPEROR PENGUINS

The 2.5-hour flight to see the Emperor Penguin Colony located in Atka Bay is one of the main highlights of your adventure. Being able to stand so close to a breeding colony like this, truly one of nature's wonders, is an experience like no other.

The Emperor Penguin is the largest penguin species in the world with these majestic birds standing up to 1.30 meters in height and weighing between 22 to 45 kilograms. Their striking appearance is characterised by a sleek and streamlined body with a sharp and slender bill.

Their diet consists mainly of fish, but may also include krill and squid. They cannot fly, but are expert swimmers and can remain submerged for up to 18 minutes, diving to a depth of 535 meters!

This species of penguin breeds in the coldest temperatures, and are the only ones that stay over the Antarctic winter. It is a phenomenon that makes them truly special. The adults trek up to 18 miles from the coast in order to establish the colony. Females will lay one egg, which they will then pass over to the male. The male holds it on his feet, incubating the egg for over two months in the terrible winds and cold of the Antarctic winter. The males have to keep shuffling around in a group to survive and during the entire time do not eat or drink, and can lose up to half their body weight!

Your visit may require walking a short distance to the colony, depending on their location on the day, or you can opt to travel this distance by sled, being pulled by one of our skidoos. On approaching the penguins, visitors must never move closer than 5 meters from a lone bird, or 30 meters from a group of birds. You will stay at the colony for as long as the pilot's flying hours allow, before returning to Whichaway camp.

Snacks and hot drinks will be available throughout your excursion, as will basic toilet facilities. No feed is allowed to be taken to the colony and please do not attempt to feed any birds. We also ask that you do not remove any feathers or fragments of egg from the colony.

On the edges of the colony you may see predatory Southern Giant Petrels and South Polar Skuas who prey on the young and injured birds. Leopard Seals and Wedder Seals may also be in the vicinity.

The Antarctic Treaty and IAATO has a series of guidelines that are designed to ensure that tourism does not impact on the emperor penguin colonies. You will be comprehensively briefed as to these regulations when in Antarctica.



C. THE SOUTH POLE

IN DETAIL

During the flight to the South Pole, our doctor will be available on board for those feeling any effects of the altitude. We also have high-altitude drugs and carry a hyperbaric chamber. Although reactions to altitude are rare, your wellbeing is of paramount importance and you will be monitored by our doctor throughout the trip. On arriving at the pole, you will have time to take photographs and enjoy the feeling of reaching the lowest point on the planet. Here, there is no more East, South or West – every direction is simply North!

Given the technical nature and importance of flyable weather for this flight, White Desert prioritises the South Pole over other excursions and will try to schedule this first. For your information, weather needs to be clear for both departure and arrival in three different places for the flight to take place – our camp, the fuel depot en-route, and the pole itself.

CLIMATE DATA FOR THE SOUTH POLE													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °C (°F)	14.4 (6.1)	20.6 (-5.1)	26.7 (-16.1)	27.9 (-18.0)	25.1 (-13.2)	28.8 (-19.8)	33.0 (-29.0)	30.8 (-27.0)	25.3 (-20.7)	25.1 (-13.2)	18.0 (-2.0)	12.3 (9.9)	12.3 (9.9)
Average high °C (°F)	-26.0 (-14.8)	-37.9 (-36.2)	-49.6 (-57.3)	-53.0 (-63.4)	-53.6 (-64.5)	-54.5 (-66.1)	-55.2 (-67.4)	-54.9 (-66.8)	-54.4 (-65.9)	-48.4 (-55.1)	-36.2 (-33.2)	-26.3 (-15.3)	-45.8 (-50.4)
Daily mean °C (°F)	-28.4 (-19.1)	-40.9 (-41.8)	-53.7 (-64.7)	-57.8 (-72.0)	-58.0 (-72.4)	-58.9 (-74.0)	-59.8 (-75.6)	-59.7 (-75.5)	-59.1 (-74.4)	-51.6 (-60.9)	-38.2 (-36.8)	-28.0 (-18.4)	-49.5 (-57.1)
Average low °C (°F)	-29.6 (-21.3)	-43.1 (-45.6)	-56.8 (-70.2)	-60.9 (-77.6)	-61.5 (-78.7)	-62.8 (-81.0)	-63.4 (-82.1)	-63.2 (-81.8)	-61.7 (-79.1)	-54.3 (-65.7)	-40.1 (-40.2)	-29.1 (-20.4)	-52.2 (-62.0)
Record low °C (°F)	-41.1 (-42.0)	-58.9 (-74.0)	-71.1 (-96.0)	-75.0 (-103.0)	-79.3 (-109.0)	-82.8 (-117.0)	-89.6 (-113.1)	-79.3 (-110.7)	-79.4 (-110.9)	-72.0 (-97.6)	-65.0 (-67.0)	-41.1 (-42.0)	-82.8 (-117.0)
Mean daily sunshine hours	13.1	11.6	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	12.6	18.6	19.9	7.4

