



PONANT in pole position 1st operator to return to the Antarctic



With the start of *Le Commandant Charcot's* inaugural season, PONANT is the first operator to resume cruises to the White Continent. The company's high polar exploration ship set sail from Punta Arenas on 1st November 2021.

*"We all felt very emotional as we welcomed the first guests. A moment that marks the culmination of six years of hard work, and resumption of the company's activity in the Antarctic. Sailing on *Le Commandant Charcot* opens whole new horizons," says the ship's Captain Patrick Marchesseau. "Our guests were even fortunate enough to observe emperor penguins from the first days of our cruise, an extremely rare encounter".*

This maiden cruise from 1st to 16 November 2021 is exploring the Bellingshausen Sea, off the beaten track, with a 20-strong team of naturalist guides who are accompanying guests all the way.

In total, 14 different itineraries and 33 sailings are scheduled this winter from November 2021 to March 2022. *Le Lyrial*, *L'Austral*, *Le Boréal* and *Le Soléal*, the company's four sisterships, will also be on site.

Winter season 2022/2023 already open

Nigh-on 13 different exploration itineraries are planned for Winter 2022/2023, with 34 sailings. These voyages offer totally new itineraries in the wake of the great explorers, and opportunities to observe extraordinary, secretive wildlife: humpback whales, gentoo penguins, king penguins, Adélie penguins, chinstrap penguins, leopard seals, crabeater seals, Weddell seals, seabirds galore... and more. Activities organised for guests include Zodiac® landings, sea kayaking supervised by state qualified guides, talks, hovercraft outings, activities in polar waters and hikes on foot or snowshoes. Guests will also be able to participate in citizen science lectures and workshops intended to raise awareness and inspire them to protect these fragile environments.

Le Commandant Charcot will also be sailing to the Far North for summer 2022, with 11 sailings planned: odysseys in the true sense of the word to discover the planet's northernmost wildernesses. Travellers in search of meaning and purpose have the chance to reach the end of the world, that mythical point on the edge of extreme lands, the geographic North Pole.

About *Le Commandant Charcot*

With an eco-design at the cutting edge of technology, *Le Commandant Charcot* is undoubtedly the most advanced and innovative vessel in the PONANT fleet. The ship's ground-breaking Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) hybrid electric propulsion system is an integral part of the company's commitment to sustainable tourism. Every attention to detail has been paid in terms of safety, comfort and respect for the environment to enable this PC2 Polar Class ship to sail and explore the far reaches of extreme lands in the Arctic and Antarctic. A certified 'Clean Ship' by Bureau Veritas, *Le Commandant Charcot* is equipped with the latest green technologies, including having the capacity to sort all waste and treat waste water on board. With 123 staterooms, the innovative polar ship can accommodate up to 245 guests, and is equipped with research facilities available to the scientific community as a platform for observation, research and analysis of polar ecosystems.

ABOUT PONANT

Founded in 1988, by officers of the French Merchant Navy, PONANT has created a new style of cruising, under the French flag, through a unique conception of sea travel and a commitment to promoting sustainable and responsible tourism. Accessing exceptional territories aboard yachts featuring refined design, on which the art of living and excellent cuisine take pride of place: such is the promise of a unique and authentic PONANT voyage. For more information, visit www.ponant.com

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