



## Patagonia - Highlights of Chile and Argentina

*One of the world's last frontiers and unique must-see destinations...*

**Trip Length: 23 days / 22 nights**

**Minimum 6 people - Maximum 12 people**

**November - December 2022**



**6 guests US\$ 8995, 7-8 guests US\$ 7995, 9-12 guests US\$ 7495 per person / twin share)**

**Single Supplement USD \$ 1150 (hotels) USD \$390 (\* single tent Torres del Paine Circuit) / person**

2020 prices quoted. 2022 prices to be confirmed

**Included meals marked each day. B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner**

**Patagonia - one of the few places on the planet that will etch itself into your memory.**

Sparsely populated Patagonia is shared by Chile and Argentina on that southern tip of South America. Here the grandeur is as huge as the silence it exudes. Our magical trip begins and ends in Chile's capital, Santiago. We'll climb Lonquimay, Sollipulli and Villarricca volcanoes; visit Huerquehue National Park in the foothills of the Andes; discover the native 'monkey puzzle' trees that grow 30 to 40 metres high; maybe sight a red woodpecker busily chipping away, and bathe in hot springs. And all this before we start the magical Torres del Paine Circuit through a land of wind, ice and snow. And we're still not finished. Argentina's Perito Merino Glacier and walks in the spectacular Fitz Roy National Park are calling.

**This is truly a trip of a lifetime!**

### **Day 1: Monday Santiago.**

Meet your **Take A Walk** group leader and fellow adventurers for a briefing at our designated hotel in the afternoon. Dinner not included.

**Overnight hotel**

### **Day 2: Tuesday Santiago - flight to Temuco - drive to Corralco. (B, D)**

**Flight time 1.5 hours**

**Drive time 1.75 hours**

Transfer in a private vehicle to the airport for the flight to Temuco. You will be met by your Chilean guide and transferred to Corralco, near Lonquimay Volcano.

**Overnight lodge**

### **Day 3: Wednesday Lonquimay Volcano. (B, L, D)**

Day hike around the slopes of Lonquimay Volcano. If conditions permit there may be a chance to reach the 2865 m summit. Lonquimay is a beautiful mountain, located deep in the Andes, alongside several other volcanoes, surrounded by Araucaria ('monkey puzzle') forests, and usually draped in white snow. Excellent views all day!

**Overnight lodge**

### **Day 4: Thursday Corralco to Sollipulli. (B, L, D)**

**Drive time 2.75 hours**

We drive through Conguillio and Llaime National Park on our way to our domed eco camp below Sollipulli Volcano. This is truly a mountain hideaway where you can experience nature at its purest. Unique landscapes, vegetation, birds and animals are part of this stunning area.

**Overnight at eco camp.**

*Around the slopes of Lonquimay Volcano*





**Day 5: Friday Sollipulli Volcano. (B, L, D)**  
**6 hours return walk to the summit (2282 m),**  
**Grade steep, challenging**

Sollipulli is a flat-topped volcano with an ice-filled caldera, about 6 km by 4 km. The last big eruption occurred 3000 years ago. Although Sollipulli is dormant, it is not extinct. From the summit there are sweeping views across the huge glacier in the crater. On the way back down we'll either walk along the pumice flows or if the snow is good we can be up for a bit of 'bum-sliding'. Back at our eco camp we can relax in the hot tubs, maybe with a glass of the traditional Pisco Sour

**Overnight at eco camp.**



**Day 6: Saturday Sollipulli to Pucon. (B, L)**  
**Drive time 3 - 4 hours with transfers to bus**

After a hearty breakfast, we start our ground transfer to Pucon village, by Lake Villarrica and overlooked by snow-capped Villarrica Volcano. There will be time to explore Pucon in the late afternoon. Pucon is an adventure tourism hub, renowned for access to hiking trails, water sports, white-water rafting and kayaking, and skiing and snowboarding.

