



**Argentinian
Explorer**



ARGENTINA TOURS

NORTH PATAGONIA IN 15 DAYS

All the Northern Patagonia in an only journey, covering it from North to South and from East to West. We begin with Puerto Madryn, to watch the Southern Right Whale and observe the sea fauna at Península Valdés. Then we cross the Patagonia towards Los Alerces National Park, we get on the Patagonian Express Train to continue then to Bariloche and end up our itinerary in San Martín de los Andes and the Lácar and Nonthué Lakes and the lovely beaches at Quila Quina.

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.

Bus Option: This program can be performed by bus, setting off Buenos Aires to Puerto Madryn, travelling around 1.450km and lasting 18 hours. In this case the departure must be the previous day near 12pm or 1pm to be arriving at 8am the following day.

Day 2 - 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 3 - 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.

Optional: Ameghino Dam

Breakfast at hotel. We will set off to the Florentino Ameghino Dam, hydroelectric reservoir formed by the dam and the tourist village, supplying with energy to most of Patagonia, together with the hydroelectric power station Futaleufú. It is on the Chubut river. It started working in 1963, being a pioneer in Patagonia. The aim of building it was to protect the lower valley from floods as well as to give electricity to the region. We will enjoy pleasant views during the trip. We then return to Puerto Madryn.

Day 4 - Departure to Esquel

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the bus terminal in Puerto Madryn. Reception and transfer to the bus terminal in Esquel to the hotel.

Day 5 - Los Alerces National Park

We depart towards the principal gate of the National Park in a journey where we will be able to distinguish the ecosystems of the region, with a dense vegetation thanks to the continuous rains. The lakes as in the Percy River that we can observe during the trip are due to the movements of the glaciers that we find in the mountains. We rest for the first time in Villa Futalaufquen knowing the Interpretative Center so as to understand its autochthonous flora and fauna. We then arrive at Puerto Limonao, bathed by the Futalaufquen Lake waters, 4km near. We can take a ship from that harbour to sail the waters of the lakes Futalaufquen, Verde and Menéndez so as to arrive at the northern part of the park, actually to enter the jungle area to discover the Alerzal Milenario. This voyage on a catamaran (double hulled vessel) is not included, please check before travelling because it is offered only in high season months. In case of not performing the navigation, we return to Esquel.

Optional in high season: Navigation along the Futalaufquen, the Verde and the Menéndez Lakes & Alerces Milenarios Forest

In Summer there is an optional navigation along the Futalaufquen Lake from Puerto Limonao to Puerto Mermoud. From here we do a small trek to reach Puerto Chucao at the shore of the Menéndez Lake, from where we will start the second maritime stage towards the Alerzal Milenario. Another path takes us to the lake and river Cisne with its rapids until we meet the oldest alerce in the park.

Day 6 - Old Patagonian Express "La Trochita" - Bariloche

We start a fantastic journey of 25 kilometers in the vintage Patagonic Express La Trochita, which was declared National Heritage Patrimony. It is an old steam train whose narrow gauge has less than a meter, it goes across the Patagonic steppe, with its wagons, whose heating are iron salamander stoves with firewood as fuel, were built in 1922 together with its engines Baldwin and Henschel. The first trip was inaugurated in 1945 up to Esquel. The train offers a dining-room with delicious cakes that can be served together with chocolate and coffee. The route begins at the Esquel station, going through the Esquel stream, then the way changes so as to go parallel to the mountain range and the route towards a town called Tecka. It crosses the steppe, we can see aquatic birds such as ducks, cauquenes and flamingos in low lands called mallines in indigenous language. The route ends in Nahuel Pan station (name of the highest mountain of the zone) where there is a place with craftsmen. While we visit a small handcraft center, the steam engine performs the maneuvers to get ready to go back. During the return, the train crosses the valley. The journey lasts nearly 3 hours and it isn't cancelled for bad weather, unless an excess of snow provokes blockages. Today there are two stretches, the touristic stretch which joins Esquel with Nahuel Pan and the passenger's stretch which goes up to El Maitén.

