

Explore Chile Argentina Desert, Lakes & Patagonia



Santiago – Atacama Desert – Lake District - Torres del Paine – Perito Moreno glacier – Buenos Aires – fully guided group

Explore Chile's great outdoors from the far north to the far south.

Cross into Argentina to see the incredible Perito Moreno Glacier and cosmopolitan Buenos Aires.

Enjoy a thoughtful blend of short walks, cultural activities and free time.

Take in the wonderful landscapes of the Atacama Desert and Lake District.

Visit the spectacular mountain scenery and glaciers of Patagonia.

Pura *handmade* holiday with an activity rating *low* and comfort rating *first*.



The spectacular Perito Moreno glacier in Argentine Patagonia



Holiday Itinerary



Traditional dancing in the heart of Santiago



Sunset over the Atacama Desert

Day 01 | flight | fly to Chile

Fly overnight to Chile.

Please note: international flights are quoted separately for this holiday.

Day 02 | Santiago | day to relax

Early morning arrival in Santiago.

You meet your tour leader at the airport and transfer to your hotel.

Check in to freshen up and relax until this afternoon when we take you on an introductory stroll.

Day 03 | Santiago | free to explore

Today is yours to explore Santiago.

Your hotel is in the centre of this bustling city so you can explore on foot quite comfortably.

Optional excursions. (b)

Day 04 | San Pedro | desert walk

Fly north this morning to the Atacama Desert.

Drive an hour across the desert to the small, characterful oasis town of San Pedro de Atacama.

The town is on a plateau at just over 2,400m. A few kilometers outside the town, the Andes rise steeply to peaks of up to 6,000m. This beautiful curtain of peaks forms a backdrop to your time here in the Atacama.

Enjoy a relaxed walk through the Cordillera de la Sal (Salt mountains) towards the Valle de la Muerte in time to see the beautiful evening light.

The walk is an easy two hour walk over three hours, starting at the viewpoint of the Valle de la

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Strolling across the lagoons in the Atacama



Soaking in the Puritama hot springs



The Osorno Volcano in the Chilean Lake District



Stilt houses on Chiloé Island

Muerte with beautiful views over the Andes and the enormous Licancabur volcano.

The route takes you through a landscape of sand dunes, colourful mountains and beautiful views.

Dinner this evening is not included. Although San Pedro is a single storey adobe town with dirt roads with a range of surprisingly nice places to eat. (b)

Day 05 | San Pedro | **salt flats & lagoons**

This morning you head out into the surrounds of San Pedro to visit some of the highlights.

Pukara de Quitor is a 12th century fortress of the Atacama people.

From here you will walk a flat path for an hour along the 'Devil's Canyon'.

Late this afternoon set off across the salt flats to the beautiful Chaxas lagoon, part of the Reserva Nacional los Flamencos.

This is a 60km drive so we break your journey with a stop in the traditional small village of Tocaño.

If it's your sort of thing, you also have the chance to buy handicrafts here, principally wool.

Continue to the lakes in the heart of the Salt Flats to enjoy spectacular 360 degree views as the sun sets. (b)

Day 06 | San Pedro | **geysers & hot springs**

Visit the world's highest geothermal field – the Tatio geysers.

A very early start is necessary to arrive in time to watch the sunrise.

At first light the geysers come to life in a spectacular display of steam.

Breakfast is served up at the geysers, sometimes we even manage to cook eggs in the steaming waters.

Please do bear in mind that the geysers are a natural phenomenon which on rare occasions fail to perform.

Stop at the lovely Puritama hot springs for a soak on the way back to San Pedro for lunch and a free afternoon. (b)

Day 07 | Puerto Varas | **to the Lakes**

Set off early to fly south to the Chilean Lake District via Santiago.

Stay in the town of Puerto Varas which lies on the edge of Llanquihue Lake in full view of the lovely Osorno Volcano.

The town is a charming small place, easy to explore on foot with lots of good restaurants and cafés. (b)

Day 08 | Puerto Varas | **volcanoes & lakes**

Visit the Petrohue Falls for a short walk to see the various different falls and pretty viewpoints.

Continue to the shores of the Todos los Santos Lake, thought to be one of the most beautiful in the world.

