



## Patagonia Explorer

*Join us in Patagonia, the unspoiled wilderness at lands' end, shared by Chile and Argentina. Here, the Torres del Paine massif presides over rugged plains, and vast glaciers feed the sparkling sea. As we visit two breathtaking national parks in this remote region, we experience nature at its purest, up close and unfettered. And a stay in Buenos Aires adds zest to our small group journey.*

### Itinerary

Created on Apr 8, 2025

# **Patagonia Explorer**

## **Day-by-Day Itinerary**

### **DAY 1: Depart for Punta Arenas, Chile**

### **DAY 2: Arrive Punta Arenas**

We arrive today in Punta Arenas, capital of Chile's southernmost Magallanes region. As guests' arrival times may vary greatly, we have no group activities or meals planned.

### **DAY 3: Punta Arenas/Magdalena Island**

On our day cruise through the storied Strait of Magellan today, we have the opportunity to see for ourselves an animal that most people have only seen in captivity: the Magellanic penguin, the two-foot-tall flightless bird that numbers among the millions along the southern tip of South America. We cruise to tiny Magdalena Island, home to a colony of more than 70,000 penguins that coexist peacefully with cormorants, sea lions, and other species. Tonight we gather for a welcome dinner.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 4: Punta Arenas**

This morning we travel outside the city to historic Fort Bulnes, built in 1843 to cement Chile's sovereignty over the region. Our tour here includes the interpretive center depicting the human and natural history related to the Strait of Magellan, as well as a scenic viewpoint of the Strait. Returning to Punta Arenas, we have lunch together followed by an afternoon and evening at leisure.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch

### **DAY 5: Punta Arenas/Torres del Paine**

Today we set out by motorcoach for the journey north to Torres del Paine National Park. On the way, we get a close-up view of Patagonian Chile on our excursion to a working *estancia* (ranch). We visit with the local cowboys who work here and watch a sheepdog exercise to see how these amazing animals perform their important job of herding. We also see a sheep-shearing demonstration and learn how the wool is processed. Then we enjoy a traditional Patagonian *asado* (barbecue) lunch at the ranch before continuing to Torres del Paine. Sitting on the shores of Ultima Esperanza Sound, Torres del Paine comprises a 700-square-mile national park and UNESCO reserve. Upon arrival at our hotel this afternoon, we have time to relax and to enjoy the spectacular surroundings. We dine together tonight at our hotel.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 6: Torres del Paine National Park**

Today marks our first full day in Torres del Paine, one of the most unspoiled and beautiful nature preserves on Earth. We spend the day exploring this unparalleled landscape of jagged peaks, virgin forests, ice-blue glaciers, turquoise lakes, rushing rivers, and thunderous waterfalls. We also visit magnificent Lago Grey, which is fed by the glacier of the same name in the Southern Patagonia Ice Field.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 7: Torres del Paine National Park**

Our second day of exploration in the park features Laguna Amarga and Cascada Rio Paine, along with resident wildlife.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 8: Torres del Paine/El Calafate, Argentina**

We travel to Argentine Patagonia today, crossing the border at Cancha Carrera then continuing on to the southern shores of Lago Argentino and the town of El Calafate, gateway to Los Glaciares National Park. Late afternoon we reach our hotel, where we dine tonight.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 9: Los Glaciares National Park/Perito Moreno**

It's a full day of jaw-dropping scenery, as we set out this morning on our boat trip to Perito Moreno Glacier, inside the national park. We cruise on Lago Argentino, the country's largest and most southerly lake. At Toro Bay, we disembark for a guided walk through the Andean Patagonian forest, where we see a variety of trees, including a 100- year-old cherry tree whose trunk is almost 10 feet in diameter. Back on board, we continue on to a spot where we can view two glaciers: Mayo Hill and Negro Hill "hanging" glacier that starts high on the valley wall and descends only partway down. Then we disembark at Negro Hill for another guided walk. Returning to our boat, we enjoy a simple box lunch en route to the northern wall of Perito Moreno Glacier, the spectacular 97-square-mile mass of ice that counts as one of Argentina's most popular attractions. Here we disembark at the floating pier, where we can get panoramic views of Perito Moreno from different heights and angles.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch

## **DAY 10: El Calafate**

After a morning at leisure, this afternoon we put some of what we saw on Day 9 into perspective as we visit the Glaciarium, a modern interpretation center devoted to the Patagonian Icefield and its glaciers through models, photographs, and interactive exhibits. Built to blend in with the natural environment, the Glaciarium features a dramatic façade that evokes the face of the Perito Moreno Glacier. Following our experience here, we return to our hotel before we dine together tonight at a local restaurant.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 11: El Calafate/Buenos Aires**

We transfer to El Calafate airport today for our flight to the lively Argentine capital of Buenos Aires. Dinner tonight is on our own in this city known especially for its *asado* – and for its late dining hours.

*Meals:* Breakfast

### **DAY 12: Buenos Aires**

Highlights of our full-day city tour include the elegant mansions and lovely parks and gardens of the leafy Palermo neighborhood; the colorful bohemian district of La Boca; picturesque San Telmo, the city's oldest neighborhood; elegant Recoleta cemetery, with its elaborate mausoleums; and historic Government House. Tonight, we celebrate our Patagonian adventure over a farewell dinner.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 13: Buenos Aires/Depart for U.S.**

This morning we tour Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires' beloved opera house that ranks as one of the world's most important, on par with Milan's La Scala and the Vienna State Opera. We return to our day rooms at our hotel midday; the remainder of the day is at leisure before this evening's transfer to the airport for our overnight flight to the U.S.

*Meals:* Breakfast

### **DAY 14: Arrive U.S.**

We arrive in the U.S. this morning and connect with our return flights home.

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