



MOUNT VINSON

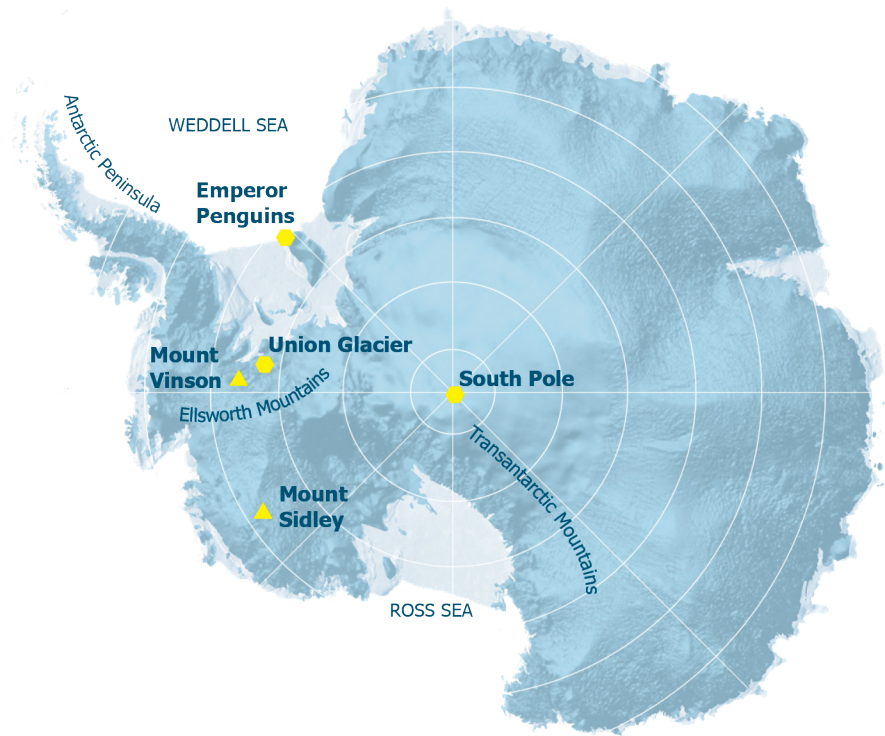
ANTARCTICA'S HIGHEST PEAK

Imagine yourself on the summit of Mount Vinson 16,050ft (4,892m), the highest peak in Antarctica and one of the coveted Seven Summits. Majestic, snow-covered peaks stand guard over vast glaciers below and in the distance, snow meets sky along a noticeably curved horizon. This is a moment to savor. All of the challenges you faced to get here only highlight the vast beauty before you and the sense of accomplishment that comes from achieving the extraordinary.

Mount Vinson lies in the aptly named Sentinel Range of the Ellsworth Mountains, deep in the interior of Antarctica. It was first summited on December 18, 1966 and for many years did not see a second

ascent due to the challenges of accessing its remote location. In 1985, we pioneered logistics to support a private expedition to Mount Vinson and 30+ years later, we continue to guide climbers to the top of the bottom of the world!

You'll ascend the Branscomb Shoulder Route which has become the "standard route", climbing gentle glaciers, 45° snow covered slopes, an exposed high plateau, and spectacular summit ridge. The rate of ascent and daily climbing plan set by your experienced mountain guide will be geared toward the safety and success of your team. To climb Mount Vinson is to challenge yourself on a mountain like no other, in one of the most remote regions on Earth.



