



ADVENTURES  
*in good company*



## ADVENTURES IN PATAGONIA

### Trip Summary

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking to the fabled granite spires of Patagonia, including Fitz Roy, Cerro del Torre, and the Towers of Paine
- Seeing the remains of the vast glaciers that carved out this land
- Learning about the natural and human history of Patagonia
- Gaining a firsthand experience of the scope, diversity, and majesty of this awe-inspiring area

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## TRIP AT A GLANCE

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Location:   | Argentina and Chile   |
| Activities: | Hiking  |
| Arrive:     | Lobby of our trip hotel in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at 6PM on Day 1 |
| Depart:     | Punta Arenas Airport, in Chile, at 2PM on the last day              |

### Trip Overview

Patagonia is one of the most incredible, rugged, and sparsely populated places on earth. Shared by Argentina and Chile, it is known for its pristine wilderness, magnificent snow-capped peaks, dramatic granite spires, sparkling lakes, and immense glaciers. On this 13 day trip, we have picked out the places that will stand out in your memory forever: the breathtaking mountain environs of Torres del Paine National Park in Chile and the stunning Los Glaciares National Park in Argentina. Maximum group size: 12. You must have a valid passport at time of registration and Travel Insurance is mandatory for this trip.

### Rating

This trip is designed for women in excellent physical condition who have hiking experience and want an active exploration of Patagonia. This trip is rated 5. While the level of activity varies each day, you should be able to hike up to 10 hours on trails with elevation gains of up to 4000 feet while carrying a daypack weighing about 15 pounds. We will not be hiking at high elevation but there is significant elevation gain and loss each day. Prior to beginning the trip, participants should be engaged in aerobic conditioning for at least 40-50 minutes 4-5 times a week. Adding some specific conditioning such as strength training, endurance training, and longer aerobic workouts will be necessary; hiking 3-6 hours once a week, starting at least 6 weeks before the trip, is also recommended. **Rating:** 1 2 3 4 **[5]** .

### What's Included

- Experienced guides, including an AGC guide and local bilingual Argentinian guides
- 12 nights lodging: 7 in hotels or inns, and 5 in mountain refugios
- Meals as detailed on the itinerary
- All transportation from our hotel in Buenos Aires to the Punta Arenas airport at trip's end (Internal flights excluded)
- Local National Park guides
- Entrance fees to the National Parks
- Kayak on Lake Grey

**What's not included:** International and domestic airfare (Once the group is confirmed, AGC will coordinate the purchase of domestic flights for participants), Buenos Aires airport to hotel transfer if you arrive early, travel from Punta Arenas after the trip if you extend your stay, alcoholic beverages, certain meals as specified

in the itinerary, AGC guide gratuities, W Trek local guide gratuities, and mandatory travel insurance that covers emergency evacuation.

## OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

### DAY 1

Welcome to Argentina! Upon arrival at the international airport, you will be met by our local guide and transferred to our hotel in the heart of Buenos Aires. At 6:00 pm we'll meet in the hotel lobby for introductions before going to one of the city's most important highlights: a dinner and spectacular Tango show! Buenos Aires is the birthplace of tango and we'll see how a good dancer transmits the feeling of the music to their partner. Overnight Hotel Recoleta Grand or similar in Buenos Aires (D)

### DAY 2

Today we'll drive to the domestic airport for our 2.5 hour flight to El Calafate (cost of airfare is not included but we will coordinate buying the tickets for AGC participants). From there we drive across the Patagonian steppe to the mountain town of El Chalten, often called Argentina's Trekking Capital (driving time: 3 hours). Route 40 is famous for its expansive vistas and gorgeous scenery; on a clear day, we can see the Fitz Roy mountain range during our drive. We arrive in time to settle in and explore this charming mountain town. Tonight's dinner is free for you to choose from any of the quaint and delicious nearby restaurants. (B, L)

Overnight Poincenot Hotel or similar in El Chalten

### DAY 3

Our first hike is to the lookout of Laguna de Los Tres - a turquoise lake named for the three glaciers that drain into it. The trail begins in a dense forest of lenga (southern beech) trees that protect us from the Continental Ice Field winds. We trek towards Fitz Roy massif, A UNESCO World Heritage Site, with breathtaking views of its iconic spires and peaks. Our trail then continues through forest and open areas to Rio Blanco, the base camp where climbers prepare to climb the 11,290-foot Fitz Roy summit. From here it is a steep but worthwhile 1,300 ft climb to Laguna de los Tres, a striking azure blue lake at the foot of the massif. From the lake we have close-up views of the vertical rock walls of Fitz Roy's east face, the impressive spire called Poincenot Needle, and the dramatic blue of Piedras Blancas glacier. Retracing our steps, we return to the town of El Chalten for a well deserved dinner and night's rest. (B, L)

