



A Life-Changing Opportunity.

Driving Expedition To The South Pole



Arctic Trucks have led the field for over 30 years in providing light-footprint Arctic and Antarctic logistics. The company's special capabilities mean individuals, science, governments, NGOs and companies can reliably, comfortably and safely access remote, low- (or no-) infrastructure polar environments by 4x4 or 4x6 vehicle. Founded in the early 1990's, Arctic Trucks' high quality, often unique, products, services and solutions satisfy corporate or governmental requirements whilst also allowing life-changing, highly experiential, adventures for individuals, whatever their personal goal.



Arctic Trucks' superb guides and employees are the heart of a professional team which has an excellent safety record; the company practices a safety-first policy within all its operations.

Following the very highest standards of crucial environmental care, Arctic Trucks are a pioneer of low-emission solutions in extreme environments, continually researching and implementing improvements. Being in a unique operational niche, the company aims to contribute to science whenever possible whilst in the field and works closely and positively with local communities and organisations as applicable. Almost all client assignments therefore have positive and practical impact. Arctic Trucks is a longstanding member of IAATO (which is dedicated to safe and responsible travel to Antarctica) and works closely with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, our “National Competent Authority”.



Prince Harry's "Walking With The Wounded" Expedition, logistics by Arctic Trucks.



Arctic Trucks vehicles have now completed more than an astonishing 350,000 kms on the Antarctica Plateau alone as well as being tasked with many PR & logistics support tasks in Antarctica. Other challenges around the world include driving to the magnetic North Pole with BBC's Top Gear.



This is no ordinary itinerary or experience. We will accomplish a return drive from Union Glacier Camp, near the edge of Antarctica, to the South Pole.

We may even decide to slightly backtrack and route from Union Glacier to the Ronne Ice Shelf (Constellation Inlet), which abuts the very edge of continental Antarctica, before driving on to the Pole. Whatever the final route agreed, participants will fly into Antarctica from Chile and arrive on a blue ice runway from where the expedition will start. The map shows the approximate route to be taken (including Constellation Inlet).



Approximate Schedule, Antarctic South Pole Expedition.

The expedition will need to arrive in Chile **several days before departure to Antarctica for briefing and, if required, any pandemic-related requirements**. The approximate expedition will thereafter be:

- Day 1: Flight to Union Glacier. Stay at UG
- Day 2: Stay at UG, perhaps visit/explore Drake Icefall
- Day 3: Drive to Ronne Iceshelf, then to South Pole.
- Day 5: Pass Thiels Corner
- Day 8: Arrive and stay at South Pole
- Day 9: Start return drive. Possible variations in route where/if logistically feasible
- Day 13: Arrive at Union Glacier.
- Day 14: Fly Union Glacier/Punta Arenas.

NOTE: **If time is short:** Fly back from Pole is possible but expensive.

Additional activities are available from Union Glacier at extra cost – we can build the itinerary to accommodate specific requests, eg penguin visits, snowmobiling, climbing, skiing.

The above is weather- and route-dependant. Please ALWAYS book flexible international return flights between your home and Chile!



You will first fly to Punta Arenas (Chile), ideally several days pre-departure to Antarctica. Note that any pandemic or related planning will extend the arrival date.



After a short stay in Punta Arenas for briefing, documentation checks and, perhaps, some sightseeing (arrangements in Punta Arenas are booked direct by clients although we can assist if required) you will “fly in” to the ice on Day One of our itinerary, most likely on an Icelandair chartered B757 with a specially trained crew. (The Ilyushin of many past photographs and some repute is now only used for moving materiel and stores!). Arrival is on the famous Union Glacier “blue ice” runway.



Union Glacier is a seasonal, fully-equipped, base camp. The location, near Mt Vinson (the highest mountain in Antarctica), is spectacular.





Union Glacier Camp



Union Glacier Camp is surrounded by beautiful mountains! It is not a year-round camp but it is substantial and offers many conveniences like showers, a good kitchen and other minutiae that may, by the time you return at the end of the expedition, become luxuries! The staff are very friendly and one is likely to meet some fascinating “residents”.