When it is operating the train? The outputs for the year are on Saturdays and depending on the month is added on Monday. Departure is at 10:00 AM and return at 24:45. Saturdays can add an additional departure at 14:00 pm, depending on the demand.

Day 7 - Parallel 42º Andean Shire (Comarca Andina del Paralelo 42º)

In the afternoon transfer to the bus terminal. Reception and transfer to the bus terminal in San Carlos de Bariloche to the hotel.

We begin a full day excursion visiting the mountain range towns that form the Parallel 42 Comarca, interprovince boundary between Río Negro and Chubut provinces. This region is characterized by the cultivation of fine fruit and hop which is used to flavour handcraft brewed beer produced in El Bolsón. There is a special micro-climate in this region due to the fact that the valley is 200 meters over sea level and it is not attacked by the strong winds of the rough Patagonia, creating an ideal climate with fertile lands, where redcurrants, morello cherries, maroons, blueberries, apart from strawberries and raspberries are produced. During our itinerary, we will visit the Lago Puelo National Park, Epuyén, El Hoyo and El Bolsón. The first stop is at the Leleque Museum, on the Benetton Estancias (ranches), which shows the history of the Tehuelche natives who originally inhabited these lands and were fiercely dislodged by the Mapuche natives who entered the country through Chile. Then comes Epuyén, the capital of fine fruit, then we visit El Hoyo and Golondrinas. Later, in the province of Río Negro, we come to know El Bolsón, and we stop at the craftsmen fair where the stalls display woollen, carved wooden and ceramic goods and more. Beer is very special, thanks to the hops, you can try different flavours, stout, made of wheat, with honey or fruity. We also visit the Loma del Medio and the Mirador Río Azul.

Day 8 - Llao Llao Peninsula & Campanario Mount through Bustillo Ave

Breakfast at the hotel. We set off towards the Llao Llao Hotel, discovering one of the most classic routes of San Carlos de Bariloche. We start in the center of the city to the west along Bustillo Ave. winding along the Nahuel Huapi Lake most of the time. Near km 8 is Playa Bonita (Pretty Beach) which is the precise place from where to see Huemul Island. Going on along that avenue, at km 17, we stop to know the Campanario Mount, we climb by chairlift which take us to the summit at 1050 meters (optional).

We can try very good pastymaking and drink hot chocolate (optional). Once at the summit, we will appreciate the probably best sight of all the zone of Bariloche. We continue so as to reach Llao Llao at km 25, leaving behind the San Pedro peninsula. The San Eduardo church and the Puerto Pañuelo (harbour) are located in the zone of the hotel and it is from there that the navigation to the Arrayanes Forest (myrtle forest) and Puerto Blest sets off. From this place you can see the Lopez and Capilla Mounts. We go towards the golf area and the bridge that links the Moreno Lake to the Nahuel Huapi Lake at Lopez Bay. There is another privileged place from where to enjoy the Llao Llao peninsula and the lakes around it. We cross the bridge over Moreno Lake and go along the edge of El Trébol Lake. Further on we start our return to Bariloche city where our trip ends.

Note: This program can be done early in the morning or after midday. The ascent to Campanario Mount is not included, having to be purchased upon arrival.

Day 9 - Tronador Mount

We start the day travelling along the Pampa de Huenuleu arriving at Gutiérrez Lake. Later we go along the East bank of the Mascardi Lake until the track splits in two, having to turn right into the dirt path which leads us to the Cerro Tronador (Tronador Mount). The bridge over the Manso River is crossed and we go along the West bank of the Mascardi Lake arriving at Pampa Linda. We go through the Vuriloches valley and after crossing a forest, we find the Ventisquero Negro. The trip ends at the foot of the mount. The tongue of the glacier can be reached by trekking. The Ventisquero Negro is a black glacier originated at the summit of Cerro Tronador. Here is where the Manso River has its source and flows down into the Pacific Ocean. The Cerro Tronador has three important peaks. The International peak with 3.555 meters, the Chilean peak with 3.430 meters and the Argentine peak with 3,400 meters, climbers have reached the top of the three of them in Summer.

