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Dear adventurer,

Thank you for choosing to travel with Heritage Expeditions aboard our new expedition ship *Heritage Adventurer* exploring New Zealand and Australia's Subantarctic Islands.

We hope you enjoy reliving your adventure when reading the below Expedition Log from your voyage. If you have any problems viewing this document please do not hesitate to contact us.

Click here to view the [Species List](#) for 'Galapagos of the Southern Ocean' #HA221123

Please download your copy of our Slide Show presentation which screened on the final night of our voyage [here](#).

If you have not already shared your experience, photography skills or memories with us we invite you to take a few minutes to submit your comments, testimonial or images from the expedition [here](#).

Please note we may choose to place your comments and photographs in the public viewing gallery, so whatever you submit may be viewed by any visitor to our website unless requested otherwise.

And don't forget, as a returning guest we'll give you a 5% discount off your next voyage with Heritage Expeditions.

Yours in adventure,

***The Heritage Expeditions Team***

## **GALAPAGOS OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN on board HERITAGE ADVENTURER 23<sup>rd</sup> November - 4<sup>th</sup> December 2022**



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### **Day 1**

**23 November**

Queenstown

Arriving at Queenstown we met at our hotel for the first night, gathering for the start of our Subantarctic adventures. We spent part of the day exploring Queenstown, preparing for our voyage, and meeting our Expedition Leader Aaron Russ.

### **Day 2**

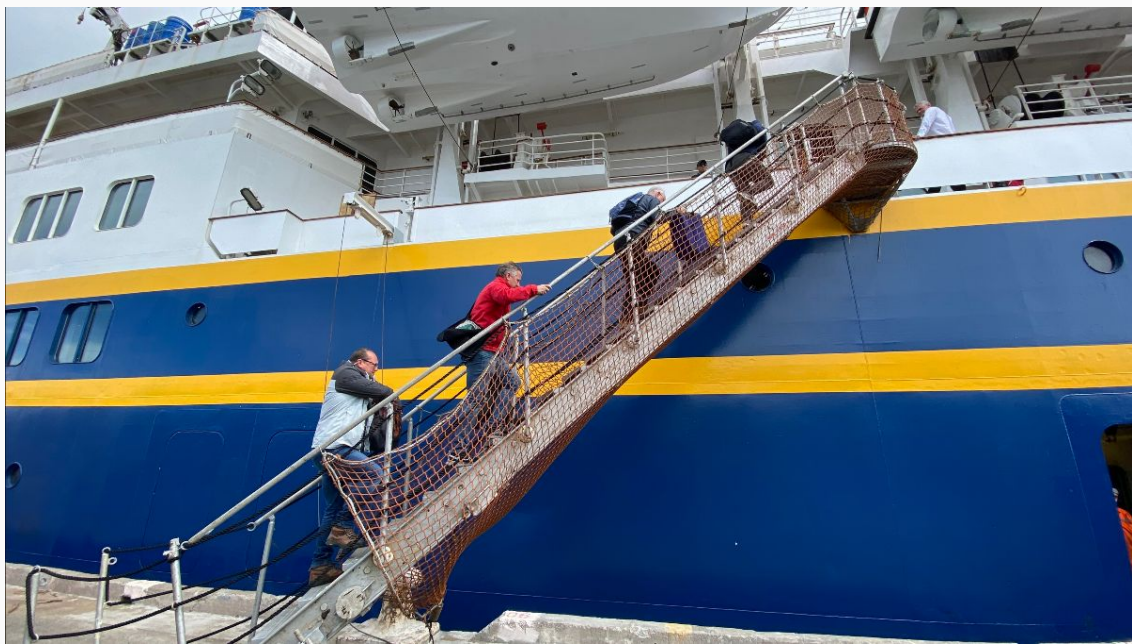
**24 November**

Queenstown – Bluff – Stewart Island

Spending the morning in Queenstown awaking to snowcapped mountains we prepared to meet *Heritage Adventurer* in the port of Bluff. Travelling from the mountainous Central Otago into the rolling farmland of Southland we made our way down to the port of Bluff. Arriving at Bluff we embarked on the *Heritage Adventurer* meeting our guides and crew. We partook in a lifeboat drill and familiarised ourselves with the vessel before sitting down to dinner while crossing Foveaux Strait and sailing by Stewart Island.



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**Day 3**  
**25 November**  
Snares Islands

We awoke to a relatively calm sea heading toward the Snares. Arriving to the sounds and smells of the Snares Crested-Penguins we embarked on our first Zodiac cruise, flocks of Cape Petrels gliding by our Zodiac as we neared the islands. Cruising around the coastline we encountered Snares Crested Penguins in the bush and along the shoreline, covering the steep slopes and attempting to dive into the oncoming swells. Exploring the coastline we cruised in and out of the many bays and inlets of the islands, amongst granite cliffs and sea caves. We also observed several of the endemic land dwelling birds including the Snares Islands Fernbird and Tomtit, along with some inquisitive fantails. Around the coastline we also encountered several lazing New Zealand Fur Seals and some curious and inquisitive Hooker's/New Zealand Sea Lions who patrolled the coastline, and even a juvenile Elephant Seal.

Skuas watched over seeking their next meal – some even fighting mid-flight, while Northern Giant Petrels flew by and rested on the water. The odd albatross also glided by, some White-capped even coming to land on their nests. On land we saw the *Oleria* and *Brachyglottis* with their sea spray resistant leaves, and *Stilbocarpa* and Southern Rātā just starting to flower – the sign of a dry summer.

Reluctantly we had to leave the sights, sounds and smells of the Snares, heading off to the Auckland Islands. Peter gave us our first lecture on birds in relation to their island life, with Lou also giving us an introduction to our next destination – the Auckland Islands.



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**Day 4**  
**26 November**  
 Enderby Island

This morning, in the relatively sheltered waters of Port Ross, we anchored off the beach at Sandy Bay, Enderby Island. After breakfast at 0730 we picked up our packed lunches and were ferried across to the rocks at the eastern end of Sandy Bay for a wet landing. We removed our life jackets and prepared ourselves for one of two walking options. The third option was a short Zodiac cruise in the morning and a short walk in the afternoon after lunch on board.

**The Zodiac cruise**

We headed straight for the shelter of the island but none was found, so we gently headed up the coast spotting a small colony of Auckland Island Shag nesting on the cliffs just above the braking waves. Two Auckland Island Teal were showing well on a ledge just below the shags, difficult at first to spot as they blend in so well to their favoured habitat. We then made our way to Rose Island where we spotted several more teal and a beautiful New Zealand Falcon showed well after chasing away a Brown Skua. On our return we had the pleasure of a Light-mantled Sooty Albatross floating above the cliff tops.



## The short walk

After a slippery landing Chris and Peter led the short walkers around through the sandhills and across towards the huts before entering the Rātā forest to the boardwalk. Yellow-eyed Penguins/Hoiho and Hooker's/New Zealand Sea Lions littered the beach and in the dunes along the way. The boardwalk then worked its way through the Rātā forest to the western side of the island and *Bulbinella rossii* meadow with its beautiful yellow-flowered Ross lilies. Once closer to the coast we encountered the purple flowered carrot *Anisotome latifolia*. There were also several Royal Albatross and one which didn't seem very happy overlooking the seal colony. Nesting birds hid among the turf and scrub on the low ridge. After enjoying the coastal vistas, we returned along the boardwalk to take more pictures of the megaherbs, flowering Rātā trees, sea lions, and penguins in the dunes at Sandy Bay, enjoying our time contemplating this beautiful place at our leisure.