ITINERARY ❄️



Arrival Day
Punta Arenas, Chile



Pre-departure Days
Gear Check, Welcome and Safety Briefing



Day 1
Fly to Antarctica



Day 2-3
Vinson Base Camp



Day 4-5
Base Camp to Low Camp



Day 6
Low Camp to High Camp



Day 7-8
High Camp to Summit



Day 9
Descent to Base Camp



Day 10-11
Return to Union Glacier



Day 12
Return to Chile

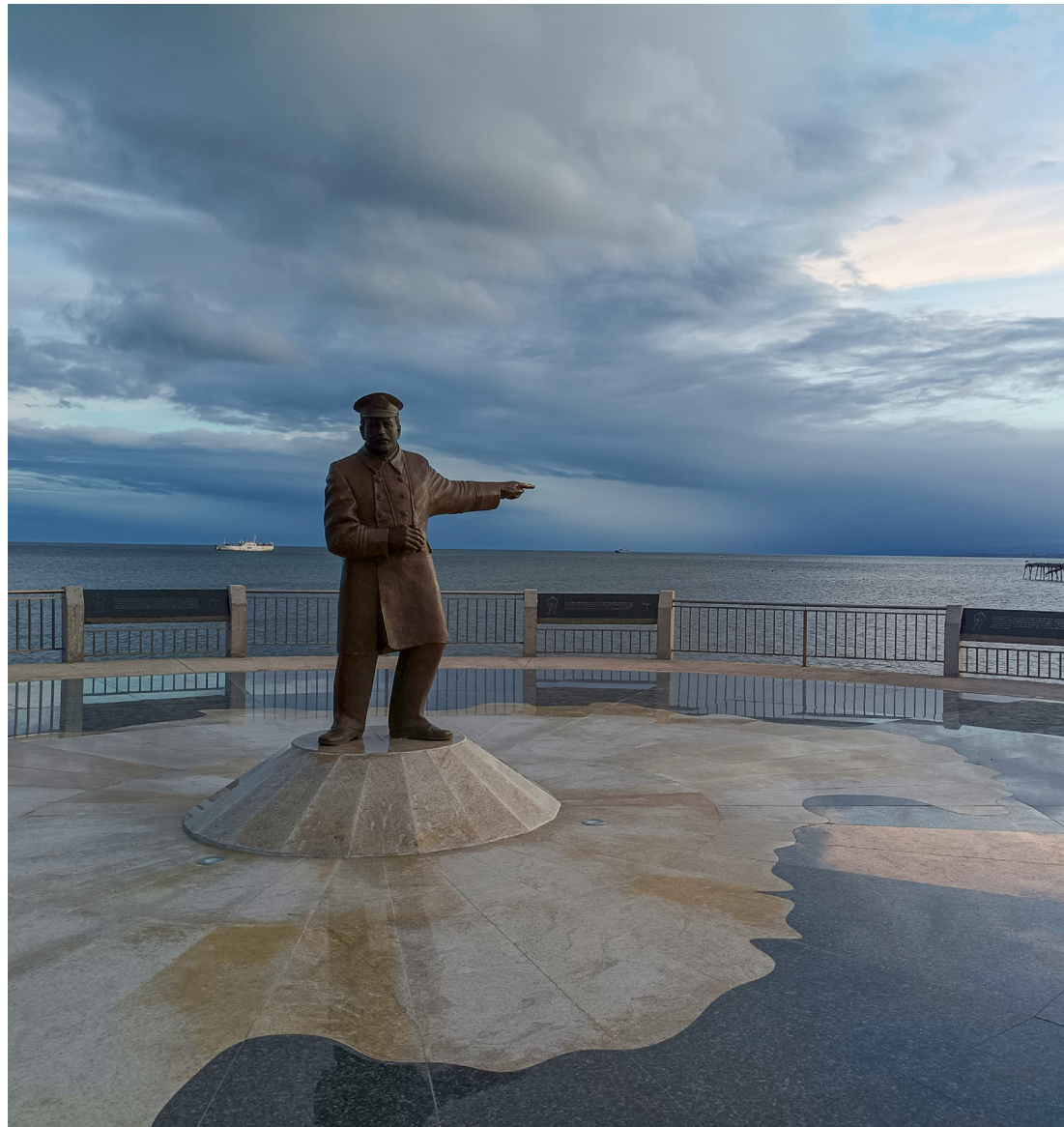


Flexible Departure Day
Fly Home

❄️ *All itineraries are subject to change based on weather and flight conditions.*



ARRIVAL IN PUNTA ARENAS



Known as the gateway to Antarctica, all of our flights depart from the Chilean city of Punta Arenas.

We ask you to arrive in Punta Arenas at least three nights prior to your trip start date, to allow time to complete the pre-departure process. This also provides a buffer for flight and luggage delays should your travels to Chile not go as planned. We do not hold Antarctic flights for delayed passengers or luggage.

