



## ***Argentinian Explorer***



### **THE W OF THE TORRES DEL PAINE**

*This is the classic path to visit Torres del Paine, the most traditional in the National Park, which is required by the vast majority of adventurous people who wish to impact themselves with the Paine. We will cross unuc and impressive landscapes like Valle del Francés and Glacier Grey.*



The "W" is the circuit of the most important trails of the Torres del Paine National Park from the Base of Las Torres and the fantastic treks along the Valle del Francés and the Valle del Lago Grey.

The Park forms part of the Chilean National System of Wild Protected Areas created on the 13th May 1959 and declared by UNESCO as a Biospheric Reserve in 1978. The 'W' of Las Torres is the most famous circuit. Las Torres del Paine are huge blocks of granite originated by the laccolithic outcropping of fiery rock that with the passing of time have suffered erosion from glaciers, wind and water. It is made up of three towers, La Torre Central of 2,600 metres, La Torre Norte of 2,600 metres and La Torre del Sur the highest of 2,850 metres.

The 'W' route is formed by the three most important sections of the Park:

### **Base de Las Torres**

This is the most well known trek and hence the most walked. We go by the River Ascencio Valley crossing the river by an old hanging bridge. Further on the trail splits where to the left the trail goes to the Base de Las Torres and to the right to Los Cuernos. We take the left trail that entails a steep climb before we descend into the valley. We later go through a forest of lengas that is on a more gentle slope and passes a number of springs. When we arrive at a second turn off the slope becomes significantly more pronounced and the path loses its outline in the rocky ground. Here we get to 700 metres above sea level and arrive at the eastern point of the lagoon where there are excellent views of Las Torres and the Peineta and Nido de Cóndores (Condor's Nest) Mountains.

### **Frances Valley**

This section is walked over two days and is easier with slight inclinations. Here it is possible to see the condors. The trail over the second stage is very pretty, bordering the Nordenskjöld Lake with little slope and some impressive views. On the way we leave behind the Admirante Nieto Mountain and descend to the edge of the Lake. Before we arrive at the Los Cuernos Camping site we have to pass a complicated zig zag section. On the first night we sleep at the Los Cuernos Refuge which is smaller than that of el Torres and is found at the base of Cuerno Este (2,200 metres). The next day, before we arrive at the Italian Camp we encounter another zig zag section. Passing the Italian Refuge we follow the path descending down to the border of the Skottberg Lake (here we can take a detour of 6,500 metres to the British Camp in order to see the very impressive views of the Valle del Francés). On our route we are able to see the Paine Grande Mountain with its 3,0000 metre height. In the ascent we can see the Francés Glacier and then we enter the valley through a forest.

### **Grey Glacier Valley**

One of the most spectacular days is produced by the sightings of the amazing Grey Glacier. It is a day of walking that does not present many difficulties because in part we border the Grey Lake in order to reach the viewpoint. Following an important descent we pass through a forest that leaves us in the Grey camp site.

In resumé, the traditional 'W' circuit of las Torres assures that we walk the three most important valleys of the Park: the Torre Valley, the Francés Valley (Cuernos del Paine and Paine Grande) and the Grey Glacier Valley.

The combination of mountains, lakes, glaciers with legendary nothofagus (coihue) forests and native wildlife go together to make an extraordinary scenario for this classic trekking. We arrive by the Guarderia Laguna Amarga of the National Park and camp at the Las Torres Camp site. The first trail is to the Las Torres Base crossing the River Ascencio Valley. We then continue until the second valley, el Francés. From las Torres we go to Los Cuernos del Paine where we can observe the Nordenskjöld Lake and we finish the circuit by walking the third valley, the Grey Glacier Valley.

## **Day 1 – El Calafate**

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Reception at the El Calafate Airport and transfer to the hostel or inn, according to the chosen accommodation.