## The long walk

We set off with Lindsay and Mike leading the way and Lou bringing up the rear, beginning our journey through tall tussock and thick *Dracophyllum/Myrsine* scrub. Although there was a track it was indistinct in places and most of us tried to stick together. Kākāriki, Auckland Islands Teal, Shags and Tomtit, Bellbirds, petrels, skuas and penguins were all seen. Some of us took the side trip into the Rātā forest to enjoy the twisted shapes of the tree trunks. Back on the western side we dropped down to the coast for lunch. Eventually entering a section of bigger tussock and coastal hebe shrubland, before we finally emerged and moved onto coastal views and sight of Derry Castle Reef, location of the wreck of the *Derry Castle*. Auckland Island Banded Dotterel – longer legged and much larger than the New Zealand Banded Dotterel were seen with three Bar-tailed Godwits. The return journey tested the fitness of some, but all guests arrived safely back to Sandy Bay before jumping aboard the Zodiacs for a speedy trip back to our trusty expedition ship. Everybody was back on board by 1900 ready for the BBQ dinner on deck 6.



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**Day 5**  
**27 November**

Auckland Islands – Musgrave Inlet – Fairchild's Garden & Adams Islands (Carnley Harbour)

Calm seas and nice weather greeted us at Musgrave Inlet as we sailed along the swell observing the elusive Rockhopper Penguins. The big waves were having an impact on them getting ashore! On the south side we watched Light-mantled Sooty Albatross and Auckland Island Shags, along with flocks of Tui air bombing insects. The real highlight though were the lava tube caves, with one collapsed to resemble a Pacific Island paradise of deep blue water, bright green mosses and towering Rātā trees. The other was pitch black at the back with torches required to see the rock patterns.

In the afternoon we split into two groups, one to tackle Victoria Passage via Zodiac to view a White-capped Albatross colony, set among vertical cliffs and a very confused sea. The other group walked up to see the same colony from above traversing tangled scrub and muddy sections to reach the highest point to enjoy the thrilling sight of hundreds of White-capped Albatross soaring across the cliff faces and seeing hundreds more sitting on their nests. Sadly, we also witnessed two black pigs in the colony and the stark reality of the damage these introduced pests are doing, reducing albatross numbers, and the very real need for this island to also become predator free.



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## Day 6

**28 November**

At sea

Today was a full day at sea en route to Macquarie Island. Fortunately, the sea conditions were not too rough, considering we were in the notorious 'Furious Fifties' of latitude. After breakfast, at 0930, our lecture series kicked off with a presentation by Ian entitled 'Marine Mammals of the Southern Ocean'. He gave us a general overview of marine mammals before going into more detail about the cetaceans (whales and dolphins) and pinnipeds (seals and sea lions) we could possibly encounter, or have already encountered, on our voyage.

Next, at 1100, we attended a presentation by Peter, who talked about the 'Ever Popular Penguins'. We were especially interested to learn about the penguins we have seen (Snares Crested, Yellow-eyed/Hoiho and Eastern Rockhopper Penguins) and the penguins we are likely to see tomorrow at Macquarie Island (Royal, King and Gentoo Penguins).

At around noon we crossed into Australian territorial waters. After lunch, at 1400, we had the chance to attend a special photography seminar by renowned wildlife photographer Michael Snedic. Afterward, some of us went on deck to practice our newly learned photography skills on the many seabird species that inhabit the wild Southern Ocean.

Then, at 1500, it was time for a mandatory biosecurity screening which was run very efficiently by our expedition staff. We were required to make sure all our outerwear, backpacks and boots were immaculately clean before setting foot on Macquarie Island, to prevent introducing any invasive plants or pathogens to the nature reserve.

At 1700 we gathered again in the Aft Lounge for a presentation by Rowena Hannaford, the representative of Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service, entitled 'An Introduction to Macquarie Island'. We learned all about this magnificent natural wonderland and the great efforts that have gone into rehabilitating the environment after it was severely degraded by man prior to the establishment of the nature reserve. Then, at 1900, our Expedition Leader Aaron gave us the particulars of the plan for landing and Zodiac cruising at Macquarie Island. Our dinner conversations were filled with the excitement of tomorrow's much-anticipated activities.



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## **Day 7**

**29 November**

Macquarie Island – Sandy Bay – Buckles Bay

The day started slowly, with only a few hardy souls on deck at 0600 to enjoy the parties of King and Royal Penguins that greeted our ship as we lay at anchor off Sandy Bay, on the east coast of Australia's Macquarie Island. At dawn the weather looked promising, with the peaks mostly clear, and only a bank of cloud to the east obscuring the sunrise. However, we had to wait for the island personnel – who were operating on Tasmanian time, two hours earlier than the ship – to rouse before we could go ashore.