We will be waiting for you in the terminal when you arrive at Punta Arenas airport and will transport you to your hotel. The following day, you will have an individual Gear Check at your hotel, where we will review the personal clothing and equipment you will need in Antarctica.

The day before your Antarctic flight there is a Welcome and Safety Briefing in the ALE Office. Here we will explain the flight dispatch process, review environmental and safety procedures for your stay in Antarctica, and provide the latest weather updates.



DAY 1 FLY TO ANTARCTICA

At the Punta Arenas airport, you will check-in for your flight, pass through normal Airport Security then board our chartered jet for the 4 hour flight to Antarctica. Our route crosses the Drake Passage, then follows the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula and the spine of the Ellsworth Mountains. We land on a naturally occurring blue-ice runway on Union Glacier where you will take your first steps in Antarctica.

Climb aboard one of our specially-adapted vans for the 5 mi (8 km) shuttle to our main camp. Our friendly staff will provide a welcome tour of camp and show you to your tent.





DAY
2-3

VINSON BASE CAMP

Vinson Base Camp is situated at an elevation of 7021 ft (2140 m) on the Branscomb Glacier and offers you a spectacular setting to relax and recover from your travels to Antarctica while you prepare for the climb ahead. Here you will meet our experienced mountain guides who will be climbing with you. On the first day, your guide will take your team on a short acclimatization hike which allows you to gain familiarity with the Antarctic environment and refine your clothing and equipment choices for the climb. We keep team sizes small so our guides can assess individual strengths and challenges and develop a strategy that maximizes everyone's chance for a successful ascent. The following day, you will pack your personal equipment as well as a small amount of food and fuel.

Your team will ascend Vinson using the Branscomb Shoulder Route (standard route). The climb usually takes 5-9 days depending on weather conditions and how quickly team members acclimatize. Most groups set two intermediate camps on the mountain prior to attempting the summit. Your climb is a team effort and at the end of each day, everyone will help pitch camp. The rate of ascent and daily climbing plan will be set by your guide to ensure everyone's safety and success.

You'll travel roped together throughout your time on the mountain due to crevasse hazard.

DAY
4-5

BASE CAMP TO LOW CAMP

From Vinson Base Camp, you'll follow the gradual rise of the Branscomb Glacier to Low Camp (9121 ft/2780m). This gentle climb is ideal for pulling sleds, allowing you to lighten your pack load. Typically climbers split their 40-49lb (18-22 kg) loads by carrying 30% in a backpack and 70% on a sled when they leave Base Camp.

The climb to Low Camp takes 4-6 hours and ascends 2100ft (640m). A large dining tent and cached sleeping tents await for your first night on the mountain.

Low Camp is in the shade until the late morning and it is normal for people to stay in bed until the sun hits the tents. After a late breakfast, your guide will lead an excursion to a nearby viewpoint and you may visit the lower section of the fixed lines for some additional training and familiarization. Strong parties may wish to make an ascent of Knutzen Peak (11,066ft/3373m), a 5-6 hour round trip from Low Camp.





DAY
6

LOW CAMP TO HIGH CAMP

When conditions are suitable and the forecast indicates stable weather ahead, your team will leave the sleds at Low Camp and ascend to High Camp (12,402 ft/3780 m) carrying all of your equipment in backpacks. Low Camp to High Camp is 3,281 ft (1000 m) of elevation gain and usually takes groups 6-8 hours to complete.

The route takes you up the broad mixed spur at the northern end of Branscomb Ridge, offering fantastic views of Mount Shinn and the glaciers below. The hike to the start of the fixed ropes takes less than 1 hour. You'll ascend fixed ropes on snow covered slopes up to 45°. Snow conditions can vary from soft to hard and wind-blown with icy patches. The ascent of the fixed ropes takes approximately 4-5 hours. There is a large ledge at the half-way point where you can stop for a rest and enjoy some food and drink.

The hike from the top of the fixed lines to High Camp takes about 1.5 hours, ascending the gentle slopes of the summit glacier. This final section of the route can be very exposed to the wind, requiring care to prevent cold injury.