- » Lodging: Hostel double or triple room with private bathroom
- » Meals we provide: Dinner
- » From / To: El Calafate / El Calafate

## **Day 2 – Journey to the Torres del Paine National Park and the Guardería Laguna Amarga entrance**

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We leave Argentina to cross the border with Chile at the immigration centre of 'Cancha Carrera' and then go on to the Torres del Paine National Park, considered a Humanity Patrimony Site by UNESCO. We enter the park by the Guardería Laguna Amarga, that

takes its name from the Estancia 'Laguna Amarga' that is in the zone and is situated some 115 kilometres from Port Natales. The trail starts at the Guardería and we go 7 kilometres by vehicle until the Estancia. Here, it is 600 metres above sea level and we camp at the Las Torres campsite.

- » Lodging: Full Camp at Las Torres in double tent (area with sanitary services)
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, box lunch and dinner
- » From / To: El Calafate / National Park Torres del Paine
- » Duration: 6 hours
- » Difficulty: Mild

### **Day 3 - Trail by the River Ascencio Valley to the base of Las Torres.**

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Breakfast in the Camping Full de Las Torres. We begin the trails to las Torres del Paine. The trekking starts on the slopes of the Almirante Nieto Mountain that borders the River Ascencio. We make a pronounced ascent to arrive at the River Ascencio Valley and then a further two hour climb to reach the Chilean refuge. We continue our walk crossing the forest of coihues, a Chilean evergreen used for thatching, with the objective of reaching our campsite at the base of Las Torres. This is popular point for the mountaineers to begin their climbing, with vertical faces of more than 880 metres. Later we arrive at the Las Torres viewpoint, a natural amphitheatre with magnificent views that is situated at the base of the vertical granite towers that are more than 2,700 metres high. Here we can see la Torre Sur, Central y Norte, el Nido de Cóndores and the North face of the Almirante Nieto Mountain. Also we can see la Morena, a rocky formation, that has an altitude of 1,000 metres. Finally we return by the same path.

- » Lodging: Full Camp at Las Torres in double tent (area with sanitary services)
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, Box Lunch & Dinner
- » From / To: Camping de Las Torres / Valley by River Ascencio / Mirador de Las Torres
- » Duration: 4 hours
- » Difficulty: Intermediate

### **Day 4 - From Las Torres de los Cuernos del Paine and the Nordenskjöld Lake**

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After breakfast we leave to go to the 'Nordenskjöld crossing'. This route involves two days of intermediate level trekking, walking from the River Ascencio Vally camp site until the Pehoe Refuge. We spend the night in the Paso Los Cuernos refuge after three hours of trekking. This walk helps us to discover the native wildlife of the zone south of the banks of the River Paine by seeing birds and mammals of the National Park and also excellent views of the southern part of the lake, las Torres and the Almirante Nieto Mountain. The Paso Los Cuernos refuge has 32 beds, a restaurant and bathrooms with hot water showers. We find it on the banks of the Nordenskjöld Lake, surrounded by a forest of coihues and is in between the Torres and Valle Francés Refuges. The walk borders the

Nordenskjöld Lake and the base slopes of the Cuernos del Paine. It takes some three hours of trekking.

- » Lodging: Refuge Los Cuernos with shared room and bathroom
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, box lunch and dinner
- » From / To: Camping de Las Torres / Refuge Paso Los Cuernos
- » Duration: 3 hours
- » Difficulty: Mild

### **Day 5 - Trekking to the Valle Francés**

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Breakfast in the Full Camping. We continue our trekking in the National Park in the direction of the Valle Francés, the mountain valley that descends from the mountain interior until the Nordenskjöld Lake, protected on the east by los Cuernos and on the west by the Paine Grande, that rises over 3,000 metres. Following our valley trail we enter to some impressive viewpoints that are found in a natural amphitheatre sculptured by the ice needles and the most impressive mountain walls: Cuernos, Espada, Máscara, Hoja, Aleta de Tiburón, Catedral and Paine Grande. The combination of the forests of coihues and the Paine Grande glaciers provoke a unique spectacle on this walk. We arrive at Valle Francés continuing by the same trail and then effectively west skirting the Scottberg Lake until we arrive at the Refuge Pehoe.