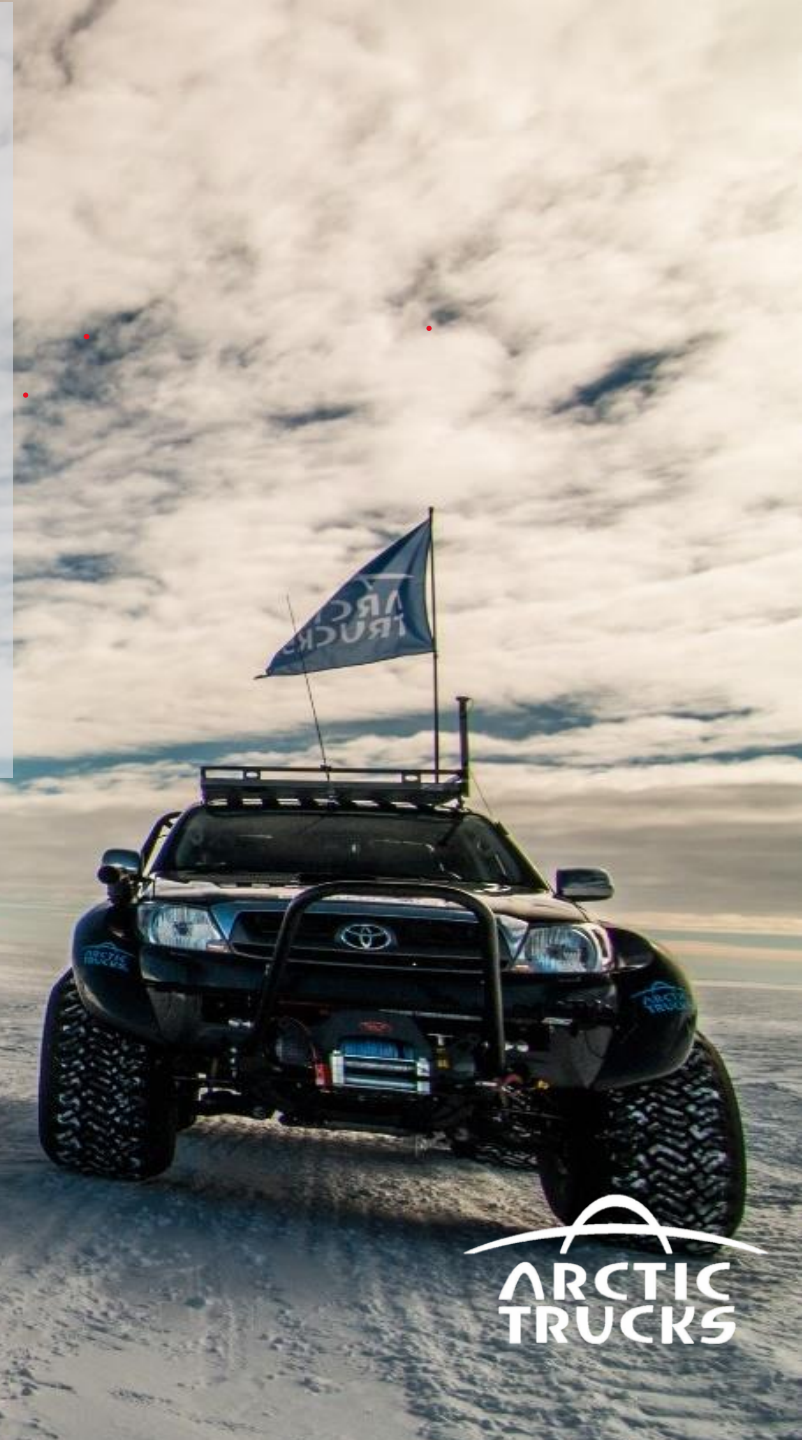
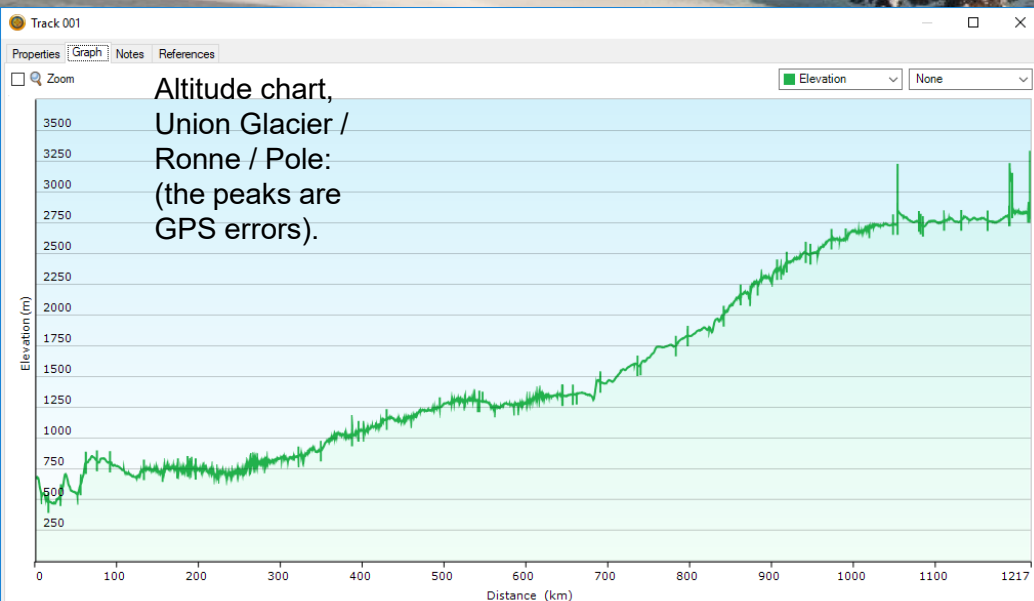
There are various activities possible around Union Glacier: climbing, snowmobiling, hiking, skiing and flights to penguin rookeries. Extra time will need to be factored in if these are to be undertaken before or after the drive to the South Pole.



