



**Argentinian
Explorer**



ARGENTINA TOURS

SOUTHERN PATAGONIA

An itinerary where we know the 4 most important sites of the southern Patagonia: Puerto Madryn, El Calafate, El Chaltén and Ushuaia. We start our journey in the Perito Moreno Glacier, sailing along the Argentino Lake, we go towards the exclusive Estancia Cristina. Then we continue to El Chaltén. We leave Argentina to enter Chile and to know Torres del Paine, Puerto Natales and Punta Arenas. Finally, the city of Ushuaia is awaiting while we navigate along the Magellan Strait.

15 DAYS - 14 NIGHTS

- Double Base accommodation with breakfast according to the selected hotel category
- Transfers detailed itinerary
- Regular excursions listed in the itinerary (except optional)
- Air tickets of cabotage
- Bilingual English Spanish Guide
- 24 hour emergency service
- Constant coordination

Day 1 - Puerto Madryn

Welcome to Argentina. Reception and transfer from Ezeiza International Airport (Buenos Aires City) to Jorge Newbery Airport in Buenos Aires. Reception and transfer from Trelew Airport to the hotel.

Day 2 - City Tour in Puerto Madryn & Sea Lions Watching at Punta Loma

Breakfast at hotel. We begin our day visiting one of the prettiest atlantic cities in Argentina: Puerto Madryn. The principal attraction in the region is the Southern Right whale watching.

We continue our excursion setting off some 17km to the south of the city, where we arrive at the Punta Loma Protected Natural Reserve. This station stands out for being the one hair sea lions chosen place for their habitat, not mentioning that many other whole communities of birds, reptiles and mammals live together, such is the case of cormorants, seagulls, etc.

Optional: Night Patagonia towards the Cerro Avanzado

Free day to know the city. Before the night, we set off to a special crossing trip: Cerro Avanzado some only 20km travelling south of Puerto Madryn, where we perform a unique trip at night under a full moon. We do a mini-trekking where we will learn about the vegetation, the geological formations and discover the maritime fossils remains of the zone. We descend through the shoal towards the end of the great canon, walking along the beach and then we enjoy delicious appetizers with a glass of wine surrounded by nature. The Patagonic sky delights us with all its beauty and we can enjoy the sound and the figures of the Southern Right whale lit up by the moon.

Day 3 - Península Valdés & Whale Watching

Breakfast at the hotel. We will have great excitement on this day. We will set out first thing in the morning towards Península de Valdés, which was declared Natural and Cultural World Heritage by the UNESCO for being one of the few places in the world where you can watch the Southern right whale in its natural habitat. In this place we can find the biggest concentration of sea animals in the entire Atlantic coastline.

We will visit the Interpretation Center in Carlos Ameghino Isthmus, and then we will head for the ecotouristic village of Puerto Pirámides, which is the only urbanized town in the Peninsula. In Pirámides, we will enjoy a spectacular experience watching the whales in their natural habitat, accompanied by whale specialized guides, biologists, and film and naturalist photography teams.

Before starting our voyage, we will provide travelers with a raincoat and a life jacket. We will set out on a motorboat tour around the crystalline waters of Golfo Nuevo (New Gulf) to see the Southern Right Whale.

We will have a unique natural experience when the whales make their appearance moving, swiping their tails, blowing air through their holes and jumping. From the end of May to December, whales from Antarctica reach the coasts of Golfo Nuevo (New Gulf) to breed in the coastline of Puerto Pirámides.

Note about the whale watching: It is performed between July and November. Waterproof clothes and windbreakers are recommended. Before the trip, elemental advice is provided. This adventure is available for adults as well as for children.

Day 4 - Punta Tombo Penguin colony with Valle Inferior

Breakfast at hotel. Today we visit the most important Magellan penguin colony in South America: Punta Tombo, located in the south of the Valle Inferior of the Chubut River. At the beginning (more than 50 years ago), it was a natural reserve, 20 years later it was considered protected area. Punta Tombo has an expanse of almost 3.000m per 500m wide along the Atlantic Ocean. This natural accident is produced by crystalline rocky structures appearance before the Jurassic era which have beared the erosion produced by the ravages of the sea. Key factors for nest creation are the existence of boulder and compact sand. The season is from the beginning of September until April, when penguins emigrate to nest and protect their young.