- » Lodging: Refuge Pehoe Full Camp in double tent (area with sanitary services)
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, box lunch, dinner
- » From / To: Refuge Paso Los Cuernos / Refugio Pehoe
- » Duration: 9 hours

» Difficulty: Intense

## Day 6 - Walk to the Grey Glacier Valley

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Breakfast in the Full Camping. We begin our trekking to the Valle del Lago and the Grey Glacier, that originates from the Patagonian Ice Fields and goes into the northern sector of the lake surrounded by forests of lengas and morenas. The Grey Glacier forms part of the Southern Ice Fields and has a width of 6 kilometres and a height of 30 metres. Its bluish colour is produced by the absorption of the light by part of the ice. It is a glacier that is found in full regression, a combination of the global warming and the change of rain patterns in the southern Patagonian region. Blocks of blue coloured ice fall from the Grey Glacier and are blown south by the prevalent Patagonian winds. We continue by the track that defines our route for a further two hours until we reach a viewpoint where we can observe the lake and the glacier in its maximum splendour. Later we arrive at another viewpoint that puts us in front of the glacier, in a privileged position. The route crosses a forest of notros – whose reddish flower is a symbol of Patagonia – and a dense vegetation of thicket that are protected by the ice and are recovering the Paine Grande. Finally we return to the Pehoe Refuge.

- » Lodging: Refuge Pehoe Full Camp in double tent (area with sanitary services)
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, box lunch, dinner
- » From / To: Refuge Pehoe / Grey Glacier Valley / Refuge Pehoe
- » Duration: 8 hours
- » Difficulty: Intense

## Day 7 - Navigating the waters of Lake Pehoe until Port Pudeto.

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We breakfast a little later than usual in the Full Camping, taking the morning to rest somewhat after various days of trekking. After the deserved rest we set sail in a boat to cross the crystalline waters of the Pehoe Lake to go to Port Pudeto, where we take a bus until the campsite in Camping Pehoe. The Pehoe Lake is at the centre of the Torres del Paine National Park. After lunch we continue our route until the beautiful Salto Grande and later walk for less than one hour to arrive at the beaches of Nordenskjöld Lake. We spend the night in the Camping Pehoe camp site.

- » Lodging: Camping Pehoe Full Camp in double tent (area with sanitary services)
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, box lunch, dinner
- » From / To: Refuge Pehoe / Salto Grande / Camping Pehoe
- » Duration: 1 hour
- » Difficulty: Mild

## Day 8 - Western Sector of the Torres del Paine National Park

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Breakfast in the Full Camping. We acquaint ourselves with the western zone of the Park by making a walk by the southern shores of the Grey Lake, which is full of icebergs, and then we climb to the Ferrier viewpoint where we can see a panoramic view of the Paine Massif and the Andes Mountain range, especially with the Grey and Pingo Glaciers. We spend the night in the Camping Pehoe.

- » Lodging: Camping Pehoe Full Camp in double tent (area with sanitary services)
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast, box lunch, dinner
- » From / To: Camping Pehoe / Costa Sur del Lake Grey / Camping Pehoe
- » Duration: 3 hours
- » Difficulty: Mild

## Day 9 - Return to El Calafate

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Breakfast in the Full camping before starting our journey back to Argentina and returning to El Calafate.

- » Lodging: Hostel double or triple room with private bathroom
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast
- » From / To: Camping Pehoe / El Calafate

## Day 10 - El Calafate

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Breakfast in the Hostel, We are taken to the El Calafate Airport and that signals the end of our trekking program.