**Overnight hotel**

**Day 7: Sunday Trekking in Huerquehue National Park. (B, L)**

**Drive time 2.75 hours**

**Approx 3 - 4 hours walking time, Grade easy to moderate**

We transfer to Huerquehue National Park, a spectacular green forest and a multi-lake trek where you can see native trees: lenga, araucaria, laurel, tepa and coigue, and possibly spot the red woodpecker. After the trek, you'll visit the natural hot spring of Los Pozones where the water is between 35° - 40° C. Then its back to Pucon.

**Overnight hotel**



*Our guides take us to Villarrica's summit*

**Day 8: Monday Villarrica Volcano. (B, L, D)**

**8 hours return walk to the summit (2847 m), Grade steep, challenging**

Villarrica is Chile's most famous active volcano. It last erupted in March 2015. It's a perfect cone-shaped volcano with an open crater and simmering lava pool. Before the climb we are kitted out with boots, crampons and a gas mask to filter the sulphur fumes. This is a safety measure enforced by the national parks and our guides who always put our well-being first. We start hiking on lava fields and continue on snow until we reach the top of Villarrica where you can look down into the crater. It's a real buzz to stand on the summit of a volcano that only erupted a short time ago and makes summiting Villarrica Volcano one of the most unique and amazing experiences in Chile. Then it's back to Pucon, where we can relax and pat ourselves on the back after completing an excellent walk.

**Overnight hotel**

**Day 9: Tuesday Pucon to Puerto Varas. (B,L,D)**

**Drive time 4 hours**

After an early morning start, we'll drive to Puerto Varas, located beside Llanquihue Lake and with great views of Osorno Volcano. Osorno Volcano has often been described as being similar in appearance to Mount Fuji, in Japan. After checking into our hotel we'll have time to do a leisurely walk. A kind of unwind after yesterday's strenuous adventure.

**Overnight hotel**



**Day 10: Wednesday** Puerto Varas - Punta Arenas – Puerto Natales (B, D)**Flight time 3 hours****Drive time 3 hours**

It's a travel day today and we're taken to Tepual Airport for the flight to Punta Arenas, where we'll be met by our bus driver and transferred to our hotel in Puerto Natales. Puerto Natales is the only city in the Patagonia region. Formerly a modest fishing town, these days it's the gateway to Parque Nacional Torres del Paine. Tourism is alive and well.

**Overnight hotel****Day 11: Thursday** Puerto Natales to Torres del Paine National Park. (B, L, D)**Drive time 1.5 hours****6 - 7 hours walking time, 18 km, Grade moderate to strenuous**

After an early breakfast, you'll transfer to the national park. Today's hike with a day pack leads through the Ascencio Valley towards Torres del Paine Lookout, for one of the most spectacular views in the park, the Towers of Paine. You'll see the three granite pinnacles towering in one vertical leap to almost 3050 m above a green, cirque-bound lake in a deep and narrow glaciated valley. Return to Las Torres Camp.

**Overnight tents, hot showers****Day 12: Friday** Las Torres Camp to Camp Serón. (B, L, D)**4 hours walking time, 14 km, Grade moderate**

You'll start the Torres del Paine Circuit by 9.30 am. You will need to carry all your personal things, plus sleeping bag, mat and pillow. Porters will carry all tents, common gear and food. After leaving Las Torres campsite you'll contour low around the ridge falling from Cerro Paine. The walk will take you through beautiful beech forests before descending to the banks of Paine River, milky with glacial silt. After crossing a few tributaries of Paine River you'll continue over level fields and more stretches of woodland to Camp Seron where you will set up camp.

