



Ecotourists explore near an Antarctic island.

## Tour 'The Ice'

*If Antarctica sounds tempting—but too hard to get to—the time has come to make the trip*

• **Though once limited** to explorers and tycoons, the frozen continent now hosts a steady stream of sightseers, thanks to dozens of travel companies marketing increasingly affordable tours. Businesses like Adventure Life ([adventure-life.com](http://adventure-life.com)), Boundless Journeys ([boundlessjourneys.com](http://boundlessjourneys.com)), Grand Circle Travel ([gct.com](http://gct.com)) and Quark Expeditions ([quarkexpeditions.com](http://quarkexpeditions.com)) book tourists on 100- to 200-passenger ships that can navigate through ice floes. Cruises average \$600 to \$900 per day, plus airfare to and from the tip of South America. For the best prices, book at least 18 months in advance and nab a lower-deck cabin. While cruising to your stops, you'll see the same penguins and icescapes but through a porthole instead of a window. Sail in "shoulder" season—November or March—to save more. —*Laura Daily*

### Learn the Lingo

Want to talk like the locals on your next trip abroad? Computer lessons can teach you the basics of a foreign tongue quickly and cheaply—and the programs are getting better all the time. Travel experts told us they'd pick these.



**Mango Languages** (16 languages, \$79 to \$176, [trymango.com](http://trymango.com)) helps you master basic conversations as you click through slides. Many libraries offer Mango lessons in more than 40 languages, for free.

**Pimsleur** (50 languages, \$49.95 and up, [Pimsleur.com](http://Pimsleur.com)) takes the listen-and-repeat approach digital. Download units to your computer, then study with a computerized tutor in 30-minute lessons.

**Livemocha** (38 languages, about \$1 per lesson, [livemocha.com](http://livemocha.com)) features interactive quizzes and feedback from native speakers. Earn credit for lessons by giving feedback to other learners. —*L.D.*

## Be a Greener Guest

• **Who knew that** eco-friendly extras could be so much fun? To help pollinate nearby gardens and provide honey for diners, multiple hotels—like the Four Seasons in Atlanta, St. Ermin's in London and 21 Fairmont hotels—have installed rooftop beehives.

Guests are encouraged to visit the hives or, in the case of the Inter-Continental Boston, watch closed-circuit "Bee T.V."

for 24/7 live honey-bee action. Other green twists generating buzz: Element Hotels in Houston, Denver and eight other U.S. cities offer pedal-powered charging stations in their fitness centers—guests can fully charge a smartphone or tablet during a single stationary bike workout. Paradise Point Resort in San Diego rents small electric cars to guests so they can get around, as does the Langdale Hotel in England's Lake District. —*L.D.*