Source #1: Pogoda.ru.net (temperatures, 1981–2010, extremes 1957–present)¹
Source #2: Deutscher Wetterdienst (precipitation 1957–1988 and sun 1978–1993),² NOAA (snowy days data, 1961–1988)³

CAMP AND MEALS

During your excursion to the South Pole, you will spend a night at our FD83 camp to allow our Basler pilots to take their statutory rest period. This stop is usually between 10-12 hours in duration and gives a real taste of what it would be like to be an Antarctic explorer.

The camp at FD83 consist of 7 two-man tents. These large, insulated tents are tall enough to stand up in and wide enough to accommodate two cot beds and your hand luggage. Given the effects of solar radiation, your sleeping tents will be a great deal warmer than the outside temperature (often around 0°C). This solar radiation can be decreased by wind or clouds but the Antarctic-rated sleeping bags that we supply will keep you warm during the night. Please do not be tempted to keep too many layers on when trying to sleep, the sleeping bag needs to heat up to do its job effectively. A hot water bottle can be provided on request.



There are two further Arctic Oven tents that are heated and used as communal areas where staff will prepare your hot meals and drinks. Meals at FD83 can be taken in the form of dehydrated food, which is supplemented by snacks which will be available throughout the trip.

The toilet facilities at FD83 are basic and can be supplemented by a 'pee bottle'. This bottle, a favoured type being a wide mouth Nalgene, can be used for comfort in your tent in order that you don't have to get dressed and go outside to the toilet facilities during the night. They can then be emptied in the urine toilet the following morning. Our staff can explain the use of these bottles, for men and women, further at the safety briefing. For hygiene, we recommend that you bring your own.

After a warming breakfast, your Basler will be ready to fly you on your onward journey. Whether this stop takes place on the way up, or back, from the South Pole is dependent on a number of factors, including weather. On your return to Wolf's Fang Explorer, you will receive a hearty welcome and a champagne dinner to celebrate this momentous occasion.

SAFETY PROTOCOL

Both South Pole and FD83 are at altitude. The actual altitude at South Pole is 2,850 meters but the physiological altitude is 3,350 meters, meaning the effects of altitude on the body are increased. Please be aware that alcohol can exacerbate the effects of altitude.

Watch out for the following first signs of High Altitude Sickness:

- Nausea
- Headache or dizziness
- Difficulty breathing normally

It is significantly colder at the South Pole and FD83. Using your specialist clothing and following the instructions of the guides, will help you avoid any cold injuries, but do be aware of some basic rules:

Use your down jacket and trousers during this trip. These effectively trap retain your body heat, which is easily lost if the layers are removed. When taking photographs, be careful, as the metal on the camera will rob the heat from your hands – so always wear your liner gloves! Please also remember to apply and reapply sunscreen during your time at the South Pole and FD83.

If you feel any tingling or numbness in any of your extremities, or any altitude sickness symptoms, please inform the Doctor immediately – even if it's the middle of the night!



SOUTH POLE BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The first attempt to find a route from the Antarctic coastline to the South Pole was made by British explorer Robert Falcon Scott on the Discovery Expedition of 1901-1904.

Scott, accompanied by Ernest Shackleton and Edward Wilson, set out with the aim of travelling as far south as possible, and on 31 December 1902, reached 82°16' S.

Shackleton later returned to Antarctica as leader of the British Antarctic Expedition (Nimrod Expedition) in a bid to reach the Pole. On 9 January 1909, with three companions, he reached 88°23' S - 112 statute miles from the Pole - before being forced to turn back.

The first people to reach the Geographic South Pole were Norwegian Roald Amundsen and his party (pictured above) on 14 December 1911. Amundsen named his camp Polheim and the entire plateau surrounding the Pole, "King Haakon VII Vidde" in honour of the King of Norway at that time.

Racing him to the South Pole, Robert Falcon Scott organised the Terra Nova expedition. Scott and four other men, finally reached their goal on 17 January 1912, thirty-four days after Amundsen and on the return journey, all of them were fated to die of starvation and cold only a few miles from one of their food depots.