Certainly on a sunny day it's hard to image a more beautiful sight than the steep, densely forested slopes dropping into the turquoise waters.

Optional excursion to cruise the lake as far as Puella.

Those not interested in the cruise continue to the Vicente Perez Rosales National Park for an easy walk on the lower slopes of the Osorno Volcano. (b)

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Views of the Paine massif from Salto Grande.



Walking along iceberg beach in Torres del Paine



The boat ride onto Lago Grey



Sunrise over Torres del Paine

Day 09 | Puerto Varas | Chiloé Island

Spend today on the island of Chiloé.

The short ferry ride across to the island can be wonderful with glorious views of snow capped volcanoes and pods of dolphins swimming alongside.

Chiloé has a unique and fascinating history and culture, including the UNESCO world heritage wooden churches, fishing houses on stilts and its own delicious cuisine.

Today is an opportunity to learn about life on this special island. (b)

Day 10 | Torres del Paine | to Patagonia

This is a long though beautiful travel day.

Set off early to fly south along the spectacular spine of the Andes, over the massive Patagonian ice fields.

From the airport in Punta Arenas, it is a three-hour drive across the open plains of Patagonia to the seafront town of Puerto Natales where you have lunch.

After lunch set off towards the spectacular Torres del Paine National Park.

Stop off as you approach to enjoy the ever more spectacular views.

If there is time, we visit the Milodon Cave to learn about the pre-history of this region.

Arrive in the park to settle into your comfortable hotel accommodation. (b)

Day 11 | Torres del Paine | lakes & mountains

Today is spent outdoors, exploring the park.

Whether you are interested in photography, wildlife, birds or just being outdoors in incredible landscape, today should be memorable.

From the hotel drive towards the east of the park to walk up to the Mirador del Condor.

The walk is an hour there (uphill) and a bit less back.

The rewards are spectacular views over Pehoe Lake and the Torres del Paine massif beyond.

Visit the thundering waterfalls of Salto Grande.

Carrying on, you come to Nordenskjöld Lake and another beautiful, this time flat, walk for views of the plains of Patagonia, mountains and lakes.

Complete your outdoor exploration of the eastern side of Torres del Paine with a stroll along the shores of Amarga Lake.

On a clear day, the views from here are amongst the best you can get. Return to your hotel for dinner.(b,l)

Day 12 | Puerto Natales | glaciers & forests

Optional morning boat excursion out onto Grey Lake.

This takes you along the sediment laden waters of the lake, past icebergs, to the face of the glacier.

For anyone not on board, enjoy a lovely three-hour walk along the shores of the lake.

Return to Puerto Natales for a free afternoon and evening. (b,l)

Day 13 | Calafate | travel to Argentina

Travel today across the wide open landscapes of Patagonia to cross into Argentina.

This journey is made by comfortable public bus.

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Ice calving off the Perito Moreno Glacier



Explore Buenos Aires



Time to relax

Depending on how busy the border crossing is, you should arrive early this afternoon.

Check in for a two-night stay in a comfortable hotel in town before exploring on foot. (b)

Day 14 | Calafate | **visit Perito Moreno**

Spend today visiting the Perito Moreno Glacier.

Travel around the southern bank of Lago Argentino, into the Los Glaciares National Park.

Catch a catamaran for an hour's sailing to the south wall of glacier, to get close and see the sheer size of Perito Moreno from water level.

Once back on land, continue the short distance to the glacier, where you will have a few hours to walk the extensive walkways and enjoy your picnic lunch with a view. Return to Calafate late this afternoon. (b,l)

Day 15 | Buenos Aires | **fly north**

Transfer to the airport for your flight north to the Argentine capital, Buenos Aires.

On arrival you are collected by your guide and taken to your charming small hotel in the Las Canitas area.

Despite being close to the centre of the city, this barrio is quiet, leafy and green with lots of pavement cafes.

Stroll to one of the restaurants nearby for supper. (b)

Day 16 | Buenos Aires | **explore the capital**

Spend this morning in the company of a local guide who can take you on and off the beaten track in this lively and beautiful city.

This afternoon is yours to enjoy the city on your own terms. You might like to explore the enormous and rather lovely Recoleta cemetery. (b)

Day 17 | flight | **travel home**

Free morning to explore the city before flying home (flight times may vary).

