

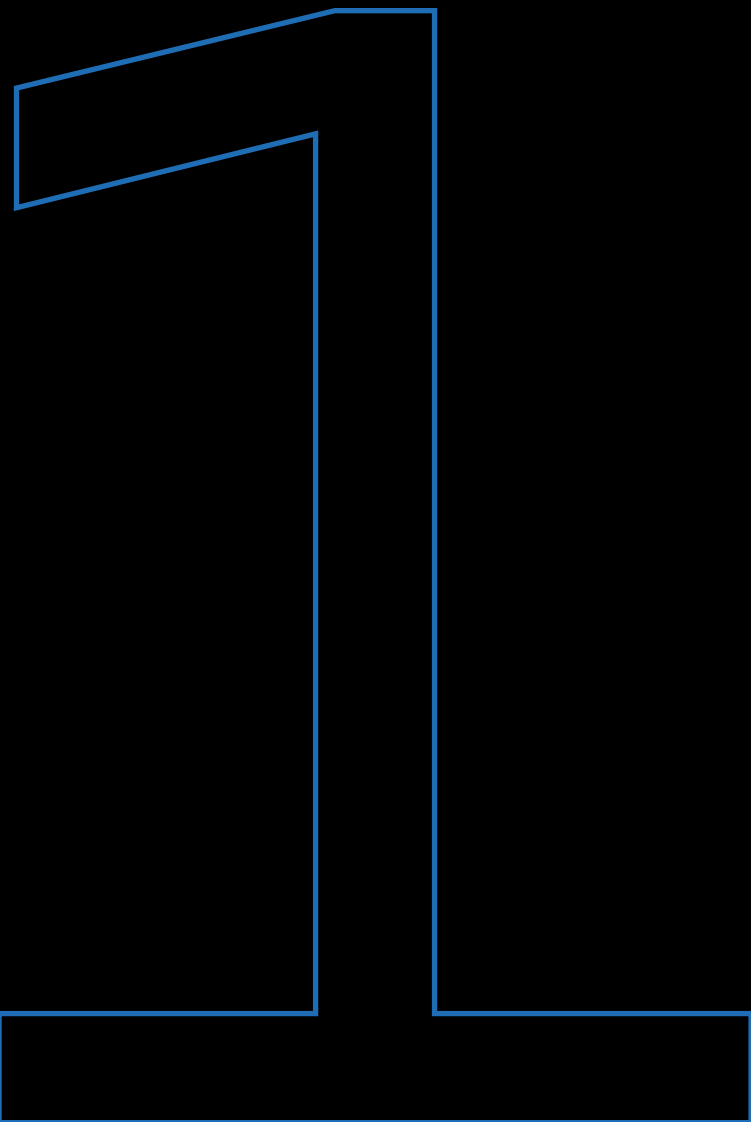
The Complete
Survival Guide
to Antarctica

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On the southern-most tip of the planet rests one of the world's most massive and mysterious landmasses...



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INTRODUCTION

Antarctica has been coined the most mysterious continent on planet Earth. About 98% of Antarctica is covered in a large ice sheet. Aside from being covered in ice, Antarctica's extreme climate and uninhabited land has made it a place for exploration and research by scientists, and strikes curiosity in those brave enough to brace the continent's extremities.

It is the southernmost continent, home to the South Pole. Antarctica's cold, extreme climate renders the continent uninhabitable for the most part, aside from the seasonal scientists that visit Antarctica for research purposes. Its high altitude results in year-round cold temperatures, averaging about -74 degrees fahrenheit at higher elevations. Not only is the weather extremely cold, but it is also dry and windy. Rain and snow are not common on the continent, in fact, Antarctica averages about two inches of precipitation every year. However, the strong winds can carry the dry snow and become Katabatic winds. Katabatic winds are a type of dangerous wind storm, where wind descends onto the ground, picking up snow and dry, cold air with it. These

wind storms can reach over 150 MPH, and can last for days, making it difficult for people to leave their base camps.

