

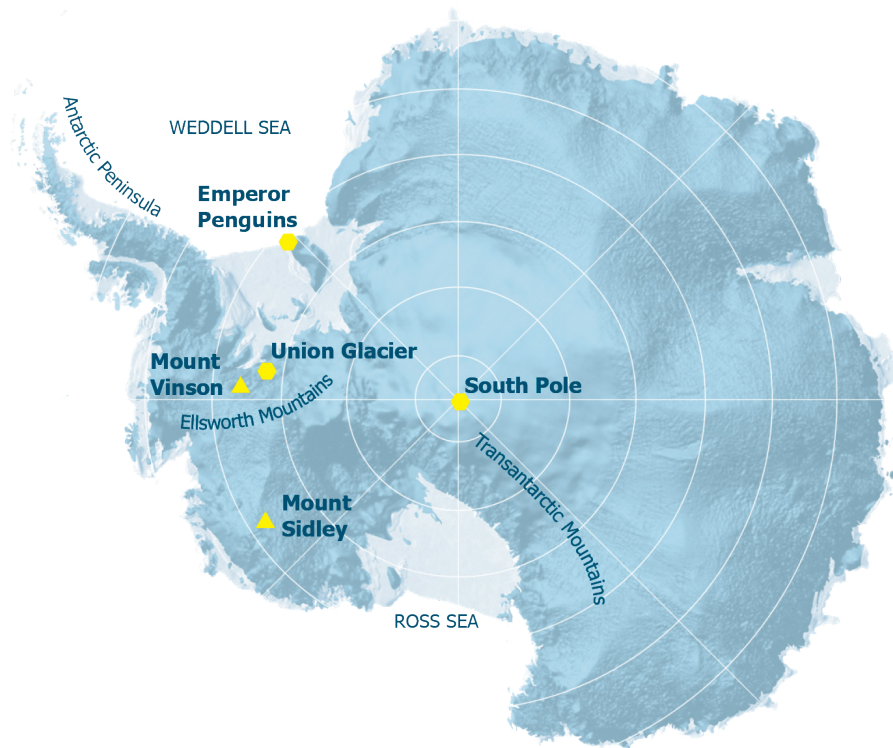


# SKI SOUTH POLE: HERCULES INLET

## THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

**Embark** on an expedition that will test your strength, endurance, and resolve and join an elite group who have arrived at the Geographic South Pole under their own power. Ski South Pole is the ultimate challenge, a journey that spans an entire Antarctic season and traverses 7021mi (1130 km) from Hercules Inlet, on the edge of the frozen Antarctic continent, to the Geographic South Pole.

You'll travel by ski for 7-10 hours a day and pull a sled with all of your supplies that weighs 132-177 lb (60-80 kg). You'll experience all types of weather, facing constant winds, fields of sastrugi, and white-out conditions. The route takes 50-60 days and climbs gradually to more than 9,300 ft (2,800 m). Days are filled with 24-hour daylight and an intense solitude and tranquility that can be found almost nowhere else on Earth.