Depending on the season, all their productive cycle can be observed. First males appear so as to build their nests or rebuild the previous year one, they take advantage of the natural caves for that. One month later, females lay their eggs to sit on them during 40 to 45 days. During that gestation period, males go for food. At the beginning of April, chicks are already good swimmers and feed alone. In the past, this zone was an indigenous cemetery where many Tehuelches also lived and hunted. When walking around the reserve we recommend not to divert the route. When returning from this adventure with penguins, we go towards the lower valley, to know the industrial and commercial center of the region: Trelew. Then we continue towards Gaiman, the most important Welsh colony in Argentina. There are still traditions and customs such as the Welsh tea with Welsh Black cake, as well as the walnut cake with fruit and homemade bread. If we go back the chacras (eateries), we will observe the different Welsh Chapels and observe the farming-tourist ventures.

Day 5 - Departure to Ushuaia

Breakfast in the Hotel. We will move from the Trelew Airport to board the flight to Ushuaia. We are welcomed in Ushuaia airport to the hotel. We will have the afternoon free to explore the city.

Day 6 - Classic Navigation on the Beagle Channel & Tierra del Fuego National Park and Train at the end of the World

Classic Navigation on the Beagle Channel

Breakfast at the Hotel. We take a trip to the Beagle Channel. Our leaving point is in the Ushuaia Bay, which is on the banks of the City of the same name, entering the Canal by the Paso Chico. In old times the Reverend Thomas Bridges said that the 'Ushuaia Bay' means the 'the calm water bay'.

The Beagle Channel, situated at the south of the Big Island of Tierra del Fuego, was originated from glaciers and it covers an area of 180 kms, it joins the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. It was baptised by Captain Fitz Roy in honour of the ship "Beagle" on which was the Lieutenant Murray who discovered the Canal in 1930. It is now the political frontier between Argentina and Chile. As in the Ushuaia Bay, the Beagle Canal offers

a variety of sea birds and mammal marine life, where it is possible to watch skuas, black capped albatross, cauquenes, seagulls, etc. The crossing goes until the Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse. This has a conical tower of over 11 metres and is 22.5 metres above the sea level. The lighthouse name was given by Captain Luis Fernando Martial and that was after the place where it is located.

The journey continues to the naval station Isla de los Lobos Marinos (Sea Lion Island) where we will be able to watch one and two hair seals and the cormorants settlements. Following our route we navigate to the Isla de los Pájaros (Bird Island) a place where we can see settlements of Magellan and Imperial Cormorants as well as enjoy more than 20 species of other marine birds. Both Islands are part of the Bridges Archipelago.

Optional - Disembarkation on the Bridges Islands: It is possible to ask for a landing on the Bridges Islands during this navigations, in which we can have a trekking of half an hour with the guides assistance while we go along the paths of one of the Bridges Islands to see the Concheros Yámanas (Yámana shells), relics of an old indigenous tribe.

Tierra del Fuego National Park and Train at the end of the World

During the afternoon we will go to Tierra del Fuego National Park which highlights for being the only park with sea coast because it is located at the shore of the Beagle Chanel. Outside Ushuaia, we will go through the Valley of Pipo River to get to the entrance. We will get on board the Train of the End of the World which is outside the Tierra del Fuego National Park where we start in the Central Station until getting to the Tierra del Fuego National Park Station. We will have the excellent opportunity to meet the Southern Fueguino Railway which travels along one of the routes that were used in the past by thousands prisoners who obey everyday their routine in those legendary woods. The journey starts over the embankment that the prisoners made a long time ago, going through the Cañadón del Toro so then we can ascend a steep surrounding the Pipo River until getting to the "Cascada de la Macarena" Station where we will have the possibility to descend to the restoration of a native camp or we can have the option to appreciate the amazing panoramic view of the fall's source.

The train's horn give us the signal that we have to continue with the journey to get into the sub-antarctic woods. Surrounding the Pipo river and the "turbales" area where the moss Sphagnum grows, the train ends the journey when it arrives at the Park's Station where we will descend to continue with the tour. Once we get into the Tierra del Fuego National Park which was founded in 1960 and it is located in the region of the patagonic woods and the Andean mountain chain. Our tour goes to Ensenada Bay where we will be able to see the Redonda and Estorbo islands and the Montes Nevados in front of them which belong to the Sampaio mountain chain in Chile. Then we get to Roca Lake.

We continue the way while we are surrounded by lengas, ñires and guindos woods until getting to the bridge of the Lapataia river, an ideal area to do trekking as there are many paths such as the Paseo de la Isla, Roca Lake, Black Lagoon, etc. We will go through a winding way where we will find the Green and Black Lagoons, this last one is an impressive "turbal", until flowing in the Beavers' dike which will guide us to Lapataia Bay.

