



**Argentinian
Explorer**



ARGENTINA TOURS

ESQUEL, BARILOCHE & SAN MARTÍN DE LOS ANDES IN 9 DAYS

Esquel, San Carlos de Bariloche and San Martin de los Andes. A short Northern Patagonia crossing, where we take advantage of every moment so as to know the 3 national parks: Los Alerces National Park in Esquel, the Nahuel Huapi National Park in San Carlos de Bariloche and the Lanín National Park in San Martín de los Andes and Junín de los Andes. This program tries to discover the best area of our whole Patagonia, autochthonous and magical, it is considered the most beautiful zone in Argentina.

9 DAYS - 8 NIGHTS

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

Day 1 - Esquel- Patagonian Express "La Trochita"

Reception and transfer from Esquel Airport to the Hotel.

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 2 - Los Alerces National Park

Today we will know one of the most attractive national parks in Patagonia: Los Alerces. The park spans two hundred and sixty-three thousand hectares protected since 1937 with the fundamental aim to safeguard the woodland species after which it is named, the lahuan or alerce. During our stroll around the park we will visit beautiful places which make up a water basin with more than 12 lakes and rivers, such as the Futalaufquen Lake, the Arrayanes River, the Verde Lake, the Menéndez Lake, surrounded by an Andean mountain range, together with glaciers and the Valdivian jungle. What completes this wonderful offer is the one-thousand-year-old alerces forest located in the north of the park, one of the few forests still kept in wilderness in the world, known as Alercial Milenario. This region is considered, by experts, the most beautiful of all regions in Patagonia and honestly they are not mistaken, it is difficult to find another destination with so much charm as this one.

Optional in High Season:

Navigation along the Menéndez Lake & Alerces Milenarios Forest or Navigation up to Kruger Lake without disembarkation

In Summer there is an optional navigation to Menéndez Lake having access to the alerces milenarios forest (one-thousand-year-old alerces) discovering trees of more than 2,500 years of existence, which have an impressive appearance. We must arrive at the Arrayanes River, we walk over the hanging bridge to cross the river, and border the Menéndez River up to the Puerto Chucao entrance. At this harbour we embark at midday to sail along the Menéndez Lake, the biggest of the park, till we arrive at Puerto Sagrario. During the voyage, we can see the Torrecillas Glacier. Once on land, together with the guide, we walk into the forest of alerces milenarios (one-thousand-year-old alerces) and enjoy the Cisne Lake and the rapids of the river with the same name. We can appreciate the oldest alerce in the park, with 2,600 years old and a diameter over 2 meters and a height over 57 meters.

Note: Another possibility is to sail along the Verde Lake, the Arrayanes River and the north area of the Futalaufquen Lake until we reach the Kruger Lake once we pass through the Los Monstruos Strait. In this second case, we don't disembark.

Day 3 - El Bolsón & Lago Puelo - Esquel

We leave Bariloche to set off to El Bolsón, taking the road in the southeast of Río Negro province which is part of the Parallel 42 Andean Region, together with the northeast of Chubut province. It is an ecological zone par excellence, with a perfect microclimate for fine fruit growing such as raspberries, morello cherries, blackberries and strawberries, apart from hop plants. We take the road to the south, the lakes Gutiérrez, Mascardi and Guillermo can be seen while getting near La Veranada and Pampa del Toro.

The Ñirihuau and Áspero mountains can be seen on the left of the route. We go past the Cañadón de la Mosca and cross the small town called Villegas. Once crossing the Fuyel river and crossing the bridge on the Quemquemtreu river, we finally arrive in El Bolsón with its natural borders: the Puelo Lake, the Piltriquitrón Mount, formidable rock near the Tallado Forest and the Río Azul valley. Already in the town, we will visit the Regional Craft Fair, provided that it is open, where pieces of pottery, wooden and leather creations are displayed thus gathering the manufacturers and craftsmen of the zone. It is considered one of the biggest in South America.

