Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic ALE has made some adjustments to our operations in order to ensure the well-being of our guests and staff and to minimize the risk of bringing the infection into Antarctica. Below, you will find how our itineraries across all of our experiences for the 2021-22 season will be modified.

**Punta Arenas**

- You will be required to arrive in Punta Arenas 6 nights prior to your departure.
- Welcome and Safety Briefings will be done virtually.
- There will be no fitting periods for Rental Clothing in the Punta Arenas office, instead clothing will be picked up at a specified location and time. Further information will be given upon arrival in Punta Arenas.
- Your Gear Checks will be done virtually and we will explain to you how this will be done once you arrive in Punta Arenas.
- Flight Check in and Baggage Drop Off will be done using COVID-19 safe practices and you will receive more information on how this will be done on arrival in Punta Arenas.
- You will be required to complete and sign a COVID-19 Declaration prior to your departure.

**Antarctica**

ALE has developed COVID-19 management procedures for Antarctica. These will be covered in your briefings in Punta Arenas and on arrival at Union Glacier.

Please visit our [FAQ](https://bit.ly/3g5e4q) for more detailed information on ALE’s COVID-19 Management Strategy.
Test your limits on an extreme expedition marked by deep snow, steep climbs, and complex route-finding. Traverse the same terrain Amundsen discovered more than 100 years ago. Climb the steep Axel Heiberg Glacier, bounded by majestic peaks on both sides, and navigate your way around the infamous maze of crevasses known as the Devil’s Ballroom.

While Amundsen traveled by dog sled, you’ll travel by ski for 7-10 hours a day and pull your own sled weighing 132-177 lb (60-80 kg). The challenges continue on the polar plateau where elevations reach almost 10,500 ft (3200 m) and temperatures plummet. You’ll experience all types of weather, facing constant winds, fields of sastrugi, and white-out conditions. The rewards for your effort are tangible as you reach the Geographic South Pole and follow in the footsteps of Antarctica’s great explorers.
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 2-4
- Expedition Preparations

Day 5-14
- Axel Heiberg Glacier

Day 15-31
- The Polar Plateau

Day 32-33
- Return to Union Glacier

Day 37
- 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. Carry-on luggage is restricted to 18” x 16” x 10” (46cm x 41cm x 26cm) so it will fit beneath the seat in front of you. 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.
FLY TO ANTARCTICA

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.
The flight to your start point takes you over the empty expanse of West Antarctica. Nearing the coast, you’ll cross the Queen Maud Range and land on the Ross Ice Shelf near the base of the Axel Heiberg Glacier. The glacier tumbles down between magnificent snow-covered summits and Mount Fridtjof Nansen towers above you at nearly 13,353 feet (4070 m). In Amundsen’s words, "Shining white, glowing blue, black crevices lit up by the sun; this land looks like a fairy tale." This is your gateway to the polar plateau, beckoning us south.

EXPEDITION PREPARATIONS

You will spend several days at Union Glacier 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.

AXEL HEIBERG GLACIER

The flight to your start point takes you over the empty expanse of West Antarctica. Nearing the coast, you’ll cross the Queen Maud Range and land on the Ross Ice Shelf near the base of the Axel Heiberg Glacier. The glacier tumbles down between magnificent snow-covered summits and Mount Fridtjof Nansen towers above you at nearly 13,353 feet (4070 m). In Amundsen’s words, "Shining white, glowing blue, black crevices lit up by the sun; this land looks like a fairy tale." This is your gateway to the polar plateau, beckoning us south.
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 10 am. You’ll travel as a group, making a series of eight, 1-hour marches with 5-10 minute rest/snack breaks in between. You 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.

The lower part of the glacier is gently sloped, but with deep, soft snow making sled hauling a challenge. Soon the terrain becomes very steep and broken. You may need to relay sledges as you wade through deep powder, wind your way between yawning crevasses, and find a route up to the first terrace below Amundsen’s Icefall.

You’ll follow Amundsen’s line around the chaotic jumble of ice, heading for the base of Mount Don Pedro Christophersen, then curving round onto the upper terrace. Looking back down the glacier, “The wildness of the landscape...is not to be described; chasm after chasm, with great blocks of ice scattered promiscuously about, gave one the impression that here Nature was too powerful for us.”

You’ll trace the sweeping curve of the upper terrace and, passing between Mounts Fridtjof Nansen and Engelstad, leave behind the Axel Heiberg Glacier.
Here on the plateau you’ll face a new set of challenges. You have climbed quickly from sea level to 9200 ft (2800 m) and will feel the effects of altitude. The air is much colder, the wind constant, and of the snow surface Amundsen wrote, “A sledding trip through the Sahara would not have offered a worse gliding surface.”

As you leave behind the mountains and set off across the plateau, you’ll trend west to avoid the Devil’s Glacier and Ballroom. These heavily crevassed areas waylaid Amundsen in whiteout conditions, slowing his progress south.

Temperatures plummet as you continue south and gain elevation, climbing to 10,171 ft (3,100 m) on Titan Dome. Wind, cold and white-out are our constant companions, challenging body, mind and spirit.

At 88° 23’S you’ll reach Shackleton’s Furthest South. Amundsen paid tribute here to Shackleton—the first man to penetrate the Antarctic Mountains and set foot on the polar plateau. Imagine Amundsen’s feelings as he skied further south than any human being had been.
The last two degrees to the Pole may be the hardest as you spend hours alone with your thoughts and anticipation builds. Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station 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, completing one of the most challenging expeditions imaginable. Feel the satisfaction of having arrived here through your own efforts and the support of your team. Embrace the spirit of those first men who pioneered your route to the Pole. 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.

When weather and runway conditions permit, our intercontinental aircraft will arrive at Union Glacier to transport you back to Chile. Once your flight has been confirmed we will ensure that you have a hotel reservation in Punta Arenas. If the flight returns in the early morning, we will book your reservation for a day ahead of your arrival because many hotels do not allow check-in until after 3:00pm.

If in the event of a delay we cannot adjust your reservation, ALE will find you a new hotel of comparable quality. Upon your arrival our staff will meet you at the airport and transfer you and your bags back to your hotel.

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.
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 30 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 Axel Heiberg Glacier 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.