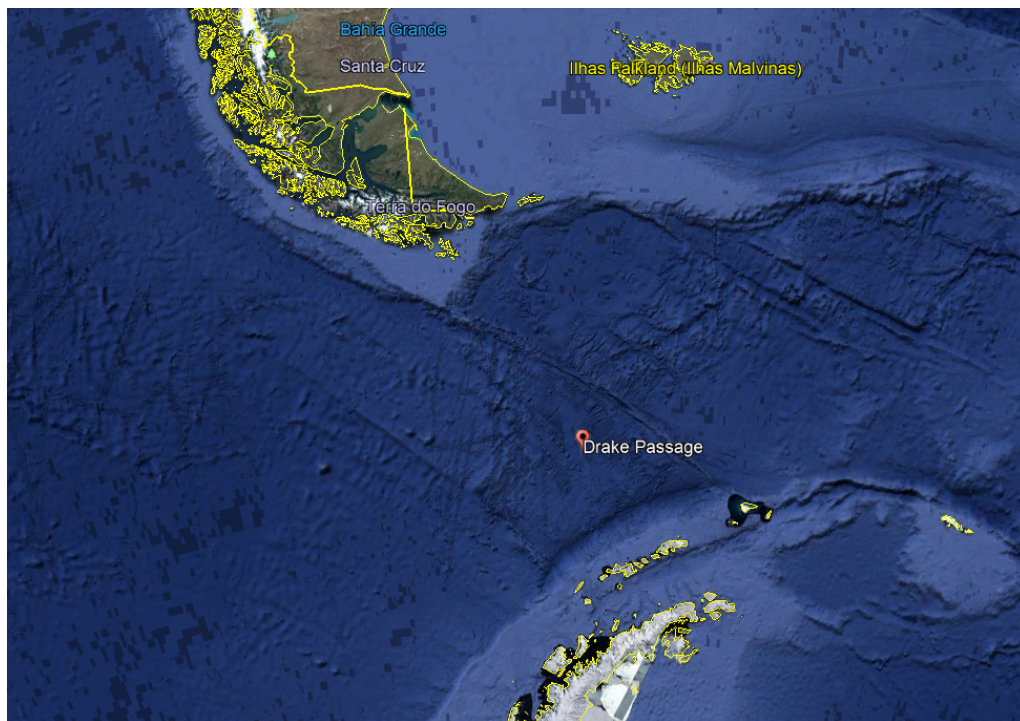




KNOW THE BEST TIME TO TAKE THE DRAKE PASSAGE CROSSING

In recent years we have seen a substantial increase in people traveling to Antarctica; about 50,000 tourists (IAATO) embark, during the summer months, on sailboats and ships departing from the ports of Ushuaia (Argentina) and Punta Arenas (Chile) towards the Peninsula Antarctica, consisting mainly of Americans, Australians, Germans, and English.



However, this promising, exotic expedition requires that its travelers possess a key attribute: the courage to cross the Drake Passage, which is one of the stormiest regions in the world, due to the constant cyclones, including bombs cyclone, that form at the confluence of the Antarctic, Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Many sailors are proud to say they crossed the Drake 3, 4, 5, times. And this truly is something to boast about, as facing waves of 10 meters high and winds of 50 kt is not for everyone. In the Drake Passage there are no islands or lands to shelter, so a trip of this kind has to be very well planned, with vessels suitable for bad weather, and a trained crew. It is very important to monitor the weather conditions in the region to determine the best time to cross. In addition to taking into account traditional and well-known forecasts of weather and waves, know that there is a practical and easy way to evaluate the sea conditions in the Drake Passage that was developed by the Chilean Navy. The best time to cross the Drake is when the differences in

atmospheric pressure observed in the Ushuaia (87938) and Carlini (89053) meteorological stations are the lowest possible, because the greater the difference in pressure, the stormier the Drake will be.

For example:

**DRAKE CROSSING INDEX
DCI**

Pressure in Ushuaia at 12Z: 995 hPa
Pressure in Carlini at 12Z: 990 hPa
Difference: 5 hPa = **GOOD FOR CROSSING**

Pressure in Ushuaia at 12Z: 1000 hPa
Pressure in Carlini at 12Z: 980 hPa
Difference: 20 hPa = **BAD FOR CROSSING**

Pressure in Ushuaia at 12Z: 1000 hPa
Pressure in Carlini at 12Z: 992 hPa
Difference: 8 hPa = **REGULAR FOR CROSSING**

**THIS INDEX DOES NOT REPLACE OTHER DRAKE PASSAGE ANALYSIS AS
MODELS FOR WEATHER FORECAST, WAVES, SYNOPTIC CHARTS, ETC.**

In general, traversing should be avoided when the pressure difference is equal to or greater than 12 hPa.

After several days of bad weather on the Drake, the sea can remain agitated, even if the pressure gradient is small. You should wait at least 12 hours for the start of the crossing.

TEAM:

