

From the National Geographic Explorer in Antarctica



Weddell seal

Port Lockroy & Orne Harbour

Today was our last day on the Antarctic Peninsula. A voyage such as this is unpredictable by nature, and while we have plans, these will often give way to changes forced upon us by weather or gifted to us by nature. Our morning went to plan – a landing at Port Lockroy, the site of a former British base and now a museum showing a glimpse of life on an Antarctic base in the middle of the 20th century. The contrast between our three base visits could scarcely be greater – from the abandoned ghost of Detaille to the modern Vernadsky and the time capsule of Lockroy. Port Lockroy is also home to a small gift shop and post office, the proceeds of which support the work of the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust.

The afternoon plan was more nebulous but again proved to be a good one. A chance to explore with no fixed destination - TBA. After looking at a couple of options the Captain and Expedition Leader settled on Orne Harbour - it proved to be a great choice. In this sheltered bay with glaciers and the occasional avalanche cascading down steep slopes we explored by Zodiac and found a landing. For one last time we were on the Antarctic continent. Those with the most energy hiked uphill to a small colony of chinstrap penguins and marveled at how these birds will mountaineer to reach their nests on an exposed rocky ridge. Good visibility gave us stunning views of the surrounding land and seascapes.

This evening, we turned our bow to the north and head out into the open ocean of the Drake Passage on our return passage to Ushuaia. In our wake lies an intense week of experiences that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives.

Richard White, Naturalist; Photo by Michael Nolan, Lindblad Photo Specialist