## ITINERARY



### Arrival Day

Punta Arenas, Chile



### Pre-departure Days

Gear check, Expedition Food Packing, Welcome and Safety Briefing



### Day 1

Fly to Antarctica



### Day 2-3

Expedition Preparations



### Day 4-32

Hercules Inlet to Thiel Corner Skiway



### Day 32-57

Thiel Corner Skiway to South Pole



### Day 58

Return to Union Glacier



### Day 60

Return to Chile



### Flexible Departure Day

Fly Home

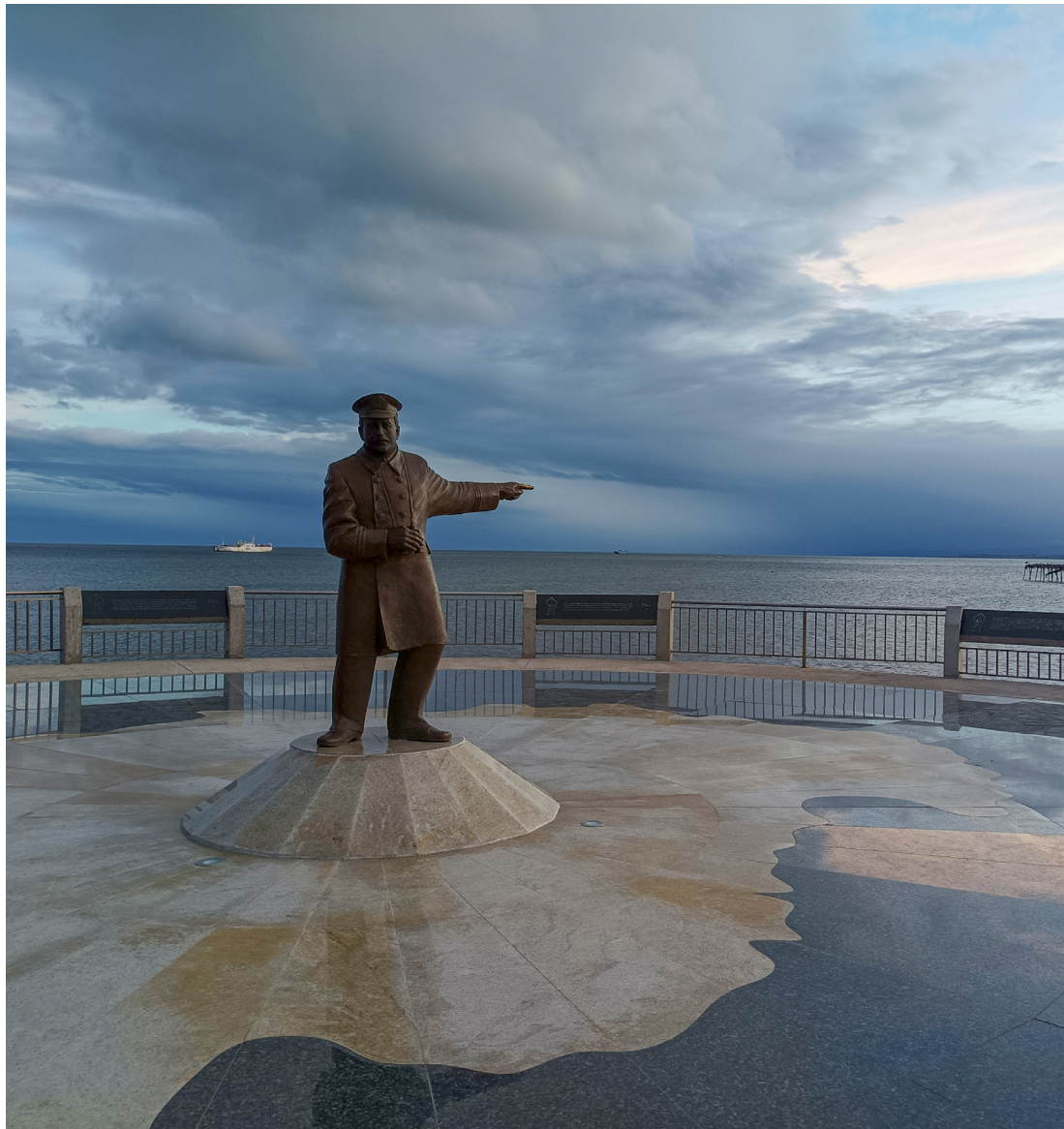


*All itineraries are subject to change based on weather and flight conditions.*





## ARRIVAL IN PUNTA ARENAS



Known as the gateway to Antarctica, all of our flights depart from the Chilean city of Punta Arenas.

We ask you to arrive in Punta Arenas at least six nights prior to your trip start date. Here you will meet your fellow team members, pack expedition food rations, and complete the pre-departure process. The pre-departure period also provides a buffer for flight and luggage delays should your travels to Chile not go as planned. We do not hold Antarctic flights for delayed passengers or luggage.

We will be waiting for you in the terminal when you arrive at Punta Arenas airport and will transport you to your hotel. The following day, you will have an individual Gear Check at your hotel, where we will review the personal clothing and equipment you will need in Antarctica.

The day before your Antarctic flight there is a Welcome and Safety Briefing in the ALE Office. Here we will explain the flight dispatch process, review environmental and safety procedures for your stay in Antarctica, and provide the latest weather updates.





## DAY 1 FLY TO ANTARCTICA

At the Punta Arenas airport, you will check-in for your flight, pass through normal Airport Security then board our chartered jet for the 4 hour flight to Antarctica. Our route crosses the Drake Passage, then follows the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula and the spine of the Ellsworth Mountains. We land on a naturally occurring blue-ice runway on Union Glacier where you will take your first steps in Antarctica.

Climb aboard one of our specially-adapted vans for the 5 mi (8km) shuttle to our main camp. Our friendly staff will provide a welcome tour of camp and show you to your tent.







DAY  
2-3

## EXPEDITION PREPARATIONS

Your first few days in Antarctica will be at Union Glacier Camp. These days will give you an opportunity to test your clothing and equipment and practice sled hauling on a mini-expedition outside of camp with your team. Then you'll pack your sleds and ready for departure.