**Overnight tents, hot showers****Day 13: Saturday** Serón Camp to Dickson Camp. (B, L, D)**4-5 hours walking time, 18 km, Grade moderate**

Your porters will pack all the tents and you'll leave camp again at 9:30 am. The track follows the Paine River, across meadows and along the lower slopes to Lagos Paine. After climbing steeply to a col known locally as Windy Corner, there are dramatic views of the lake and the snow-plastered walls of Ceros Paine, Chico and Cerro Ohnet. The path will descend past the small Camp Coiron and on to the river meadows. After wandering through the valley a short sharp ascent will bring you to your first glimpse of Lago Dickson and the campsite. There are also good views of Escudo and Cabeza de Indio mountains where the rock profile takes on the shape of an Indian face. After descending to camp near Lago Dickson, you will be able to see the south continental ice cap for first time (Glacier Dickson).

**Overnight tents, hot showers**

*Seron Camp to Dickson Camp*



**Day 14: Sunday Dickson Camp to Perros Camp. (B,L,D)**

**4 hours walking time, 10 km, Grade moderate**

After breakfast at the refuge we'll have another 9:30 am start. It's mainly up today along this beautiful section of the track through impressive forest of lengas and coigues (*nothofagus* trees). Towards the end of the walk we have a spectacular view of the Glacier Perros that calves directly into the small lake beside Perros Camp and fills it with icebergs. Perros Camp is a necessary resting stop before the next days big hike over John Gardner Pass. Nestled amongst trees, the camp is one of the more basic camps on the circuit due to its remoteness and the logistics of transporting supplies. There is a small store where you can buy basic snacks and drinks.

**Overnight tents, hot showers**



*Glacier Grey on the move into Lago Grey from the Southern Patagonia Ice Field*

**Day 15: Monday Perros Camp to Refugio Grey. (B,L,D)**

**10 hours walking time, 22 km, Grade strenuous**

You'll be given a very early breakfast. This is the longest day of the hike and it also has some of the best views of the park. From the beginning of your trek, you'll gradually climb to the tree line, then continue on to John Gardner pass at 1150 m. In 1976, British mountaineer John Gardner and two Torres del Paine rangers, pioneered the trail we are on, that circles the Paine Massif. You can occasionally experience strong winds and difficult conditions crossing the short pass, but your guides have years of experience crossing this area and safety is always their main concern. Once you arrive at the highest point, there are awe-inspiring views of enormous Glacier Grey coming down from the Southern Patagonia Ice Field. From here you descend steeply to the tree line and continue traversing near this massive glacier which fills the valley with heavily creased ice. We continue on across several bridges, built to aid tired walkers, to Lago Grey, where Glacier Grey calves into the lake.

**Overnight refugio, hot showers**



*Chilean and Patagonian Flag*



**Day 16: Tuesday** Refugio Grey to Paine Grande. (B,L,D)**4-5 hours walking time, 10 km, Grade moderate**

After a restful morning beside the lake watching icebergs, you'll leave the camp in the afternoon toward Lago Pehoe. It's mainly contouring today and along your walk there are several spots with spectacular views of Lago Grey, icebergs and huge mountains on both sides of the lake.

**Overnight tents, hot showers****Day 17: Wednesday** Paine Grande to French Valley and Cuernos Refuge. (B,L,D)**7 hours walking time, 13 km, Grade moderate to strenuous**

After an early breakfast you'll trek towards French Valley, a great mountain experience. Three hours later, you'll arrive at Camp Italiano, the entrance to French Valley. From here, there's an optional two hour side trip that takes you to a lookout to contemplate some of the most dramatic peaks to dominate Patagonia's skyline. You will see Cuernos (horns); Cerro Espada (Sword Mountain) and its neighbours Cerro Hoja and Cerro Mascara; Paine Grande, Aleta de Tiburón, Cathedral among others. You return to Camp Italiano and continue your trek for 3.5 hours to Cuernos Refuge (3.5 hours).

**Overnight tents, hot showers****Day 18: Thursday** Cuernos Refuge to Las Torres to El Calafate. (B, L)**5-6 hours walking time, 11 km, Grade moderate****Drive time 3.75 hours**

This is the last day of your circumnavigation of the Paine Mountain Range. You'll walk beside Lago Nordeskjold, crossing several creeks before reaching your starting point at Las Torres Camp. Then it's back in the vehicles for your road transfer to El Calafate in Argentina. You can expect to arrive at your hotel around 7.00 pm.

