

GREAT ADVENTURES

Getting up close and personal with Antarctica



Appreciate the scale and beauty of the White Continent with the 92-passenger polar exploratory and research ship *Akademik Sergey Vavilov*. Accompanied by professional polar guides, the ship will navigate Drake Passage to spend ten days in the Antarctic Peninsula, where passengers can embark on a three-day sea-kayaking expedition, camping overnight on the icecap, and ski-touring, snowshoeing and skiing excursions.

Bailey Robinson (01488 689777; baileyrobinson.com) offers the 12-day 'Off the beaten track' voyage from £7,345pp (based on a twin cabin with shared bathroom), including a return flight to Ushuaia via Buenos Aires, where one night's accommodation is provided, departing 6 November 2012.

The Galapagos Islands



The 92-passenger *Celebrity Xpedition* sails exclusively in the Galapagos Islands, and its crew and expedition team have unparalleled expertise in the region. The lavish mega-yacht offers seven-, ten- and 11-night itineraries and brings exceptional levels of luxury to this archipelago of volcanic islands located off the Ecuadorian coast, whose extraordinary wealth of endemic fauna and flora so enthralled Charles Darwin.

Celebrity Cruises (0845 456 0523; celebritycruises.com) offers an 11-night Galapagos itinerary from £4,504pp, including a return London/Quito flight, three nights' hotel accommodation and an eight-night cruise, departing 2 December 2012.

The Atlantic, Pacific and Caribbean in one

Stepping aboard the 490-passenger *Seven Seas Navigator* in Vancouver, you wouldn't suspect the luxurious all-suite ship was once a Soviet research vessel. Safe and comfortable aboard *Navigator*, you'll head north to Alaska, spending six days immersed in its pristine beauty before sailing the length of Canada, Oregon and California to Mexico. Pressing on to Costa Rica, you'll transit the Panama Canal to Columbia and the Cayman Islands before skirting the southeastern US coastline, calling at Florida and South Carolina before arriving in New York. **Regent Seven Seas Cruises** (02380 682 280; rssc.com) offers the 33-night 'Vancouver to New York City' voyage from £9,319pp, including all shore excursions and international flights.



The World Voyage

A world voyage enables passengers to discover extensive tracts of the globe with ease and in comfort. This is particularly the case when sailing aboard the ultra-luxury, 450-passenger *Seabourn Quest*, which (with her two sister ships) provides more space per passenger than any other ship in the industry. *Quest* boasts multiple restaurants, bars and lounges, and a spa, theatre and casino to entertain you as you sail from Florida through the Panama Canal to French Polynesia, Australia, Indonesia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Singapore and India to Dubai. **Seabourn** (0843 373 2000; seabourn.com) offers the 90-day 'World Voyage I' from £24,499pp, cruise only, departing 6 January 2013.



BY GABRIELLA LE BRETON**From the icebergs of Antarctica to the deserts of Cape Verde**

Next spring, the 264-passenger mega-yacht *l'Austral* will embark on a remarkable journey. Sailing from Ushuaia, the world's southernmost city, *l'Austral* will navigate the pristine bays and shores of Antarctica before sailing to the South Shetland and Falkland Islands, continuing north along the Argentinian, Uruguayan and Brazilian coast, and crossing the Atlantic via Cape Verde to reach the Canary Islands.

Compagnie du Ponant (0800 980 4027; en.ponant.com) offers the 45-day 'Antarctic Peninsula to the Canary Islands' itinerary from £8,305pp, cruise only, excluding port taxes and fuel surcharges, departing 18 February 2013.

Meandering down the Mississippi

Despite her traditional appearance, the opulent paddle-wheeler *Queen of the Mississippi* made her maiden voyage on the world's fourth-longest river last month, and will grace Old Man River all year round. Week-long voyages between Memphis and New Orleans provide ample helpings of gentle southern charm and vibrant Cajun culture, along with a fascinating guide to Civil War history.

American Cruise Lines (americancruiselines.com) offers seven-night voyages aboard *Queen of the Mississippi* between Memphis and New Orleans (in both directions) from £2,550pp, cruise only, from March through June 2013.

Following in the footsteps of the Inuit

Ensnconced in the comfort of Silversea's 132-passenger expedition ship, *Silver Explorer*, this cruise visits remote islands and communities first inhabited (and in some cases still only inhabited) by the Inuit people of the Canadian Arctic and their descendants in Greenland. Sailing from Kangerlussuaq in Greenland, *Silver Explorer* will spend a week navigating the dramatic south-western coast of Greenland before sailing across to the ruggedly beautiful Newfoundland and Labrador, calling at Gros Morne National Park, Bonaventure Island and Iles De La Madeleine before reaching Halifax.

Silversea Cruises (0844 251 0837; silversea.com) offers the 17-day 'Kangerlussuaq to Halifax' voyage from £7,829pp, cruise only, departing 8 September 2013.

**Into the heart of the Amazon**

The Amazon, the world's second-longest river, with its teeming wildlife, flooded forests and ancient tribes, has captured the imagination of explorers, writers and artists for good reason. The slick expedition ship *MS Bremen* sails down the mighty river from Iquitos, Peru, to the Amazon delta in Brazil, stopping at Indian settlements and floating markets along the way with its fleet of Zodiac inflatable boats. As the boat ventures deeper into the jungle, into the pulsing heart of South America, *Bremen's* 164 passengers will see pink river dolphins and hummingbirds and grow accustomed to the soundtrack of macaws and howling monkeys.

Hapag Lloyd (0049 4030703070; hl-cruises.com) offers the 18-day 'On the River of Life' itinerary from £5,515pp, cruise only, departing 23 April 2014.

