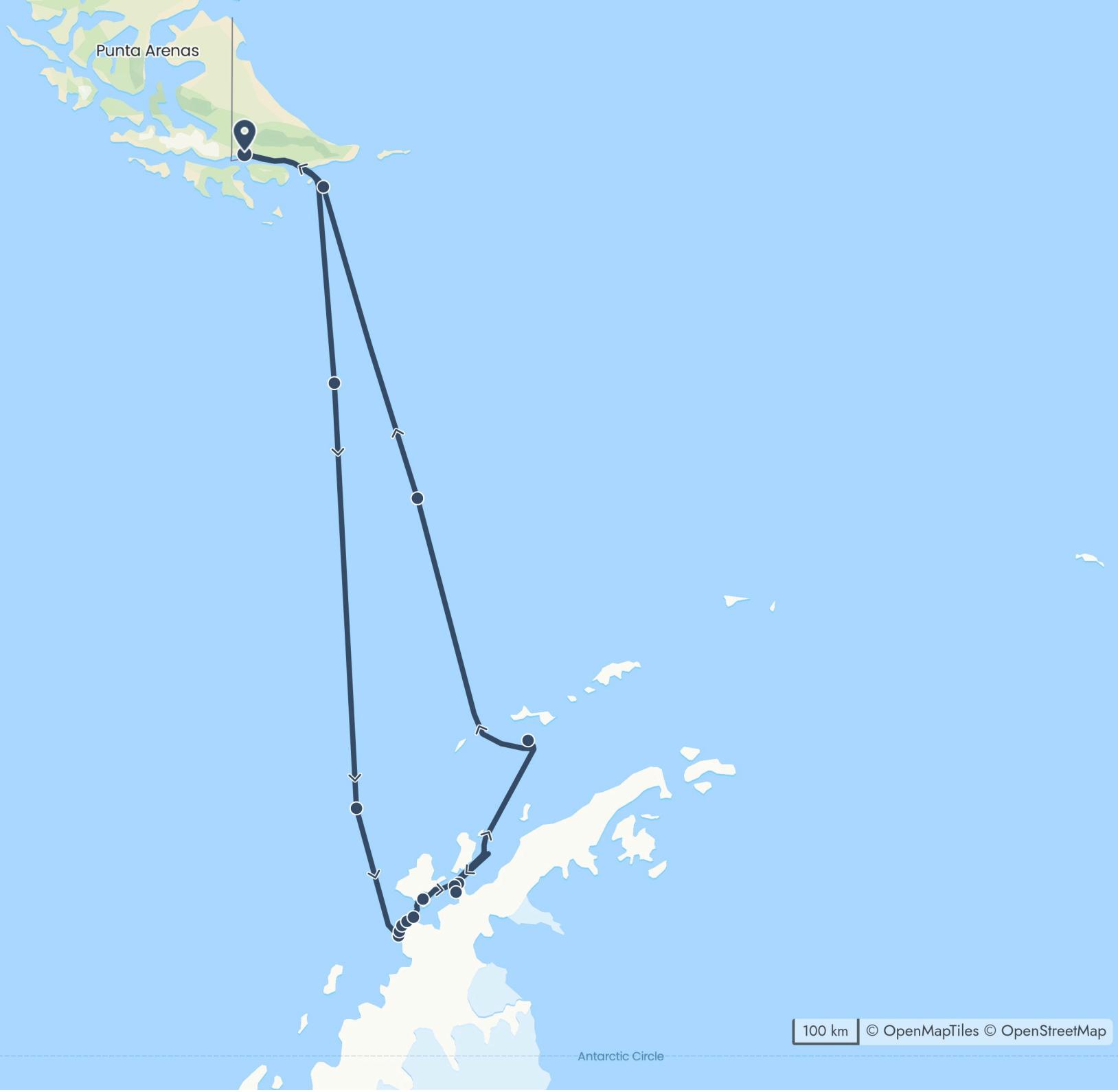




MS Fridtjof Nansen

30.12.2025 - 9.1.2026



Antarctic Circle

100 km © OpenMapTiles © OpenStreetMap

Antarctic Circle

Embarkation in Ushuaia

Our new guests embarked MS Fridtjof Nansen full of anticipation after their flight from Buenos Aires.

After the obligatory safety drill before departure, our Captain, Frank, informed us that the weather was conspiring against us, with strong winds keeping our ship pinned to the pier. This is an expedition, so

flexibility is essential.

