

Wildlife Argentina Patagonia Self Drive



vibrant Buenos Aires – Valdes Peninsula – whale watching
beautiful Patagonia - Perito Moreno Glacier – Fitzroy mountains – freedom to
explore – tailor made to suit you - fantastic small hotels

A fly drive holiday perfect for anyone interested in wildlife and beautiful mountain scenery.

Travel at your own pace with your own car on the Valdes Peninsula and in southern Patagonia.

Experience the full variety of wildlife on the Valdes peninsula, including the rare Southern Right Whale.

Travel through some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in the world to see the Perito Moreno Glacier.

This is a Pura *handpicked* holiday with an activity rating of *low* and a comfort rating *premium*.



The spectacular Perito Moreno Glacier.



"We had our best holiday ever, and from us that is some accolade!" Linda M.

Holiday Itinerary

Day 01 | Buenos Aires | **travel to Argentina**

Fly to Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires.

Please note: international flights are quoted separately.

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.



Time to explore Buenos Aires at your own pace.

Day 02 | Buenos Aires | **explore the capital**

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

You will have a car at your disposal, but we recommend getting out and walking for some of the tour.

Rather than follow a specific route, you basically just let them know what sorts of things you like to see and they can take you.

This afternoon you might like to explore the enormous and rather lovely Recoleta cemetery. (b)

Day 03 | Buenos Aires | **day at leisure**

Spend today exploring the city at your own pace. (b)

Day 04 | Puerto Madryn | **fly to Patagonia**

Transfer to the airport early today for your flight south to the Atlantic side of Patagonia.

On arrival pick up your rental car. You will explore with the help of maps and local information we provide.

This afternoon is yours to explore though you might like to visit the very interesting dinosaur museum in town.

Questions? Ready to book? Call us on **01273 676 712**

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Wildlife Argentina

Patagonia Self Drive



The beautiful solitude of the Patagonian Steppe.



A breaching Southern Right Whale.



An Elephant Seal has a rest on the Peninsula Valdes.



Visit the penguin colony at Punta Tombo.

Alternatively, drive out to the Welsh settlement of Gaiman for tea and cake.

Between late September and early April you can also visit the penguin colonies of Punta Tombo.

Tonight is spent in nearby Puerto Madryn. (b)

Day 05 | Valdes | **explore the peninsula**

Drive north and onto the Valdes Peninsula this morning.

The peninsula is a natural reserve, a UNESCO world heritage site since 1999.

The isthmus leading onto Valdes is only 11 kms wide which makes the peninsula almost an island.

The landscape is one of sand dunes, cliffs, bays and lagoons around the coastline. Inland, the landscape is dry, windy Patagonian steppe.

As you come onto the peninsula there is a good visitor centre which is worth a look.

The most famous inhabitants of Valdes are around 3,000 endangered Southern Right whales.

They can grow to up to 17m and weigh up to 100 tonnes. By taking a boat trip into the bay, you can get incredibly close to these huge, gentle beasts.

The peninsula also holds important groups of elephant seals, sea lions and orcas (a.k.a. "killer whales").

The breeding season for the Southern Right whales is June through December though September on is best.

You can pick up whale watching trips in Puerto Piramides, boats are fairly small and you get remarkably close to the whales.

Make your way out to your cosy lodge by the lighthouse at Punta Delgada, a remote and wild spot. (b,d)

Day 06 | Valdes | **explore the peninsula**

At the right time of year you might see orcas hunting by surfing up onto the beach to snap up young seals.

The season for orcas is September to April though you have the best chance of seeing them February-March.

Another famous inhabitant of the peninsula is the enormous elephant seal.

These seals arrive in August and stay until late October to mate. You are likely to see the most spectacular behaviour in September or October.

Bear in mind that you can only see these giants from a distance from behind fences or up on cliffs.

Alternatively, drive around the remote roads of Valdes to spot wildlife both inland and offshore. (b,d)

Day 07 | Puerto Madryn | **back to the 'mainland'**

Return the 200km or so to Puerto Madryn over the course of today.

You may well like to take another trip out into the bay at Puerto Piramide in order to see the whales. (b)

Day 08 | Chalten | **travel south**

Drop off your car at the airport and fly from Trelew south to Calafate in southern Argentina.

On arrival, pick up your car and drive the beautiful two hours up to the village of El Chalten at the foot of the spectacular Cerro Fitzroy.

