The Ross Sea region of Antarctica is one of the most remote places on Planet Earth, and one of the most fascinating places in the continent’s human history. With shipping restricted by impenetrable pack ice to just two brief months each austral summer, few people have ever visited this strange and beautiful territory, with opportunities for non-scientific personnel limited to a handful of tourist expedition ships. Our voyage in a fully equipped and ice-strengthened ship, crewed by some of the most experienced officers and sailors in the world, and staffed by some of the most passionate and knowledgeable tour leaders. This is a unique opportunity to experience nature on a scale so grand there are no words to describe it.
The Ross Sea takes its name from Sir James Clark Ross who discovered it in 1841. The British Royal Geographical Society chose the Ross Sea for the now famous British National Antarctic Expedition in 1901-04 led by Robert Falcon Scott. That one expedition spawned what is sometimes referred to as the ‘Race to the Pole’. Ernest Shackleton almost succeeded in 1907-09 and the Japanese explorer Nobu Shirase tried in 1910-12. Scott thought it was his, but was beaten by his rival, Norwegian Roald Amundsen in the summer of 1911. Shackleton’s Trans Antarctic expedition in 1914-17 marked the end of this ‘heroic’ or ‘golden age’ of exploration, but many of the relics of this era, including some huts, remain.

The dramatic landscape described by these early explorers is unchanged. Mt Erebus, Mt Discovery and the Transantarctic Mountains are as inspiring today as they were 100 years ago. The penguin rookeries described by the early biologists fluctuate in numbers from year to year but they still occupy the same sites. The seals which are no longer hunted for food lie around on ice floes seemingly unperturbed. The whales, which were hunted so ruthlessly here in the 1920s, are slowly coming back, but it is a long way back from the edge of extinction, and some species have done better than others. Snow Petrels, Wilson’s Storm-Petrels, Antarctic Prions and South Polar Skuas all breed in this seemingly inhospitable environment.

Lying like stepping stones to the Antarctic continent are the little known Subantarctic Islands. Our journey includes The Snares, Auckland, Macquarie and Campbell Island. They break our long journey but more importantly they help prepare us for what lies ahead, for these islands are part of the amazing and dynamic Southern Ocean ecosystem of which Antarctica is at the very heart. It is the power house which drives this ecosystem upon which the world depends.

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

THE ITINERARY

| Day 1 | Arrive in Invercargill |
| Day 2 | Port of Bluff and depart |
| Day 3 | The Snares – North East Island |
| Day 4 | Auckland Islands – Enderby Island |
| Day 5 | Auckland Island – Carnley Harbour |
| Day 6 | At Sea towards Macquarie Island |
| Days 7 & 8 | Macquarie Island |
| Days 9 to 12 | At sea |
| Days 13 to 22 | Ross Sea region |
| Days 23 to 26 | At sea |
| Days 27 & 28 | Campbell Island |
| Day 29 | At sea toward Port Bluff |
| Day 30 | Port of Bluff, Invercargill, and disembark |
TOUR ROUTE MAP...

- Stewart Island
- The Snares
- Auckland Islands
- Macquarie Island
- Balleny Islands
- Cape Adare
- Coulman Island
- Ross Island
- Scott Base / McMurdo Station
- Ross Ice Shelf
THE TOUR IN DETAIL...

Day 1: Arrive in Invercargill. Today you will meet the trip staff at our hotel in Invercargill. A detailed program will be available to you when you check in at reception. There will then be an informal get-together at the hotel for dinner this evening, giving you an opportunity to meet your fellow travellers.

Day 2: Port of Bluff and depart. After breakfast, we transfer to our ship at the Port of Bluff. Once we have embarked and cleared Customs, we will steam southwards to the Snares Islands.

Day 3: The Snares – North East Island. The closest Subantarctic islands to New Zealand, they were appropriately called The Snares as they were once considered a significant hazard to sailing ships. Comprised of two main islands, and a group of five smaller islands named the Western Chain; they are uninhabited and enjoy the highest protection as Nature Reserves. The islands consist of boreal forest in a Subantarctic environment, and have been little affected by humans. It is claimed by some that these islands are home to more nesting seabirds than all the British Isles combined!