**Overnight hotel****Day 19: Friday** El Calafate to Perito Moreno Glacier to El Chalten. (B)**Drive time 5 - 6 hours**

After an 8:00 am breakfast you'll be driven 80 km from El Calafate to Perito Moreno Glacier. Patagonia's most famous glacier is an absolute highlight of the trip. There will be several stops on the way before arriving at the glacier where there are imposing views of the ice wall. Unlike most of the world's glaciers, Perito Moreno is still growing. As you follow the myriad of boardwalks alongside the glacier you will normally see icebergs calving into the sea directly in front of you. Then it's back on the bus for the drive back to El Calafate and then on to El Chalten, a town at the foot of impressive Mount Fitz Roy. This is a big day and your estimated arrival time is around 9.00 pm.

**Overnight hotel****Day 20: Saturday** Walk to Cerro Torre Lookout. (B, L)**6 - 7 hours walking time, 22 km, Grade moderate.**

This pleasant but spectacular walk leads us towards the base of Cerro Torre. On the way you'll have a short side trip to Mirador Maestri (Maestri's Lookout) where you get the first view west towards the icy spire of Cerro Torre (3128 m). Then it's back to El Chalten. The local ice cream is to die for. There is an option to shorten this days' walk.

**Overnight hotel***On the way to Cerro Torre Lookout*



### Day 21: Sunday Trek to Laguna de los Tres (Fitz Roy Lookout). (B, L)

8 hours walking time, 21 km, Grade moderate

After a short drive, we start the hike to Fitz Roy Lookout where there are spectacular views of Mount Fitz Roy and the series of mountains that surround it. Mount Fitz Roy is sacred to the local Tehuelche people. Because of the perennial cloud-covered apex, they believed it to be a volcano and named it El Chalten, meaning 'the mountain that smokes'. There are several stops along the way to Laguna de los Tres, at the base of Mount Fitz Roy. Glacier de los Tres drains into this beautiful high mountain lake and majestic Mount Fitz Roy towers above. There are breathtaking views to Laguna Viedma and the endless Patagonia Steppe. We return through Rio Blanco Valley on a path that leads back to El Chalten. This day can also be shortened by not climbing to the final lookout.

Overnight hotel

### Day 22: Monday El Chalten to Puerto Natales. (B)

Drive time 6 hours

We'll be transferred by bus back to El Calafate, then on to the Chilean Border where we transfer to another bus for the trip back to our hotel in Puerto Natales.

Overnight hotel

### Day 23: Tuesday Puerto Natales to Santiago. (B)

Flight time 3.25 hours

Sadly, this is the end of our Patagonia sojourn. We'll transfer to Puerto Natales Airport for the flight to Santiago. We would expect the flight to arrive in Santiago late afternoon to early evening. There are late evening flights or midnight flights from Santiago to Australia. Alternatively you may wish to spend extra time in Santiago before returning home.

## What's Included

- Local English speaking trekking guides
- Your own Australian **Take A Walk** leader for the whole trip
- All private ground transport
- Baggage transfers
- Medicine / First Aid Kit
- Radio communication
- Meals as mentioned **(B, L, D) Note:** During the Torres del Paine Circuit, all meals are supplied.
- 1 night in hotel in Santiago
- 2 nights hotel in Corralco
- 2 nights eco camp at Sollipulli
- 3 nights hotel in Pucon
- 1 night hotel in Puerto Varas
- 2 nights hotel in Puerto Natales
- 1 night hotel El Calafate
- 3 nights hotel in El Chalten.
- 6 nights in tents (two-person tents unless wanting single tent \*) Tents at Cerron and Torres camps on the circuit are provided by the company operating the circuit walk and may not be as roomy as the two-person tents our operators provide.
- 1 nights in refuge - Refugios Grey
- All park entrance fees
- Hot spring entrance fee
- Closed cell sleeping mats for camping
- All supplementary mountain equipment, crampons and ice axes when climbing volcanoes. (national park requirement)
- Porters for carrying camping gear and food
- Internal domestic flights. (Santiago – Temuco, Puerto Montt – Punta Arenas, Puerto Natales – Santiago)