Antarctica has two seasons, summer and winter, each lasting for six months. The summer season begins in September and ends in February. During these months, the sun rises and does not set until the end of summer, resulting in constant sunlight. Conversely, the winter season begins in March and ends in August. The sun sets and does not rise until the end of wintertime, producing constant darkness.

Antarctica no singular national representation, nor does it have a native human population. However, 46 countries have research and scientific associations to Antarctica, having signed the Antarctic Treaty. The treaty ensures that each country conducts research and scientific work without disturbing its environment and wildlife. Furthermore, it states that nations may not use Antarctica as a place for military bases, weapon testing, or other experiments of violent nature. There are currently 45 research base camps scattered throughout Antarctica. These stations host thousands of people during the summer and winter seasons.

Scientists and researchers conduct work on meteorology, geology, astronomy, and wildlife through observing Antarctica's pure, untouched resources.

Whether you are looking to research the depths of Antarctic land and wildlife, or you are intrigued by the extremities of this mysterious ice mass, Antarctica is a place for you. Brace yourselves, as there is a lot to learn before commencing your journey.

WHEN TO TRAVEL

Antarctica operates on only two seasons: summer and winter. The summer season begins in October and ends in March. The winter season begins in April and ends in September. Most tourists visit Antarctica during the summer months simply because of the favorable weather and long hours of daylight. However, visiting Antarctica also depends on what you're looking to see during your visit. For example, if you'd like to witness the Antarctic whales, the best time to travel would be in February and March, towards the end of summer.

Travel during the winter months becomes more difficult and less favorable due to the harsh weather conditions and constant darkness. However, the winter season does offer the chance to see exciting wildlife, such as the Antarctic Emperor penguins. There is limited transportation going in and out of Antarctica during the winter time, even between base camps. So, if you decide to stay for the winter, be prepared to commit seven to nine months of stay on Antarctica with no way out. The reason for the limited transportation is, of course, due to the cold weather. For example, the U.S. Antarctic Program

does not fly over the continent during the wintertime due to the cold temperatures at which gasoline from the plane fuel freezes.

In conclusion, it is best to plan your visits or stays during the summer months. Know what you are looking to see during your visit and plan accordingly if you are brave enough to want to stay during the winter months.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

If one wishes to see Antarctica, there are two ways: you can visit as a tourist, or apply for a job during the summer or winter seasons. As a tourist, there are plenty of cruises and tour packages available. However, it can become incredibly expensive, costing you anywhere from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for as much as a week.

Since it is expensive to visit as a tourist, most people are able to visit Antarctica by getting a job. The base camps host plenty of opportunities for year-round jobs. If you are interested in research and science-based jobs, consult your country's Antarctic research program, if there is one. If your country does not have an Antarctic program, it may be hard to navigate from there. However, keep in mind that certain jobs are not sponsored by these programs. For example, the U.S. Antarctic program does not sponsor jobs related to photography, sight-seeing, or recreational activities simply because these jobs are not seen as providing contribution to the advancement of Antarctic research. Be prepared to have skills in engineering or any specialized science,

a lengthy resume, and any skills that set you apart from other candidates.

If you still want to have a job but aren't interested in science or research, research base camps are always looking for ad hoc jobs. For example, these opportunities can vary from sous chefs, janitors, electricians, to hair dressers. Most of these jobs are offered during the summer months, whereas the research based jobs are both during the summer and winter. However, only around 25% of the summer-time employees stay for the winter months.

Do your research: there are plenty of agencies and websites posting paid job opportunities in Antarctica. Find what works for you, and be prepared to dazzle the employers with a stellar resume, job experience, and a passion for the continent.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

Depending on where in the world you are visiting from, Antarctica is a relatively easy place to visit in terms of visas and passports. Antarctica is not owned by a single country, therefore no visa is required. However, visitors and tourists must show proof of permission as per the Antarctic Treaty. This permission is provided by the country, and if you are visiting Antarctica through a tour operator, this will usually be taken care of. If you are partaking in a private expedition, the Antarctic Treaty requires that you and your group notify your country three months before your intended travel date.