We plan to arrive near The Snares early in the morning, but as landings are not permitted, we will climb into Zodiac inflatables and cruise along the sheltered eastern side of the main island (weather and sea conditions permitting). In the sheltered bays, we can expect to see the endemic Snares Penguin; a highly vulnerable species, as their low numbers and limited breeding areas make them susceptible to both natural and human disturbances.

Thankfully, the New Zealand government has undertaken significant efforts to protect and preserve the island’s habitats and marine feeding grounds. Of course, there are many other birds present aside from the penguins and we hope to get good views of the Snares endemic subspecies of Tomtit and New Zealand Fernbird, both of which show markedly different morphology and probably warrant species status. With an enormous amount of luck, we could also spot a Snares Snipe from the zodiac. An estimated six million Sooty Shearwaters nest here, and we will also be on the lookout for pairs of Buller’s Albatross that would have arrived to breed...
only a few weeks before our cruise. Other species we will keep an eye out for include Antarctic and White-fronted Terns, Cape Petrel and Red-billed Gull.

As we sail towards the Auckland Islands, we are crossing some of the most productive waters in the Southern Ocean. We can expect to see several species of albatross, including White-capped and Salvin’s; both Southern and Northern Giant Petrel, Mottled and Cape Petrel, White-chinned Petrel, Grey-backed and Black-bellied Storm-Petrel. These waters are inhabited by all 6 of the world’s prion species and these will no doubt provide endless entertainment/frustration! This is also a good area to see Long-finned Pilot Whale.

**Day 4: Auckland Islands – Enderby Island.** The Auckland Islands group was formed by two volcanoes that erupted some 10 - 25 million years ago. These have undergone erosion and dissection by glaciation, creating the archipelago we know today. Enderby Island is one of the most beautiful islands in this group. This northernmost island in the archipelago is an outstanding wildlife and birding location, being pleasantly easy to land on and walk around. The island was cleared of all introduced animals in 1994, and both fauna and flora, especially the herbaceous plants are recovering both in numbers and diversity.

We plan to land at Sandy Bay, one of three breeding areas in the Auckland Islands for New Zealand (Hooker’s) Sea Lion, a rare member of the seal family. Beachmaster bulls gather on the beach, defending their harems from younger (though ambitious) males, to mate with the cows shortly after they have given birth to a single pup. For reasons unknown, Hooker numbers are in slow decline at present, though this is most probably connected with a nearby squid fishery.

During our day ashore, there will be several options available to us, covering both long and short walks as well as having time to spend just sitting and enjoying the wildlife. Walking here is relatively easy, with a boardwalk traversing the island from the east to the dramatic western cliffs, from which point we follow the coast on a circumnavigation of the island.

Birding activity is high and we can look forward to sightings of Southern Royal Albatrosses, Northern Giant Petrel, Auckland Shag, Auckland Teal dozing between patches of rock, Double-banded Plover, Tomtit, New Zealand Bellbird, Subantarctic Snipe, Red-crowned Parakeet, the rare Yellow-eyed Penguin and Light-mantled Albatross; often claimed to be the world’s most elegant bird. Commoner species we may see amongst the
dense thickets of chaparral shrubs and stunning Gentians include the distinctive New Zealand Pipit and introduced species such as European Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Eurasian Blackbird, European Starling and Common Redpoll. We stand a good chance to see the rare endemic New Zealand Falcon. On Derrycastle Reef there is also a fair chance to see migratory waders such as Bar-tailed Godwit and Ruddy Turnstone, while there is every possibility that we could stumble upon the odd vagrant or two.

Day 5: Auckland Island - Carnley Harbour. In the south of the Auckland Island archipelago is a very large, sheltered harbour - rich in human history that covers shipwrecks, treasure hunters, coastwatchers and of course, scientific parties. We plan to arrive in the early morning from our anchorage at Enderby Island. Access to the harbour is through the eastern entrance, guarded on both sides by dramatic cliffs and rugged tussock covered hills. Our activities here today are totally weather dependent, though we have a number of possible options.

