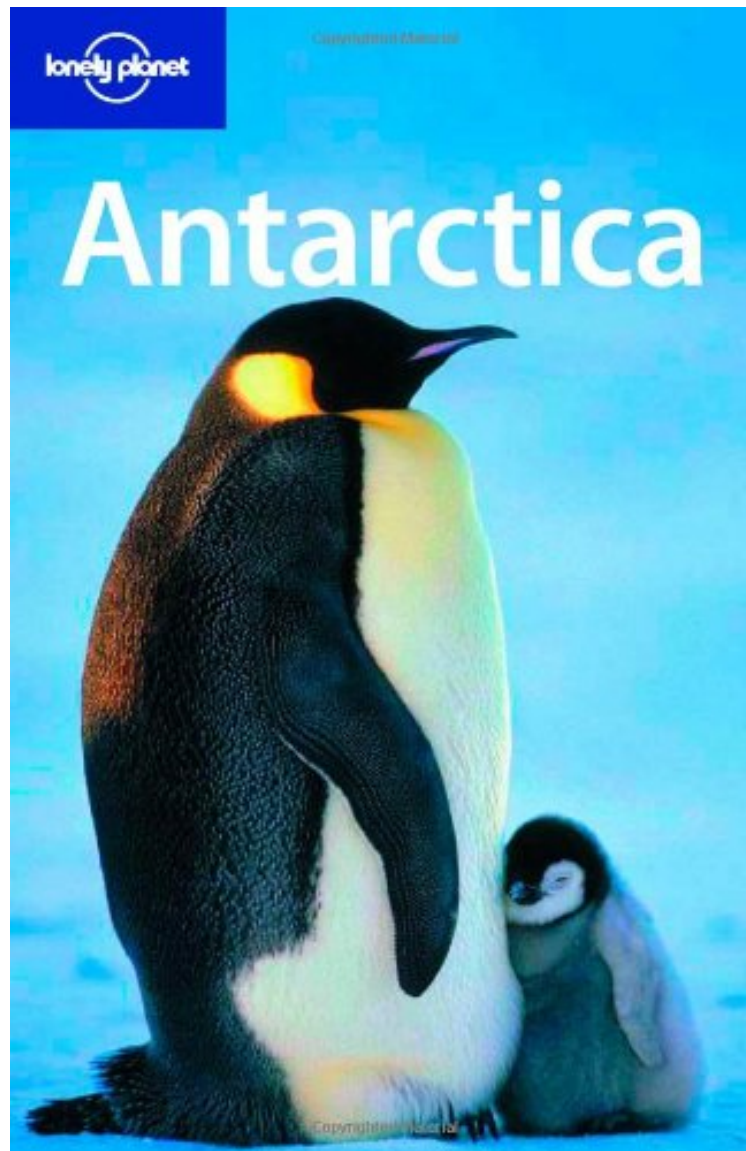


(Mobile book) Antarctica (Country Travel Guide)

## Antarctica (Country Travel Guide)

*Jeff Rubin*

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**Jeff Rubin : Antarctica (Country Travel Guide)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Antarctica (Country Travel Guide):

33 of 34 people found the following review helpful. Little guidance for the prospective travelerBy dickhThis book, while relatively well written with a good survey of the exploration history of the continent and much detail on the many parts of Antarctica where virtually no one goes, is almost totally useless as a travel guide.The single, by far most important decision that a prospective traveler makes is to choose the type of ship and, within the type, which

