

PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

VALUE ARGENTINA: EXPLORE PATAGONIA

13 days from **£2,990pp**

ARGENTINA / BUENOS AIRES / ARGENTINIAN LAKE DISTRICT / EL CALAFATE AND LOS GLACIARES NATIONAL PARK / EL CHALTEN AND THE FITZ ROY MASSIF / PATAGONIA



WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

An economical holiday with walking in the Patagonian lake district, around Fitz Roy and Perito Moreno glacier, with a backdrop of volcanoes and jagged, icy mountains. You also have time to explore on your own.

DAY 1	**Arrive in Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel.**
DAY 2	**Biking tour of stylish quarters of the capital.**
DAY 3	**Fly to Bariloche, lake district (northern Patagonia), transfer to hotel.**
DAY 4	**Guided excursion to Cerro Otto.**
DAY 5	**At leisure in the lake district.**
DAY 6	**Fly to El Calafate (southern Patagonia), transfer to hotel.**
DAY 7	**Visit Perito Moreno glacier; boat cruise on the lake.**
DAY 8	**By bus to El Chaltén; assistance to your hotel.**
DAYS 9-10	**At leisure in the El Chaltén district, optional activities.**
DAY 11	**Return to El Calafate by public bus.**
DAY 12	**Transfer to the airport and fly to Buenos Aires. Transfer to hotel.**
DAY 13	**Transfer to airport.**

ITINERARY

The world's most spectacular wildernesses can be hard to reach. Not so in Argentine Patagonia, just a short drive away from the airport at El Calafate you enter the stunning Los Glaciares National Park. This budget holiday includes walks in some of the loveliest landscapes in the country including the volcano-dotted lake district.

Your trip begins and ends in cosmopolitan Buenos Aires, considered to be Latin America's most European city, with its wide boulevards, colonial architecture and café society. Fly onto the Alpine-style resort town of Bariloche in the lake district, where you can explore the snow-dusted mountains, lakes and evergreen forests along gentle walking trails. From here you continue south to the windswept landscape of Patagonia, where you get up close to the vast Perito Moreno Glacier, which calves huge chunks of ice into the water below. El Chaltén is the jumping off point for explorations of the Fitz Roy region of Patagonia, which offers you the chance to admire some of the most dramatic mountain scenery on the continent.

DAY 1

Arrive in Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel.

Transfer to your hotel in Buenos Aires. The capital is an elegant, cultured and cosmopolitan city famed for its interesting museums and the fascinating port district of La Boca, with its cobbled streets and brightly painted houses. It was here that the tango was born, and Diego Maradona honed his footballing skills. The centre of town is home to the colonial heartland, government buildings and churches, as well as chic shopping districts, which have a nostalgic Parisian feel.

The bohemian quarter of San Telmo is full of quaint old houses interspersed with antiques shops, tango bars and classy restaurants. Slightly further out of the centre is the Recoleta district, even more evocative of the French influence, where Evita Perón was laid to rest.

DAY 2

Biking tour of stylish quarters of the capital.

A fun and exhilarating way to get a different perspective on Buenos Aires is to explore this multi-facetted city by bike. It would be a daunting prospect to launch off into the labyrinth of streets and grids on your own, but this tour is fully accompanied with English-speaking guide leading the way safely from one top sight to another. Although these tours aim to avoid to the worst of the traffic, and you walk across busy intersections, you'll feel more confident if you have some experience of cycling in an urban setting.

This tour takes you through the aristocratic districts of Palermo and Recoleta, with their wide tree-lined boulevards lined by French belle époque mansions. You'll ride through Palermo Woods with its rich rose garden, pedestrianised at weekends; and Barrio Parque, home to stately embassy buildings and aristocratic residences. En route, you'll pass at a leisurely pace through Recoleta Cemetery, where Eva Perón is buried and the Botanical Gardens. The Fine Arts Museum, National Library and polo fields are also on the check list.

DAY 3

Fly to Bariloche, lake district (northern Patagonia), transfer to hotel.

Fly to San Carlos de Bariloche, the main town in Argentina's lake district, on the southern shore of Lake Nahuel Huapi. The town is a centre for skiing in winter (July and August), and a walking in summer – set against a stunning backdrop of glacial green-blue lakes framed by the mountains of the Andes.

DAY 4

Guided excursion to Cerro Otto.

You'll be met at the hotel by your English-speaking guide and taken to the base of the funicular which transports you up to the Cerro Otto viewpoint for breath-taking vistas of Bariloche and Lake Nahuel Huapi. There's time to admire and photograph the panorama, before you begin this low intensity 3hr trek along the ridgeline, appreciating the vastness of the surrounding landscape.

As you enter into the Patagonian old-beech tree forest – characterised by huge lenga trees and amancay flowers carpeting the hillsides – you'll no doubt spot a variety of interesting birds. The route leads to the Piedra de Hapsburgo viewpoint where you'll set eyes on the impressive Cathedral Mountain, glistening Lake Gutierrez and the expansive Andes mountain range to the west. Then you'll head back to the funicular via a different path. Enjoy a picnic lunch en route.

DAY 5

At leisure in the lake district.

At leisure in the Bariloche region. There's plenty to choose from here from mountain hikes to cycle rides, car tours and kayaking on the lakes.

DAY 6

Fly to El Calafate (southern Patagonia), transfer to hotel.

Transfer to airport and fly to El Calafate in southern Patagonia (2hrs), a small tourist resort with a frontier feel situated on the banks of milky turquoise Lago Argentino. This is a one high-street town, but it is growing fast, brimming with hotels, cafés, tour agencies, delicatessens, sweet shops and excited travellers. There's not a huge amount to do, but it's a nice place to unwind and a wonderful base for excursions into the area.