In 1914, Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition set out with the goal of crossing Antarctica via the South Pole, but his ship, the Endurance, was frozen in pack ice and sank 11 months later. The overland journey was never made, but the story of Shackleton's bravery, and that of his men, has become an Antarctic legend.

US Admiral Richard Evelyn Byrd, with the assistance of his first pilot Bernt Balchen, became the first person to fly over the South Pole on 29 November 1928.



IAATO / ANTARCTIC TREATY

Antarctica remains a relatively pristine environment and White Desert work with IAATO to minimise the risk of transferring non-native species (these that do not occur naturally in Antarctica) to the continent.

HOW TO HELP BEFORE YOU HEAD SOUTH

CLEAN & EXAMINE CLOTHES THOROUGHLY

Examine all clothing, including pockets, seams, velcro fasteners & boot soles for dirt & organic material.

PACK CLEAN GEAR

Make sure your gear & outdoor equipment are freshly cleaned & free of dirt & organic material.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR VISITORS TO THE ANTARCTIC



All visits to Antarctica should be conducted in accordance with the Antarctic Treaty, its Protocol on Environmental Protection, and relevant Measures and Resolutions adopted at Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCM). Visits may only occur after prior approval by a relevant national authority or if they have met all the requirements of their national authority.

These Guidelines provide general advice for visiting any location, with the aim of ensuring visits do not have adverse impacts on the Antarctic environment, or on its scientific and aesthetic values. ATCM Site Guidelines for Visitors provide additional site-specific advice for some locations.

Read these Guidelines before you visit Antarctica and plan how to minimise your impact.

If you are part of a guided visitor group, abide by these guidelines, pay attention to your guides, and follow their instructions.

If you have organised your own visit, you are responsible for abiding by these guidelines. You are also responsible for identifying the features of the sites you visit that may be vulnerable to visitor impacts, and for complying with any site specific requirements, including Site Guidelines, Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASP) and Antarctic Specially Managed Area (ASMA) management plans, or station visit guidelines. Guidelines for particular activities or risks (such as aircraft use, or avoiding the introduction of non-native species) may also apply. Management plans, a list of historic sites and monuments, and other relevant information can be found at www.ats.aq/e/ep_protected.htm. Site Guidelines can be found at www.ats.aq/e/ats_other_siteguidelines.htm.

PROTECT ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE

The taking of, or harmful interference with, Antarctic wildlife is prohibited except in accordance with a permit.

WILDLIFE

- When in the vicinity of wildlife, walk slowly and carefully and keep noise to a minimum.
- Maintain an appropriate distance from wildlife. While in many cases a greater distance may be appropriate, in general don't approach closer than 5m. Abide by any guidance on distances in site specific guidelines.
- Observe wildlife behaviour. If wildlife changes its behaviour stop moving, or slowly increase your distance.
- Animals are particularly sensitive to disturbance when they are breeding (including nesting) or moulting. Stay outside the margins of a colony and observe from a distance.
- Every situation is different. Consider the topography and the individual circumstances of the site, as these may have an impact on the vulnerability of wildlife to disturbance.
- Always give animals the right of way and do not block their access routes to the sea.
- Do not feed wildlife or leave food or scraps lying around.
- Do not use guns or explosives.

VEGETATION

- Vegetation, including mosses and lichens, is fragile and very slow growing. Do not damage the vegetation by walking, driving or landing on any moss beds or lichen covered rocks.
- When travelling on foot, stay on established tracks whenever possible to minimise disturbance or damage to the soil and vegetated surfaces. Where a track does not exist, take the most direct route and avoid vegetation, fragile terrain, scree slopes, and wildlife.

INTRODUCTION OF NON-NATIVE SPECIES

- Do not introduce any plants or animals into the Antarctic.
- In order to prevent the introduction of non-native species and disease, carefully wash boots and clean all equipment including clothes, bags, tripods, tents and walking sticks before bringing them to Antarctica. Pay particular attention to boot treads, velcro fastenings and pockets which could contain soil or seeds. Vehicles and aircraft should also be cleaned.
- The transfer of species and disease between locations in Antarctica is also a concern. Ensure all clothing and equipment is cleaned before moving between sites.

RESPECT PROTECTED AREAS

Activities in Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs) or Antarctic Specially Managed Areas (ASMAs) must comply with the provisions of the relevant Management Plan.

Many historic sites and monuments (HSMs) have been formally designated and protected.

SPECIALLY MANAGED AND SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS

- A permit from a relevant national authority is required for entry into any ASPA. Carry the permit and obey any permit conditions at all times while visiting an ASPA.
- Check the locations and boundaries of ASPAs and ASMAs in advance. Refer to the provisions of the Management Plan and abide by any restrictions regarding the conduct of activities in or near these areas.