- » Lodging: Hostel double or triple room with private bathroom
- » Meals we provide: Breakfast
- » From / To: El Calafate / Calafate Airport

## Services

### Included:

- ✔ Bilingual tour leader for all the trekking
- ✔ Mountain guide
- ✔ Navigation of Lake Pehoe
- ✔ Transfers during the trekking by public and private transport
- ✔ Accommodation
- ✔ Lodgings according to the itinerary and that is:

### Not Included:

- ✔ Entrance to the national parks
- ✔ Medical insurance
- ✔ Life Assurance
- ✔ Tips
- ✔ Drinks
- ✔ Air tickets
- ✔ Optional excursions and all services which are not included in the journey program

## Season 2016-2017

### [Prices and outputs of the Trekking to Patagonia 2016-2017](#)

10 Days / 09 Nights

### Prices

HOSTEL	Spanish language			Other languages		
	ROOM	DOUBLE ROOM	SINGLE ROOM	ROOM	DOUBLE ROOM	SINGLE ROOM
Season High	2.623 USD			2.741 USD		
Season Low	2.494 USD			2.611 USD		

### Departures (Spanish language / English language)

OCT		NOV		DEC		JAN		FEB		MAR
Departure	Arrival	Departure								
25OCT16	03NOV16	08NOV16	17NOV16	06DEC16	15DEC16	03JAN17	12JAN17	14FEB17	23FEB17	14MAR17
		22NOV16	01DEC16	20DEC16	29DEC16	17JAN17	26JAN17	28FEB17	09MAR17	
						31JAN17	09FEB17			

## Lodging

Lodging	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Hostel Double Room with Private Bathroom	x								x
Camp Full Double Room (Services Area)		x	x		x	x	x	x	
Refuge with Shared Bathroom				x					

 7 days - 6 nights

### Day 1 - Puerto Natales, Milodon Cave & Torres del Paine National Park

You will head to Torres del Paine National Park departing from Punta Arenas (you can also depart from El Calafate.) There are several stops on your way, the first one is in Puerto Natales, a beautiful Patagonian town at the shores of “Seno de Última Esperanza” (Last Hope Sound), where you will enjoy a typical meal of the region for lunch. Then, you will continue on your way to the National Park stopping by at Milodon Cave, an astonishing prehistoric cave, where the remains of a giant sloth were found in the decade of 1890. This hike is full of local color and you will catch the sight of many wild birds and amazing landscapes of Southern Patagonia. Then you will reach Torres del Paine National Park and stay at the very heart of the park, with a privileged view of the majestic Torres. During summertime, January and February, the sun sets at about 11 pm, so you can take full advantage of your day and end it watching the guanacos and the everlasting snow of the mountains in the Patagonian steppe.

### Day 2 - The Cuernos del Paine (Horns of Paine)

You will start your hike in Patagonia on the trails heading to Cuernos, a winding road that leads to Lake Nordenskjold. You will begin enjoying the exquisite wildlife at Torres del Paine National Park with fantastic views of the central lakes of the park and Cuernos del Paine. This first trekking day ends at Los Cuernos Shelter, a small mountain shelter located at the shore of Lake Nordenskjold. You can also continue on as far as Domo El Francés, close to Camping Italiano camp site, which has great views of the lake as well. During the afternoon, you will relax and replenish your energy for the following day, and enjoy dinner next.

*Note: You can spend the night at Los Cuernos Shelter or at Domo El Francés, depending on availability.*

### Day 3 - Valle del Francés: Heart of Macizo del Paine (Massif of Paine)

You will start your day with breakfast at Los Cuernos Shelter and depart for a difficult hike to Valle del Francés, along a steep trail leading to the heart of Macizo del Paine. You will head to a suspended bridge over Francés river, located at the foot of the southeast side of the massif, where you will enjoy the spectacular views of the valley. You will continue ascending the highest area of the valley, where you will see the geological shapes of the valley: Hoja (blade), Máscara (mask), Espada (sword), Catedral (cathedral), Aleta de Tiburón (shark's fin) and the magnificent Fortaleza (fortress.) After this ascent, you will have a picnic break. The trekking ends with a descent on an uneven trail of pastures which leads us to our next shelter: Paine Grande. As an option, you can take the trail to Mirador Británico (British Viewpoint)

### Day 4 - Grey Glacier

Departing from Paine Grande Shelter along the shore of Paho Lake heading for the north sector of Grey Glacier. You will have an outdoor lunch and then jump on a boat to sail the crystal clear surface of Grey Glacier. From the south sector of the glacier, you will head to the camp site. Previously, you will have hiked back to Paine Grande in order to catch the catamaran to Pudeto dock to finally arrive at the Eco-Camp for the night.

