

PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

ACTIVE ARGENTINA: WALKING IN PATAGONIA

15 days from **£4,800pp**

**ARGENTINA / BUENOS AIRES / ARGENTINIAN LAKE DISTRICT / EL CALAFATE AND LOS
GLACIARES NATIONAL PARK / EL CHALTEN AND THE FITZ ROY MASSIF / TIERRA DEL
FUEGO**

WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

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

If your idea of relaxation is stretching your legs in the elemental outdoors with a comfortable hotel room to come back to each evening, we've designed this trip with you in mind. Our holiday captures Patagonia's epic scenery as seen from a series of scenic trails in the Lake District, Los Glaciares National Park and Tierra del Fuego. No camping or cooking duties: just prepare your day pack and let our guides do the rest.

DAY 1	Arrive in Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel.
DAY 2	At leisure to explore the city.
DAY 3	Fly to Bariloche
DAY 4	Hiking in Nahuel Huapi National Park
DAY 5	Fly to El Calafate, transfer to hotel.
DAY 6	Excursion to the Perito Moreno Glacier.
DAY 7	Transfer to El Chaltén in the Fitz Roy Mountains
DAY 8	Day walking in the Los Glaciares National Park: Laguna Torre
DAY 9	Day walking in the Los Glaciares National Park: Laguna de los Tres
DAY 10	Boat on Lago del Desierto with walking options near Vespignani glacier.
DAY 11	Fly to Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego. Transfer to your hotel.
DAY 12	Walking and Canoeing in Tierra del Fuego National Park
DAY 13	Hiking to the Emerald Lagoon
DAY 14	Fly to Buenos Aires, transfer to central hotel for final night of the holiday.
DAY 15	Transfer to airport for your flight home.

ITINERARY

The world's best mountain scenery can be hard to reach. Not so in Argentine Patagonia where you can access world-class hiking trails within a short drive of the comfortable tourist hubs of the Lake District, Los Glaciares National Park and Tierra del Fuego. Progressing south all the way to the tip of South America, we've chosen a series of thrilling day walks across these regions, ensuring that you return each day to a cosy hotel within reach of Argentina's more worldly pleasures of great food and wine. This holiday should suit the actively-inclined weekend walker: whilst we've thrown in a couple of long-distance trails, hiking is generally of low intensity and not technical.

Beginning with a couple of nights in Buenos Aires, you'll fly to the city of Bariloche in the Lake District, a springboard for a medley of trails in Nahuel Huapi National Park. A short hop by air further south is El Calafate, gateway to one of South America's finest wildernesses, Los Glaciares National Park with its iconic Perito Moreno Glacier and the Fitz Roy massif where trails meander amidst sub-Antarctic forests and glacial lagoons. Finally to the end of the earth, Tierra del Fuego, where just a few kilometres inland from the busy port of Ushuaia is a quiet wilderness of ancient forest clinging to mountain cliffs, hidden streams and views over vertiginous glaciers.

DAY 1

Arrive in Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel.

Buenos Aires 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

At leisure to explore the city.

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.

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DAY 3

Fly to Bariloche

A 2-hour flight south brings you to the city of San Carlos de Bariloche in Argentina's spectacular lake district. Bariloche, on the southern shore of Lake Nahuel Huapi, 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

Hiking in Nahuel Huapi National Park

It's time to get outside and we offer a choice for today depending on whether you prefer a gentle start to your holiday or more of a challenge.

For a relaxed day walk it's hard to beat the Llao Llao peninsula, an area that protects and preserves beautiful ancient evergreen beech and cypress forests. The route delves into the lush Patagonian wilderness where you will get the chance to discover the unique arrayan forest distinguished by myrtle trees with a vibrant reddish brown bark, whilst enjoying stunning view points from around the Moreno Lake. Lunch will be overlooking the Villa Tacul bay, soaking up the sylvan scenery and glistening water. After a leisurely break, you'll climb to the top of the Llao Llao hill passing pretty orchids and native lilies. From the top you will embark on the loop home, covering a total of 12km and a 300m altitude gain.

