



Falkland Islands

T O U R I S T B O A R D

CRUISE FACT SHEET

Falkland Islands Cruise Industry at a Glance

- Falkland Islands are included in itineraries of over 35 cruise lines
- Part of wider Antarctic & South American cruises
- Regular visits from expedition vessels
- Nine locations are regularly visited across the Islands
- Variety of tours available from Stanley, the capital
- Approximately 42% passengers take day tours outside Stanley
- Over 62,000 cruise passengers visited the Falkland Islands during the 2008-2009 season (October 2008 – April 2009)
- Cruise industry has grown over 200% in the past decade with an average annual growth rate of 13.9% since 2000
- New record set on February 6, 2009: 4,053 visitors arrived on board cruise ships

The Falkland Islands – From Ship to Shore

Each year thousands of tourists make the journey to the Falkland Islands onboard a cruise ship or expedition vessel. This increasingly popular method of travel allows people to visit many sites that remain largely inaccessible to land-based tourists in the Falklands, all from the comfort and safety of a world-class vessel. Expedition ships have the opportunity to land on the outlying islands of the Falklands archipelago, such as West Point, New Island and Steeple Jason. These often have very small populations and can only be accessed by helicopter.

A wide variety of shore excursions and tours are available for passengers to experience the unique wildlife and fascinating history of the Islands. From the capital, Stanley, join a tour to Bluff Cove Lagoon in a 4WD vehicle, where you can stroll along the white sandy beach, home to 1,000 breeding pairs of gentoo penguins and a growing colony of king penguins and chicks, or watch the sea lions and dolphins often seen swimming in the surf. Visitors can also take part in tours to Volunteer Point, a cornucopia of bird activity and home to king, gentoo and Magellanic penguins – as well as waterfowl and endemic subspecies like the dark-faced ground tyrant, Falkland pipit and thrush. A trip to Long Island is a chance to see a working Falklands farm, while historical tours are also popular with cruise visitors, who can visit the sites made famous by the battles of the 1982 conflict, such as Mount Tumbledown and Wireless Ridge.

Latest Cruise News and Statistics

Tourism is the Falklands' fastest growing industry, and the second largest industry behind fisheries in terms of contribution to GDP (gross domestic product). The industry is experiencing strong annual growth in visitor numbers, primarily due to the increased popularity of Antarctic cruise ship itineraries that the Falklands can capitalise on. It is extremely encouraging that despite the current economic climate, the cruise market in the Falklands is so buoyant. This demonstrates the growing popularity of the Falkland Islands as an integral part of cruise and tourist visitors' itineraries.

Successful season: The Falkland Islands are riding on the crest of a wave following a record-breaking visitor season with increased visitor numbers, new products on show and confidence for further growth in the future. The recent season (October 2008 – April 2009), which saw 62,600 passengers arriving on 105 ships, compared to 62,200 in 2007-2008, has topped off a decade of visitor number increases documenting an impressive growth of 218% over the past 10 years.

New record: A new record was set for Falkland Islands tourism on February 6, 2009 with a combined total of 4,053 visitors arriving on board the *Celebrity Infinity*, *Spirit of Adventure* and *Norwegian Sun*. This outstripped the previous record day of 3,779, which took place on December 4, 2007.

US is top visitor: In line with international cruising trends, the vast majority (39%) of cruise tourists to the Falklands come from the US. Other prominent markets among the 95 nationalities represented include the UK, Brazil, Canada and Germany.

Positive visitor feedback: The Falkland Islands Tourist Board firmly believes in the importance of understanding its market and is currently in the process of conducting surveys of visitors. Visitor feedback has been excellent, with a large proportion saying they would consider returning to the Falklands and 98% of visitors surveyed rating their cruise experience in the Falklands as 'good to excellent', while half (50%) of all visitors stated that they would be interested in returning for a land-based holiday.

Future projects: Despite the current success, FITB isn't resting on its laurels and is all too aware of the slowing economy and how it might affect next season. The team at FITB is working hard to develop new opportunities to market the Islands. There are some exciting projects in the pipeline including a website overhaul and attendance at some important international exhibitions. Improvements that will be complete before the start of the 2009-2010 season include the installation of a wave barrier on the jetty, a new pontoon, a new ramp giving access to the pontoon, and a shelter for awaiting cruise passengers.

For further information on the Falklands Islands, please visit www.falklandislands.com.

Notes for Editors:

- The Falkland Islands have a raw, unspoilt quality that entices locals and tourists back time and again. Visitors to the Islands are spoilt for choice with more than 227 species of identified birds (including several of the world's largest endangered breeding colonies), as well as whales, dolphins, elephant seals, sea lions, delicate flora and rugged geographical formations.
- The best time to visit the Islands and experience the local culture and wildlife is October to April. The average summer temperature (December to March) is 15° Celsius (59° Fahrenheit) and the Falklands has more sunshine hours and less rainfall than the UK.
- There are over 40 international tour operators offering tailor-made packages and escorted tours to the Falkland Islands. See www.falklandislands.com for the latest list.
- Visitors can reach the Falklands on the weekly LAN Airways flight via Chile or the charter flight operated twice weekly from RAF Brize Norton in the UK by the Ministry of Defence.