The facilities at High Camp are more basic than those at Low Camp. Your guide will prepare simple meals in a cooking shelter and you can eat inside your tent or outside if the weather is calm. The next day is normally spent resting and acclimatizing at High Camp to give everyone the best chance of summiting.



DAY 7-8 HIGH CAMP TO SUMMIT

Your team will make its summit attempt on the best weather day possible, based on forecasts predicting good visibility and low winds. High Camp to Mount Vinson's Summit is 3,648ft (1112m) of elevation gain and takes most teams 9-12 hours round-trip. The majority of the route is along the gently angled Vinson summit valley, with a short, steeper snow and ice slope leading to the spectacular, rocky, summit ridge.

Parts of the route are exposed and can be subject to high winds. The summit pyramid can be climbed via two routes. The easiest route is via the left-hand (eastern) ridge which is less steep than the right-hand (western) ridge. Many teams traverse the peak by climbing the right-hand and descending the left-hand route. Your guide will select the route that is most appropriate based on the weather conditions and the abilities of the team.

The views from the summit are breathtaking. Mount Gardner, Tyree, Epperly, and Shinn dominate the foreground, surrounded by impressive peaks that rise from the vast ice sheet below. Here, at the top of Antarctica, the true scale and majesty of the continent are overwhelmingly apparent. Take time for photos and savor the experience before retracing your steps to High Camp.

DAY 9 DESCENT TO BASE CAMP

The descent to Vinson Base Camp usually takes one day from High Camp, re-tracing your route down the fixed ropes and along the Branscomb Glacier. At Base Camp you'll celebrate your summit with a hearty celebration meal and toast to your team!



DAY
10-11

RETURN TO UNION GLACIER

Vinson Base Camp will stay in close contact with Union Glacier Camp to identify the best 'weather window' for your return flight.

Depending on flights, you may have at least one day at the end of your expedition to explore Union Glacier. Enjoy a hot shower and celebrate your summit with your team! Here you will receive a certificate to commemorate your Mount Vinson Expedition.

DAY
12

RETURN TO CHILE

When weather and runway conditions permit, our intercontinental, passenger aircraft will arrive at Union Glacier to transport you back to Chile. Upon your arrival our staff will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel.



FLY HOME

Your flight home concludes this remarkable adventure. We recommend keeping a flexible schedule due to the possibility of weather delays. Allow yourself to savor your experience without the pressure of other commitments.



Weather

Possible severe storms with temperatures down to -40 °F (-40 °C).



Activity Level

Extremely Strenuous—climbing at high altitudes in cold temperatures carrying a load of up to 49lb (22 kg) for 5-9 days.



Requirements

Climbing experience above 14,000 ft (4300m) on multi-day peaks and in cold environments with movement on snow and ice. Knowledge of glacier travel and crevasse rescue procedures.



What's Included

- Airport transfers in Punta Arenas, Chile
- Round trip flight to Antarctica from Punta Arenas
- Round trip flight to Vinson Base Camp from Union Glacier
- Meals and tented accommodation in Antarctica
- Group camping and climbing equipment
- Mountain Guide
- Celebration event and Certificate of Achievement
- Checked luggage up to 55lb (25 kg)



Not Included

- Insurance coverage—personal, medical, evacuation, or otherwise
- Commercial flights to and from Punta Arenas
- Airport transfers outside of Punta Arenas
- Meals and accommodation in Punta Arenas
- Additional flights within Antarctica
- Personal equipment and clothing
- Expenses incurred due to delays
- Luggage over 55lb (25 kg)
- Satellite phone charges



Weather Delay Advisory

All itineraries are subject to change based on weather and flight conditions. Every effort will be made to keep to the scheduled itinerary and flights will depart as soon as weather and runway conditions permit. Our staff will provide you with regular updates in the event of a delay.

Please understand that delays are common in Antarctic travel. For this reason we advise you not to plan any important meetings, functions, or other trips for at least one week following your scheduled return from Antarctica. We strongly suggest that you purchase a full-fare, flexible airline ticket that easily permits date changes without penalty.