*The Patagonian Steppe*

## What's Not Included

- Flights to and from Australia and Santiago, or to and from any other destination before and after the tour dates
- Airport transfers from Santiago Airport to the group hotel in Santiago
- Travel, accident and rescue insurance
- Entry visa for Chile and Argentina
- All personal trekking equipment including backpacks, sleeping bags, liners and pillows
- Cash for extra expenses
- Extra meals not mentioned
- Alcohol, soft drinks and mineral water
- Tips for guides, porters and drivers
- Personal medications and first aid kit
- Personal expenses and other services



*Great Meals*

## Other General Information

- It is your responsibility to be 'on-time' for the start of the trip. The group itinerary cannot be altered to accommodate missed flights, late connections etc, nor can we reimburse for taxi services, road or air transport for you to catch up with the group due to connection problems.
- Hot showers in hotels and the eco lodge
- WiFi and device charging in hotels
- ATMs available in all towns
- Porters will carry the tents and food, so you will only need to carry your clothes, toiletries, wet weather gear, sleeping bag, pillow, sleeping mat, personal medication, camera etc.
- The further south you go in Patagonia, the cooler it gets. During November and December the days are long and climate (relatively) dry and mild with temperatures from 22° to 5° C. The wind-chill factor can sometimes make the ambient temperature feel up to about 6° C colder than what it really is. It is common to get some rain during these months. Patagonia is known for its often windy conditions and in the summer months winds have been known to reach speeds of about 120 kmh in some areas.
- Tipping - this is usually arranged with the trip leader and is generally organised as a group thing
- We will provide a detailed gear list. During the Torres del Pane Circuit, you should plan to travel light. You will definitely be able to leave excess gear at the start of the walk, and collect it at the end of the walk.



- Reservations and payments - to secure your place on this adventure, please complete the interactive booking form and activity questionnaire <http://takeawalk.com.au/book-now/> on our website. We will confirm your booking once we have received your booking form and \$500 deposit.
- Although all care to provide specialised diets is taken, there may be limited choices. If you require, or you choice is a special diet, eg vegan, please provide us with a sample of what you would expect for breakfast, lunch and dinner and we will gladly pass this onto our operators.

## Testimonials from our 2017 trip adventurers

**Gerry** - 'Thanks John. Great photos and great memories. You did a wonderful job with the organisation of that trip - the selection of guides made us feel comfortable and safe 100% of the time, and the schedule was excellent and well paced. We achieved far more than we could have done on our own.'

**Ruth** - 'Thanks John, and all, for a great trip. We are missing you all already... Hoping to have a few mins post Xmas to look at our photos and relive memories of the trip.'

**Larry and Joy** - 'A great trip & a great group of people....I put a slide show of our pictures up on a large screen yesterday & while I only looked at some of them as they flicked past it really brought home how privileged & lucky we were, particularly with the weather. I do have one complaint however. I am finding that the large amount of walking we did has left me with quite a serious problem. Wearing boots for long periods has softened my feet & I am now finding that my thongs are giving me blisters...'

**Bill** - '... thank everyone for your companionship and encouragement during what was for us both the trip of a lifetime.... my mind is still very much in Patagonia.'

**Pauline and Richard** - 'It's been a fabulous experience. We appreciate all your planning to bring it all together.'



*Patagonia - an adventure like no other...*

(**Please note:** This itinerary is a living document. Please ensure you download and print the latest version of the itinerary before you leave home to start your adventure. To ensure the safety and the well-being of the group, there may have been slight changes due to local weather conditions, park or road closures, flight changes etc. The final hiking selection is at the discretion of our local tour leaders.)

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