When we finally began our journey down the Beagle Channel and into the infamous Drake Passage, we all wondered if it be the 'Drake Lake' or the 'Drake Shake'? Only time will tell.



Drake Passage, the First Day at Sea

New Year's Eve day was our first full day at sea as we made our way toward the great white continent. Some guests found their sea legs faster than others. We experienced neither the 'Drake Lake' nor the 'Drake Shake', but something in between, which our experienced Expedition Team confirmed was an average Drake experience.

Guests attended lectures and briefings on what they can do in Antarctica and the expectations for their behaviour there. During the

afternoon, the seas quieted, as if in reverence for the year end celebrations ahead, perhaps a reflection of 2025 itself.

Our Captain hosted a welcome cocktail, where guests were introduced to the ship's leadership and the Expedition Team who will ensure our safety and enjoyment throughout the voyage. The ship's band, aptly named the 'Rolling Waves', played a collection of songs from the past as we danced our way into 2026. Happy New Year!



Second Day at Sea

The ship came to life slowly as we recovered from the celebrations of the night before. The Drake was kind today. Hopefully, the Drake will be a reflection of the year ahead, calm and peaceful for all.

Lectures, briefings, and workshops filled the day. We saw more species of birds, and whales were spotted. The excitement was building, as tomorrow we would arrive in Antarctica.





Yalour Islands

With excitement, our guests witnessed the wonder of their first glimpse of Antarctica, the continent appearing on the horizon as we navigated through a field of majestic, startlingly white icebergs set against a dramatic backdrop of snow-laden skies.

We began the morning with a leisurely expedition boat cruise around

the Yalour Islands, home to a mixed rookery of chattering gentoo penguins ready to dive into the water with their white swim cap markings adorning their heads and their striking red beaks. Beside these colourful birds we observed the stylish and ever elegant Adélie penguins, always dressed for dinner. A smattering of Weddell and elephant seals lounged along the shoreline, lazily awaiting our arrival.



Petermann Island

During the afternoon, we went ashore and found ourselves in the midst of the bustling rookeries of Petermann Island. Gentoo penguins carefully guarded their chicks and eggs from the predators circling above, with skuas ever on the hunt for an exposed egg or vulnerable chick. We were also joined by Adélie penguins, and some of us even

spotted visiting chinstrap penguins near the landing site.

From a beautiful viewpoint overlooking the shallow waters to the southwest of the island, we watched icebergs run aground and create a stunning natural landscape.



Hovgaard Island

The adventures continued today with expedition boat cruising in the Penola Strait, our small boat captains expertly navigating through a maze of icebergs, berg bits, and brash ice, constantly adjusting their course to provide our guests with the best views and backdrops for photography in these extraordinary landscapes.

The morning silence was broken by the unmistakable sound of

humpback whales breathing as they lazily meandered northward. Crabeater seals took time out on the ice floes, entertaining us with their flipper shenanigans.

Many guests went ashore for a snowshoe hike on Hovgaard Island, which added another unforgettable perspective to the day.





Lemaire Channel

We made our way northward through the ice-filled Lemaire Channel, a narrow and spectacular passage that feels like a rite of passage for all who venture to the Antarctic Peninsula. Towering cliffs closed in on both sides, their dark rockfaces streaked with ice and snow, while colossal icebergs drifted silently past, almost close enough to touch.

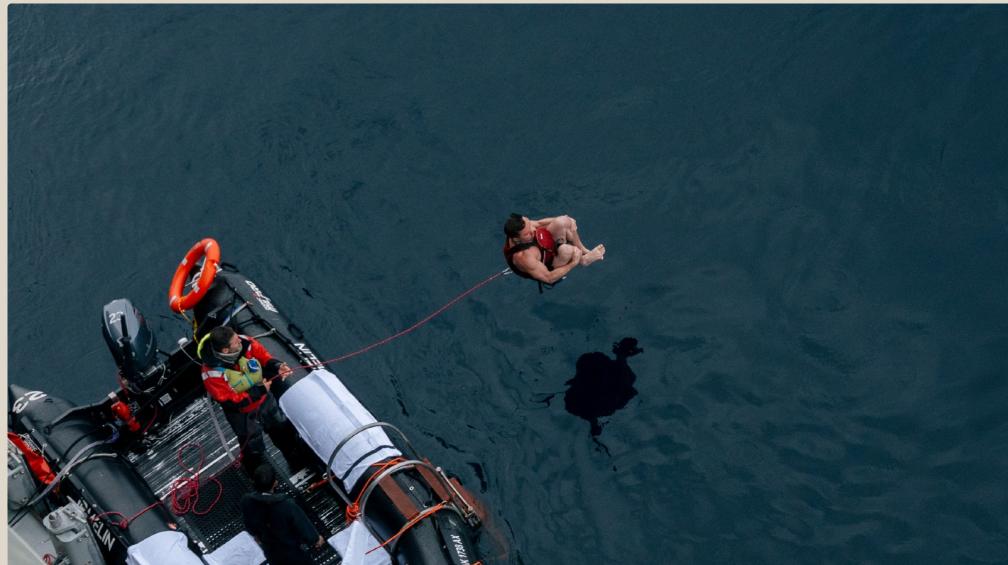
The ship glided forward with deliberate care, the air heavy with anticipation and awe, as guests' witnessed one of Antarctica's most iconic moments.