The more energetic expeditioners can climb the South West Cape and visit the Shy Albatross colony, where we occasionally see the 'Gibson’s' form of Antipodean Albatross, while also providing magnificent views in all directions, especially over the western entrance to Carnley Harbour, Adams Island and Western Harbour. For those not keen on the climb, there will be an opportunity to take a Zodiac cruise along the coast of Adams Island and Western Harbour, with landings in the latter.

For some history, there is a visit to Tagua Bay coastwatchers hut and lookout (the former is derelict), which was occupied during the Second World War, or we can visit Epigwatt and the remains of the ‘Grafton’ that was wrecked here in 1864. All five men aboard the Grafton survived and lived here for 19 months before sailing their modified dinghy to New Zealand to get help (it took 6 days to reach Stewart Island!) Two of the survivors wrote books about their ordeal, their first-hand accounts telling us much about their time here. We can also visit Camp Cove, where we will see the remains of the castaway depots established and maintained by the New Zealand government between the 1860’s and early 1900’s. Later this afternoon, we depart Carnley Harbour for Campbell Island.

En route to Campbell Island, we have some more excellent seabirding in store and will hope to see Southern Rockhopper Penguin, Antipodean, Campbell, Grey-headed and Light-mantled Albatross, White-headed Petrel, Little Shearwater, and repeat sightings of many other species. In the mid-afternoon, we depart Auckland Island and head towards Macquarie Island.

Red-crowned Parakeet by Adam Riley

Cook's Petrel by David Shackelford
Day 6: At Sea towards Macquarie Island. En route to Macquarie Island, we have the opportunity to observe pelagic species at our leisure. Likely birds that we may spot include Wandering, Southern Royal, Black-browed, Light-mantled, Salvin’s and Grey-headed Albatrosses, Northern and Southern Giant Petrels, and Sooty and Little Shearwaters. We will also endeavour to spot Fairy, Fulmar and Antarctic Prions – never an easy task – but we should obtain some great views. Other species to be on the look-out for include Soft-plumaged, Mottled, White-headed, Grey-faced and White-chinned Petrels, Grey-backed, Wilson’s and Black-bellied Storm Petrels, and Common Diving Petrel.

Days 7 & 8: Macquarie Island. We have two days to explore Macquarie Island, which has a very interesting and rather tragic history. Discovered accidentally in July 1810 by the Australian, Briton Frederick Hasselborough, while looking for new sealing grounds, its seals and penguins were sadly soon hunted to the point of extinction for their fur and blubber. Fortunately, it was eventually declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1933; but not before it was overrun by rats, rabbits and cats. While the cats have now been successfully eradicated, the rats and rabbits continue to wreak ecological havoc: the rats by killing the vulnerable bird chicks and the rabbits by eating the island’s sensitive and slow-growing grasses and other ground-covers. The extent of their damage becomes clear when considering that, in 2006, a large landslide that partially destroyed an important penguin breeding colony at Lusitania Bay was directly attributable to their ferocious grazing. This incident helped prompt the Australian and Tasmanian Governments to jointly fund the eradication of both rabbits and rats to protect the island’s World Heritage status. At an estimated cost of $24 million Australian dollars, this is expected to take up to seven years.

Macquarie Island is the only place to see the Royal Penguin – of which there is an abundance. (An estimated 850 000 pairs breed here!). King Penguin is also found in large numbers; while both Gentoo and Southern Rockhopper Penguins breed here as well – the total population of all breeding penguins here is between 3 and 4 million. Along the coast, we will also search for the endemic Macquarie Shag. The seas here are also home to Killer Whale, Leopard Seal, Southern Right and Sperm Whales and about 150 000 Southern Elephant Seals. We
plan landings at both the ANARE base and at Sandy Bay. We will also zodiac cruise Lusitania Bay, where there is a huge King Penguin colony. Once we have concluded our exploration of Macquarie Island, we head further south.