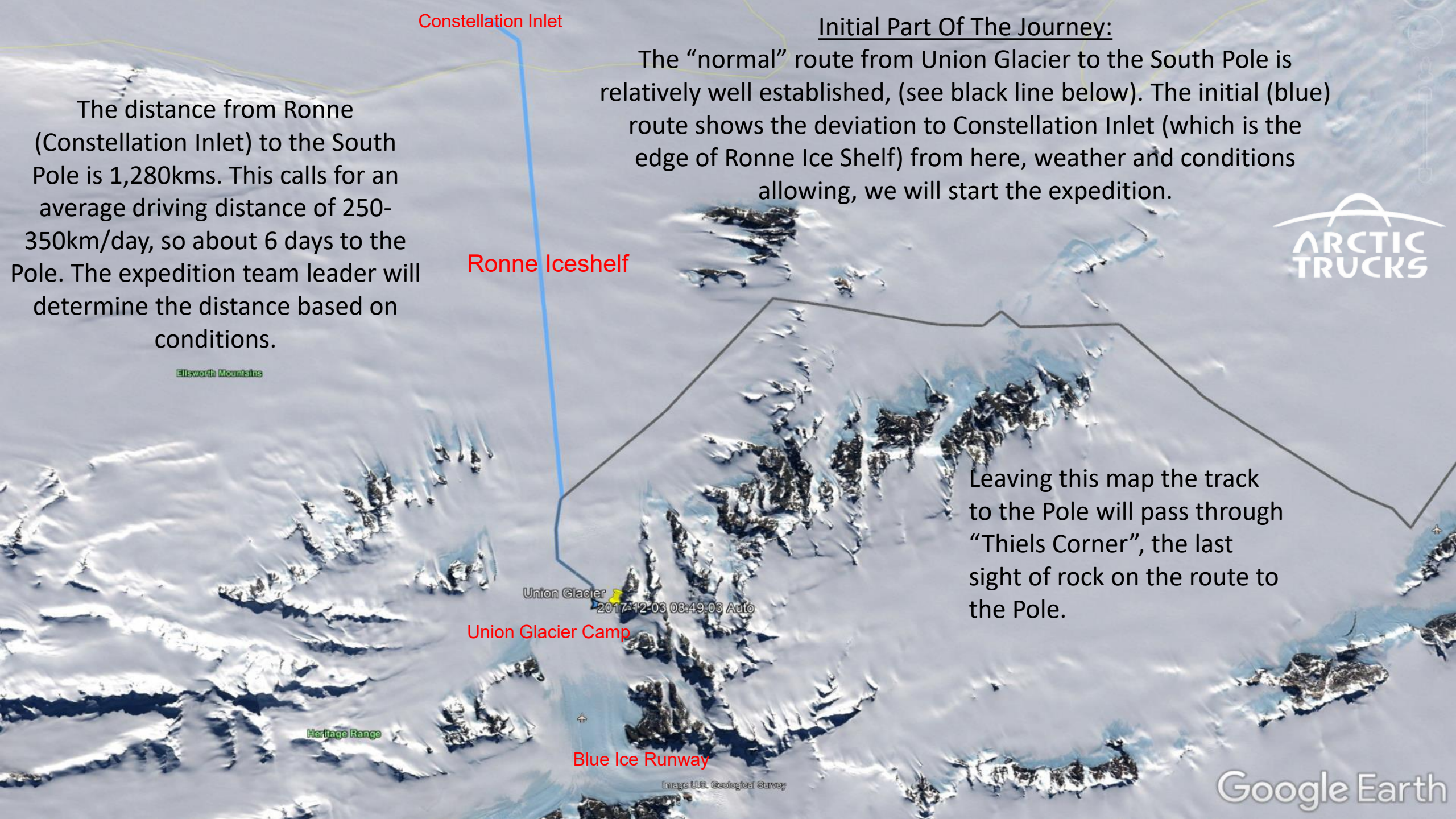
Leaving Union Glacier, the sensation of being in an “untouched” environment is magical. If conditions allow the expedition will plan to “backtrack” slightly to Ronne Ice Shelf (see next slide) from where, heading south towards the Pole, the terrain gently climbs. Once on top of the Antarctica Plateau, at an altitude of some 3000m (10,000ft) and on the largest, coldest, desert on Earth, the view becomes endless white in every direction - and the temperature drops!

