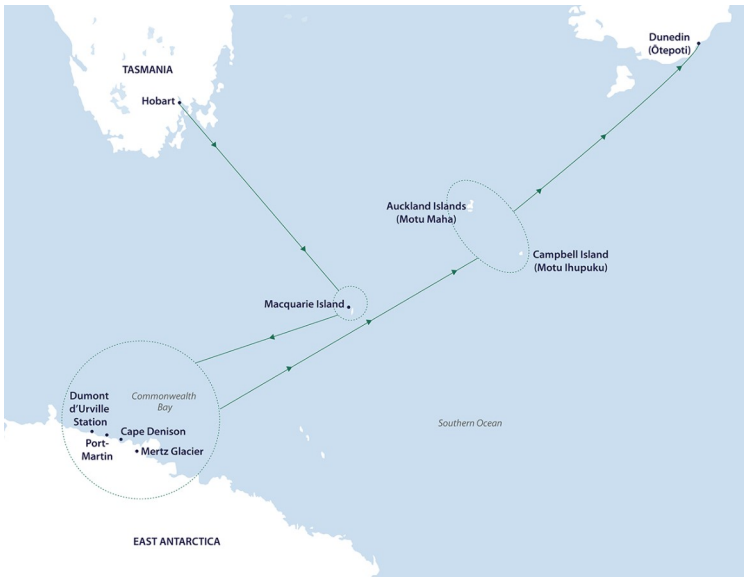
MAWSON'S ANTARCTICA - EXPEDITION FROM HOBART, AUSTRALIA

Retrace the historic voyage of Sir Douglas Mawson's Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) and experience the grandeur of remote East Antarctica. Cross the Antarctic Circle and cruise the pack ice, skirting majestic ice cliffs and marvelling at beautifully sculpted icebergs. Keep watch for emperor and Adelie penguins porpoising along the ice edge, orcas patrolling for prey, and snow petrels soaring against a backdrop of the vast Antarctic Ice Sheet.

Continue towards Commonwealth Bay and the fabled Cape Denison. Conditions permitting, make landfall to explore what remains of Mawson's main base, and find yourself transported back to the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. Then onwards to Dunedin, with a pause to enjoy the ruggedly beautiful New Zealand subantarctic islands, where nesting royal albatross, the endemic yellow-eyed penguin (hoiho), and lush megaherb meadows await.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Hobart

Arrive in Hobart, where you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred with your fellow expeditioners to your assigned pre-voyage hotel. If you are already in Hobart, we ask you to make your way to your hotel. This afternoon, visit the Aurora Expeditions hospitality desk in the lobby to collect your luggage tags. Please clearly label the tags with your name and ship cabin number. Our team will confirm details regarding your embarkation day, answer any questions and provide you with information on where to dine or purchase last minute items.

That evening, enjoy light refreshments as you meet your fellow expeditioners at a Welcome Reception and Pre-Embarkation Briefing. Afterwards, enjoy your evening in Australia's southernmost capital city. You may like to indulge in a

sumptuous meal at one of Hobart's celebrated restaurants, or perhaps enjoy a leisurely stroll along the historic waterfront.

Assigned accommodation: To be advised

Day 2 Embarkation

This morning, enjoy breakfast and check-out. Please ensure your cabin luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. By 11.00 am, take your cabin luggage to hotel reception, prior to, or at check-out. Your luggage will be stored and transferred directly to the port for clearance, to be placed in your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Please keep any valuables or personal items with you throughout the day.

Your morning is at leisure to explore Hobart.

Settle into your beautifully appointed cabin and discover the many public spaces designed with your comfort in mind. This luxurious vessel is yours to explore! As we throw the lines and set sail down the Derwent River, join your expedition team on deck to enjoy panoramic views of the Hobart foreshore, and the dramatic fluted columns of the Tasman Peninsula. From Storm Bay we set a southerly course, following in the wake of the vessel Aurora, which carried Sir Douglas Mawson's Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) 100 years ago.

Days 3-5 At Sea

On an expedition such as this, the journey is as significant as the destination. Sea days are a wonderful opportunity to relax, meet your fellow travellers and learn about the history, environment and local wildlife in this fascinating corner of the globe.