If you are travelling through at least one other country during your journey to Antarctica, you must hold a valid passport. Once you arrive on Antarctica, it is important to note that there are no embassies operating by any country on the continent. If in any case you misplace or damage your passport or any other travel document, you must plan to contact the embassy of the next country on your itinerary.

In terms of health requirements, there are currently no vaccinations required to visit Antarctica. However, you must have some form of travel insurance before your visit. If you intend on staying for the winter season, you must have a very clean bill of health. You must provide dental x-rays, numerous blood test results, and several other health records that prove you have been in good physical and mental well being for at least the past two years. Healthcare on Antarctica is basic, with a few physicians and dentists, x-ray and ultrasound machines, and life-support devices. You must also prove that you will be able to maintain mental stability for the long duration of time that you are staying during the cold, dark winter months.

HOW TO GET THERE

There are several ways to get to Antarctica from different parts of the world. Provided that Antarctica is the southernmost continent, travel would commence from the continents of South America, Australia, and Southern Africa. South America is the best point to depart and arrive from as it is the closest to Antarctica. If you are located in America or Europe, flying to South America is the easiest method, whereas natives from more Western countries and continents would be better off flying to Australia or South Africa. The two main methods of getting to Antarctica are by ship and by plane.

If you choose to take a ship into Antarctica, there are many different ports on several continents that arrive at different points on Antarctica. Most cruise ships depart from South America, in particular, the Ushuaia port in Argentina and Punta Arenas in Chile. If you depart from Ushuaia, the journey will be 2 to 3 days to reach the Antarctic peninsula. Ships depart quite rarely from Punta Arenas, therefore it is recommended to stick to Ushuaia port for arrivals and departures. Furthermore,

crossing the Drake Passage, a body of sea that lies between South America and Antarctica, may make the journey take longer than expected due to the strong winds and high waves that occur.

Ports in Australia and New Zealand offer ship journeys to the Eastern Antarctic peninsula, which is far more remote and rugged. This route would be more suitable if you are looking to see more wildlife and rugged terrain. From New Zealand, you can depart from Port Invercargill, and from Australia, you can depart from Port Hobart. However, these routes take far longer than the ports in South America, taking about 7 days to reach the Eastern Peninsula.

If you are looking to fly into Antarctica, one can take a charter plane from Australia, South Africa, and South America. Flights from Australia are very expensive and do not happen often. Flying from Argentina or Chile will take you to the South Shetland Islands of Antarctica, Union Camp, and the South Pole. In addition, flights from Cape Town will land at the South Pole. In conclusion, flying to Antarctica is more of a luxury, as it will run anywhere from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Most flight

expeditions are fly-around, meaning they only tour the peninsula from the sky and do not make actual landings. Few of these flights land on the Antarctic peninsula and expeditions last for about a week. Taking a boat or cruise will prove to be more cost-efficient, but depending on where in the world you depart from, may be a rough journey. Crossing the Drake Passage between South America and Antarctica is a difficult and dangerous journey especially during inclement weather.

WHAT TO PACK

Traveling to one of the coldest, most extreme continents in the world calls for wearing the warmest gear you have. In addition to clothing, bring along items you will need for hygiene, making memories, and a few personal items to remind you of home.

Dressing up in Antarctica requires dressing in layers. Make sure to pack clothing that are made out of moisture-wicking, breathable material. Such material can be wool, polyester, or nylon. Avoid cotton as it traps moisture and takes a long time to dry.