One then reaches the South Pole.

You will be here at the best time of year - between November and end of January - to experience this enormous, spellbinding continent which is sculpted by high winds, extreme temperature, ice and snowfall. The accomplishments of the early explorers are truly humbling.



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Initial Part Of The Journey:

The “normal” route from Union Glacier to the South Pole is relatively well established, (see black line below). The initial (blue) route shows the deviation to Constellation Inlet (which is the edge of Ronne Ice Shelf) from here, weather and conditions allowing, we will start the expedition.

The distance from Ronne (Constellation Inlet) to the South Pole is 1,280kms. This calls for an average driving distance of 250-350km/day, so about 6 days to the Pole. The expedition team leader will determine the distance based on conditions.

Ellsworth Mountains

Union Glacier
2017-12-03 08:49:03 Auto

Union Glacier Camp

Heritage Range

Blue Ice Runway

Image U.S. Geological Survey

Leaving this map the track to the Pole will pass through “Thiels Corner”, the last sight of rock on the route to the Pole.

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Google Earth



Some points to note:

- This is not a journey to be taken lightly but it is very achievable for anyone with a sense of adventure.
- It will be fun, the trip of a lifetime. But it will occasionally be challenging.
- It may be sunny (24 hour daylight) or a whiteout, but it will always be cold and, often, windy.
- It may be a little cramped in the vehicles.

As you would expect, the route from Ronne to the South Pole is sometimes relatively easy.....



....and sometimes more
difficult.....



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...but often stunningly beautiful.





You will then reach the South Pole. At the Pole there will be 24 hour daylight; here the timelines of the world converge and you make a global circumnavigation in a few seconds, standing on an ice sheet over 2.5km thick.



An overnight may be spent at the South Pole to rest and make the most of this unique opportunity.

This is South Pole Station (USA, not guaranteed to be open to visitors).

The expedition will then turn around and drive back to Union Glacier. If it is logistically possible to vary the inbound route we will do so but this is not guaranteed on both safety and logistical grounds.

The return route “down” to Union Glacier always looks quite different!

It is possible to fly back from the Pole to Union Glacier - at considerable extra cost.



We then arrive back at Union Glacier Camp



When the expedition arrives back at Union Glacier it will *really* enjoy all the camp facilities! The camp is very atmospheric; also clean and efficient with a canteen, **showers**, lecture & medical rooms etc.



The schedule may include a short stop at Union Glacier before flying back to Punta Arenas. If the team arrives early it will have option to undertake some extra activities (these incur extra cost).