As you acclimatise to life on board, your expedition team is available to answer any questions you may have and offer pro-tips on photography and birdwatching. With decades of collective experience in the region, they love to share their expertise and enthusiasm with fellow travellers. Specialists across a range of fields will offer entertaining talks and presentations on the local wildlife and history, which you won't want to miss!

Once you've settled in, you may like to pamper yourself with a sauna, or work out at the onboard gym. For the bookworms, our well-equipped polar library is the perfect place to while away the hours at sea, and the bar is a vibrant social hub to get to know your fellow expeditioners.

As you take in the vast expanse of the Southern Ocean, spare a thought for Mawson and his party, who made this transit aboard the Aurora, a wooden vessel no longer than an Olympic swimming pool! Mawson reported sightings of many whales and albatross in these waters, so spend some time out on deck with your binoculars - or grab a 'cuppa' and find a vantage point in one of our spacious observation lounges.

Days 6-7 Macquarie Island

"Penguins were in thousands on the uprising cliffs, and from rookeries near and far came an incessant din . . . seabirds of many varieties gave warning of our near approach to their nests" Douglas Mawson, 1911.

As they sailed towards Antarctica, Mawson and his men encountered 'an exquisite scene'. Macquarie Island (known affectionately as Macca) rises steeply from the Southern Ocean in a series of emerald summits: a beautifully fierce, elemental landscape teeming with life.

Keep your binoculars handy because this subantarctic refuge is home to 3.5 million breeding seabirds, including no less than four species of penguin! Alongside boisterous colonies of tuxedoed kings, charming gentoos, robust rockhoppers and endemic royal penguins, you'll find three types of fur seals and a large proportion of the world's elephant seals. Layer up and head out on deck to experience the sound, sight (and smell!) as you approach one of the largest concentrations of life in the Southern Ocean.

Remember to keep an eye out for Macca's kelp forests--these remarkable underwater ecosystems are quite mesmerising as their fronds sway back and forth on the water's surface.

In addition to being a globally recognised and protected wildlife refuge, Macquarie Island played an important role in Antarctic history. It was here, in 1911, that five men disembarked Mawson's Aurora and established a radio relay station which would transmit the first communication from Antarctica to

the outside world.

Days 8-10 At Sea

As Macquarie Island slips over the horizon, keep watch for wandering, grey-headed, black-browed and light-mantled albatross, which may follow the ship to bid you farewell as you continue south.

Close observers may notice a subtle change in the character of the sea as you cross the Antarctic Convergence. Beyond this zone where the waters of the north and south mix, the sea surface temperature drops by about 4°C (39°F), signalling your entry into the Antarctic. Mawson reported spotting 'innumerable' birds in these waters, so keep watch for porpoising penguins, flocks of fluttering Antarctic petrels, or perhaps the more solitary snow petrel. You're not far from the Antarctic Circle, so your first iceberg can't be far away!

Sea days are a great opportunity for some R & R as you digest your subantarctic experiences and prepare for the next phase of your voyage. Relax and unwind your way, perhaps meeting newfound friends at the bar, treating yourself to a sauna, or editing some images in the comfort of your cabin.

As we continue along the path taken by the Aurora in 1911, join your expedition team in the lecture room for presentations about Antarctic ice, wildlife, and of course the remarkable story of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition. Led by Australian geologist and explorer Sir Douglas Mawson, the expedition successfully charted vast swathes of previously explored Antarctic coastline, and over 6000 kilometres of the interior. Despite its tremendous contribution to the advancement of Antarctic science, the expedition is perhaps best known for its nail-biting tales of triumph and tragedy. Hear the story of the extraordinary sledge journey undertaken by Mawson, Ninnis and Mertz, and rediscover why this remains one of the most incredible polar survival stories of all time.

Days 11-13 East Antarctic Coast

'The tranquility of the water heightened the superb effects of this glacial world. Majestic tabular bergs, lofty spires, radiant turrets . . . illumined by pale green light within whose fairy labyrinths the water washed'. Douglas Mawson

When Captain John King Davis skillfully steered the Aurora through heavy pack ice in 1912, the Australasian Antarctic Expedition became the first to chart this stretch of coastline. As you sail into these waters over a century later, you are entering one of the most inaccessible and seldom-visited parts of Antarctica.