individual ship. According to IAATO there were some 38,000 visitors to Antarctica during the 2009/2010 season. Almost exactly half were passengers on large standard cruise ships that the big operators reposition to the Valparaiso (Chile) to Buenos Aires route during the Northern Hemisphere winter. As a little "bonus extra" these ships skirt Antarctica as they round the Horn and let their passengers view the continent between trips to the groaning buffet tables. Ships of more than 1000 passengers make no landings, while ships with between 400 and 1000 do sometime make a single landing of groups of 100 or less. The same is the case for ships of between 100 and 400 passengers which may venture to make a couple of landings. The other half, some 19,000, opt for one of the "expedition travel" choices. The vast majority of these book a cruise on one of the roughly 20 ice strengthened ships that are able to navigate in Antarctic waters and, since they carry less than 100 passengers, can land passengers on the continent. As Mr. Rubin points out in the book, 80% of these travelers visit 30 different spots on the Antarctic Peninsula and half of these visit just 10 of the sites, and finally 30% visit only 5. Therefore, while the 19 pages on the Antarctic Peninsula are useful, I question what value the other 200 pages on East Antarctica, Ross Sea, Weddell Sea, pre-Antarctic Islands and even South Georgia, the Falklands etc are since no more than a handful of tourists visit these locations. But the real failure is that there is almost no information that could help prospective visitors choose with whom they will travel. There are obviously vast differences between the big cruise ships and the expedition ones. For the purpose of this discussion let's put aside passengers on the big cruise ships; they are at best accidental visitors to Antarctica. But there are also huge differences between the expedition ships. About half are Russian research vessels that are chartered out to large tour operators for the season. They are technically good ships but accommodations are often Spartan and onboard service frequently spotty. At the other end of the spectrum are the Lindblad ships and the Hapag-Lloyd ones which are super luxury and with price tags in accordance. Then there are several ships in between, including the only two locally owned ships, the Chilean Antarctic Dream ( [...]) and the Argentine Ushuaia ( [...]). Both offer typical cuisine of the two countries with notable examples of both countries wines. The Antarctic Dream is a bit more upscale while the Ushuaia is somewhat more for the backpacker set. In short what this guide book lacks is guidance on the most important decision that an Antarctic traveler will make; how to get there.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Outdated and Awkward By M. Gotshall  
Outdated:- The listings in Ushuaia are terribly outdated. Many no longer exist. If your Antarctic journey begins in Ushuaia, I would strongly recommend purchasing a Tierra del Fuego chapter from a more recent Lonely Planet guide (e.g. Lonely Planet Chile Easter Island: Tierra del Fuego)- The volcanic hot spots on Deception Island shift, and expeditions are discouraged from digging into the sand on the beach, so the prospect of a less than authentic swim in Antarctic waters is becoming extremely unlikely. (But the advice to pack a swimsuit still holds true, as visitors still go swimming, and you might otherwise be persuaded to make the icy plunge in your thermals. Or au naturel.)  
Awkward:- If you're really headed to Antarctica, chances are that you're headed to the South Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula. However, the peninsula comprises just one chapter of the book, and that chapter is nestled somewhere in the middle of the book. Even after a week of landings in the area, I still found that I had trouble locating the one chapter that covered nearly everywhere we visited. If nothing else, pack a bookmark!  
Penguin Clip-over-the-page Bookmark By Re-marks- Even the most detailed map of the Antarctic Peninsula is not particularly useful, since the Lonely Planet map conventions don't make much sense in a place devoid of traditional landmarks. The attractions here are the places themselves (islands, bays, waterways, etc) which are not indexed in the map legend. This means that you're forced to scour a map of a huge region, hoping that the tiny spot where your next landing will be actually made it onto the map.- I agree wholeheartedly with dickh's review that this book is a bit of a failure as a travel guide. There are very few logistical details on the different expedition companies and the different kinds of ships.- When to go? Every trip to Antarctica is different, but there are relatively well-defined differences in the seasons. The "When to Go" section is a few short paragraphs with vague comments. Basically, the book's answer is "summer," but ask someone who's spent a full summer there, and they can elaborate quite a bit on the differences between the beginning of the season and the end of the season. The temperatures, the landscape, the wildlife all change from month to month. There are no guarantees in Antarctica, but you can certainly schedule your trip to improve your chances of seeing what you hope to see.- The sections covering wildlife do the best that they can (since Lonely Planet books have very few color photos), but a text-only wildlife guide leaves much to be desired. It is well worth looking into another book to cover this if your trip does not include one. Antarctica Cruising Guide: Includes Falkland Islands, South Georgia and Ross Sea has great photos and descriptions of the wildlife as well as descriptions of common landing sites.  
Good Points:- The history section is excellent! It provides a wonderfully detailed history of the key expeditions and the exploration of the continent. I was also surprised to find that the history of the Scott and Amundsen's race to the pole was reasonably unbiased (Many accounts come across as very one-sided).- The book contains a map of the various research stations and bases around the peninsula, which I found extremely useful and referred to quite often. But again, I always had trouble locating it when I needed it.- Antarctica is a vast area to cover in a single guidebook, and I appreciate that LP made the effort to even produce this book. A very few visitors do explore the other islands and other parts of the continent, and I was pleasantly surprised to find that I already own the guidebook that covers some of my most obscure travel goals (e.g. Tristan da Cunha, Bouvetya), so it will definitely stay on my shelf for years to come.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By lois wittner  
Great

Discover Antarctica Feel the salty kiss of sea mist when nearby whales exhale their startlingly loud 'ffffffffffffffff' next to your boat Sneak a peak at the secret harbor of Deception Island, where you can sail inside a restless volcano Pay homage to intrepid explorers at their base camps, where objects remain eerily preserved a century later In This Guide Five authors, 30 specialists, a supporting cast of thousands of emperor penguins Expanded coverage of environmental issues, climate change and ways travelers can make a difference Complete pre-trip planning information for visits by air, private yacht, cruise ship or resupply vessel Content updated daily - visit [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com)

.com Just looking at the hauntingly sculpted blues, vast horizon-touching Shelves, and towering behemoths of Antarctica's ice formations makes the traveler know why she wants to go there and why she needs a good guidebook. Lonely Planet has once again done its homework. In addition to a thorough and succinct history section, useful overviews of Antarctic tour companies, information about how to plan your trip, detailed maps, and interesting facts about the places you'll visit, this book includes a 32-page color wildlife guide that introduces you to Chinstrap penguins, elephant seals, and eight types of whales. LP has sought out the experts on Antarctic issues to write about science, environmental, and exploration issues. Shaded boxes offer in-depth highlights about topics such as traveling by zodiac (the small inflatable boats used by tour companies--ideal for cruising among "bergy bits"), Antarctic fiction, glaciology, and icebergs: "The Antarctic ice sheet is the iceberg 'factory' of the Southern Ocean. The total volume of ice calved from the ice sheet each year is about 2300 cubic km, and it has been estimated that there are about 300,000 icebergs in the Southern Ocean at any one time." This book offers sage advice and is not afraid of the stark and sometimes dangerous realities of traveling to such a harsh and foreboding land: "If you fall overboard, you will die. Although this may not be true in every single case, it is almost certain, for human survival in the -1.8C water of the Southern Ocean is calculated in minutes. Since drowning is thought by some to be preferable to freezing to death, one bit of only half-cynical advice for those who fall overboard is to swim as hard as you can for the bottom."