Limited by narrow and winding roads Schedule: Due to the characteristic of the roads leading to the Black Glacier and Los Alerces waterfall as it is narrow paths, with important cliffs, you can not move all day. There are times income: The Cascada Los Alerces from 8:00 AM to 10:15 PM. It should be down between 11:15 am and 13:00 PM. The Tronador and Lake Steffen is entered later from 10:30 AM to 14:00 PM. It should start from 16:00 PM to 18:00 PM.

Day 10 - Valdivian Jungle: Puerto Blest, Frías Lake & Los Cántaros Waterfall

We embark at Puerto Pañuelo (Pañuelo harbour) towards Brazo Blest, where we will arrive at the Blest harbour. We go past the Centinela islet, famous for being the place where Perito Moreno has been buried. All this region is somehow similar to the channels of Tierra del Fuego and to the fjords in Norway, it overflows with vegetation due to the damp climate and frequent rains. There is an additional possibility to reach Frías Lake by bus. Then we go to Puerto Alegre in a northernly direction of the Frías Lake, to embark up to Puerto Frías. The Frías Lake has an oval shape, there are rocky zones which protrude from the East and West coasts generating the classic image of the fjords.

Continuous rains due to the damp winds coming from the Pacific characterize all the region. The rain average is around 3.700mm per year especially in Winter, being January the only dry month. This lake feeds on thaw water coming from the Tronador Mount and on the intense rains of the Valdivian jungle. When returning to Puerto Blest (it is on the Nahuel Huapi Lake just at the mouth of the Frías river) we go by Los Cántaros waterfall. We must climb through a native wooden track surrounding the waterfall reaching some 600 meters high, where beautiful small waterfalls can be seen. We return to the ship to go back to our destination.

Day 11 - 7 Lakes Road & Villa La Angostura

Just at the town of San Martín de los Andes is where the famous Seven Lakes Route begins and it ends in the town of Bariloche. The piers on the Nahuel Huapi lake stand out, and the most important points are the small town and the Manzano Bay. Then the Espejo Grande lake up to the branch off to Chile by the Antonio Samoré crossing and turning to the left to get to Villa la Angostura. Then we go into the zone of the Espejo Chico and the Ruca Malen lakes. The road takes us to the Pichi Traful lake and then we go around the edge of the Correntoso lake. We leave the asphalted road and once on the gravel road, rougher and more natural, we get into a zone of Coihues forests, the Escondido lake is on our right with its fantastic emerald colour. We go through the Vullingñanco Waterfall with its important fall of over 20. To honour the lakes, we delight seeing the fourth and fifth lake: to the east the Villarino lake and to the west the Falkner Lake.

The second lake we see is the Machónico, then the Hermoso Lake where we abandon the Lanín National Park to continue along the Nahuel Huapi National Park. As we go on, we arrive at the forked Arroyo Partido, which divides its water in branches into the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. The Chapelco Mountain range with its 2.200 meters high and the crystalline lakes of sweet water are always with us during the journey. We stop at the Pil-Pil lookout point to enjoy an overwhelming sight of the Lácar Lake. The landscape is composed of cypress, lengas, raulíes and oaks legendary forests. We set off around the edge of the Lácar Lake during almost 4km up to Paihuén. We continue to San Martín de los Andes to end the journey.

Note: Depending on the flight back end on day 7 this program to take us the flight from San Carlos de Bariloche. If instead the flight leaves from San Martín de los Andes, we return to this beautiful mountain village.