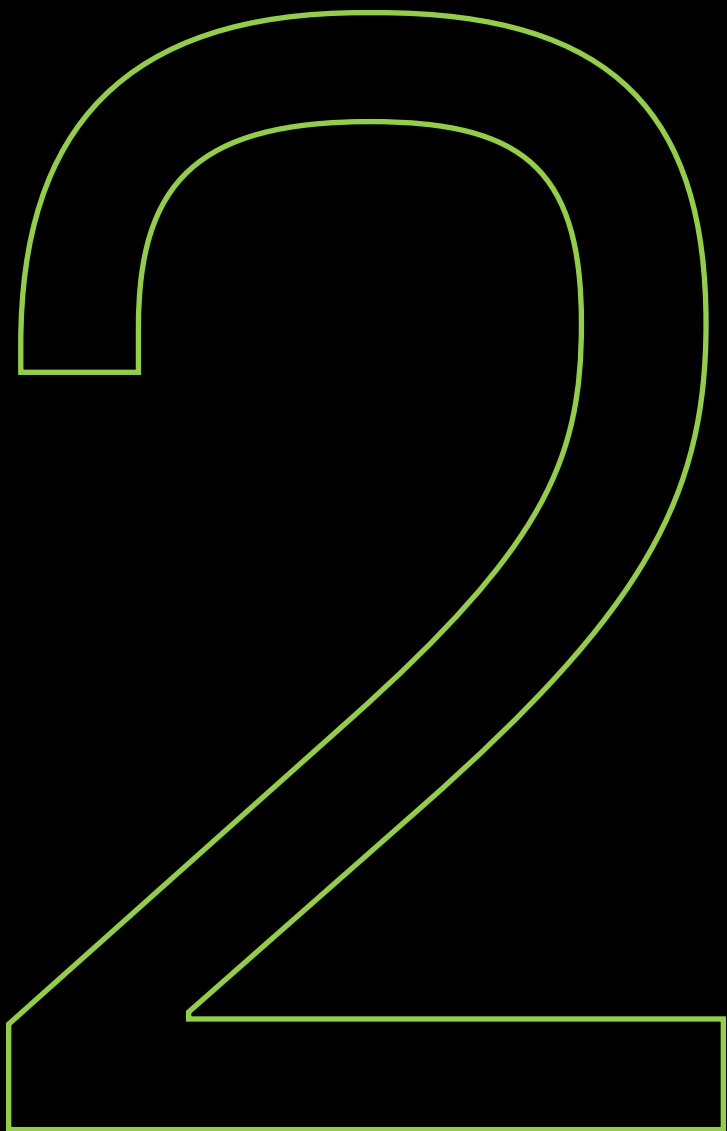
Here's a clothing list for reference:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| -Undergarments | -Outer coat |
| -Socks | -Gloves |
| -Sweaters | -Hats |
| -T-shirts | -Scarves |
| -Leggings | -Sunglasses |
| -Pants | -Ski mask |
| -Fleece jacket | -Ear muffs |

Aside from clothing, make sure to pack items you will use for hygiene. Such items should be used for showering, oral care, skin care, hair care, and more. Make sure to only bring the essentials, but don't make the mistake of underestimating what you will actually need.

In terms of items you will be using during your expedition, make sure to bring plenty of memory-capturing devices. Cameras, recorders, and mobile devices are great items to bring along with you. Be sure to pack necessary cables and chargers, and bring plenty of back-up batteries. While you're at it, bring along binoculars- you never know when you'll need them !

Lastly, bring a few key items that remind you of home. Whether it be photos or a favorite t-shirt, you will never know when homesickness will arise ! Being on a continent so distant from another human-habited place will surely make you miss home. Having these items will ease your mind and help you stay connected to home.



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HYGIENE AND SELF-CARE

Adjusting to life on Antarctica can be difficult, but it is possible. Taking showers and using the bathroom are tasks that are so well-ingrained in our routines that we don't question them. However, conducting these tasks in a new environment introduces a learning curve. So, how does one take care of themselves while on the continent ?

Well, living on Antarctica is often compared to living in a college dorm. At base camps, there are dorms for sleeping quarters, and the bathrooms are shared by roommates. These bathrooms have flushable toilets, public showers, and sinks with running water. However, showers should be taken as quickly as possible to save water and reduce electricity needed to heat the water. Should you be located at a camp without running water and proper bathrooms, you may need to resort to heating water in a pot for bathing. Most camps have portable, flushable bathrooms available in walking distance. It is always best practice to bring along wet wipes and other hygienic products in case you are ever in a situation where a shower is not readily available to you.