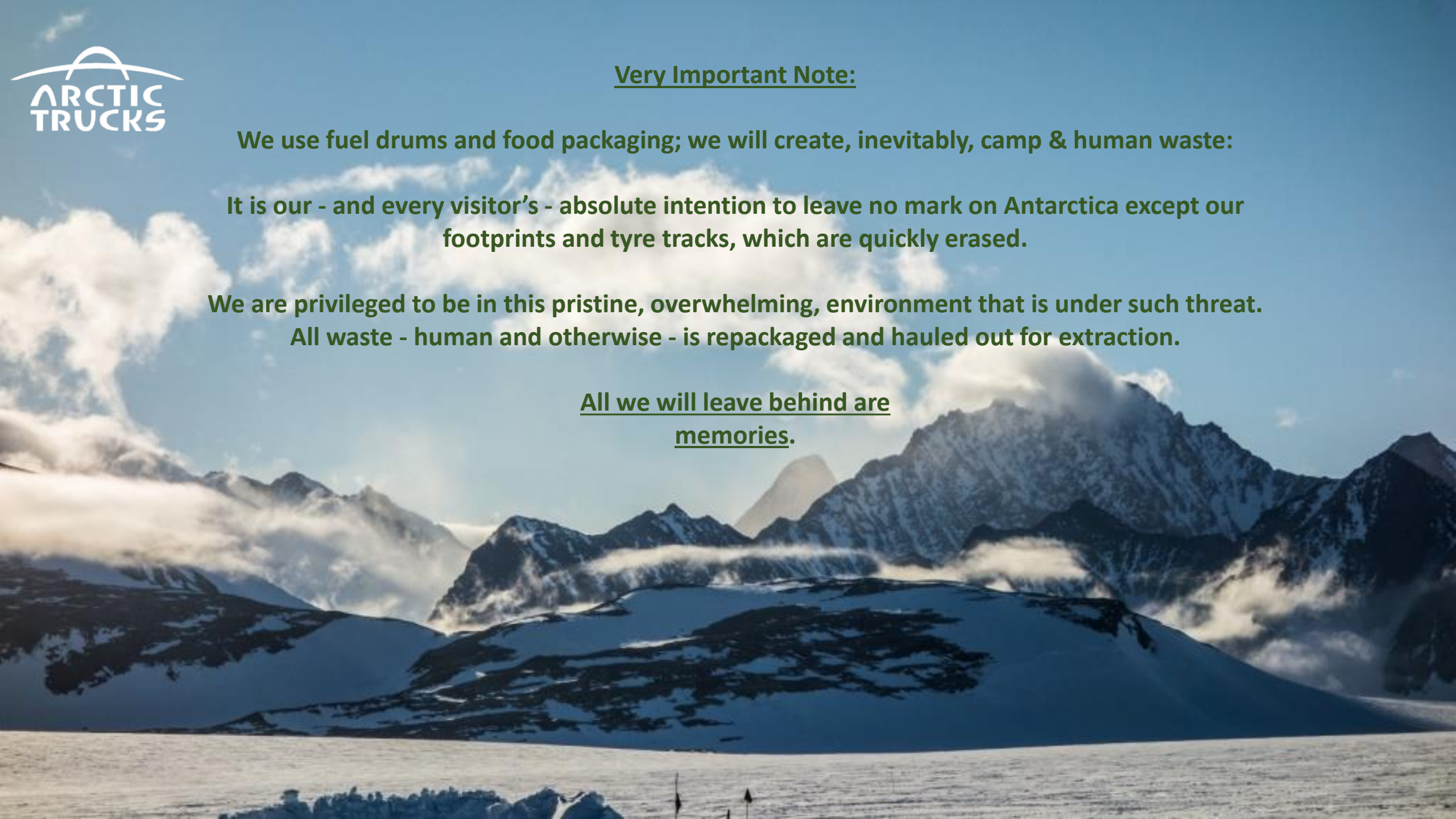
Very Important Note:

We use fuel drums and food packaging; we will create, inevitably, camp & human waste:

It is our - and every visitor's - absolute intention to leave no mark on Antarctica except our footprints and tyre tracks, which are quickly erased.

We are privileged to be in this pristine, overwhelming, environment that is under such threat.
All waste - human and otherwise - is repackaged and hauled out for extraction.

All we will leave behind are
memories.



It is expected to make camp every day en route; the itinerary is flexible to allow for weather. One will sleep in excellent expedition tents that are specially designed to capture the warmth from the sun. Cooking, dining and socialising will take place in a larger mess tent equipped with chairs and tables.

The Antarctica plateau is the most pristine place on the planet. We will keep it thus.



Facilities are simple.....



...but provisions are ample and very nutritious. Drinking plenty of water within one's diet is essential.





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The weather is not always kind.....
-15c to -30c can be expected.

