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 702 mi (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 9300 ft (2800 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
Personalized Gear Check

Pre-departure Day
Flight Check-in and Baggage Drop-off
Welcome and Safety Briefing

Day 1
Fly to Antarctica

Day 2-3
Expedition Preparations

Day 4-31
Hercules Inlet to Thiel Corner Skiway

Day 32-55
Thiel Corner Skiway to South Pole

Day 56
Return to Union Glacier

Day 58
Return to Chile

Flexible Departure Day
Fly Home

*All itineraries are subject to change based on weather and flight conditions.
We ask you to arrive in Punta Arenas, Chile at least **five full days prior** to your scheduled Antarctic flight in order to fully prepare you for your upcoming expedition. These days also allow a buffer for flight and luggage delays should your travels to Chile not go as scheduled. We do not hold Antarctic flights for delayed passengers or luggage.

Do not forget to collect your checked luggage in Santiago, before clearing customs! Upon arrival in Chile, you will pass through immigration, collect your checked luggage, go through customs, and then go to the 3rd floor of the terminal and re-check your bags for your domestic flight to Punta Arenas. If your luggage does not arrive, complete a missing form for lost luggage before leaving the Santiago airport.

Upon arrival at Presidente Carlos Ibáñez del Campo International Airport (PUQ), our representative, holding an ALE sign, will be waiting for you at the exit of the luggage claim area and will transport you to your hotel. **Please notify our Punta Arenas team if you are delayed or your arrival time changes:**

**Guest Services Manager**
guests.punta@antarctic-logistics.com
+56 9 6832 7472

**Guest Transport Services**
+56 9 9640 0135

**Office Address**
Calle Bernardo O’Higgins 568

You will receive a Welcome Pack which includes your **Gear Check** time, your **Clothing Rental** time (if applicable), your **Check-in and Baggage Drop-off time**, and the time of the **Welcome & Safety Briefing**. These events are required and very important steps in preparing you for arrival in Antarctica.
In Punta Arenas, you will meet your guide and team members. Together you will prepare your food and equipment, review the route and expedition plan, and stay fit through training sessions.

**Gear Check**

Your guide will arrange a specific time to come to your hotel and review your personal clothing and equipment. Please lay out all of the items on our **Required Clothing and Equipment List** in your hotel room so your guide can go through each item with you. Your guide will help sort the items to pack in your checked luggage vs. your carry-on bag and what items to leave behind in Punta Arenas.

**Luggage Preparations**

**Please notify us in advance if you plan to have more than 66 lb (30 kg) of luggage.** Ski aircraft have strict cargo limits and we may not be able to accommodate excess luggage without advance notice. Keep the following requirements in mind as you prepare your luggage:

- All luggage must comply with international air transport regulations.
- Fuels or other hazardous substances are prohibited on flights to Antarctica.
- Spare or loose lithium batteries are prohibited in checked luggage and must be packed in your carry-on.
- You can check more than one bag, but for the safety of our staff, individual bags must not weigh more than 55 lb (25 kg).
- Your sled/pulk must travel empty on the flight to Antarctica so that it can be protected and handled with care. Please bring enough duffel bags in order to pack your sled contents.

On the morning before your Antarctic flight, we will come to your hotel at your scheduled Check-in and Baggage Drop-off time. **Be ready in the lobby with ALL of the luggage you will be taking to Antarctica** including checked luggage and items that will be carried on. We will weigh everything and use these weights to calculate cargo totals for the ski aircraft flight to your drop-off. We will only collect your checked luggage at this time.

**Checked Luggage**

Checked luggage is collected the day before your Antarctic flight in order to preload the aircraft so it is ready to depart as soon as the weather is suitable. Keep in mind, you will not have access to your checked luggage until it is delivered to your tent in Antarctica, even if the flight is delayed. Do not put anything in your checked luggage that you might need during a delay in Punta Arenas, on the flight, or for the first few hours in Antarctica.

**Your checked luggage allowance is 66 lb (30 kg).** Any checked luggage in excess of this amount will be charged at $35 USD per lb ($77 USD per kg). You can pay in US cash or we can invoice you for the excess luggage. Carry-on luggage within the size limit, clothing worn aboard the aircraft, and sleeping bags rented from ALE, are not included in your checked luggage allowance.