Argentina's southern Patagonia is a remote land of endless grassy plains, granite mountain peaks tipped with eternal snows, cool blue lakes dotted with icebergs and immense blue-tinged glaciers. Transfer to your hotel.

DAY 7

Visit Perito Moreno glacier; boat cruise on the lake.

El Calafate is most famous however as the stopping off point for visitors to the Perito Moreno Glacier. On today's guided tour the road follows the lake before turning up a wooded valley, dense with beech and birch, and then continues alongside shimmering lagoons, bordered with bright crimson heather lichens. The park authorities have been sensitive about keeping the site as natural as possible, and there are no shops or cafés within close proximity of the wooden viewing platforms, which are tastefully landscaped into the cliff.

Just looking at the front-edge of the glacier, which towers 60 frozen metres above the water level, and is an extraordinary 5 km wide, is awe-inspiring in itself. But after a time you hear the unforgettable sound of the glacier calving a vast wedge of ice the size of a tower block and sending it smashing it down into the lake, where it divides and floats away as an iceberg.

After lunch (not included) in the nearby cafeteria, board the Safari Nautico or Moreno Fiesta for an hour-long cruise on the lake beneath the glacier, with a commentary. Alternatively, you can just walk and contemplate, away from the other visitors.

DAY 8

By bus to El Chaltén; assistance to your hotel.

A 3hr journey from El Calafate bus station takes you deep into Los Glaciers National Park. Wildlife to look out for includes guanaco and the ostrich-like rhea. The road skirts the turquoise waters of Lago Viedma, with views of the Viedma glacier. On a clear day, an hour before arriving in El Chaltén, the whole of the Fitz Roy massif comes into view – a fantastic taste of what lies ahead. Transfer to your hotel.

El Chaltén is a small town about 220 km NW of El Calafate, with the southern Patagonian icecap right on its doorstep. Since it attracts climbers and hikers owing to its proximity to Cerro Torre, as well as the Fitzroy and Viedma Glaciers, it has expanded in recent years on the back of a boom in this style of tourism. While the settlement itself is unattractive, it has a superb setting and there are some exhilarating walks, hikes and excursions in the vicinity.

DAYS 9-10

At leisure in the El Chaltén district, optional activities.

At leisure in the El Chaltén area. Explore this region of extraordinary natural beauty on foot, along one of the national park's many trails. You hike through dense forest and across glacial brooks with the vertical peaks of the Fitzroy Massif, too steep to shelter snow, providing a mesmeric backdrop. All trails are undulating but not strenuous. Be sure to take warm clothes as the weather in the south is notoriously unpredictable.

Choose from a number of hikes and other outdoor activities available locally (or book them through Journey Latin America before departure).

DAY 11

Return to El Calafate by public bus.

DAY 12

Transfer to the airport and fly to Buenos Aires. Transfer to hotel.

DAY 13

Transfer to airport.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

Guided cycle tour in Buenos Aires

Hiking on Cerro Otto, lake district

Guided excursion to Perito Moreno Glacier

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

TRANSPORT
Three flights (longest 3.30hrs); 2 road journeys (longest 3-4hrs).

ACCOMMODATION
Here we have selected modest but comfortable small to mid-sized hotels with heating and private bathroom.

MEALS
Breakfast daily.

GUIDES
We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 25 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by the latter on their return.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS
13 days, 12 nights: Buenos Aires 2; Bariloche 3; El Calafate 2, El Chaltén 3, El Calafate 1; Buenos Aires 1.

CURRENCY
The unit of currency in Argentina is the Argentine peso.

HOW TO TAKE IT
Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds. We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency, and possibly some travellers' cheques (American Express are the most widely accepted), though these are gradually falling out of use. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money.

For our latest currency advice for Argentina please see our FAQs section.

TIPPING
Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

INSURANCE
Travel insurance is essential.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

AIRPORT TAXES
If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket.

TRIP SUITABILITY
This holiday includes some excursions where there is some walking involved. There are a couple of public bus rides, and three internal flights.

The itinerary includes some walking in rocky and hilly terrain. On the whole it is suitable for reasonably fit clients, including families with older children. If you have a disability or other special requirements, please call us.

CLIMATE

Buenos Aires is hottest January-March (very humid with tropical showers, occasionally over 40°C during the day). Weather conditions here are best for a visit in spring and autumn.

The lake district has warm mostly sunny summers from December to march and cool, rainy winters, from June to August. Expect changeable weather in the shoulder seasons, which resemble a UK summer!

The weather in the far south is notoriously unpredictable throughout the year. During the southern hemisphere summer (October to March) there can be blizzards or heat waves. The adage "four seasons in a day" is very apt here. In winter days are short and snow is not uncommon but it is rarely much below freezing, because of the moderating influence of the sea.

In El Calafate and El Chalten in Los Glaciares National Park it is summer December to February and the days are long and mild, but at this time – especially January – the area is popular with both Argentine and foreign visitors. March and October can be sunny and clear, but also windy.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Even in stylish Buenos Aires, dress is casual or smart casual except for the classiest restaurants. For the holiday as a whole you will need a variety of clothing, from light trousers, shorts, cotton dresses, skirts or T shirts through to fleeces and waterproof outer shells. A hat and gloves are advisable for the far south.

A day pack is essential for carrying rainwear, snacks, books and a water bottle. The sun in summer can be strong so take a hat with a visor, sunglasses and sunblock. Some walkers find hiking poles helpful and binoculars are useful for wildlife spotting.

Please get in touch with the office before departure if you have any doubts. Good equipment is very important and hard to come by in Latin America.

VACCINATIONS

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following; typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. For specific requirements you must consult your GP.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

VISAS

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying to the US, or via the US you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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