Day 12 - Hua Hum next to the Yuco Beaches

We start our excursion towards the frontier post with Chile, when going to the west, the Lácar Lake is constantly beside us. During the journey we can watch the rock structure Piedra Trompul and the Sabana and Colorado Mounts. After quite a while we arrive at Río Hua Hum and we cross it over a wooden bridge. There we walk to the Chachín Waterfall, these small falls are approximately of 30 meters high. During the journey we can see how the landscape goes changing from an Andean Patagonic forest to a Valdivian jungle. The last place of this itinerary is the Cristo de la Paz, then we return to San Martín de los Andes along the same route. There is a stop at La Peninsula del Yuco which is one of the most interesting beaches of the west bank of the Lácar Lake, with cristaline water and myrtle trees.

Day 13 - Quila Quina

We leave behind the beautiful town San Martín de los Andes to go deeper into the Lanín National Park so as to visit one of the most wonderful places of this region: Quila Quina. It is located on the banks of the Lácar Lake and the road is a typical mountain road with fantastic sights. During the visit to this residential village, we arrive at the best beach of the zone next to the pier. In summer, with hot weather, people bathe in the lake. Towards the east there is an interpretation path: The Cipresal, a cypress legendary reserve. We can return navigating through the Lácar Lake and enjoying the landscape (optional)

Day 14 - Navigating through the Lagos Huechulafquen and Epulafquen & Lanin Volcano

We set off to Junín de los Andes, a town located 40km away from San Martín de los Andes. There, in Junín, we will stroll around to know the church where the Virgen de las Nieves (Snow Virgin) is situated. We continue towards the Huechulafquen and Paimún Lakes to appreciate a first class sight of the Lanín Volcano. We arrive at the gorge of the Río Chimehuín, this river is the most important one for fly fishing in the whole Patagonia. We walk around a transition area appreciating notros, maitenes and geological figures such as the Piedra la Virgen (Virgin Stone).

We enter the Andean-Patagonic forest going along the edge of the lake, where we observe a sub-antartctic jungle covered of coihues of more than 25m high, together with antique oaks and lengas (kind of Patagonic trees). The undergrowth is made of reeds, ñires, bushes introduced by the man, such as rosa mosqueta, apart from mutisias, amancay (lilies) and reina mora (a kind of berry). We continue towards the Lanín Volcano of over 3,500m, to approach the south base. We continue towards the Paimún Lake, and we will visit its chapel. When returning we will stop at the Río Rucu Leufú to appreciate another sight of the Lanín. Our last destination is the Saltillo Waterfall, having to walk almost half an hour through the Andean Patagonic forest.

Going back, in Puerto Canoa we can optionally take a ship to navigate along the extense lake. Once on board, on the north bank of the Huechulafquen we will go south to see the face of the Lanín Volcano of almost 3,800m high. The lakes with their frozen water can have over 400m depth and are of glacial origin. The Isla de los Chivos stands out of the lake. Towards the west, we arrive at the joint of the Huechulafquen and the Epulafquen rivers. The latter quite shallow and with legendary forests and snow-covered mountains where there is plenty of fauna due to the fact that man hasn't made incursions nearby. The vessel arrives at the Escorial, a lava river in solid status, because of the eruption of the Achén Ñiyeyu Volcano more than 480 years ago. As time went by, the lush vegetation covered this lava soil producing a midget forest or a bonsai forest, which doesn't reach one meter of height.

Day 15 - Return to Buenos Aires

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to the city of San Martín de los Andes to take flight to the city of Buenos Aires. Reception in the Metropolitan Airport Jorge Newbery and transfer to the International Airport of Ezeiza to take us the international flight. End of our services. End of our services.

Bus Option: This program can be by bus, returning to Buenos Aires from San Martín de los Andes, with an approximate distance of 1.650 Km and a length of 6pm In this case you must exit near 1pm to be arriving at the 7am of the following day.

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