



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Cool it this summer: Orion's Sub- Antarctic and Antarctic Expeditions

While the rest of Australia swelters under the summer sun a handful of spaces remain for a fortunate few to follow paths pioneered by historic polar explorers a century ago. Voyage south on the world's youngest purpose-built expedition cruise ship, *Orion*, to the World Heritage listed Sub-Antarctic Islands and mainland Antarctica.

These expeditions particularly suit modern-day adventurers, those with an interest in polar exploration, nature lovers and keen wildlife and seascape photographers, as well as anyone with an adventurous spirit interested in visiting remote places of outstanding historic and ecologic importance.

The Mawson's Huts polar expedition has sold out however limited space remains on each of the following voyages:

***Orion* 13 night Sub-Antarctic Wildlife Adventure / 15 January 2011:**

Surrounded by the Southern Ocean, secluded and seldom visited, these Sub-Antarctic Islands have UNESCO World Heritage status recognising one of our planet's most important bio-diverse regions with their volcanic and glacial geological formations and extraordinary diversity of flora and fauna.

The remnants of the old whaling station on Macquarie Island, the high cliffs and numerous caves and arches formed by marine erosion on Campbell Island and the enormous sea stacks on the southern peninsulas of Snares present dramatic contrast to the prolific bird life, penguins, fur and elephant seals, sea lions, killer whales and unique flora seen in this remote region.

This region has the highest diversity and abundance of seabirds found anywhere in the world, some of which exist nowhere else. Birds of a feather flocking together.

***Orion* 21 night Scott and Shackleton's Antarctic expedition / 27 January 2011:** Departs from Hobart, heading for Macquarie Island, then crossing the Antarctic Circle at 66 degrees south bound for the Ross Sea with visits to polar explorers Scott and Shackleton's historic bases.

These important time-capsule buildings reveal how these 'heroic era' explorers lived with plentiful examples of clothing, books, food, crates, sleds, ropes and kerosene tins remaining, literally frozen in time. The specialist expedition team will provide insightful background to enhance the experience.

The southern part of the Ross Sea is icebound for some 9 months of the year and few ships venture here; those that do principally to supply the scientific stations,

making this a rare opportunity for visitors to experience this remote and fascinating region.

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Orion, with the benefit of oversized stabilisers, retractable sonar and ice strengthened hull, provides her 100 guests with the needs of today's adventurers: technology, safety and creature comforts that include fine food and wines, a gym, boutique, hairdressing, sauna and massage facilities - as well as 80 staff and specialist expedition crew to look after every need.

Orion's 10 inflatable Zodiacs, the perfect expedition transport, will be put to good use for landings ashore in both Antarctica and the Sub-Antarctic islands.

[13 night Sub-Antarctic Wildlife Adventure – departs Dunedin for Hobart 15 January 2011](#) Dunedin / Fiordland / Stewart Island / Snares Island / Auckland Island / Campbell Island / Macquarie Island / Hobart

Fares from \$10,630 per person twin share for an ocean view Category B stateroom

Suites from \$14,660 per person twin share for a Junior Suite

Owners' Suites with French Balcony are \$22,265 per person twin share

[21 night expedition: Hobart / Antarctica / Christchurch - departs 27th January 2011](#) Hobart / Ross Sea region / Campbell Island / Snares Island / Christchurch

Fares from \$22,590 per person for an Ocean View category B Stateroom

Suites from \$31,160 per person for a Junior Suite

Orion's spacious Owners' Suites are \$47,315 per person

NOTE: Please note that all Antarctic voyages are subject to possible variation according to prevailing weather conditions and as such are opportunistic in nature. On occasion intended destinations will need to be changed for safety or other reason.

Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises can be obtained by visiting the website www.orionexpeditions.com

For reservations or to obtain a brochure call Orion Expedition Cruises: 61-2 9033 8777 (Sydney callers) 1300 361 012 (regional and interstate) or your travel agent. Email: info@orionexpeditions.com.au

Additional Information:

Orion Antarctic Expedition Team Profiles

Don & Margie McIntyre / Expedition Leaders, Lecturers

Adventurers Don and Margie McIntyre are known as Australia's "Antarctic Couple". In 1995 they spent a year living together alone in a 2.4 x 3.6 metre box chained to rocks at Cape Denison in Commonwealth Bay, the windiest spot on the face of the earth. Living only 400 metres from the historic 1911 Aurora Expedition huts of Sir Douglas Mawson, they struggled to survive a frontier experience battling blizzards which at times kept them trapped in their box for up to 20 days. The effects of this self imposed isolation are the subject of an award winning documentary and bestselling book 'Two Below Zero'.

As a couple their awards and accolades are many and varied. In 1996 Margie was recognised as one of Australia's 12 most outstanding women and together they were presented with the Australian Geographical Society's highest honour - a gold medal as Adventurers of the Year, the youngest ever to receive it.

Don & Margie are both AAP Mawson Huts Foundation Ambassadors along with Sir Edmund Hillary, Tim Bowden and Sir Peter Durham.

From 1993 to 2000, the McIntyre's organised and participated in nine sailing expeditions on their own expedition yachts and worked on Russian Antarctic tourist ships as Lecturers, Field Guides, Boat Drivers and joint Expedition Leaders. In 2000 they purchased their own 36 metre helicopter equipped ice ship 'Sir Hubert Wilkins' in Finland. During the next three years they sailed half way around the world and then set out on four Antarctic Expeditions in support of education, research and adventure.

Guillaume Bouteloupe / Conservation Manager at the Centre Ornithologique Lorraine (Birds Conservation Society of Lorraine) in France. Fuelled by his passion for birds and conservation, he has been a field biologist at various locations in France and Middleton Island, Alaska between 2001 and 2004. From September 2004 to February 2006 Guillaume led the main ecological program and environment protection of the entire Archipelago for 15 months in the Terre Adélie region of Antarctica.

Diana Patterson / considered to be one of the pioneering women of Antarctica. Diana has worked in Antarctica on four occasions and wintered at all three Australian bases including as the Field Leader of the Mawson's Huts Conservation Program at Commonwealth Bay.

Alasdair McGregor / Alasdair was an artist and photographer for the AAP Mawson's Hut Foundation, taking part in three summer expeditions to Commonwealth Bay. He is the author of "Mawson's Huts – an Antarctic Expedition Journal" and most recently "Frank Hurley – A photographer's life – a biography of a great polar photographer".

Orion Sub-Antarctic Expedition Team Profiles

Available at

http://www.orionexpeditions.com/expeditions/newzealand/expedition_team

Ranked #2 expedition cruise ship in the world in the current Berlitz Cruise Guide, Orion is the world's latest purpose-built luxury expedition cruise ship, featuring an unmatched range of onboard facilities.

With 75 crew and a maximum of just 100 passengers Orion offers the highest staff to guest ratio and guest to public space ratio of any ship based in Australian waters.

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[For further media information please contact:](#)

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