HISTORIC SITES AND MONUMENTS AND OTHER STRUCTURES

- Historic huts and structures can in some cases be used for tourist, recreational and educational visits. Visitors should not use them for other purposes except in emergency circumstances.
- Do not interfere with, deface or vandalise any historic site, monument, or artefact, or other building or emergency refuge (whether occupied or unoccupied).
- If you come across an item that may be of historic value that authorities may not be aware of, do not disturb it. Notify your expedition leader or national authorities.
- Before entering any historic structure, clean your boots of snow and grit and remove snow and water from clothes, as these can cause damage to structures or artefacts.
- Take care not to tread on any artefacts which may be obscured by snow when moving around historic sites.

RESPECT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Do not interfere with scientific research, facilities or equipment.

- Obtain permission before visiting Antarctic stations.
- Reconfirm scheduled visits no less than 24-72 hours before arriving.
- Comply with any site specific rules when visiting Antarctic stations.
- Do not interfere with or remove scientific equipment or markers, and do not disturb experimental study sites, field camps or stored supplies.

KEEP ANTARCTICA PRISTINE

Antarctica remains relatively pristine. It is the largest wilderness area on earth. Please leave no trace of your visit.

WASTE

- Do not deposit any litter or garbage on land nor discard it into the sea.
- At stations or camps smoke only at designated areas, to avoid litter and risk of fire to structures. Collect ash and litter for disposal outside Antarctica.
- Ensure that wastes are managed in accordance with Annexes III and IV of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.
- Ensure that all equipment and rubbish is secured at all times in such a way as to prevent dispersal into the environment through high winds or wildlife foraging.

WILDERNESS VALUES

- Do not disturb or pollute lakes, streams, rivers or other water bodies (e.g. by walking, washing yourself or your equipment, throwing stones, etc.)
- Do not paint or engrave names or other graffiti on any man-made or natural surface in Antarctica.
- Do not take souvenirs, whether man-made, biological or geological items, including feathers, bones, eggs, vegetation, soil, rocks, meteorites or fossils.
- Place tents and equipment on snow or at previously used campsites where possible.

BE SAFE

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

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS/ PREPARATIONS

- Know your capabilities, the dangers posed by the Antarctic environment, and act accordingly. Plan activities with safety in mind at all times.
- Keep a safe distance from dangerous wildlife like fur seals, both on land and at sea. Keep at least 15m away, where practicable.
- If you are travelling in a group, act on the advice and instructions of your leaders. Do not stray from your group.
- Do not walk onto glaciers or large snow fields without proper equipment and experience. There is a real danger of falling into hidden crevasses.
- Do not expect a rescue service. Self-sufficiency is increased and risks reduced by sound planning, quality equipment, and trained personnel.
- Do not enter emergency refuges (except in emergencies). If you use equipment or food from a refuge, inform the nearest research station or national authority once the emergency is over.
- Respect any smoking restrictions. Use of combustion style lanterns and naked flames in or around historic structures should be avoided. Take great care to safeguard against the danger of fire. This is a real hazard in the dry environment of Antarctica.

LANDING AND TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS

Act in Antarctica in such a way so as to minimise potential impacts on the environment, wildlife and associated ecosystems, or the conduct of scientific research.

TRANSPORT

- Do not use aircraft, vessels, small boats, hovercraft or other means of transport in ways that disturb wildlife, either at sea or on land.
- Avoid overflying concentrations of birds and mammals. Follow the advice in Resolution 2 (2004) Guidelines for the operation of aircraft near concentrations of birds in Antarctica, available from www.ats.aq/devAS/info_measures_list.aspx?lang=e.
- Refilling of fuel tanks for small boats should take place in a way that ensures any spills can be contained, for example onboard a vessel.
- Small boats must be free of any soil, plants, or animals and must be checked for the presence of any soil, plants, or animals prior to the commencement of any ship-to-shore operations.
- Small boats must at all times regulate their course and speed so as to minimise disturbance to wildlife and to avoid any collisions with wildlife.

SHIPS*

- Only one ship may visit a site at any one time.
- Vessels with more than 500 passengers shall not make landings in Antarctica.

LANDING OF PASSENGERS FROM VESSELS

- A maximum of 100 passengers may be ashore from a vessel at any one time, unless site specific advice requires fewer passengers.
- During landings from vessels, maintain a 1:20 guide to passenger ratio at all sites, unless site specific advice requires more guides.

* A ship is defined as a vessel which carries more than 12 passengers



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