**Days 9 to 12: At sea.** Soaring albatross and petrels circle the vessel as we steam ever southward through the Southern Ocean. Lectures now concentrate on Antarctica and the Ross Sea region. We will pay attention to water temperatures so that we know when we cross the Antarctic Convergence into the cold but extremely productive Antarctic waters. Drifting icebergs carry vivid colours and come in extraordinary shapes. Each is a unique, natural sculpture. The captain will manoeuvre the ship in close for your first ice photography and announce a special celebration as we pass the Antarctic Circle and into Antarctica’s realm of 24-hour daylight! Relax in the ship’s bar and catch up with some reading in the library. If you have brought your laptop with you there will be time to download and edit photos while they are fresh in your mind.

**Days 13 to 22: Ross Sea region.** During our time in the Ross Sea region, we will visit the highlights of Antarctica’s most historic region. Due to the unpredictable nature of ice and weather conditions, a day-by-day itinerary is not possible. The captain and Expedition Leader will assess daily conditions and take advantage of every opportunity to make landings or send you out in the Zodiacs. Our program emphasises wildlife viewing, key scientific bases and historic sites, as well as the spectacular scenery of the coastal terrain, the glaciers and icebergs of the Ross Sea. Whilst specific landings cannot be guaranteed, we hope to visit the following as well as seek out new, perhaps previously unvisited areas.

**Cape Adare** - Cape Adare’s bold headland and the Downshire Cliffs greet us as we approach Cape Adare – ice conditions permitting – at the tip of the Ross Sea, the site of the largest Adelie Penguin rookery in Antarctica. Blanketing the large, flat spit which forms the cape is the huge rookery which now, at the height of summer, numbers over one million birds – an absolutely staggering sight. You will never forget your first experiences in a ceaselessly active and noisy ‘penguin city’, where the dapper inhabitants show no fear of their strange visitors. Our naturalists will point out various aspects of their lifestyle and, by sitting down quietly, one may observe the
often comical behaviour of the penguins, courtship displays, feeding ever-hungry chicks, territorial disputes and the pilfering of nest material. Curious penguins often come very close, presenting superb photographic opportunities. Surrounded by a sea of penguins, we will find Borchgrevink’s Hut, the oldest in Antarctica, an overwintering shelter for the first expedition to the Antarctic continent in 1899. It is a fascinating relic of the ‘Heroic Age’ of Antarctic exploration and we are able to inspect the interior, which still contains artefacts of the early explorers. One thousand feet up in the hills behind Cape Adare is the oldest grave in Antarctica, that of 22-year-old Nicolai Hansen, a member of Borchgrevink’s expedition.

**Cape Hallett** - The enormous Admiralty Range heralds our arrival at Cape Hallett, near the head of the Ross Sea. The scenery here is wild and spectacular; mountains rear up from the sea to over 4,000m and giant glaciers course down from the interior to the water’s edge. We land next to the site of the abandoned American/New Zealand base, home to large numbers of Adelie Penguins and Weddell Seals.

**Franklin Island** - This rugged island, deep in the Ross Sea, is home to a large Adelie Penguin colony and other nesting seabirds. We will attempt a Zodiac landing near the rookery as well as exploring the coastline. If a landing is achieved and weather conditions are suitable there will be an opportunity for those who are feeling fit to climb to the summit of the island.

**Possession Islands** - These small, rugged and rarely visited islands lie off the shore of Cape Hallett. An Adelie Penguin rookery, numbering tens of thousands of birds, blankets Foyin Island. Observe their busy and sometimes humorous activities, with the Admiralty Mountains forming a superb backdrop across the water.

**Ross Ice Shelf** - The largest ice shelf in Antarctica, the Ross Ice Shelf is also the world’s largest body of floating ice. A natural ice barrier, at times it creates hazardous weather conditions, with sheets of snow blown at gale force by the katabatic winds coming off the polar ice cap. Just 800
miles from the South Pole, this daunting spectacle prevented many early Antarctic explorers from venturing further south. From the Ross Ice Shelf we cruise eastward along the shelf front, with its spectacular 30m high ice cliffs, which sometimes calve tabular icebergs.