A passing squall around 0830 dampened expectations, but the weather cleared again. We were all set to depart at 0900, when a delay in medical clearance paperwork saw us on hold until after 0930. Finally the first group was allowed to head ashore, with the remaining expeditioners exploring the coast by Zodiac. The fairly strong northerly wind was backing into the west and dropping, and we were treated to patches of sunshine that grew increasingly longer, until the sky was virtually cloudless.

We were met ashore by Kaely and Jarred, two rangers from Tasmania's Parks and Wildlife Service, who had hiked down from the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) station 10 kilometres away to supervise our visit. The coast was replete with Southern Elephant Seals; a few large bulls and moulting immatures, plus hundreds of corpulent weaners who had recently completed their intensive nursing period lasting 21-25 days. They were joined by thousands of King and Royal Penguins as well as smaller numbers of Kelp Gulls, Northern and Southern Giant Petrels, and Brown Skuas.

Royal Penguins were shuttling back and forth to their small – by their standards – colony a few hundred metres inland. We were able to visit the colony thanks to a boardwalk which climbed through the tussock and across a megaherb field. Unfortunately, we were unable to carry along the walkway as there were several Northern Giant Petrel chicks in the area, already stressed by the unusually warm weather. At the colony we were treated to the spectacle of thousands of penguins brooding their newly hatched chicks. We didn't have to worry too much about disturbing these birds, as they created their own cacophony of greeting and complaints. Noise levels peaked whenever a Skua ventured out on an aerial sortie over the colony, where it was vigorously repulsed by the shouts and beaks of all the adult penguins.

To the north of our landing site, we visited a small King Penguin colony, containing a mix from incubating adults to rotund 'oakum boys' and sleek fledglings losing their last traces of brown down. Surrounding the colony there were hundreds of non-breeders in all stages and ages, and seemingly all curious to meet the first tourist group to visit Macquarie since the start of 2020. Offshore, the Zodiac cruisers enjoyed their first views of Macquarie Island Shags, and were able to get close to a colony of Eastern Rockhopper Penguins on a steep slope south of the ranger's hut.

We finally returned to the ship for a late lunch around 15:00, which we could enjoy while watching the east coast of the island unfold as we steamed north to anchor off the ANARE station. By 1630 the first group was ashore again, climbing the walkway to the Razorback for a panoramic view over the Isthmus and Wireless Hill, and visiting the remains of the penguin digesters used to render countless thousands of

penguins into oil in the early 1900s. This was a great chance for the Australian listers to tick a Redpoll – a self-introduced finch which arrived via New Zealand.

Gentoo Penguins were making life difficult by breeding along the roadway, so we had to walk along the beach, but we enjoyed the antics of their fluffy chicks, chasing their parents in the hope of extracting some extra food from them. Macquarie Island Shags were breeding on a rock off the west coast of the Isthmus, where the beach was full of Giant Petrels, including a good number of White-face Southern. Most were snoozing, but there was a robust battle for possession of a freshly dead Elephant Seal carcass, with the victors readily identified by their blood-stained heads.

For many, the cherry on top of an exceptional day was a group of 15-20 Orca that passed the ship, giving exhilarating views to those in the Zodiacs, and more distant views to those on land. The last expeditioners returned to the ship after 2030 to enjoy a well-deserved Philippine-themed dinner watching the sunset over the island. Macquarie Island had pulled out all the stops for the first tourist visit in almost three years!