Day 7 - Fagnano & Escondido Lakes

Breakfast at the Hotel. We will go to Escondido Lake or Escondida Lagoon as it also frequently known. It is located in the Andes Mountain Chain in the middle of the fueguino chain, where we will be able to appreciate the wonderful view of the woods which are full of ñires, lengas; there we can also see the valleys that are surrounded by "turbales", such as the Carbajal Valleys, Las Cotorras and Tierra Mayor. During the trip we will be able to appreciate one of the most attractions as it is the Paso Garibaldi to 500

metres over the level of the sea, where the fueguino Andes are mixed and mistaken with the Escondido and Fagnano lakes. From this spot we start descending over the coast of the Escondido lake, then we go through the Hostería Petrel to continue our way to the sawmills.

Later on we continue descending to the north to another water mirror: the Fagnano Lake which is considered the largest of the Island of Tierra del Fuego with its 100 km and it is internationally famous because of the sport fishing. A hundred years ago the Onas used to call it "the Horizon Break" (El Descanso del horizonte), which honours the catholic priest Monseñor José Fagnano who was the first administrator of the region. Then we will go for a walk along this magnificent lake enjoying all of its natural beauties. Going on our tour, we will know the Tolhuin town which was founded in october 1972, at the edge of the Fagnando Lake in the very centre of the woods.

Day 8 - Departure to Calafate

Breakfast in the Hotel. Transfer to the airport of Ushuaia. Reception at the airport of Calafate and transfer to the hotel.

Day 9 - Visit to the Perito Moreno Glacier

Early in the morning we make our way to the most famous glacier in the world. It was declared as a Heritage Humanity in 1981 by UNESCO and it is considered unique for many characteristics such as its continuous advance, its comfortable access to its best viewpoints and the possibility to walk over it. The name was given in honour of the great explorer of the Patagonian area, Perito Francisco Moreno.

We walk along the edge of the southern side of the Argentino Lake, before crossing the rivers Centinela and Mitre, at the same time we discover post card views of the pre Andean Mountain Chain. We arrive to Brazo Rico and enter Los Glaciares National Park. While we tour along the Rich Lake we see the huge blocks of ice drifting along and walk until we have a full panoramic view of this giant glacier. If the weather conditions are favourable, we can have the privilege of attending this unique spectacle in the argentinean Patagonia... the ice landslides from the southern falls in which huge ice floes cover the homonym channel as they are accumulated there or in the Brazo Rico.

Here it is possible to get to know the glacier from different panoramic and viewpoints by walking the footbridges whilst we are informed about its history, characteristics and settings. In the afternoon we return to the Hotel.

Note: The Perito Moreno is a glacier in continuous advance; this is different to the great majority of such giant glaciers that are in a severe regression. In its advance it surrounds the cold waters of the Brazo Rico, that are originated from the Argentino Lake which causes some pressure over the ice that make the level of water increase in that part of the lake and has the effect of generating a tunnel of almost 45 metres through which flows from the Brazo Rico and in to the Argentino Lake. The continuous erosion by these waters causes parts of the dome to collapse producing fantastic spectacles.

Navigation across the Rich lake – Nautical Safari

We leave from the 'Bajo de las Sombras' Port to begin this navigation that complements the visit by the footbridges to the Perito Moreno Glacier and has a time lapse of one hour. There we can see well the southern edge of the glacier. The same as for the Brazo Rico and the Brazo Sur of the Argentino Lake, they are transformed by the glacier into dykes. We navigate the Rich Lake marveling at the imposing face of the glacier that reaches up to 60 metres high. Here we get closer to the confluence between the colossal

ice structure and the Magellan Peninsular before continuing, for approximately 3 kms, the length of the southern wall.

This is the major attraction spot and the most awaited moment by all the visitors: the landslides of enormous blocks of ice during the summer season that are related to other typical formations such as crevices, 'seracs' and their bluish tints. We have the opportunity to take photos and capture this emotional experience.

Day 10 - The Route of the Sleepy India

We depart from the city of El Calafate to go to the Huyliche Estancia, climbing the mountains and arriving at the El Calafate Balcony, a panoramic point from which you can see the city, the Argentino Lake and the reliefs that surround it. Depending on the weather it is possible to observe the El Chaltén massif and the Fitz Roy and Torre Mountains. We continue the journey passing some magnificent views such as the ski run. After visiting the Labyrinth of Stones, a Cretaceous formation of more than 85 million years, we arrive at the highest terrace at some 1200 metres, a natural viewpoint found behind the India Dormida formation, where we have some postcard views of the Perito Moreno Glacier, the Pietrobelli Mountain, the Torres del Paine, the Baguales Cordon and the Fitz Roy and Torre Mountains. We carry on seeing rock formations that have been there for centuries due to the erosion of each area in order to form unique landscapes, moreover, we have the privilege to see the giant condors gliding over the highest mountains. We descend by the gully of the Portezuelo Stream to see the River Centinela Valley. We return to the hotel later in the afternoon.

Note: The lunch with steaks, vegetables and a drink is included. This excursion is available between the months of October and May.