Please note: international flights are quoted separately for this holiday. (b)

Day 18 | home | **arrive back**

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Holiday Information

Pura Handmade

This holiday is unique to us.

We have designed and deliver this holiday using our own people and carefully selected local suppliers to create a *Pura Handmade* holiday.

You are looked after by a Pura team on the ground. We ensure that you see places from off the beaten path in the Atacama desert.

In Patagonia we take you on a route through beautiful scenery without your having to completely sacrifice your creature comforts.

The hotels and lodges we have chosen very carefully to best reflect the places you are visiting.

How active?

This is a holiday for people who enjoy the great outdoors without wanting to be overly active.

Walks are generally taken at a slow pace and will last for one to three hours.

Activities in the Atacama Desert are at the same altitude as the town (+/-2,400m) with the exception of the Tatio Geysers when you are driven up to 4,300m.

In the Lake District and Patagonia walks are generally short and designed to get you out into the great outdoors in magnificent scenery without being full day hikes. In both cases, you are at sea level and distances are not great.

How comfortable?

Comfortable small hotels with en suite rooms throughout. These are generally equivalent to 3* or sometimes +3*.

Suggested hotels (subject to availability):

Santiago, Hotel Fundador

San Pedro, Hosteria San Pedro

Puerto Varas, Hotel Solace

Torres del Paine, Cabanas del Paine

Puerto Natales, Hotel Martin Guisinde

Calafate, Hosteria Hainen

Buenos Aires, 248 Finisterra

How independent?

You will be part of a fully guided small group of 24 passengers maximum.

Minimum group size for this holiday to run is 4. With smaller groups some of the excursions will be on a shared basis (Santiago, Lake District, Perito Moreno).

In all cases, the Atacama and Patagonia sections of this holiday are private Pura Aventura services. Holidays are accompanied by a dedicated tour leader/guide.

How Responsible?

Pura Aventura is passionate about the places it visits. To help preserve the integrity of these destinations we:

- Keep groups small to minimise environmental impact.
- Work directly with local businesses and organisations to directly benefit local economies. We use small, locally owned hotels and restaurants. We know the owners except in the large cities.
- Work with local guides so that our holidays are more interesting for clients and more beneficial locally.
- Make payment to suppliers before our clients arrive.

When should I go?

The best time for this holiday is during the southern hemisphere summer months, i.e. October to March.

Santiago and Buenos Aires have a Mediterranean climate so you can expect warm and sunny weather.

Weather in the Atacama can change at any time. Rains come in January, February and March (Bolivian winter affects this part of Chile) but this makes it particularly beautiful. Days are generally warm and sunny. Nights are always cold due to the altitude.

The Lake District is the wettest part of Chile so this is the part of the trip where you are most likely to see some rain.

Patagonia is very changeable from wind to rain to snow to sun in a day. Daytime temperatures are generally mild, evenings cool.

How do I book?

If you would like to book onto this holiday, please call us on **01273 676 712** with the following information:

- Full names
- Address
- Contact telephone numbers & email
- Deposit of 15%

Deposits can be paid by card, cheque or bank transfer, whichever suits you best. The balance of your holiday is payable 60 days prior to travel.

Once we have the details above we send you a confirmation email detailing all of the services agreed between us.

We ask you to check through all of this carefully and sign off on the holiday at that point.

Note that this small group holiday is subject to minimum client numbers in order to operate. We require four people to confirm this departure.

Prices & departures

2012/13	17 Nov 01 Mar £2,968
Please note	<i>This price assumes arrival in South America on a One World airline (BA, Iberia, American, Lan or Tam). Domestic flights can be significantly more expensive for those arriving on a non-partner airline such as Air France.</i>
Flights	International flights are quoted separately for this holiday (<i>guide price £800 - £950</i>). You can book these directly or we can book them on your behalf.
Prices include	All domestic flights in Chile & Argentina; all accommodation (twin share basis) Pura Aventura guide throughout; transport, transfers, activities mentioned; and meals (b,l,d) as per itinerary.
Not included	Personal expenses, tips, meals not listed.

Prices are per person based on two sharing.

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