The last thing you'd want is a bacteria or skin infection from being unclean. There may be some instances where you are not able to access a bathroom or flushable toilet. For example, you may be stuck at a base with no bathrooms or you are outside on an expedition and need to use the bathroom. In these instances, you are most likely going to use a make-shift toilet. These toilets are ice holes dug into the ground, where one squats and does their business. The waste is collected safely as to not introduce waste and harmful bacteria into Antarctic water. For going #1, many expeditioners recall using pee bottles to collect urine until they return to a location where they can properly dispose of it.

FOOD AND WATER

Eating and drinking on Antarctica may pose a challenge to those accustomed to their normal eating habits in their native countries. The truth is, you need to be eating a lot of food while on the continent. Higher elevations, steeper terrain, and cold temperatures will have you burning twice the amount of calories to keep you warm and alive.

If you are located at a base with more than about 10 people, chances are, you will have a chef that prepares breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the cafeteria. Otherwise, a lot of the food that is provided are frozen meals, dried food, or canned food. At the beginning of each season, food arrives to the continent with about a year's supply, or more if it is the winter season.

Say you are looking to eat fresh food. Well, by the Antarctic Treaty, you are not allowed to bring soil or other materials into the continent. This is because it may allow for foreign bacteria and insects to infiltrate Antarctic wildlife and nature. If you are lucky enough to be located at a base camp with more

advanced systems, they may have a hydroponic system. This system closely resembles a greenhouse, where fresh fruits and vegetables are grown with dissolved nutrients and water. However, these fresh foods may not be abundant especially if many people are looking to eat healthy.

Overall, the food on Antarctica is meant to be low weight and high energy. You will find lots of fattening foods to fuel you with lots of calories and avoid weight loss. Fresh water is always readily available on Antarctica even if it is frozen. This fresh water gets treatment and is then turned into water used for eating and drinking.

CONNECT TO THE WORLD

Antarctica is just starting to become a more habitable place for short-term visitors and tourists. Comparing life on Antarctica versus life in another country may show a drastic difference. In our day and age, the internet is an integrated part of our everyday lives. You may be wondering, is there internet on Antarctica? The answer is both yes and no.

Internet access is a tricky trade in Antarctica. The internet is provided through satellite, as there are no submarine cables to Antarctica that can provide better internet coverage. If you are visiting Antarctica for research or scientific purposes, you will be granted internet access for your work. Most of the broadband is given priority to those using the internet for their jobs on Antarctica. However, if you are looking to use the internet for something more leisurely, such as watching a YouTube video or checking your social media, internet access is pretty limited. Furthermore, the internet is incredibly slow. Trying to load a video or website that has a lot of content is virtually impossible and will take up too much broadband to

attempt. You will most likely be able to use the internet to check and send emails, catch up with a phone call, and other simple tasks.

If you are visiting Antarctica on a private expedition, internet access is not provided. You would need to find your own way of buying internet access and it will be incredibly expensive. Devices such as Iridium phones and modems allow for access to satellite internet coverage, but again, it is very slow and expensive.

Keep in mind that surfing the web in Antarctica is monitored constantly by governing countries. Certain websites are allowed while others are not. Keep in mind that your internet activity is being recorded and you may not have full privacy while on the web.

HOMESICKNESS

One can easily become homesick during their stay on Antarctica. After all, it is the most extreme, desolate continent on planet Earth. Flights operating in and out of Antarctica happen at most, twice a week. Even then, it is important to be prepared mentally and physically for staying at Antarctica.

There are plenty of activities and pastimes to partake in during your stay to avoid boredom and homesickness. Most base stations have libraries, gyms, game rooms, media rooms, and at least one bar for all expeditioners to release steam and relax for a bit. Since the internet coverage is slow and prioritized to those doing work, base camps have plenty of DVD's and pre-downloaded music, books, and other media content to keep you busy.

