

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

[Orion's 2010 / 2011 Antarctic Expeditions](#)

[Experience the 'Heroic Era' of Antarctic exploration](#)

Imagine spending New Year's Eve or early 2011 as part of an Antarctic expedition. Join the purpose-built expedition cruise ship *Orion* for modern-day exploration of Antarctica with departures leaving from Dunedin (New Zealand), in December 2010, and Hobart, in January 2011.

Cross the Antarctic Circle before heading for Cape Denison and a rare visit to Douglas Mawson's historic huts, built for the 1911-1914 'Australian Antarctic Expedition'; or explore the Ross Sea region including Scott and Shackleton's bases still surviving from the 'Heroic Era' of Antarctic exploration.

These timber buildings are rare in a world context. Just six complexes surviving from the 'Heroic Era' of Antarctic exploration: a period of great human adventure, exploration, research and discovery on the last continent to be explored.

Whipped by ferocious katabatic winds, it is a wonder that there are any remnants of buildings left at all. Yet, remarkably, in addition to the historic buildings, there are plentiful examples of clothing, food, crates, sleds, ropes and kerosene tins remaining, literally frozen in time.

At over twice the length and 10 times the weight of Douglas Mawson's wooden ex-whaling barquentine, *Aurora*, the purpose built expedition ship *Orion* (with the benefits 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, specialist lecturers and polar expedition crew to look after every need.

These are true expeditions - both cross the Antarctic Circle, voyaging further south than the position of the South Magnetic Pole. Magnetic compasses are useless in these waters, an area that remains largely unsurveyed.

Orion's 10 Zodiacs, purpose designed expedition transport for intrepid modern-day adventurers, will be put to good use for landings ashore in Antarctica and World Heritage listed sub-Antarctic Snares, Auckland and Macquarie Islands, pristine breeding grounds for countless wildlife.

On Macquarie Island the King penguin colony alone is estimated to have in excess of 170,000 breeding pairs. So rare are visitors here that they are usually ignored by birds, seals and penguins alike as they go about their daily business. See Elephant seals, some weighing as much as three tonnes - more than a car - and the massed gathering of Royal penguins coming and going from the sea.

Never to be forgotten expeditions to some of the most exciting and wondrous places on earth.

Mawson's Antarctica – Commonwealth Bay 2010

18 night expedition: Dunedin / Antarctica / Dunedin

Expedition departs 28th December 2010 Dunedin / Snares Islands / Auckland Islands / Commonwealth Bay region / Macquarie Island/ Dunedin

Fares from \$19,365 per person for an Ocean View category B Stateroom

Suites from \$26,710 per person for a Junior Suite

Orion's spacious Owners' Suites are \$40,555 per person

Scott and Shackleton's Antarctica – Ross Sea 2011

21 night expedition: Hobart / Antarctica / Christchurch

Expedition departs 27th January 2011 Hobart / Macquarie Island / Ross Sea region / Campbell 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

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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 80 crew and a maximum of 100 passengers for Antarctic voyages 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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