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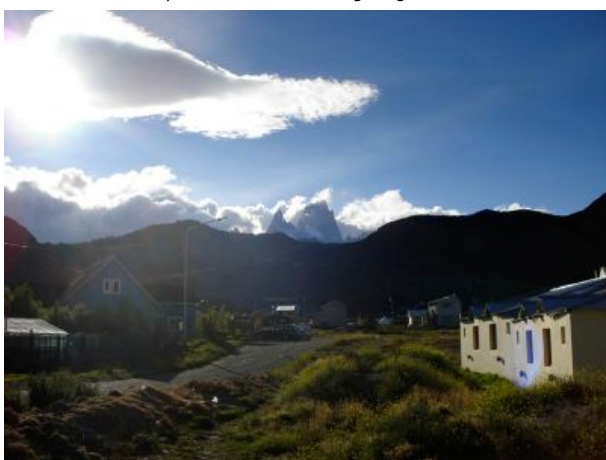


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Views of Cerro Fitzroy from the shores of Lago Argentino.



The simple village of El Chalten with its spectacular backdrop.



Time to enjoy the incredible Perito Moreno Glacier.



Admire the spectacular views at Perito Moreno

The route you drive takes you along lakes Argentino and Viedma with wonderful views of Fitzroy. Settle in to your comfortable lodge, staying in a superior mountain view room. (b)

Day 09 | Chalten | explore the area

Spend today exploring the Fitzroy area.

There are many self-guided trails you can follow or take your car further up the valley to visit the impressive Lago del Desierto.

Whichever way you choose to do, the birdlife in particular is fantastic and the scenery unforgettable.

Return to your comfortable hotel for a second night. (b)

Day 10 | Calafate | stay in a hacienda

Travel back down towards Calafate over the course of today.

You spend tonight in a lovely small hotel in the touristy town of Calafate.

You might like to take the opportunity to take a half day walk around Fitzroy or walk on the shores of Lake Argentino.

Stroll down the main street and stop for a coffee or hot chocolate – chocolate is a big deal in these parts. (b)

Day 11 | Calafate | visit Perito Moreno

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

The glacier is one of only three in Patagonia which is not retreating.

The face is some 5km wide, the ice being an average height of 74m above the surface. It continues about 100m below the surface of the lake.

The glacier moves at quite a pace which means that it makes the most amazing creaking and splitting sounds, regularly calving great lumps of ice into the water.

You might like to take 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.

Spend time watching and listening to the glacier from the network of walkways. (b)

Day 12 | Buenos Aires | fly north

Drive back to the airport for your flight back north to Buenos Aires and your last night in South America.

Stay in a comfortable small hotel in the city. (b)

Day 13 | 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 14 | home | arrive back

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Holiday Information

Pura Handpicked

This holiday is delivered by our carefully selected partners on the ground in Argentina.

This itinerary is exclusive to Pura and has been designed to show the amazing variety of Patagonia in a flexible and relaxed two week holiday.

We have chosen small, locally owned and run properties which are closely integrated with their communities.

How active?

As active as you like but we assume that really you want to be in the great outdoors rather than necessarily being active each day.

There are lots of options to be more active, particularly in Chalten and Calafate.

How comfortable?

Stay in very comfortable and charming small hotels throughout this holiday. All have en suite facilities.

Sample hotels:

248 Finisterra, Buenos Aires

Faro Punta Delgada, Valdes

Hotel Senderos, Chalten

Hotel Esplendor, Calafate

Upgrades are available, please contact us for details.

How independent?

Completely independent but with support and local information at all stages.

In Buenos Aires you have a private half day city tour but other than that you are free to set your agenda each day of your holiday.

When should I go?

The ideal time for this holiday is October to catch the whales and Elephant seals on the Valdes Peninsula as well as reasonable weather further south.

If you travel in February or March, the weather in the far south will be (in theory) at its best and you will hit the best time of year for Killer Whales in Valdes.

You would not see the Southern Right Whales or Elephant Seals in February/March.

In either case you are likely to experience cold evenings and mornings but mild daytime temperatures.

Not based in the UK?

We are very happy to discuss your requirements if you are not travelling to and from the UK.

Please call us on **+44 1273 676712** between 9am and 6.30pm weekdays.

How responsible?

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

- Work directly with local businesses & organisations. We use small, locally owned hotels and restaurants.
- 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.

You will stay in a series of family run hotels directly benefiting the communities you visit.

Your visit directly benefits the preservation of the local environment.

How do I book?

As a tailor made holiday we need to check availability and prices before taking your booking. If you would like us to prepare you a detailed proposal then simply email info@pura-aventura.com or call 01273 676 712 with your preferred dates plus any other changes you would like us to make.

Once you have the proposal and decide you would like to go ahead then please call in with the following:

- 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 due 60 days prior to travel).

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.

Prices & Departures

2012	Daily £2,350pp guide price
Flights	International flights are quoted separately for this holiday. You can book these directly (guide price £800 - £950 depending on season) or we can book them on your behalf.
Prices include	All accommodation; Flights within Argentina; Compact car hire in Valdes Peninsula and Calafate; Local information, maps and directions; Meals (b,l,d) as listed; Transport and transfers as listed.
Not included	Transatlantic flights; personal expenses; tips.

Prices are per person based on two sharing

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