Find a spot on deck as the Captain navigates carefully through glittering fields of frozen ocean, or rug up for a Zodiac cruise through the pack, keeping watch for elegant emperor penguins, sweet-faced Weddell seals resting on ice, and the unmistakable 'pouf' of an orca's exhalation. Embrace the spirit of exploration as your expedition team designs your voyage from day to day, bringing decades of experience to selecting the ideal sites based on the prevailing weather, ice conditions and wildlife opportunities.

Days 14-15 Commonwealth Bay

"Seals and penguins on magic gondolas were the silent denizens of this dreamy Venice. In the soft glamour of the midsummer midnight sun, we were possessed by a rapturous wonder--the rare thrill of unreality." Douglas Mawson

For many expeditioners, approaching Commonwealth Bay evokes a profound sense of awe and humility. This is where Mawson and his men established their Main Base, on the shores of a 'beautiful, miniature harbour' at the foot of the Antarctic Ice Sheet. Imagine their dismay when they realised that their ice-free oasis lay directly in the path of fierce katabatic winds, which rushed like rapids off the Polar Plateau! Despite its unfortunate position, Main Base housed eighteen expedition members for up to two years in this bay Mawson dubbed the 'Home of the Blizzard'.

Katabatic winds and ice permitting, we will make landfall on the storied shores of Cape Denison, where several of the huts of Mawson's Main Base still stand. The Magnetograph House and the Main Hut, where the men lived and worked, remain largely intact despite over a century of exposure to the elements. Bleached pine cladding bears witness to the passage of time, and ice drifts partially fill the huts, the past literally frozen in time. Scientific instruments and scattered personal items provide an intimate glance into the austere daily lives of Mawson and his men.

In addition to being the site of Mawson's huts, Cape Denison provides a rare ice-free refuge for Antarctic wildlife, including nesting Adelie penguins, snow

petrels and Wilson's storm petrels. Weddell, elephant and leopard seals regularly haul out to rest on the rocky shores. You may like to wander along pebbly beaches, or perhaps ramble up a snow-covered ridge to a vantage point over this spectacularly monochrome landscape.

Before leaving East Antarctica our Captain will attempt to manoeuvre us into position over the South Magnetic Pole. Spare a thought for Mawson who, accompanied by fellow Australian geologist T.W Edgeworth David and Scottish doctor Alistair Mackay, undertook a gruelling three month march to become the first to stand in the vicinity of the South Magnetic Pole in January 1909. Conveniently for us, the Pole has since migrated out to sea, so we can celebrate its attainment with a glass of bubbly in the comfort of the ship's bar!

Days 16-19 At Sea

We leave the grandeur of the ice to the seals and penguins and head northwards, but our voyage is far from over. In the days ahead there is plenty of time to enjoy the magic of the Southern Ocean and the life that calls it home. If the mood takes you, join your expedition team in the lecture room for presentations and polar film showings, or meet your new travel mates in the bar, library or observation deck to reminisce on your Antarctic experiences.

These days at sea also offer time and space to reflect on the emotions and special moments you've lived over the past two weeks. You may like to review your photos, jot some notes in a journal, mark your passage on a map, and reflect on your journey so far.

As you approach the rugged New Zealand subantarctic islands you have a rare opportunity to spot the endemic white-capped mollymawk (a type of albatross) in flight. The largest of the mollymawk family, over ninety percent of its population breeds on the Auckland Islands. Keep an eye out also for the playful New Zealand sea lion and southern right whale, which are known to frolic in these waters.

Days 20-22 New Zealand's Subantarctic Islands

Scattered across the Southern Ocean 465 kilometers (300 miles) south of New Zealand, these islands have been visited by Polynesian and M ori navigators for centuries, and are of great cultural and spiritual significance to Ng i Tahu, the indigenous peoples of New Zealand's South Island. Here you have the opportunity to witness a finely tuned subantarctic ecosystem populated by unique endemic species such as the yellow-eyed penguin (hoiho) and Campbell mollymawk.

Day 23 At Sea

As your journey draws to a close, take some time to reflect on the experiences of the past few weeks. Perhaps take some time to organise your photos, jot some more notes in your journal or simply relax and soak up the ambiance on board as you farewell your travel mates . . . until next time!

