

Summer 2025 Small-ship Adventure Travel News & Trends

AdventureSmith Explorations is the global leader in small-ship, adventure cruise vacations. The company's adventure specialists closely track what's happening in the travel industry and in the destinations where its expedition trips operate. Here's some of what they're seeing this summer and beyond.

BOOKING TRENDS

- In June 2025, solo travelers accounted for ~15% of all of AdventureSmith's inquiries. Year to date, solo leads are tracking at 8% of the company's leads, up from 6.5% in all of 2024, aligning with widely reported travel trends that solo travel is on the rise.
- Interest in [Antarctica air cruises](#) continues to be strong and gaining in popularity at a higher rate than other travel trends. AdventureSmith's page devoted to air cruises has seen 47% more new users in the past 90 days (63% more than the same time last year), and they are following through on active inquiries at a great rate.
- Interest in [charter cruises](#) is increasing overall (AdventureSmith is reporting a 212% increase in search inquiries year to date), and particularly in destinations including the Galapagos and Alaska.
- The [Alaska small ship cruise](#) season is on pace for a record-breaking 2025, with the destination generating international interest. Looking ahead, AdventureSmith is already reporting its pace for Alaska bookings in 2026 ahead of the same time last year.
- ChatGPT is beginning to rank higher in AdventureSmith's website search analytics, with its conversion rates tracking nearly 250% higher than source channel averages.

NEWS WE'RE WATCHING

- As of May 12, 2025, yellow fever vaccination is required for select travelers arriving into Ecuador from Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil. Because this will now affect some of our travelers who [visit Machu Picchu](#) before their [Galapagos cruise](#), it is something we now take into consideration when timing trips.
- All persons entering [South Georgia Island](#) and the South Sandwich Islands now must pay an entry fee (as of mid 2025). Most of the operators AdventureSmith works with are covering this; however, some travelers will see the extra charge.
- Starlink options continue to grow on [small ships](#), everywhere from Alaska to the Galapagos, Amazon and even small barges exploring more remote European canals.

DESTINATION TRENDS

- [Ecuador travel](#) and [Galapagos cruises](#) are trending due to increased confidence in the overall stability and security of the country after the recent reelection of Daniel Naboa. In addition:
 - With the trend toward cleaner, more sustainable and upscale ships, many “tourist-class” boats are being decommissioned with their permits going to more luxurious [Galapagos cruise ships](#).
 - Ecuadorian and global expedition operators are making large capital investments in their Galapagos fleets.
- Polar expedition travel is seeing its centers of gravity shift.
 - Among [Arctic cruises](#), itineraries are shifting west of Svalbard. Farther afield routes are reaching more parts of Greenland, Iceland and the Canadian High Arctic.
 - For [Antarctica cruises](#), itineraries are shifting east of the standard Antarctic Peninsula routes. AdventureSmith is booking more Weddell Sea routes than ever before due to newer, purpose-built boats and helicopter-equipped ships that offer better access to the region. More exotic routes that go where few do are also now available.

The AdventureSmith Explorations team are experts in small-ship adventure cruise travel and are happy to provide perspective on a variety of topics. View the company's [spokesperson topics](#) and feel free to reach out with questions.

WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE ADVENTURESMITH'S SPECIALISTS?

AdventureSmith's travel experts have cruised aboard or personally inspected nearly every small ship and lodge on their website, ensuring they can best match traveler requests and advise on logistics coordination. Here's where the team is headed next:

- **July 2025:** AdventureSmith's founder has just disembarked a mega-yacht sailing around Malta and Italy. Plus, specialists are currently circumnavigating Iceland, exploring the cays of Belize aboard a small catamaran and sailing on a favorite 22-guest yacht in Alaska.
- **Aug. 2025:** One of our specialists sets off for the Northwest Passage during a prime time for whales and wildlife, and another will be aboard a Svalbard expedition cruise.
- **Sept. 2025:** One of AdventureSmith's specialists will do a lodge-to-lodge trek on the famed Salkantay Trail to Machu Picchu.



AdventureSmith
EXPLORATIONS

- **Oct. 2025:** AdventureSmith will be at the Adventure Travel World Summit in Puerto Natales, Chile.
- **Nov. 2025:** A team member will experience early-season Antarctica aboard one of the top active expedition ships, while another will be in Australia for the christening of a brand-new expedition ship launching there.

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EXPEDITION CRUISES & WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

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