Polar Plunge

On this day we took a daring detour into Hidden Bay, where the brave few took the ultimate plunge into the crisp, icy embrace of the Antarctic waters. Hearts racing and teeth chattering, guests dove into the frigid blue, emerging exhilarated, breathless, and laughing at the

sheer audacity of the moment. Cheers and applause rang out from onlookers on the outer decks showing their admiration. It was a bold, unforgettable experience for all; one that would be remembered and retold long after we left these frozen waters behind.



Camping Close to Damoy Hut

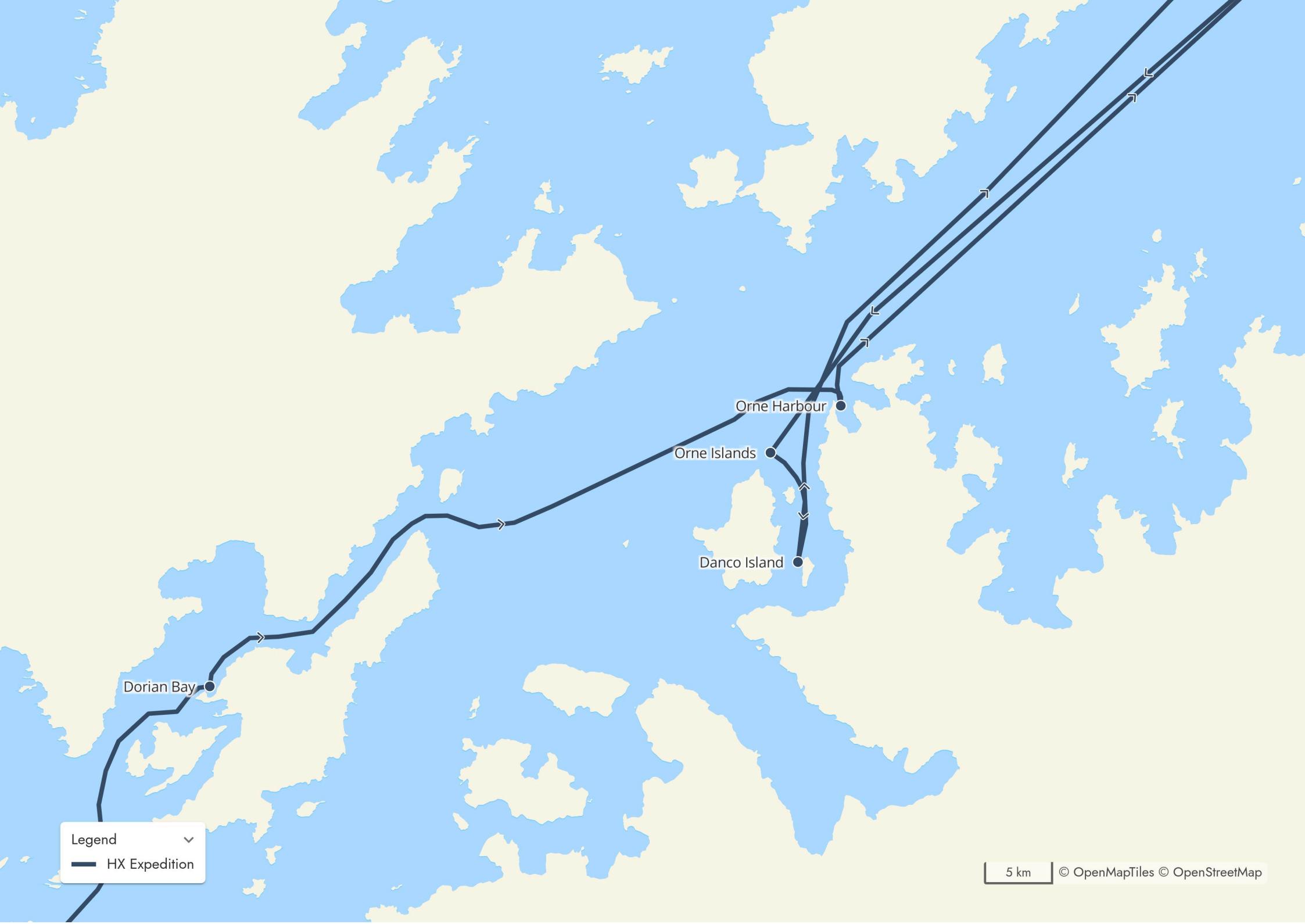
During the evening, a few lucky guests ventured forth to sleep on the snow under the stars, with a few hundred penguins as fellow campers!

On our way to Dorian Bay, where Damoy Hut is located, we passed the iconic Port Lockroy, its historic buildings standing proudly against

the icy backdrop, a reminder of the human presence in this remote wilderness.

The quiet of the evening, punctuated only by the distant calls of penguins and the crunch of snow underfoot, made camping in Antarctica a magical and unforgettable experience.





Orne Harbour

We picked up our campers bright and early and proceeded north through the Neumayer Channel to our next landing site, the one our guests had all been waiting for and quietly hoping for: the Continent itself. Standing in the footsteps of giants was clearly a thrill for them beyond words, and for some guests, it marked their seventh continent, a remarkable achievement!

In Orne Harbour, our guests slowly made their way up the slope to observe chinstrap penguins going about their daily activities, and they marvelled at their determination as they tirelessly climbed the

steep terrain. One cannot help but wonder what it must have been like for the great polar explorers to man-haul sleds toward the Pole. We can only shake our heads in awe!

To celebrate our success in reaching the Continent, we cruised around the harbour by expedition boat, where a leopard seal lounging on an ice floe was taking time out from hunting penguins. Meanwhile, our Science Team was busy guiding guests as they collected samples for the Citizen Science projects being supported on this voyage.



Orne Islands

We had an early start to the morning, as the Expedition Team wanted to ensure our guests enjoyed an action-packed day of exploration. We began with an expedition boat cruise in crisp sunshine around the low-lying Orne Islands, where we were surrounded by chinstrap penguins.

We were delighted to discover a contented leopard seal relaxing on the ice, likely enjoying the remnants of a penguin breakfast. As we rounded the southern side of the island, we encountered an elephant

seal weaner – a recently weaned pup – basking on the rocks and regarding us with clear incredulity.

We also caught glimpses of our two Guest Scientists going about their work on the island, carefully collecting samples for analysis. They were searching for evidence of HPAI – Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza – and other pathogens. For all of us, it was reassuring to know that HX is directly assisting and contributing to vital Antarctic research.