A great way to keep your mind off of missing home is to burn off some steam. Exercise is a great way to keep your mind busy and your body active. After all, you will be spending some time on the continent, so it's a great time to achieve your body goals.

Bars do exist in Antarctica, and in most base camps, alcohol is allowed. Many times during the year, programs and bases will host social events and gatherings. Most events have themes and are designed to allow social interactions between expeditioners who otherwise may not get to meet all the people staying with them during the season.

If you are feeling homesick, it is possible to arrange a flight back to another country, but it may be expensive and not always possible to alter your set itinerary. If you are visiting during the winter season, good luck. It is incredibly rare for flights to take off unless it is a medical life-or-death emergency. You may also choose to talk to psychiatrists and other help hotlines during your stay. Antarctic bases provide resources and numbers of professional help from nearby continents and countries, such as Australia. To avoid homesickness in the first place, make sure you are in a stable mental condition and are able to stay on the continent for longer than you intend, in case of inclement weather conditions. Also, it wouldn't hurt to bring along a couple of items from home that remind you of your loved ones.

EMERGENCIES

Your stay on Antarctica is designed to be as safe as possible. You will be given several informational safety briefs, lectures, and trainings to inform you of what to do during an emergency. Emergencies can vary from inclement weather to medical or psychiatric. Emergencies can and will happen unexpectedly, but if there's one thing to remember, remember to SLOW DOWN ! We'll explain this more later.

If you find yourself stuck during a weather emergency or natural disaster, the best thing to do is remain calm and follow the instructions of personnel in authority. They are informed on how to safely and securely transport crew and staff members to other parts of the continent, or if necessary, out of the continent. You will most likely be locked-in during a weather emergency, such as a hazardous storm. It is better to remain in shelter with your group than to try and disperse and risk getting lost.

Medical emergencies are rare, but they have a slight margin of occurring. As we mentioned in a previous chapter, medical help on the continent is limited only

because of the expense of bringing material and equipment onto the continent. If you find yourself in the midst of a medical emergency, physicians and emergency staff will do their best to assess the emergency with the equipment they have. If it is a life-or-death emergency, you will most likely be flown out of the continent to the nearest country that can provide medical assistance. Again, it is important that you have travel and medical insurance if such an emergency occurs.

Psychiatric emergencies are extremely far and rare, but are more likely to occur during the winter season. Many tests and rigorous evaluations of expeditioners are put into place to avoid such emergencies. Evaluation of the expeditioner's mental health, ability to make rational decisions, and mental sanity are tested to make sure expeditioners do not end up needing severe psychiatric help during their winter stay.

Lastly, the important thing to remember is to slow down. Stop, assess the situation, and make rational decisions based on information you see during an emergency. Oftentimes, rash decisions are more likely to agitate the situation more when there is no need to panic.

RESPECT THE RULES

Antarctica is a continent rich of untouched terrain, wildlife, and pristine resources. When you are visiting the continent, it is important to make sure to respect its rules. Visiting Antarctica is a privilege and the development of the Antarctic Treaty serves as a rule book for visitors and expeditioners. The number one rule is to maintain peace and preserve as much of Antarctica's natural resources as possible.

There are many opportunities to witness wildlife in Antarctica. Wildlife encompasses the famous Emperor penguins, seals, whales, grass, insects, and more. During your visit, it is incredibly important to go by the rule "look, but don't touch". Bacteria and germs are easily transmittable between humans and wildlife, who have never come in contact with foreign bodies. As with wildlife, do not touch artifacts or any designated areas that are kept off from non-authorized personnel.

The last thing you want to do during your visit is litter. Picking up after yourself is important because we don't want

to infiltrate Antarctica's land with our germs and foreign bacteria. Always dispose of your trash and waste in the designated areas, and if you are not near a base camp, hold your waste with you until you reach an area with proper disposal systems.