We hope you become ambassadors for Antarctica and tell your family, friends and colleagues about your journey to this magical place, advocating for its conservation and preservation so that they might one day visit the region to experience what you have been lucky to see and do here.

Day 24 Disembark Dunedin

After breakfast, farewell your expedition team and fellow passengers as we all continue our onward journeys, hopefully with a newfound sense of the immense power of nature.

Note: At the conclusion of the voyage, we do not recommend booking flights departing prior to 12.00 pm on the day of disembarkation in case there are delays.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

YOUR SHIP: DOUGLAS MAWSON

YOUR SHIP:	**Douglas Mawson**
VESSEL TYPE:	**Small Ship Expedition**
LENGTH:	
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	**154**
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	**2025**

Lenght: 104.4 m

Designed for global discovery

Adventure has a new name. Setting sail in 2025, our new state-of-the-art ship, the Douglas Mawson, is the last in a line of purpose-built vessels that have redefined small ship expedition cruising.

Named after the legendary Australian geologist and explorer, our new small ship embodies Mawson's pioneering spirit and is designed for global discovery. Featuring the revolutionary Ulstein X-BOW® and purpose-built with enhanced sustainability features, it takes on average 154 adventurers to the world's wildest places in smooth, quiet comfort. It boasts our most extensive range of cabins yet, including a range of single cabins. The Douglas Mawson features a host of amenities to help you connect with like-minded travellers and elevate your time onboard our floating base camp for adventure. After a long day of exploring, head to the back deck to swim in the heated outdoor swimming pool, find a sun bed to read on, or soak in one of two Jacuzzis. Work up a sweat in the gym before unwinding in the sauna, resolve to learn something new in the Citizen Science Centre, then enjoy a delicious meal with new and old friends in one of two restaurants. Or, with multiple observation areas throughout the ship, simply relax in comfort while you keep watch for wildlife or incredible landscapes unfold before you.

While enjoying the luxurious amenities onboard, you can rest assured that our aim to get you off the ship to explore the natural environment as much as possible through our unique activities program remains unchanged.

Newest Ulstein X-BOW ®

The Douglas Mawson features the newest streamlined Ulstein X-BOW®, designed for global discovery. The revolutionary design cuts through the swell, offering unrivalled stability on ocean crossings and helping to reduce fuel consumption. It's just one of the many sustainability features that helps us travel more responsibly.

Heated Pool, Jacuzzis & Sauna

In between landings, enjoy access to the onboard gym or unwind in the sauna. Or head to the back deck to swim in the heated outdoor pool, enjoy a drink at the pool bar, or soak in one of two Jacuzzis, watching the world go by.

Leading Technology

The Douglas Mawson is at the cutting edge of nautical technology, fitted with industry-leading technology including world-class return-to-port equipment. The ship also features a medical clinic designed for use in remote areas.

Built for Adventure

The Douglas Mawson features Zodiac access points and an activities platform, making boarding the Zodiacs as quick, efficient and safe as possible, minimising wait times and getting

you closer to the action for longer. In our mudroom you will have access to lockers to store gear & boots and rapid drying areas for clothing.

More Cabin Choices

The Douglas Mawson features 11 different types of cabins, including a range of spacious single berth cabins - all adorned with elegant Nordic interior design features.

Multiple Observation Areas

As you explore the ship you will find indoor lounge areas with floor-to ceiling windows, and multiple open decks with expansive 270-360 degree views. The Glass Atrium Lounge inside the bow is a fantastic place to sit and watch for wildlife - with a drink in hand. There is no shortage of spaces to take in the majesty of the incredible world outside!

Lecture Theatre

On all expeditions you will meet naturalists and local specialists, who offer presentations on their area of expertise to enhance your appreciation of the destination you are exploring.

Join the team in the lecture theatre for presentations covering a broad range of topics to suit every interest, from history and culture to biology and climate change. Regardless of the topic, they all have one thing in common: they all aim to engage, educate, entertain and turn you into an ambassador for the planet.

Citizen Science Center & Lounge

Learn more about the world and the unique destinations Aurora visits by visiting the onboard naturalist and Expedition Team in the world-class Citizen Science Center. You will be rewarded for your thirst for knowledge with one of the best views on the ship.