DAY  
4-32

## HERCULES INLET<sup>TO</sup> THIEL CORNER SKIWAY

You will fly to the starting point at Hercules Inlet once weather conditions permit. It's a short flight by ski aircraft to Hercules Inlet, where the edge of the Antarctic continent meets the Ronne Ice Shelf. You'll begin your South Pole trek skirting around the Wilson Nunataks, then heading south toward Patriot Hills. The first 3-4 days are especially challenging, as your body becomes accustomed to the rigors of sled hauling and you climb from sea level up to 2600 ft (800 m).

Soon you leave behind the Ellsworth Mountains and the terrain opens up to a vast white plain, with only the occasional rocky summit marking your route. These features, called nunataks, are the exposed peaks of mountains submerged below thousands of feet of ice.





Your guide will set a structured schedule that allows you to cover a reasonable daily distance. A typical schedule starts with breakfast at 8am and the team packed and skiing by 10am. You travel as a group, making a series of eight, 1-hour marches with 5-10 minute rest/snack breaks in between. The team will stop by 7pm to set up camp and cook supper. Your team will develop its own particular rhythm and your actual travel time and daily distance will depend on your combined strengths. There is time in the evening for reading or other camp activity. 24-hour sunlight warms your tents and clothing that is damp from perspiration dries easily.

Throughout your journey you can expect constant headwinds and temperatures from  $-13^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $-40^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Surface conditions will vary from hard packed snow and blue-ice; to soft, level snow that provides excellent travel; to fields of sastrugi, the wind-blown snow ridges that caused Scott and Amundsen so much grief. At about  $83^{\circ}\text{S}$  you'll arrive at your first re-supply and take a rest day to repair equipment, re-pack sleds, read letters from home and celebrate your progress the edge of the Antarctic continent.

Continuing south, you'll settle back into your travel routine. Your second re-supply is at our Thiel Corner Skiway at  $85^{\circ}05'\text{S}$   $80^{\circ}47'\text{W}$ , near the Thiel Mountains, and roughly halfway to the Pole. Once again you'll take a rest day, changing into clean clothes and caching unserviceable items.