LIST OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH BASES

ABOA, QUEEN LAUD LAND, FINLAND
AMUNDSEN-SCOTT, SOUTH POLE. U.S.
ARCTOWSKI, KING GEORGE ISLAND, POLAND
ARTIGAS, KING GEORGE ISLAND, URUGUAY
ARTURO PRAT, SOUTH SHETLAND ISLAND, CHILE
BELGRANO II, COATS LAND, ARGENTINA
BELLINGSHAUSEN, KING GEORGE ISLAND, RUSSIA
BHARATI, LARSEMANN HILLS, INDIA
BROWN, ANTARCTIC PENINSULA, ARGENTINA
BYRD, MARIE BYRD LAND, U.S.
CAMARA, HALF MOON ISLAND, ARGENTINA
CASEY, WILKES LAND, AUSTRALIA
COMANDANTE FERRAZ, KING GEORGE ISLAND, BRAZIL
CONCORDIA, ANTARCTIC PLATEAU, FRANCE AND ITALY
DAVIS, PRINCESS ELIZABETH ISLAND, AUSTRALIA
DECEPCION, DECEPCION ISLAND, ARGENTINA
DOME FUJI, QUEEN MAUD ISLAND, JAPAN
DRUZHNAJA 4, PRYDZ BAY, RUSSIA
DUMONT D'URVILLE, ADELIE LAND, FRANCE
ESCUDERO, KING GEORGE ISLAND, CHILE
ESPERANZA, HOPE BAY, ARGENTINA
FOSSIL BLUFF, ALEXANDER ISLAND, U.K.
FREI, KING GEORGE ISLAND, CHILE
GABRIEL DE CASTILLA, DECEPTION ISLAND, SPAIN
GREAT WALL, KING GEORGE ISLAND, CHINA
HALLEY, BRUNT ICE SHELF, U.K.
JANG BOGO, TERRA NOVA BAY, SOUTH KOREA
JINNAH, QUEEN MAUD LAND, PAKISTAN
JUAN CARLOS PRIMERO, LIVINGSTON ISLAND, SPAIN
JUBANY, KING GEORGE ISLAND, ARGENTINA

KING SEJONG, KING GEORGE ISLAND, SOUTH KOREA
KOHNEH, DRONNING MAUD ISLAND, GERMANY
KUNLUN, DOME A, CHINA
LAW RACOVITA, PRINCESS ELIZABETH ISLAND, ROMANIA
MACCHU PICCHU, KING GEORGE ISLAND, PERU
MALDONADO, GREENWICH ISLAND, ECUADOR
MARAMBIO, SEYMOUR-MARAMBIO ISLAND, ARGENTINA
MARIO ZUCHELLI, TERA NOVA BAY, ITALY
MAWSON, MAC ROBERTSON ISLAND, AUSTRALIA
MCMURDO, ROSS ISLAND, U.S.
MELCHIOR, MELCHIOR ISLANDS, ARGENTINA
MENDEL, JAMES ROSS ISLAND, CZECH REPUBLIC
MIRNY, DAVIS SEA, RUSSIA
NEUMAYER, ATKA BAY, GERMANY
ORCADAS, SOUTH ORKNEY ISLAND, ARGENTINA
PALMER. ANVERS ISLAND, U.S.
PETREL, DUNDEE ISLAND, ARGENTINA
PRIMAVERA, GRAHAM LAND, ARGENTINA
PRINCESS ELIZABETH, DRONNING MAUD LAND, BELGIUM
ROTHERA, ADELAIDE ISLAND, U.K.
S17, SYOWA STATION, JAPAN
SANAE IV, QUEEN MAUD LAND, SOUTH AFRICA
SCOTT BASE, ROSS ISLAND, NEW ZEALAND
SIGNY, SOUTH ORKNEY ISLAND, U.K.
SKY BLU, EASTERN ELLSWORTH LAND. U.K.
SVEA, QUEEN MAUD LAND, SWEDEN
TAISHAN, PRINCESS ELIZABETH LAND, CHINA
TOR, DRONNING MAUD LAND, NORWAY
VERNADSKY, GALINDEZ ISLAND, UKRAINE
WASA, DRONNING MAUD LAND, SWEDEN
ZHONGSHAN, PRYDZ BAY, CHINA