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The expedition is possible for anyone with moderate fitness, but this Antarctic Expedition will be a participatory expedition requiring serious physical and mental commitment. Expedition members will take part in daily camp routines and help each other as required. A straightforward medical check will be required pre-booking; a dental check is strongly advised.

There will be an Arctic Trucks vehicle and guide for approximately every two clients.

Despite the time of year (“summer”) the climate remains extreme: A proper energy-rich meal plan is provided and it is very important to also stay hydrated. Nevertheless, most people will lose weight on the expedition simply because of altitude and the energy required to do a limited amount of physical work in such an environment.

Antarctica guarantees nothing, including weather! At this time of year the weather is mostly favorable but bad weather and/or low visibility may affect scheduling, including flights. Safety is the paramount priority and, whilst both we and flight operators work to keep to a schedule it is advised to leave a sensible margin between the scheduled return time to Chile and any important personal calendar events – but we will advise on this and all other logistical matters.





The Arctic Trucks Team



The expedition will likely consist of 2 or more vehicles and include 2 or 3 Arctic Trucks Drivers-Mechanic/Guides, at least 1 per vehicle. The Arctic Trucks team has extensive expedition experience as well as in driving and repairs in these extremes. Medical capability is also included.

All personnel speak English.

One of the Arctic Trucks team members will be the logistical expedition leader, responsible for the itinerary, daily scheduling, safety and comfort of all members. His or her decision on daily matters will be final.

If a stand-alone party is travelling the lead client will be the titular expedition leader:

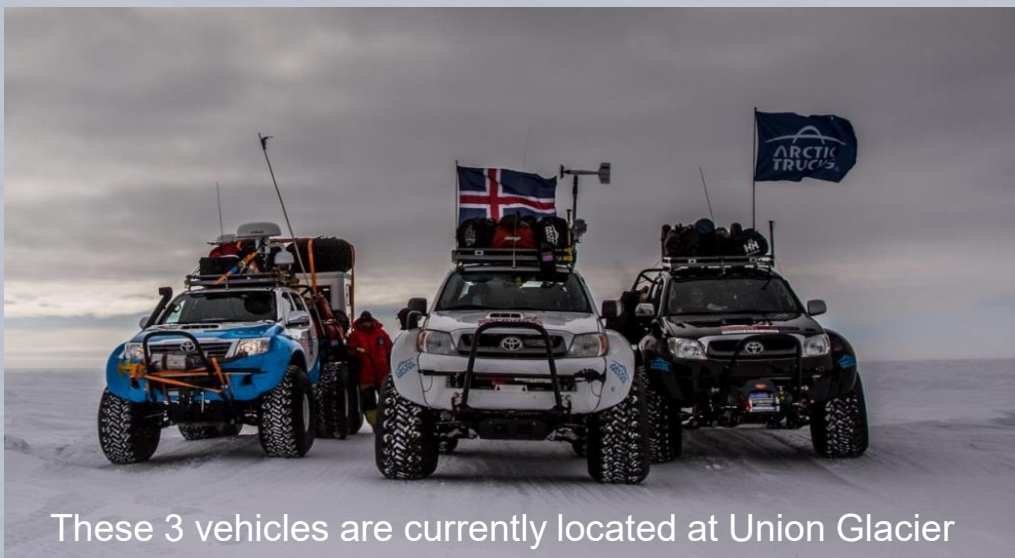
“The Joe Smith South Pole Expedition”.

This is a long drive and clients are expected to drive responsibly and share the driving. At times the terrain and or conditions can be unforgiving in which case the expedition leader will determine who drives each vehicle.





The Vehicles And Medevac



The vehicles are specially built by Arctic Trucks in Iceland **who have had over 25 years of Antarctic operational experience with an exceptional safety record.** These vehicles are unique and utterly suited to the extremely challenging polar environment.

The vehicles come in 4x4 and 6x6 configuration. Cabin space is limited but room is maximized for all participants within logistical reason.

The vehicles have 12 volt and limited 220 volt electricity with iridium phones for emergency. Special arrangements will need to be made for any in depth communication or data up/download although some simple text and email capacity is included.

The team can handle anticipated medical situations but a comprehensive tactical plan is in place for any serious emergency, including accessing advice from experienced polar doctors.

Evacuation insurance of minimum value \$1m is compulsory.





**This will be the expedition and experience of a lifetime.
For more information and a personally tailored quote, contact:
polar@arctictrucks.com**