Or, for more of a workout, we suggest Cerro Cathedral. Ideal for the more adventurous, this full-day hike is a rewarding challenge in spectacular surroundings. It begins with a drive to Villa Cathedral, from where you'll take a ski-lift up the side of the mountain – ogling the mesmerising views. Starting off gently you'll trek along the ridge of Cathedral mountain heading west, however, once you leave the resort area the track becomes more demanding as you scramble over boulder fields and loose rock. After a couple of hours you'll reach a passage that descends down towards beautiful alpine lagoons, known as Schmoll and Toncek. You'll enjoy a picnic lunch in the Frey Mountain Hut at a 1,700m elevation set in the picturesque sylvan valley. Finally, you'll continue along a well-trodden path that passes alongside the Van Titter creek and will take you back to Villa Cathedral.

Please let us know your preference at the time of booking.

DAY 5

Fly to El Calafate, transfer to hotel.

Transfer to airport and fly to El Calafate in Southern Patagonia (3hrs), a small tourist resort with a frontier feel situated on the banks of milky turquoise Lago Argentino. Argentina's 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 6

Excursion to the Perito Moreno Glacier.

Guided excursion to Perito Moreno Glacier. It's an early morning departure from El Calafate to Los Glaciares National Park, a 90min drive to the walkways and viewing platform overlooking the glacier. The thundering shards of falling ice are a breath-taking spectacle as you pass at a safe distance along the walkway in front of the Canal de los Tempanos, which separates Brazo Rico from the main part of the lake.

The glacier is a staggering 5km wide and stands 60m above the surface of the lake. Its ice mass is fed by the southern continental ice field from the west, and from other smaller glaciers in the vicinity.

In the afternoon, 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 7

Transfer to El Chaltén in the Fitz Roy Mountains

A 3hr drive from El Calafate takes you deep into Los Glaciares 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.

The snow-strafted, almost skeletal, jagged peaks which rise up from a harsh, oft barren landscape around Mount Fitz Roy frame the territory of some of Latin America's most dramatic, visually jaw-dropping trekking routes. If the fickle Patagonian weather permits you'll see some of the best sights over the next few days. Have your camera ready.

DAY 8

Day walking in the Los Glaciares National Park: Laguna Torre

Our first hike in this deep Patagonian wilderness is a beautiful and relatively easy trek crossing the valley of the Fitzroy River to its origin – Laguna Torre. After an initial, moderate ascent, the footpath generally levels out, passing through a delightful mix of landscapes: native lenga forest, meadow and riverside. Listen out for magellanic woodpeckers at work in the forest. There are several panoramic points along the way that allow one to appreciate the granite peaks of Cerro Solo, Cordon Adela and Cerro Torre, as well as the impressive glaciers, Grande and Torre. The trail culminates at the lake, which has panoramic views of the glaciers, the Cordon Adela, the Cerro Torre and Mocho, the Egger Tower, the Standhardt Needle, Bifida and Cuatro Dedos. On a (rare) still day, the lakeshore, with its small floating icebergs, is an idyllic picnic spot. Walking distance is 18km in total, taking 6-8 hours.

DAY 9

Day walking in the Los Glaciares National Park: Laguna de los Tres

You'll soon see why this is the epic, must-do hike of the area. Crossing the heart of the National Park, and taking you close to the base of Mount Fitzroy itself, the scenery is marvellous from start to finish. If you're lucky to get good weather you're in for real treat. Taking 9 to 10 hours, much of the 21km route is along a well-established and undulating trail and, although long, it's quite straightforward. The bigger challenge is the 400m uphill stretch to Laguna de los Tres and back down again – about an hour each way. This bit will certainly test your stamina and possibly your knees, but most people find it's well-worth the effort.