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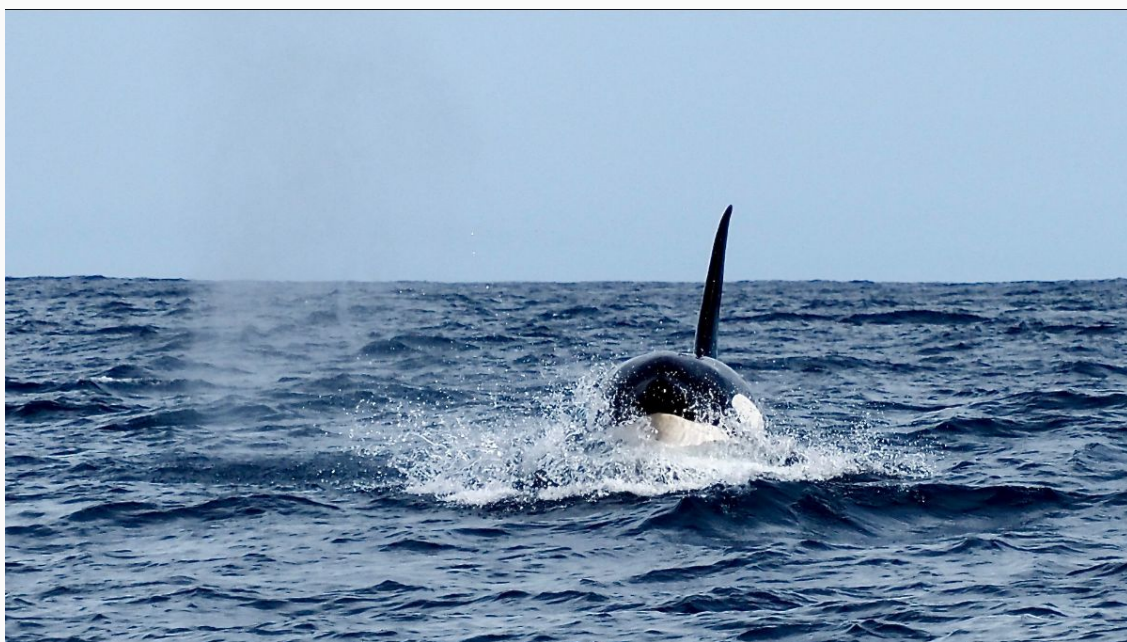


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## Day 8

**30 November**

Macquarie Island – Lusitania Bay - Sandy Bay

Today was our second day at Australia's magical Macquarie Island. After an 0845 breakfast it was time for us to board the Zodiacs for a cruise of Lusitania Bay on the island's rugged southeast coast. Wind and waves made for challenging conditions at the gangway, but the crew of *Heritage Adventurer* did a commendable job of getting us safely off the ship. Our wet-weather gear was tested as we cruised toward the shoreline through wind-driven spray. Visitors are not allowed to go ashore here, and we soon saw why: the entire beach at Lusitania Bay is thickly occupied by the island's largest colony of King Penguins, numbering well over 100,000 birds.



From the Zodiacs, we could appreciate the vastness of the colony as it stretched up and down the coast, and even up into the green hillsides. The cacophony of penguin calls reached our ears even over the crashing of surf and whistling of wind. It was gratifying to see how well the penguin population had recovered since their indiscriminate slaughter during the sealing era. As evidence of the carnage we saw some of the penguin 'digesters', once used to render the birds into oil, now silently rusting amidst the boisterous colony. After an hour of cruising, we were quite satisfied. We were all safely back aboard *Heritage Adventurer* by 1030.

While we warmed ourselves with a hot beverage we repositioned north to Sandy Bay, where we were yesterday morning. At 12:00, we had the opportunity to go ashore to enjoy the amazing wildlife spectacle once again. Some of us went ashore before lunch and the rest went after lunch. The wind and rain at the beach were benevolent compared to conditions at the anchor position of *Heritage Adventurer*, which recorded wind speeds up to 50 knots while we were ashore. Penguins and seals seemed more active today in the colder weather. After adding a few hundred (or thousand) more photos to our memory cards, we were all back on board by 1600.

Soon afterwards, *Heritage Adventurer* set a course for New Zealand's Campbell Island, the final Subantarctic island group on our itinerary. At 1900, at the recap and briefing, Niall answered some frequently answered questions while Lou spoke eloquently about the Southern Ocean and how its weather affects all of New Zealand and Australia. Aaron predicted a relatively calm day at sea tomorrow.