Library

With floor-to-ceiling windows, the library is a peaceful sanctuary where you can find non-fiction books to read up on the day's destinations, use a public laptop to organise your photos or play board games with newfound friends.

Choose from our range of informative non-fiction titles, wildlife guidebooks, travel journals, novels and a selection of children's books and board games.

Wildlife guides, books and binoculars can also be found on the observation lounge on Deck 7.

Mudroom

No need to take your wet expedition gear back to your cabin to dry. Keep your cabin warm and cosy by leaving your outer jackets and pants in the mudroom.

The mudroom is your launchpad for all shore excursions and activities. Here, you will have access to a locker when you can hang your gear up to dry, and store your boots between excursions.

Swimming Pool & Jacuzzis

There are two Jacuzzis on the top outside deck which offer amazing views of the world outside, a heated outdoor pool surrounded by sun beds you can relax on after a long day of exploring, and a pool bar.

Gym & Sauna

During your voyage, enjoy complimentary access to the gym or visit our sauna, which we highly recommend after the Polar Plunge!

Restaurants

One of the most important parts of any expedition is the food! Whatever adventures the day holds, you will be fuelled-up with hearty meals and delicious morning/afternoon teas cooked by our onboard chefs.

Meals are a great time to soak up the expedition camaraderie in our open seating dining area. Share stories with your fellow travellers and ask our expedition team questions that may have

come up during the day.

Tea, coffee and snacks are available 24 hours a day, and our chefs offer different menu options and courses for each meal. Enjoy the range of house wine, beers and soft drinks included with dinner after a long day in the wild.

We also invite you to join your captain and expedition team for informal Captain's Farewell drinks, with complimentary beverages and cocktail appetisers, followed by a 3 course meal.

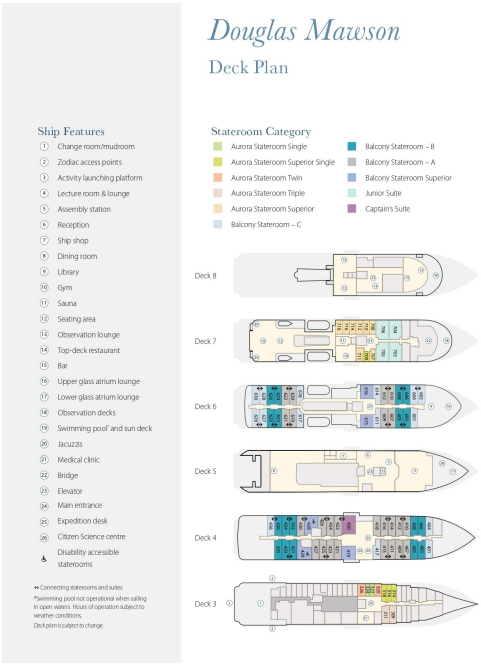
Bars & Lounges

Communal meeting areas have always played a major role in fostering the warm camaraderie on board our ships. They are the heart of the expedition, where people meet to share tales from the day, swap photos, keep an eye out for wildlife and watch the sun go down.

The bars and lounges on board are refined yet inviting places to gather, with floor-to-ceiling windows offering stunning views, and of course friendly bartenders to shoot the breeze with.

reeze with.

INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Aurora Stateroom Single

Aurora Stateroom Superior

Aurora Stateroom Superior Single

Aurora Stateroom Triple

Aurora Stateroom Twin

Balcony Stateroom Category A

Balcony Stateroom Category B

Balcony Stateroom Category C

PRICING

11-Dec-2025 to 03-Jan-2026

Aurora Stateroom Triple	30595 USD pp
Aurora Stateroom Twin	31495 USD pp
Aurora Stateroom Superior	33295 USD pp
Balcony Stateroom Category C	34195 USD pp
Balcony Stateroom Category B	35995 USD pp
Balcony Stateroom Category A	38695 USD pp
Aurora Stateroom Superior Single	40495 USD pp
Balcony Stateroom Superior	42295 USD pp
Junior Suite	53095 USD pp
Captain's Suite	62995 USD pp
Aurora Stateroom Single	0 pp

Optional extras & upgrades

Sea Kayaking. From 1330 USD