Starting off with a 30-minute drive north to Rio Eléctrico, begin hiking along the Rio Blanco valley through ancient lenga (subantarctic beech) forest. On a clear day, there are magnificent views of Piedras Blancas glacier, the glacial lagoon at its base and the massif along the way. From Poincenot Camp, begin the sustained one-hour climb to the beautiful turquoise Laguna de los Tres, spectacularly situated beneath 3,405m Mount Fitzroy. The lagoon and massif is a mesmerising sight to behold and the perfect spot to eat your packed lunch, Patagonian weather permitting. From here you can also see as far as Lago Viedma and beyond. After descending again to Poincenot, continue walking back to El Chaltén, crossing translucent rivers, passing idyllic Laguna Capri and finally descending into the village in the early evening accompanied by a superb panoramic view of the valley below (look out for condors during this final stretch). A great day.

DAY 10

Boat on Lago del Desierto with walking options near Vespignani glacier.

Today's low intensity trip takes you to an isolated reserve in the northern section of Los Glaciares National Park. A landscape of brooks, lagoons and waterfalls framed by Mount Fitzroy, the region is a walker's paradise. Arriving at Lago del Desierto, a boat takes you to the northern section of the lake, passing the distant Creston and Huemul glaciers. A choice of short self-guided walking trails leads into the fairytale native forest. An English-speaking guide will be on hand to advise on the trail options, which may take you close to the Vespignani glacier or reveal views of mount Fitz Roy. Return to El Chalten in the afternoon, and onwards to El Calafate and overnight.

DAY 11

Fly to Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego. Transfer to your hotel.

Transfer to the airport in El Calafate and fly to Ushuaia, the world's southernmost city, on the island of Tierra de Fuego. The city has grown rapidly in recent years, partly as a result of government incentives to settlers and its establishment as a Free Port, and partly a tourist centre – most Antarctic cruises leave from the port here. The setting is spectacular; jagged mountains hem in the town down to the shore of the Beagle Channel. Transfer to your hotel.

The dense forests, high mountains and glaciers of Tierra del Fuego are a surprise to you arriving from the bleak Patagonian steppes further north. The forested landscape of the National Park surrounds the world's southernmost city, Ushuaia. Here, at the tip of the continent, spring and summer days are long and it's not normally very cold, but it can be windy and wet and you should expect four seasons in one day, every day, and in no particular order...

DAY 12

Walking and Canoeing in Tierra del Fuego National Park

Tierra del Fuego National Park is a wilderness of sub-Antarctic forest, icy rivers, low mountains, glaciers and lagoons which extends from Ushuaia along the shores of the Beagle Channel and inland to Lake Fagnano. Rugged and at first sight seemingly unexplored, the park offers rewarding hiking along faint trails through resilient evergreen and deciduous woodland including the bright foliage of the southern beech and an impressive variety of flora species. Now a protected area, it was inhabited in the past by the hardy Yamana indigenous tribes, until they were settled and eventually died out following Spanish colonisation. Mammals still abound however: foxes, guanaco (a cameloid species related to the llama), rabbits and beavers (introduced from Canada) may be spotted, as may the Andean condor.

There are some popular walks along the coast – typically these are around 9km and are easy to moderate: you may be escorted on a guided trek along the Senda Costera trail, which connects Ensenada Bay to Lapataia Bay on Lago (lake) Roca (3hrs). Alternatively you'll embark on a 2.5hr guided hike inland on the pampa alta. Arriving at Lago Roca you'll have an al fresco lunch (with wine) including Argentine style nibbles. In the afternoon take an adventurous canoe excursion. Boarding inflatable canoes, paddle for around an hour on the lake to Lapataia Bay (approx 4km) exploring the shores more intimately.

DAY 13

Hiking to the Emerald Lagoon

You don't have to go far out of the busy little city-port of Ushuaia to be in a virtually untrodden wilderness. The landscape of weather-resistant beech forests, treacherous peat bogs concealed by tufty grass, deeply embedded streams and moss-mantled fallen trees (which may have died many years ago but take decades to degrade in the cold climate) creates an ambiance of undisturbed nature. This 9km guided hike (around 4-5hr of moderate grade walking) is quite slow going due to tricky terrain in places but it reveals scenery most other visitors do not get to witness as it ascends to a gemstone-clear, emerald lagoon in the heart of the Fuegian Natural and Landscape Reserve.