We can visit a farm dedicated to the manufacture of homemade jams and the Lago Puelo National Park covered with legendary forests of myrtle and pataguas together with lianas, creepers, ferns and the singing of its birds. We can walk by the interpretative path Bosque de Las Sombras. The Puelo Lake has a characteristic turquoise water, where the green of its forests and the white of the eternal snow of its neighbouring mounts reflect. If one travels to El Bolsón, one can't help tasting the high quality beer home brewed in this zone, with its different tastes, from the traditional lager beer, to the stout one or specialty beer (fruity or flavour of hops or honey). Another exquisiteness is cheese (sheep or cow cheese).

Day 4 - Llao Llao Peninsula & Campanario Mount through Bustillo Ave - Visit to Victoria Island & Arrayanes Forest

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 pastrymaking 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.

We go to Pañuelo harbour to embark towards the island. We set off to navigate almost half an hour some 10km up to Puerto Anchorena (Anchorena harbour) on Victoria Island. We will trek around the island visiting

the ancient coniferous nursery. The Cerro Bella Vista can be climbed to the top by chairlift. A small path covered with autochthonous Coihues and Cypresses is crossed. Then we return from the mount enjoying impressive natural lookout points. We continue our tour embarking again to arrive at Puerto Quetrihué at the Quetrihué peninsula, to discover the legendary Arrayanes Forest (myrtle forest) in the Valdivian jungle, inside Los Arrayanes National Park.

It is a natural reserve of almost 2.000 hectares located in a Patagonic Andean forest. The climate is cold and damp due to the influence of the lakes and there are also Western winds. We can find Coihues, Ñires, Cypresses, Radales and Notros apart from the southern Arrayanes. There is a bush called Rosa Mosqueta which has been brought by the man and it is not autochthonous but can be easily found in the area. The Arrayan is a unique tree, whose bark is cold, smooth and cinnamon-coloured. Its flowers are similar to the lemon or orange blossoms, white-coloured and violet fruit. This forest is an intangible surface and natural monument.

Day 5 - Valle Encantado, Villa Traful & Villa La Angostura

We leave San Carlos de Bariloche city crossing the Ñirihuau and Limay rivers, towards Rincón Chico. During the trip we go along the Limay river up to Rincón Grande where we can see the amphitheatre whose silhouette is similar to the one of the Roman circuses. We later arrive at Valle Encantado with its rocks drawing different figures such as El Dedo de Dios (God's Finger), Los Siameses or El Centinela (the guard). Our next destination is Confluencia, where the Traful and Limay rivers meet. Before crossing over the Traful river bridge, we take a dirt road which winds between valleys and Coihue forests, edging Traful Lake up to Villa Traful.

After enjoying this beautiful Patagonian spot we go on towards Puerto Arrayán and El Portezuelo, where there is a junction with the Siete Lagos (7 lakes) route. After going through Quintupuray and going along the coast of the Correntoso Lake, we get into Ruca Malen. Going back to Bariloche, the trip takes us to the Espejo Lake, finally arriving at Villa La Angostura. We know Puerto Manzano, going by the Huemul peninsula. Then, we are only missing the trip from Villa La Angostura to Bariloche.

Day 6 - 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 7 - San Martín de los Andes & Quila Quina

San Martín de los Andes

Vamos a recorrer la ciudad mas bonita de toda la Patagonia. Está ubicada en un valle entre cerros a orillas del lago Lácar. Es uno de los centros turísticos más completos de toda la Patagonia Andina. Su emplazamiento privilegiado, es realzado por sus edificios de madera y teja estilo montañas, su ordenada distribución urbanística y su excelente infraestructura hotelera. Su mayor atractivo es el Cerro Chapelco, centro de esquí creado en 1970, es uno de los más completos de la Argentina. Sus 140 hectáreas de superficie esquiable Están a 1200 metros de altura. El Lago Lácar, de origen glaciario es el primer lago de Argentina que desagua en el océano Pacífico.

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 8 - Junín de los Andes - Navigating through the Huechulafquen and Epulafquen Lakes & 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 Ñiyeu 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 9 - Return to Buenos Aires

Breakfast in the Hotel. Transfer to Chapelco Airport. End of our services.

Option bus: This program can realise in bus, going back to Buenos Aires from Saint Martín of Andes, with an approximate distance of 1.650 Km and a length of 18 pm. In this case it has to go out near of the 13 hours to be arriving to the 7 hours of the morning of the following day.

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