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**Day 9**  
**1 December**  
At sea

After an action filled two days on Macquarie Island today was an opportunity to relax. An easy flowing sea provided smooth passage north as we sailed towards Campbell Island, our last Subantarctic Island on our expedition.

The day was filled with plenty of opportunity to enjoy great food. In addition to what has become the new norm of delicious eating opportunities at meal times, the *Heritage Adventurer* catering team putting on a



special afternoon tea which was a great opportunity for everyone to relive the previous day's adventures. Fuelled up, it was a well-practiced process to complete our final biosecurity check ready for Campbell Island. The day's programme was punctuated by a range of interesting presentations: 'Subantarctic Plants' (Chris), 'Albatross-origins, Diversity, Ecology' (Peter), 'Bird Photography' (Tom), 'Introduction to Campbell Island' (Lou) and 'Campbell Island Rat Eradication' (Lindsay).

Today was a great opportunity for the bird enthusiasts to wrap up warmly and spend time outside looking for new species as we move in to more northern latitudes. For others it was an excellent opportunity to recharge and relax.



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## Day 10

**2 December**

Campbell Island

A blustery start to the day saw those who started the long walk to North West Bay heading to the start of their walk at Beeman Point, along with some keen albatross enthusiasts who wanted to spend the day at Col Lyall. While those of us who opted to spend the morning Zodiac cruising braved the wind and the willy whorls, tucking into the sheltered bays and encountering sea lions, Giant Petrels, Antarctic Terns, Campbell Island Teal and even a Pacific Golden Plover. At the head of Tucker Cove we rafted up after passing some of the relics from the farming era of the island, listening to Chris and Aaron recount the history of the area.

For those who went up to Col Lyall, we passed Coastwatchers' huts and Metservice buildings before rounding Beeman Hill through *Dracophyllum* scrub to the tussock clad valley that led up to Col Lyall. Heading up the boardwalk we encountered a variety of megaherbs such as *Pleurophyllum* and native shrubs such as the *Veronica benthamii* with its brilliant purple flowers. Nearing the top of Col Lyall, we started to hear and see Southern Royal Albatross flying through the air, with young ones 'gamming' in the surrounding tussock. We watched one group of six for an hour as they touched beaks, raised their wings and vocalised to each other, with one even walking close to us watching from the boardwalk. At the very



top of the boardwalk, we gained spectacular views of Northwest Bay, Dent Island and the surrounding geology; with the wind at this view point making it hard to stand but aiding the albatross wheeling past and above our heads.

Those who did the longer walk traversed the tussock and scrub of the island to Northwest Bay, encountering Campbell Island Snipe and albatross along the way heading out to the coast for a lunch stop at Capstan Bay. We also encountered restful sea lions and Elephant Seals as well as Campbell Island Teal along the ridges and the coastline.



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**Day 11**  
**3 December**  
At Sea

Today we enjoyed a full schedule of lectures starting with one from Peter about plastic's impact on our oceans. In the next lecture Aaron told us the story of how Heritage Expeditions started and what they have achieved so far. With the grey Southern Ocean gently rocking us as we make our speedy passage to Bluff to beat the weather, we enjoyed a Q&A and lecture session by Lou and Lindsay on 'Predator Free New Zealand' followed by a showcase of Nicolas Dillion's watercolour paintings. Afterwards was a workshop where he went through the stages in painting one of our King Penguins from Macquarie Island.

Finishing off the afternoon we did some last-minute shopping at the ship boutique before settling down in the bar for our final recap and slideshow presentation to finish what has been an incredible voyage. After some amazing photos from our expedition team and a final farewell from the Captain and the ship's crew; we sat down for our final dinner. During the night we docked in the harbour of Bluff for a smooth night.



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**Day 12**  
**3 December**  
Bluff



Waking up to the sounds of the Port of Bluff, we enjoyed our final breakfast before farewells to our expedition team and the ship's crew. After having our 2,600 nautical mile journey around the Subantarctic we departed on our next adventure to Invercargill, Stewart Island and Queenstown.



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