## Day 5 – The Torres del Paine

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Today is your visit to the most renowned trail at Torres del Paine National Park. From the camp site, and after ascending Ascencio Valley in the east side of Torre, you will head to Hosteria Las Torres. You will be amused by the views of the tops of the mountains, the beeches and the small rivers along the hike to the valley. The great challenge is the ascent to the steep moraine, a mass of rocks leading to a magnificent iconic view of Las Torres: The three gigantic granite monoliths. The road is difficult but the view is worthwhile: The majestic view of Las Torres rises in front of our very eyes, with the glacial lake just below you. After enjoying this incredible view and having lunch in one of the best spots in the world, you will go back on the trail passing by Ascencio Valley to arrive at the Eco-Camp for a well-deserved dinner.

## Day 6 – Azul Lagoon, Sarmiento Lake, Goic Lagoon

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After a day of intense activity, this is a more relaxed day when you will finish the circuit of the W at Torres del Paine in the best way. After breakfast you will head to Azul Lagoon (bike option is available) leaving behind Cañadón Macho, the habitat of wild guanacos and rheas. You can stop to enjoy the marvelous view of Las Torres from a different view point. At Azul Lagoon you will trek as far as the viewpoint, then have lunch and continue on to the north shore of Sarmiento Lake, where the fauna trail starts and you can watch a great variety of Patagonian fauna on the vast plains, including: guanacos, rheas, ostriches and a puma if you get lucky. You will leave behind the beautiful Goic Lagoon and after a relaxed hike of several miles you will get on board at the park ranger's station in Amarga Lagoon, where you will be picked up to be taken to the Eco-Camp for a great farewell dinner.

## Day 7 – Punta Arenas or El Calafate

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You travel to Punta Arenas to catch the afternoon flight to Santiago. If you are heading to Argentina, you will take the car to the border and then continue on to El Calafate.

### 5 days – 4 nights

The W at Torres del Paine in 5 days is the shortened version on the most renowned trails of the national park, taking you to the glaciers, lakes, forests and the majestic Torres. This trekking does not include the visit to Cuernos del Paine (Horns of Paine) or the Lakes and Lagoons of the East.

- » **Day 1** – Puerto Natales, Milodon Cave & Torres del Paine National Park
- » **Day 2** – Valle del Francés: Heart of the Macizo del Paine (Massif of Paine)
- » **Day 3** – Grey Glacier
- » **Day 4** – Torres del Paine
- » **Day 5** – Punta Arenas or El Calafate

**Seasons:** High season is from November to January inclusive. Low season is in October, February and March.

**Seasons:** High season is from November to March inclusive. Mid-season is from October 16th to October 31st and from April 1st to April 17th. Low season is from October 1st to October 15th and from April 18th to April 30th.

- » **Accommodation:** EcoCamp Patagonia
- » **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch box and Dinner
- » **From / To:** Torres del Paine / Lagunas de las Torres
- » **Duration:** 3 hours
- » **Difficulty level:** Easy
- » **Height:** 200 meters / 650 feet
- » **Distance:** 6 km / 3.7 miles

**Included:**

- ✔ Bilingual tour leader for all the trekking
- ✔ Mountain guide
- ✔ Navigation of Lake Pehoe
- ✔ Transfers during the trekking by public and private transport
- ✔ Accomodation
- ✔ Lodgings according to the itinerary and that is:

**Not Included:**

- ✔ Entrance to the national parks
- ✔ Medical insurance
- ✔ Life Assurance
- ✔ Tips
- ✔ Drinks
- ✔ Air tickets
- ✔ Optional excursions and all services which are not included in the journey program

Season 2016-2017

[Prices and outputs of the Trekking to Patagonia 2016-2017](#)