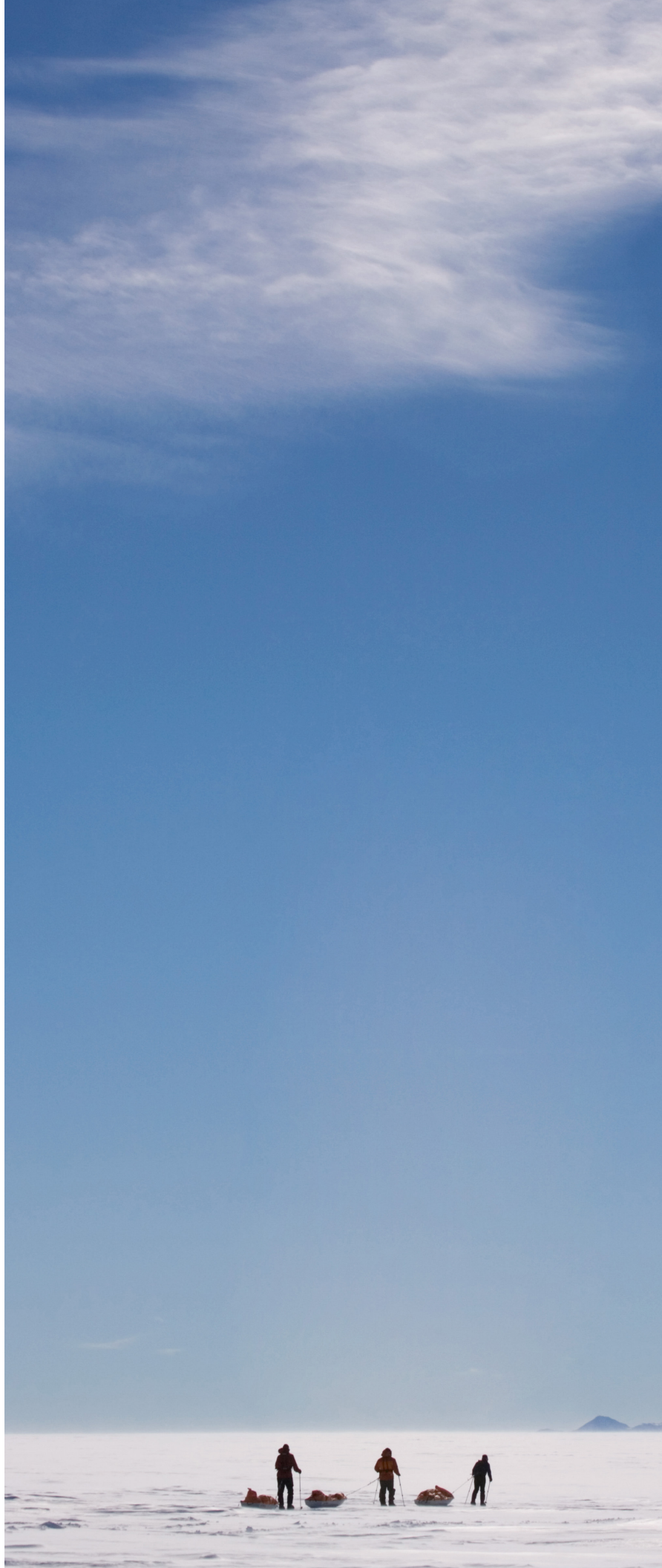




DAY  
33-57

## THIEL CORNER SKIWAY TO SOUTH POLE

Soon you'll find yourself on the vast, featureless polar plateau. This is the true heart of the Antarctic interior. Those who have traveled here talk of feeling "more alive than ever before" and of experiencing the awe that comes from being in high places. Though the plateau appears flat, you'll climb nearly 2600 ft (800 m) in the second half of your journey. Large sastrugi present a real challenge and require the support of team members, especially in flat light conditions. You'll reach your final re-supply at about 87°S. By now, the simple routine and the physical demands of the journey are familiar. The rest of the world, with its colors, smells, haste and worries feels far away.







Amundsen-Scott Station at the South Pole will be visible from about 15 mi (24km) away. Those last miles can seem the longest and will take you another 1-2 days of travel.

Finally, you'll take the last steps to your goal, joining an elite group who have skied from the Antarctic coast to the South Pole. Feel the satisfaction of having arrived here through your own efforts and the support of your team. The journey with all its highs and lows and the knowledge that you have achieved such a dream, will live with you forever.

The South Pole itself is a special place, steeped in the history of polar travel. There is the famous Ceremonial South Pole, surrounded by the flags of the original Antarctic Treaty nations, and the Geographic South Pole to visit and photograph. ALE has a seasonal camp at the South Pole. You may camp there overnight, until your pick-up by ski aircraft.

The South Pole is an Antarctic Specially Managed Area (ASMA #5). A management plan directs all activities in the Area and specific guidelines apply to all non-governmental visits. We ask for your cooperation in respecting visitor guidelines during any time we may spend at the South Pole.







DAY  
58

## RETURN TO UNION GLACIER

Our field staff will stay in close contact with Union Glacier Camp to identify the best 'weather window' for your return flight.

A celebration event, either at the Pole or at Union Glacier Camp, offers an opportunity to share stories and celebrate your achievement. You will also receive a certificate to commemorate your Ski South Pole Expedition.



DAY  
60

## RETURN TO CHILE

When weather and runway conditions permit, our intercontinental, passenger aircraft will arrive at Union Glacier to transport you back to Chile. Upon your arrival our staff will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel.



## FLY HOME

Your flight home concludes this remarkable adventure. We recommend keeping a flexible schedule due to the possibility of weather delays. Allow yourself to savor your experience without the pressure of other commitments.





### Weather

Temperatures ranging from -13 °F to -40 °F (-25 °C to -40 °C) with wind-chill down to -50 °F (-50 °C).



### Activity Level

Extremely Strenuous—skiing up to 10 hours per day for over 50 days while pulling a 132-177lb (60-80 kg) sled.



### Requirements

Skiing and cold weather camping experience as well as a high level of fitness. Participants must undertake rigorous daily training for several months prior to the expedition.



### What's Included

- Airport transfers in Punta Arenas, Chile
- Round trip flight to Antarctica from Punta Arenas
- Flight to Hercules Inlet from Union Glacier
- Flight to Union Glacier from South Pole
- Meals and tented accommodation in Antarctica
- Camping equipment, sled, and harness
- Expedition Guide
- Celebration event and Certificate of Achievement
- Checked luggage up to 66lb (30 kg)



### Not Included

- Insurance coverage—personal, medical, evacuation, or otherwise
- Commercial flights to and from Punta Arenas
- Airport transfers outside of Punta Arenas
- Meals and accommodation in Punta Arenas
- Additional flights within Antarctica
- Personal equipment and clothing
- Expenses incurred due to delays
- Luggage over 66lb (30 kg)
- Satellite phone charges



### Weather Delay Advisory

*All itineraries are subject to change based on weather and flight conditions. Every effort will be made to keep to the scheduled itinerary and flights will depart as soon as weather and runway conditions permit. Our staff will provide you with regular updates in the event of a delay.*

*Please understand that delays are common in Antarctic travel. For this reason we advise you not to plan any important meetings, functions, or other trips for at least one week following your scheduled return from Antarctica. We strongly suggest that you purchase a full-fare, flexible airline ticket that easily permits date changes without penalty.*