Hiking: 12 miles, 3,100 feet elevation gain, 9-10 hours.  
Overnight Poincenot Hotel or similar in El Chalten

#### DAY 4

We walk where the Andean condors fly today, hiking out on the only trail that ascends to a view point near El Chalten instead of dipping into a valley. We will hike toward Laguna Toro, crossing small streams and hiking through several distinct ecosystems. We will see arid hillsides scoured by the wind but still dotted with tiny wildflowers, reminders of how persistent and resilient nature's smallest organisms are. Once on alpine terrain we may see remnants of marine fossils such as ammonites and belemnites up to 100 million years old! Gaining elevation steadily near the destination, be aware that it can snow here, even in the summertime. Our viewpoint at "Loma del Pliegue Tumbado" grants us an impressive and unconventional view of the Torre and Fitz Roy massifs. (B, L)

Hiking: 13 miles, 2,400+ feet elevation gain, 7-8 hours)  
Overnight Poincenot Hotel or similar in El Chalten

#### DAY 5

One of the classic treks of El Chalten is to the Cerro Torre Lagoon, wedged between the Adela mountain range, Torre and Grande glaciers, and the famous Cerro Torre. In comparison to our first two days, our hike today is easier with gentler hills. The path ascends as we stroll along the Fitz Roy river until it arrives at a viewpoint of the river canyon and the Margarita waterfall. We see a lot of evidence of the area's glacial past as we cross terminal moraines and hike in an ancient glacial valley to a magnificent viewpoint of the area. With a little luck and clear skies, we will have a picnic lunch with a fantastic view! Time permitting, we will continue to Laguna Torre, where we can see a wide range of birds, including the Magellanic woodpecker. (There are numerous references to Magellan in this area with flora and fauna due to the first European to visit the area was Juan Ladrillero, a Spanish explorer who was looking for the Strait of Magellan's western passage in 1557.) At Laguna Torre it is common to see huge icebergs, ice which has fallen off the Torre glacier face. Here we can visit the Agostini campground that once served as a basecamp for climbers from all over the world. In the late afternoon we drive 3 hours back to El Calafate. (B, L)

Hiking: 12 miles, 1900 ft elevation gain, 7 hours.  
Overnight Kau Yatun Hotel or similar in El Chalten

#### DAY 6

After a hearty breakfast we'll head to Glaciers National Park, which has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1981 and is home to 200 glaciers. Approximately half of this park is occupied by the Patagonian Ice Field, the largest ice field after Antarctica! Today we experience the Perito Moreno

glacier, one of the world's few glaciers that is not receding. The stunning mass of tiny blue ice peaks at the terminus is even more awesome because of constant cracking sounds when pieces of ice break and crash into the water below. Most glaciers calve, or release ice, in deep water, but here the calving rates are higher than on other Patagonian glaciers. Lago Argentino, the lake where Perito Moreno ends, is shallower than the bodies of water at the ends of most glaciers so the icebergs don't melt as quickly, perhaps one reason why the glacier is still advancing. Hopefully we will get to see some calving in action! Weather permitting, we'll have our lunch overlooking the glacier along an expansive boardwalk and viewpoints, then take an hour-long boat ride on the lake for another close-up perspective. We return to El Calafate in the afternoon. Dinner is on your own again tonight, with choices from a number of great restaurants.

Overnight Kau Yatun or similar. (B, L)

## DAY 7

After an early breakfast, we pack up and leave for a scenic drive of about 6 hours through the spectacular landscape of the Patagonia steppes into Chile and Torres del Paine National Park (no visa required for US and Canadian Citizens). We'll see unique wildlife such as herds of guanacos (llama relatives) and lesser rheas (related to emus and ostrich). We'll also see the mountains that make the park famous: Paine Grande, the Horns, Admiral Nieto and the Towers. After we settle into our lodging at the base of the Towers magnificent rock spires, we'll take a walk to get familiar with the landscape. (B, L, D)

Overnight at Refugio Torres Central in Torres del Paine National Park.

## DAY 8

We start our Base Torres trek or by following the Ascencio River into the Ascencio Valley. We ascend for one hour before getting our first magnificent glimpses of unbelievable beech forests, glaciers and waterfalls. The path levels out for the next few miles before leading us up a large moraine to a lookout point, perfectly positioned for breathtaking photos. (During the trekking portion you will carry a large daypack full of your necessities and your extra luggage will be shuttled around to meet you after the W-trek.) We'll return on the same path back to where our hearty dinner awaits us. (B, L, D)

Hiking: 8-10 hours.

Overnight: Refugio Central

## DAY 9

We start our lodge-to-lodge trek today on the famous W Circuit, so named for the shape of the trails. With an early morning start and clear skies, we'll see a magnificent dawn full of orange-pink hues. From the refugio we hike to Inge Lagoon, possibly seeing Andean condors and eagles on the way.

Descriptions fall short of the incredible beauty of this trek and the views that need to be experienced in person! The trail follows around the base of Almirante Nieto Mountain, and crosses the Bader River to arrive at Refugio Los Cuernos for the night. (B, L, D)

Hiking: 7 miles, 6 hours  
Overnight: Los Cuernos Refugio

#### DAY 10

Today's journey begins with a 2 hour walk following an undulating path leading to the French River where we'll have our first glimpses of the hanging glacier. Then we will ascend for one hour through a surreal Japanese garden landscape, crossing beech forests, to reach the French Valley viewpoint. The French Valley is considered by many to be the most beautiful part of the trek. It offers a dramatic view of sheer cliffs and unique rock formations. We will picnic in the naturally-formed amphitheater encircled by the park's most impressive formations: the Hoja (Blade), Mascara (Mask), Espada (Sword), Catedral (Cathedral), Aleta de TiburÃ³n (Shark's Fin) and Fortaleza (Fortress), plus views of Paine Grande, the highest mountain in Torres del Paine at 2,884m (9,462ft). After coming back down the valley, we continue hiking across the steppe to our mountain lodge at Refugio Paine Grande. We retrace our steps to the entrance of the valley before continuing on to the southwest side of Paine Grande, the highest peak in the park. Here we cross through native Chilean forests of fire bush and evergreen beech to the shore of Lake Pehoe. (B, L, D)

Hike 8-9 hours  
Overnight: Paine Grande Refugio.

#### DAY 11

We are at the last leg of the W, hiking today on rolling ups and downs above Lake Grey. The day begins with a winding narrow path to Laguna Negra, where we first see the South Patagonia Ice Field with its many unclimbed mountains. During our hike we'll cross through forests and rivers, be on the lookout for spectacle and flying steamer ducks. After we settle into our lodge, we will kayak on Lake Grey past magnificent floating icebergs and the Grey Glacier, weather permitting. This excursion is part of your trip fee and all necessary equipment, including a life jacket, is provided. No kayaking experience is necessary and your local guide will teach you all you need to know. Some restrictions do apply to kayaking (Maximum age limit 65 and under, maximum weight limit is 220 pounds). Hiking 7 - 8 miles. (B, L, D)

Hiking: 4 hours. Kayaking: 2 hours.  
Overnight Refugio Grey

#### DAY 12

Last hike today is a retracing of our path from yesterday to a boat launch near Refugio Paine Grande where we will catch a 40 minute boat ride across Lake Pehoe. On the shores of Lake Pehoe we may see grazing wild guanaco. From there we will drive 2 hours to Puerto Natales where we will get cleaned up and have our final celebration dinner. If you're extending your stay in Puerto Natales, there are many interesting places to visit nearby, including the "Cueva del Milodon," or Mylodon Cave, National Monument. Mylodons were giant ground sloths that weighed about 2,205 pounds and were about 10 feet long from snout to tail tip. (B, L, D)

Overnight Martin Gusinde Hotel or similar

### DAY 13

What an incredible trip! We leave early after breakfast for a 3 hour drive southeast to the Punta Arenas airport in the morning, another charming city, this time on the banks of the Straights of Magellan. Plan your flight for after 2PM (If traveling straight home, you can connect through Santiago, Chile or Buenos Aires, Argentina). (B) If you're feeling adventurous, join us for the Ushuaia extension! We'll explore the southernmost city in the world for 4 days with lots of coastal adventures and delicious seafood!

## ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

### Getting There

#### Arriving in Buenos Aires, Argentina:

- Fly into the Ezeiza International Airport (EZE), 14 miles south-southwest of Buenos Aires on day 1.
- You'll receive detailed instructions for getting to our hotel in Buenos Aires in the Pre-Departure document, sent 6 months prior to the trip start.

#### Departing from Punta Arenas Airport, Chile:

- We will arrive in the Punta Arenas airport (PUQ), Chile at noon on the last day. Plan your flight for after 2:00 pm.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exitto Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exitto charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fees of \$35 per passenger.

## Accommodations

We will spend 7 nights in double occupancy rooms with ensuite bathrooms in modern hotels and small inns (four single supplements available for hotel stays for an additional cost). While on the W trek, we

will spend 5 nights in Torres del Paine in mountain "refugios" or hostels, which have dormitory-style sleeping with bunk beds. Beds will be assigned randomly so you may be in top bunk one night and a bottom bunk the next. The refugios provide sheets and blankets but it is recommended to bring your own sleeping bag liner for extra warmth and your own pack towel for use on the trek (the refugios do not provide towels).

## Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit [www.travelexinsurance.com](http://www.travelexinsurance.com) or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

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