**Prices / Departures: 7 Days - 6 Nights (Prices in USD per person)**

Season	Date	Standard		SUPERIOR		Suite	
		Double/Shared	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single
* Ask for private		Double/Shared	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single
Departures		Bestseller		Popular Choice		Best Comfort	
Low	05 OCT 2015	1465,90 USD	2198,80 USD	1759,10 USD	2638,70 USD	1978,90 USD	2968,50 USD
Low	12 OCT 2015						
Shoulder	19 OCT 2015	1710,20 USD	2565,30 USD	2052,15 USD	3078,30 USD	2308,80 USD	3463,30 USD
Shoulder	26 OCT 2015						
High	02 OCT 2015	2443,10 USD	3664,70 USD	2931,70 USD	4397,60 USD	3298,20 USD	4947,30 USD
High	09 NOV 2015						
High	16 NOV 2015						
High	23 NOV 2015						
High	30 NOV 2015						
High	07 DEC 2015						
Peak	14 DEC 2015	2565,10 USD	4104,20 USD	3078,20 USD	4925,00 USD	sold out	sold out
Peak	21 DEC 2015						
Peak	28 DEC 2015						
Peak	04 JAN 2016						
Peak	11 JAN 2016						

Peak	18 JAN 2016						
High	25 JAN 2016	2443,10 USD	3664,70 USD	2931,70 USD	4397,60 USD	3298,20 USD	4947,30 USD
High	01 FEB 2016						
High	08 FEB 2016						
High	15 FEB 2016						
High	22 FEB 2016						
High	29 FEB 2016						
High	07 MAR 2016						
High	14 MAR 2016						
High	21 MAR 2016						
High	28 MAR 2016						
Shoulder	04 APR 2016	1710,20 USD	2565,30 USD	2052,20 USD	309,10 USD	2308,80 USD	3463,20 USD
Shoulder	11 APR 2016						
Low	18 APR 2016	1465,90 USD	2198,80 USD	1759,10 USD	2638,70 USD	1978,90 USD	2968,50 USD
Low	25 APR 2016						

## General information

### Bear in mind.

These treks are at an intense rhythm and although it is not fundamental to have prior experience, because there are no technical difficulties, it is important to be in good physical condition. There are daily walks of 6 to 9 hours and the program allows for these to be walked at a normal pace and with defined rests. Within the program there are some steep ascents and descents. Most of the lodgings are in campsites and those with previous camping experience adapt rapidly.

### Security

The program does not cover for medical assistance although the guides carry first aid kits and VHF radios to cover emergencies.

### Altitude

This trekking itinerary does not go above 1500 metres/4920 feet and therefore altitude sickness is not a problem. The unique natural obstacle is the strong Patagonian winds that arrive in the summer making the trekking more arduous.

### Documentation for the frontier

In order to pass through immigration at the Argentina/Chile border, documents such as a passport are required. It is forbidden to cross with food such as fruits, meats and prepared food. The transport of equipment is included in the program price.

### Equipment transfer service

The transport of baggage including the sleeping bag is included in the service except for the zone of the Los Cuernos Refuge where each person has to carry their sleeping bag or hire one at the Refuge. Each person carries a light rucksack during the day which normally includes a guide map, jacket, lunch box, water, sun shades, camera etc. There is transport for personal baggage up to 15 kgs for each trekker and it is transported in the same way as for the general journey equipment.

### Is it possible to suspend the trekking?

If prevailing or forecast weather conditions put at risk the physical integrity of the participants then the trekkings can be suspended. Our advice is to have previous camping experience.

## Recommended gear for the trekking

The following is the suggest equipment and clothing required for the trekking:

- » 50 litre rucksack
- » Synthetic interior garments
- » Long Sleeved T-Shirt and another of cotton
- » Walking trousers
- » Under trousers without feet
- » Polar jumper
- » A pair of leggings and a pair of gloves
- » Two pairs of woolen socks
- » Two pairs of light socks
- » Walking shoes
- » Woolen hat (better woolen than fibre)
- » Sun visor
- » Hand and bath towel
- » Sun glasses
- » Sun cream protector
- » Torch
- » Walking sticks (fundamental)
- » Documents necessary to enter to Chile (Passport etc.)
- » Personal medicines

 CONSULTAR

 RESERVAR

### ARGENTINIAN EXPLORER

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