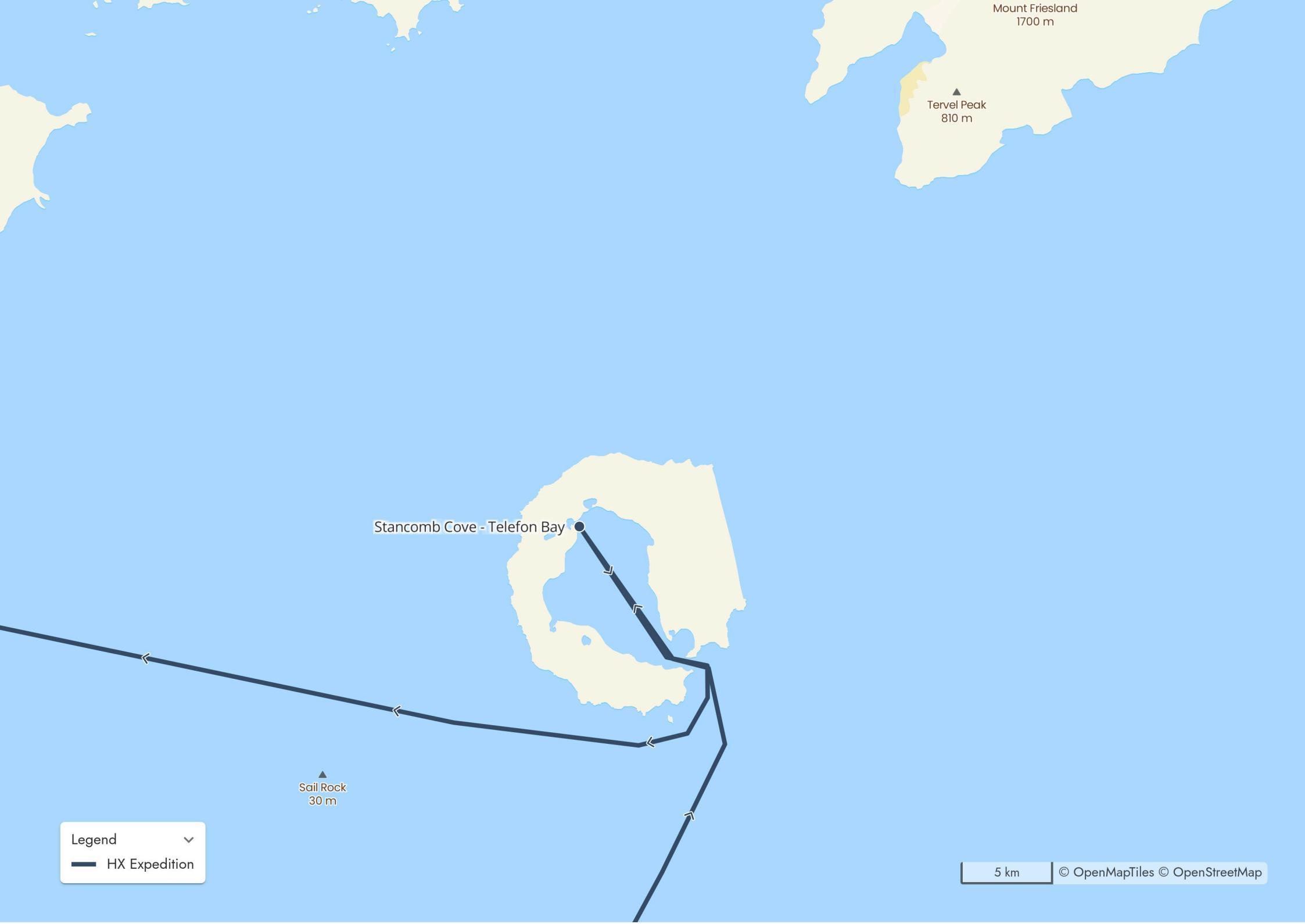


Danco Island

During lunch, we relocated to the Errera Channel and once again stepped ashore on Danco Island. Here, we found ourselves mirroring the penguins with a steady march up the hill to a colony perched above an extraordinary viewpoint.

Kayakers enjoyed a relaxed and intimate experience of Antarctica using the new Discovery kayaks, which offered a simpler and more accessible way to explore these remarkable waters.





Deception Island

Early this morning, we sailed through Neptune's Bellows and into the caldera, the dramatic remains of an active volcano. Our landing site for the day, Telefon Bay, was named after the Norwegian vessel *SS Telefon*.

Here, we had the opportunity to truly stretch our legs as we climbed

and circumnavigated the volcanic cone, which last erupted between 1970 and 1971. The views from the summit were well worth the effort of the climb.

And with that, our adventure began to wind down, as we turned northward with two days ahead of us on the Drake Passage.



Heading North

We awoke to the familiar rolling motion of the ship, the kind borne of a gentle following sea, and our guests moved about the ship with confidence, grace, and dignity. The ship now felt like home.

The day was spent in lectures and workshops hosted by our Expedition Team members, who were eager to share their wealth of experience and understanding.



Guest consumption:

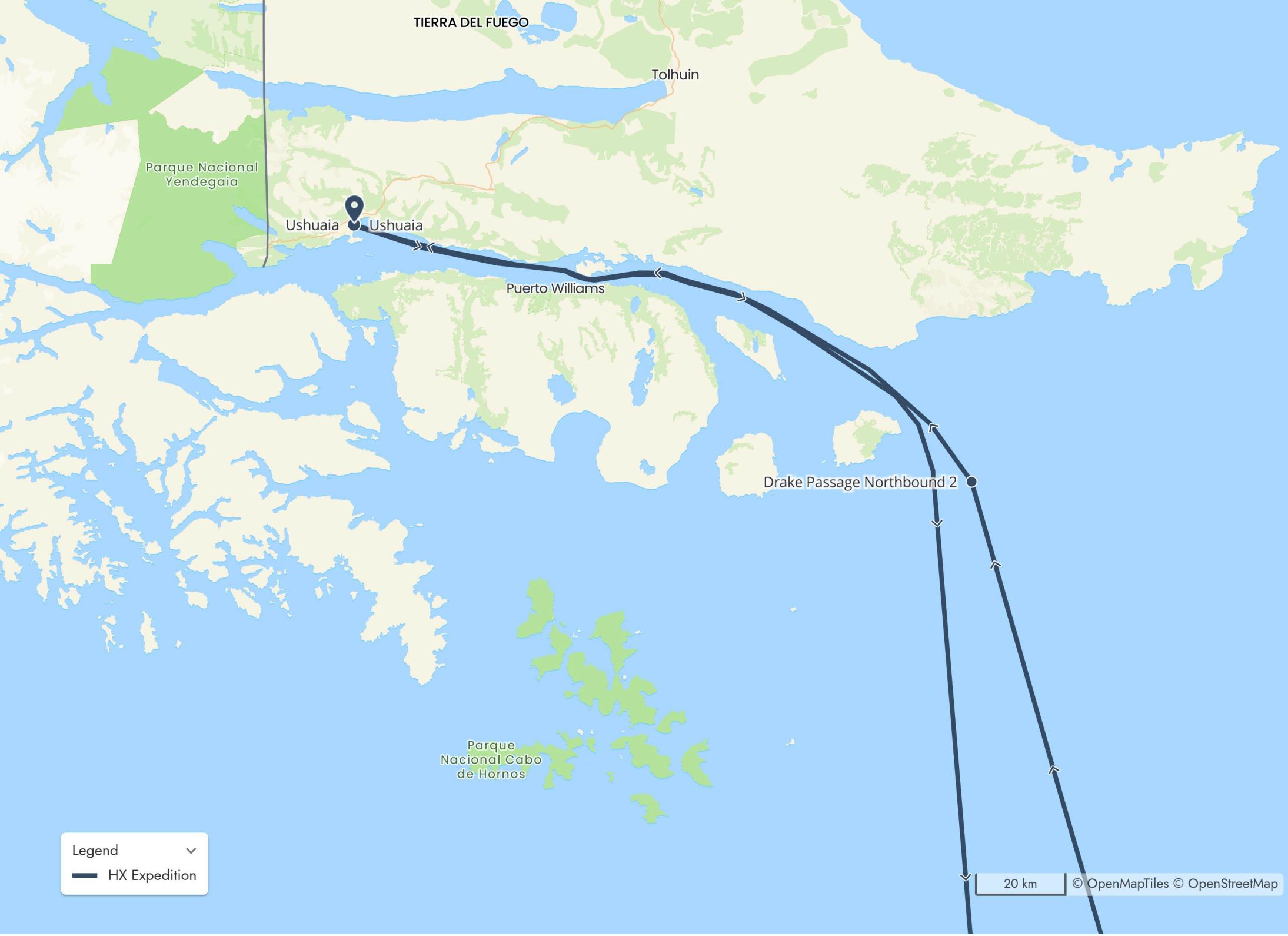
- 896 Bottles of wine
- 337 liters of Beer
- 2275 kg of meat
- 1146 liters of milk
- 615 kg of flour
- 11200 fresh eggs

The Last Day on Board

Today was a quiet day of reflection on the Drake Passage as our guests moved about the ship, catching up with new friends, sharing anecdotes from the voyage and plans for future adventures, and gathering the last gems of knowledge from the Expedition Team.

We slowly made our way back toward civilization knowing that our guests were not the same people who had departed ten days ago. There is something special about Antarctica that sears the heart like a burning brand and leaves a deep longing behind.







Ushuaia, Argentina - Jan 9, 2026

Fair Winds and Safe Travels

We are jostled awake as the Captain uses the bow thrusters to manoeuvre us alongside the pier in Ushuaia. The ship settled a bit uneasily against the dock. We sensed its restlessness as it tugged at the mooring lines, eager to return south with new guests.

Guests shared one last meal together on board, then were whisked away for a short tour of Ushuaia, followed by the journey to the

airport and the beginning of their journey home.

We hope to have an opportunity to meet again, on another expedition, to another extraordinary realm explored by HX. Until then, we hope our guests carry these memories with them and look forward to reminiscing about this truly unforgettable voyage.



HX

logbook.travelmap.net/20251230-fnant2523