**Carry-on Luggage**

Pack all of your essential personal belongings in your carry-on. The Ilyushin-76 does not have overhead bins, so your carry-on bag must fit below the seat in front of you. **Carry-on luggage is restricted to 18” x 16” x 10” (46cm x 41cm x 26cm).** Carry-on items that do not fit under the seat will be gate checked and may result in additional fees.
As we depart Punta Arenas you will be wearing the boots and outer clothing for your arrival in Antarctica. The temperature on board the aircraft will be adjusted accordingly, so don’t worry about getting too hot. It is simpler to wear these items than to carry them.

Welcome and Safety Briefing
The evening before your Antarctic flight, you are invited to our office for an important safety briefing. Here, we will describe the flight dispatch process, update you on the current weather, and prepare you for arrival at Union Glacier. Please stay to enjoy hors d’oeuvres and pisco sours served over Antarctic ice with your fellow travelers.

Camera Equipment
If you are bringing a camera pack that is larger than the carry-on size limit or as a 2nd carry-on, it will be considered part of your checked luggage allowance, and it will need to be weighed at the luggage pick-up. You will keep the pack with you to board the aircraft but once on board, your camera pack will be stored behind the last row of passenger seats. You may not have access to your camera pack during the flight. If you want to take pictures during the flight, keep that camera with you. Remember to retrieve your camera pack before disembarking the aircraft in Antarctica.

Left Luggage
You can leave luggage in Punta Arenas if there are items you do not need in Antarctica but we do not recommend leaving valuables. We will provide Left Luggage Tags with a tear-off claim receipt. Please give the bottom portion of the tag to an ALE staff member as you board the bus for your Antarctic flight. In most cases ALE will pick-up your left luggage from your hotel and bring it to our office for storage while you are in Antarctica. Your left luggage will be transported by ALE to your hotel once your return flight is confirmed. In the event you stay in a different hotel upon your return, our staff will need this claim receipt to move your left luggage for you. ALE is not responsible for lost or stolen luggage.
We will call you at your hotel in the morning to advise you of current conditions in Antarctica. If the weather is suitable for our flight, we will pick you up at your hotel within the hour. Please meet us in the lobby with hotel bills paid, ready to board the bus.

At the Punta Arenas airport, we will go through General Airport Security before boarding our chartered jet for the 4¼ 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 (8 km) shuttle to our main camp. Our friendly staff will provide a welcome tour of camp and show you to your tent.
Your first few days in Antarctica will be at Union Glacier Camp. These days give you an opportunity to test your clothing and equipment and practice sled hauling on an overnight mini-expedition outside of camp with your team. Then you’ll pack your sleds and ready for departure.

EXPEDITION PREPARATIONS

You will fly to the starting point at Hercules Inlet once weather conditions permit. It’s a short flight by ski aircraft to edge of the Antarctic continent on 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.

HERCULES INLET TO THIEL CORNER SKIWAY
Your guide will set a structured schedule that allows you to cover a reasonable daily distance. A typical schedule starts with breakfast at 8 am and the team packed and skiing by 10 am. You travel as a group, making a series of 8, 1-hour marches with 5-10 minute rest/snack breaks in between. The team will stop by 7 pm 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°F to -40°F (-25°C to -40°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°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°05’S 80°47’W, adjacent to 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.
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 (24 km) away. Those last miles can seem the longest and will take another 1-2 days of travel.

Finally, you’ll take the last steps to your goal and join 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.

You may camp overnight at the South Pole until your pick-up by ski aircraft.

The South Pole is an Antarctic Specially Managed Area (ASMA #5). Please respect established protocols while at the South Pole.
Our field staff will stay in close contact with Union Glacier Camp to identify the best ‘weather window’ for your return flight.

Depending on flights, you may have at least one day at the end of your experience to explore more of Union Glacier. You will also enjoy a celebration dinner and receive a certificate to commemorate your Ski South Pole Expedition.

Due to the potential for weather delays, we strongly suggest booking your flight home one week after your planned return from Antarctica. If you purchase a full-fare ticket, most airlines will allow you to move your departure date. We recommend booking tickets through a travel agent, so they can change your ticket once the return flight from Antarctica is en route. Please note, ALE staff are unable to assist with airline reservations.

Should you wish to explore Chile before you return home, our team can provide a list of local tour operators and excursions. When it is time for your flight home, we will provide transportation from your hotel to the Punta Arenas airport.
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 132-177 lb (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 dinner and Certificate of Achievement
• Checked luggage up to 66 lb (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 66 lb (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.