Day 11 - Navigation across the Argentino Lake

Today a navigation between giant ice structures in Los Glaciares National Park is waiting for us. We firstly travel to Punta Bandera (Flag point) in order to make an early embarkation to start our trip on the Argentino Lake, the biggest and most southern of all the Patagonian lakes in the Argentinean region. It covers an area of 1466 kms² and has a depth ranging from 150 to 500 metres.

We begin our navigation by the north branch of the lake, visiting the Spegazzini, Onelli, Bolado and Agassiz Glaciers, these last ones located in the Onelli Bay, moreover we get closer to the Upsala Glacier. This glacier integrates an area surrounded by other glaciers which covers 850 km² and its walls reach until 80 metres high. Its name comes from the University of the same name in Sweden that was the first one in starting a study about the surrounded area, in the twentieth century. On the other hand, the Spegazzini Glacier is the highest inside the national park at 135 metres and is located on the homonym branch of the Argentino Lake.

We disembark in the Onelli Bay, only if the ice conditions allow us because the large icebergs can block the entrance to the boat and it is always risky for the crew. Onelli leaves us amazed with the presence of an ancient Patagonian forest populated with different species of trees such as ñires, canelos and lengas. We might be lucky if we watch the giant condors that inhabit the Andean Mountain Chain. Meanwhile, we make a walk to a unique place where the confluence of the Agassiz, Bolados and Heim Glaciers into the Onelli Lagoon takes place. In our return we see the front of the Spegazzini Glacier.

Please note: There could be ice falls from the Upsala Glacier that leave giant icebergs which could block the navigation to the Onelli Bay. This natural hazard could make difficult the landing. When this happens

the boat crosses the waters of the Ice floe Channel to go on the northern position of the Perito Moreno Glacier.

Day 12 - El Chaltén

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the bus terminal in Calafate. Reception and transfer to the bus terminal in Chaltén to the hotel.

Day 13 - Viedma Lake Navigation & Minitrekking to the Viedma Glacier

We leave from the Túnel Bay Port in the northerly direction to El Chaltén, in Los Glaciares National Park, in order to navigate on the Viedma Lake disembarking at the Viedma Glacier and walking to its interiors. The Viedma Lake is some 78 kms in length and is the largest one caused by glacier abrasion and the second largest in the Park (the Upsala Glacier is the largest). It is fed by its glacier of the same name that is in the west.

The Viedma Glacier has a breadth of some 5.000 metres, a height of 50 metres and an area of circa 1.000 kms² and originates from the Continental Patagonian Ice Fields between the Huemul and Campana Mountains taking their ice and tipping it into the lake. Once we board the vessel we go to the south accompanied by the views of the Fitz Roy and Huemul Massifs and the impressive icebergs. In the middle of the morning we arrive at the Viedma Glacier and we descend in a rocky area to go and see the ice caverns and other glacier formations that are particular to this zone. Here we are given some information about the glaciers and then we continue our trekking to the erosion zone in front of the glacier.

With the help of crampons we ascend in order to start a walk over the icy structures for about 3 hours where we could see crevices and drainage areas. Once we finish the trekking to the interior of the caves we return to the boat to take a trip along the front of the glacier. We have lunch on board (the box lunch is not included) and in the afternoon we return to Túnel Bay.

Day 14 - Valle del Río Las Vueltas & Navigation by the The Desert Lake

We leave to go the extreme south of the Desert Lake, wrongly named Laguna del Desierto. We travel for 38 kms by a dirt road that snakes along the Río Vueltas Valley. The landscape that we watch is typical of Andes Patagonia surrounded by mountains, forests, water falls and mirror like waters that combine to present a natural harmony. We can chose between a walk until the Huemul Glacier or a navigation to the icy waters of the lake. The hike is short at only one hour but has a pronounced ascent that requires a reasonable effort. This is a private area and therefore there is an entrance charge. We can also go until Laguna Larga and Diablo but the route takes another four hours. Those who decide not to take the walk can enjoy the navigation of Lago del Desierto where the boat goes from the south to the north of the lake.

Once on land we walk to the Centinela Viewpoint that is only 12 minutes and is accompanied by some fantastic views. Lago del Desierto is located in a valley that stretches 15 kms between the Andes Mountain Range, close to the O'Higgins Lake, and the Fitz Roy Mountain. The mountain chains that enclose the valley are the Occidental Massif which is made up of the Marconi chain and the Occidental Massif amongst others. The Río Las Vueltas starts from this lake and flows through the Azul Lake before finishing in the Viedma Lake.

Day 15 - Return to Buenos Aires

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to the city of El Calafate to take flight to the city of Buenos Aires. End of our services.

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