

Don goes to Antarctica ..



A major item was checked off my bucket list when I embarked on a trip of a lifetime with an old friend, David Fadness, and his son, Matt. Joan and my friend's wife, Aiko, deferred. If you Google *Drake Passage*, you will see why our seasick-prone spouses deferred. From California, we flew to Buenos Aires for a few days of sightseeing before flying another 4 hours due south to Ushuaia, the southernmost city on the planet. From there, we boarded the *MS Fram* for an 18-hour sail across the *Drake Passage* to the Antarctica Peninsula. We were told the sail was pretty calm with only 9- to 12-foot swells.

We spent 8 days sailing further south through the Peninsula ending up at the Antarctica Circle (66 2/3 S. Lat.) before finally turning north. Each day included two "landings" where we left the ship via zodiac-like boats to set foot on land and glacier. Each day presented itself with spectacular scenery and an amazing diversity of wildlife including birds, whales, seals, and the not-so-wild penguins. The weather was surprisingly mild with temperatures a consistent 32 to 35 degrees F. On our return crossing of the infamous *Drake*, we experienced a more normal rock 'n roll ride of 24- to 30-foot swells. Surprisingly, we all survived with no "ill" affects. 😊

I am often asked, "Why in the world Antarctica?!" In short, it is beautiful, wild, and immense ... It has to be seen to be believed. It was indeed the trip of a lifetime, and I would go back in a heartbeat."

Following is a brief photo journal of the trip.



Don with friends on Petermann Island.



More spectacular views of Petermann Island on the Antarctica Peninsula.





Lunch time for the kids ..

A leopard seal siesta ..





Our last landing on Brown Bluff Island. Videotaping the not-so-wild Gentoos, a Gentoo “outhouse”, and a last photo on Antarctica.