**Ross Island (Mount Erebus, Cape Bird, Shackleton’s Hut, Scott’s Hut)** - At the base of the Ross Sea we arrive at Ross Island, dominated by the 13,000ft high volcano, Mt Erebus. The New Zealand Antarctica programme maintains a field station at Cape Bird, where scientists study many aspects of the region’s natural history, including the large Adelie Penguin colony. Scientists may be at the field station when we arrive. At Cape Royds we visit Sir Ernest Shackleton’s hut, built during the Nimrod polar attempt of 1907-1909. Lectures explain many facets of Shackleton’s amazing expeditions. He was possibly one of the greatest, and certainly one of the most heroic of the Antarctic explorers. Though the legendary explorers are long gone, the area around the hut is far from deserted, having been reclaimed by the original inhabitants of the area – thousands of Adelie Penguins in the world’s southernmost penguin rookery.

Also found on Ross Island is Cape Evans, the historic site of Captain Scott’s second hut, erected in 1911 and beautifully preserved by the Antarctic Heritage Trust. It stands as testimony to the rigours faced by pioneering explorers. Inside the hut we will witness the living conditions almost exactly as they were when Scott, Wilson and Ponting occupied these quarters. Behind the hut, Mt Erebus
looms above with its plume of white smoke spiralling up from the still-active inferno in its bowels.

McMurdo and Scott Base (including Scott’s Discovery Hut) - These are always on our wish list but ice, weather and operational requirements for the National Programs, including cargo and fuel unloading and icebreaker activities sometimes prevent us from getting in, especially on the January expedition. Our February expedition is generally more successful but not guaranteed.

Terra Nova Bay - Baia Terra Nova, an Italian summer research station, is one of the most modern and attractive in Antarctica. The scientists and support staff here are always most hospitable and enjoy showing us around their lonely but beautiful home. The Italians conduct many streams of scientific research and also claim to have the best ‘cafe espresso’ in Antarctica! Nearby is the German base, Gondwana, which is used occasionally and the South Korean station, Jang Bogo. The Chinese are planning a base nearby as well.

Days 23 to 26: At sea. En route to Campbell Island, take part in a series of lectures designed to prepare you for our visit tomorrow. Pelagic species abound here as they did en route to Macquarie Island earlier in our voyage. Above all, take the time to rest and enjoy shipboard life after the excitement of the Antarctic. On deck, we expect to come across Slender-billed and Antarctic Prions, highly sought-after White-headed and Mottled Petrels, and scores of Southern and a few Northern Royal Albatrosses.

Days 27 & 28: Campbell Island. We have two days to explore Campbell Island, New Zealand’s southernmost Subantarctic territory. Its history is as rich and varied as the other islands we have visited. Discovered in 1810, it was soon occupied by sealers who introduced rats and cats. In 1895 the New Zealand government advertised the island as a pastoral lease, which was duly taken up by an entrepreneurial New Zealand sheep farmer who stocked the island with sheep and cattle. Farming practices, which included burning the scrub, modified the island considerably. The farming lasted until 1934 when it was abandoned. Coastwatchers were stationed on the island during the Second World War, but made way for
the New Zealand Metrological service after the hostilities ceased. They maintained a manned weather and research station here until 1995.

In the early 1970's the island was fenced in half, and stock was removed off the northern half. The impacts of the remaining livestock were monitored, before they were all eventually removed in 1990. The vegetation recovered quickly, with the local feral cat population dying out naturally. In a very ambitious eradication programme (never before attempted on such a large scale), the New Zealand Department of Conservation successfully removed the rat population. With the island declared predator free, the way was clear to reintroduce the endangered Campbell Teal that had been rediscovered on an offshore island in 1975. Subantarctic Snipe, which were formerly unknown from the island found their way over and recolonized the islands themselves. The great English botanist Sir Joseph Hooker described the island's vegetation in 1841 as having a 'flora display second to none outside the tropics', is flourishing again, being nothing short of spectacular.

We will offer a number of options that will enable you to explore the island. There will be an extended walk to Northwest Bay and possibly Mount Honey, while an easier walk will visit Col Lyall Saddle. All of these options will allow you the opportunity and time to enjoy the large numbers of Southern Royal Albatross that nest here. We will also visit areas of the island that contain outstanding examples of the megaherbs for which the island is renowned.