Departing from your hotel after an early breakfast, you'll be driven 20km into the Tierra Mayor Valley to begin the trail. Once on foot you'll pass beaver dams and climb over fungi-throttled tree trunks before climbing up to and beyond the tree line. It may be snowy here depending on the time of year. Finally you reach the serene hidden lagoon, set in an enclosed valley fringed by glaciers creeping down from the mountain tops. You may stop to eat your packed lunch here enjoying views of the reflective green waters, or later at the cabin on the return leg.

DAY 14

Fly to Buenos Aires, transfer to central hotel for final night of the holiday.

DAY 15

Transfer to airport for your flight home.

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

A choice of day walks in Argentina's Lake District

Guided excursion to Perito Moreno Glacier

Day walks from El Chalten in Los Glaciares National Park

Day walks and short canoeing excursion in Tierra del Fuego

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

ACCOMMODATION

This is a hotel-based holiday and there is no camping involved. We've picked simple yet cosy and comfortable lodgings as your base for exploring Patagonia where you can start your days with a filling breakfast and return to a hot shower. Your hotel in Bariloche is within easy reach of the city's excellent restaurants. In El Chaltén you stay in an alpine-style lodge at the base of snow-capped mountains. And in Ushuaia there are views of the Beagle Channel from your hotel which is perched above the outskirts of town.

CLIMATE

Winter in the Southern Hemisphere is between May and September. In Santiago and Buenos Aires, temperatures can be cool (5°C – to 15°C). While sunshine is possible, so is rain. Spring and autumn temperatures, October to November and March to April respectively, are between 15 and 25°C and there is a good deal of pleasant sunshine. January and February are hot, around 30°C.

In Los Glaciares and Tierra del Fuego National Parks the best months for hiking are March and April, when the autumn foliage is stunning. Many hikers also visit in summer – December to January – along with non-trekkers so it can be busy. Days are long and mild then but it can be windy, as in spring (September to October).

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

For towns and cities bring practical, comfortable clothing and a light-weight jumper. If you plan to eat in smart restaurants, although clothing is not formal (no need for jacket and tie), something quite smart would be appropriate.

Clothing for the Patagonia walking should cater for the fact that you may come across any kind of weather conditions from balmy sunshine and 25 degrees to blizzards and gale force winds. Items you can wear in layers are best. If you are familiar with walking poles, you'll find them very useful in Patagonia. They both assist you on steep climbs and paths with loose stones, and help you keep your balance. Do bring a day pack (25-35 L) to carry your personal items, clothes and packed lunches. And of course it's essential to have good, well-worn and waterproof walking boots with good grip and ankle support.

CURRENCY

The unit of currency in Argentina is the Argentine peso. For the latest advice on how to carry your funds see our country FAQs section for Argentina.

GUIDES

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 35 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.

INSURANCE

Travel insurance is not included and essential.

TRIP SUITABILITY

This is a busy holiday which should suit the actively-inclined weekend walker back home. Although we've thrown in a couple of long-distance trails, hiking is generally of low intensity and not technical. You should be agile and open to walking in all weathers but no special equipment or extra training are necessary. There are also a couple of scenic road journeys, and (Argentina being 11 times the size of Great Britain) four internal flights.

Over the 2-week holiday, 6 days are spent out and about with trails ranging from just a couple of hours to a full day (9-10 hours). More details are given in the day to day itinerary. Unlike in the Andes of Peru and Bolivia, you're not walking at elevations associated with high altitude (the highest altitude reached is 1,700m on the optional Cerro Cathedral trail). Should you have any questions, please get in touch.

MEALS

Breakfast daily; lunch days 4, 8, 9, 10 and 12.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

15 days, 14 nights: Buenos Aires 2; Bariloche 2, El Calafate 2, El Chaltén 4, Ushuaia 3, Buenos Aires 1.

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.

TRANSPORT

Four flights (longest 3.5hrs); 2 road journeys (longest 3hrs).

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.

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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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