We shall target a number of special birds here including the endemic Campbell Teal and Subantarctic Snipe, although the latter will require some level of luck. The endemic Campbell Shag can be seen in the harbour while Northern Giant Petrel, Antarctic Tern, Grey-headed, Light-mantled and Black-browed Albatrosses will be sought at sea.

**Day 29: At sea toward Port Bluff.** Today we are at sea en route to Port of Bluff. We have most of the day to search for any further pelagic species that we might be missing, or perhaps seek better views and photographs of. The shallow waters of the Campbell plateau are extremely productive and this will provide a wonderful finale to the expedition, a chance to enjoy our last encounters with the albatross, petrels,
shearwaters, storm-petrels, and diving-petrels that have been our constant companions throughout the journey.

We will take the opportunity to recap the many experiences we have had on this unique expedition. This is also a good opportunity to download and edit any remaining photos while they are fresh in your mind, and you will have the experience of our expedition team on board for any questions. Tonight we enjoy a celebratory farewell dinner with our travel companions and friends, and time to reflect on a wealth of experiences.

**Day 30: Port of Bluff, Invercargill, and disembark.** We arrive at the Port of Bluff early in the morning. After breakfast and customs formalities, we will then disembark and transfer by coach to downtown Invercargill or to Invercargill Airport. (Please make your reservations for travel out of Invercargill after midday.)

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**
The price for the 30-day [Antarctica – Ross Sea](#) voyage aboard the Spirit of Enderby is as follows (depending on availability):

- Main Deck: US$ 23,000* per person sharing;
- Superior: US$ 25,500* per person sharing;
- Superior plus: US$ 28,300* per person sharing;
- Mini Suite: US$ 29,400* per person sharing;
- Heritage Suite: US$ 32,000* per person sharing;

**This Includes:**
- Night one’s accommodation pre-cruise in Invercargill;
- Transfer from Invercargill central city hotel to the ship;
- Transfer from the ship to Invercargill city hotel or airport;
- All landing and Department of Conservation fees and permits;
- All shore excursions as outlined in itinerary;
- All accommodation and meals onboard, as well as dinner and breakfast pre-cruise in Invercargill;
- Services of Heritage Expeditions leaders.

**But Excludes:**
- ANY flights;
- Visas if required;
- Travel insurance;
- Optional kayaking programme;
- Laundry bills;
- Any Drinks; and
- Gratuities and other items of a personal nature;

The landing fees are **US$ 880 per person** and will be charged in addition to the above prices.

Please contact the Rockjumper office for further information and specifics on the booking conditions for this tour.

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**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

a) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.

b) Please also note that a Rockjumper leader may not accompany the expedition unless a minimum of 10 participants are signed up through Rockjumper. In the case that a Rockjumper leader is not on board, the professional expedition staff will take care of all participants signed up through Rockjumper.

c) Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs (especially fuel) and may have to be adjusted as a result. You will be notified by email if fuel surcharges or other price adjustments need to be implemented.

d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.
Please note:
- Landings at the Sub-Antarctic Islands are by permit only as administered by the Governments of New Zealand and Australia.
- During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE:
- The above schedule is approximate and depends on sea conditions and other factors.
- Rockjumper have taken an allotment on this cruise rather than chartering the cruise in its entirety. We cannot, therefore, predict the number of Rockjumper participants that will be aboard the ship, and hence the presence of a Rockjumper guide on the ship. There will, however, be highly experienced expedition leaders onboard with a thorough knowledge of the region’s birds and other wildlife, in the event that insufficient participants sign up on this cruise to warrant a Rockjumper leader.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:
This tour does not include ANY airfares. The tour will begin in Invercargill on day 1, according to the above itinerary. The tour will conclude mid-morning at Invercargill on day 30.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:
Auckland Airport, Auckland (IATA: AKL) is the main port of entry for international flights into New Zealand and is well serviced by many of the world’s major airlines. Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.