

PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

VALUE PATAGONIA: JOURNEY TO THE GLACIERS

14 days from **£4,000pp**

CHILE / TORRES DEL PAINE NATIONAL PARK / PATAGONIA / SANTIAGO AND THE VINEYARDS / CHILEAN LAKE DISTRICT (SOUTH)



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

Explore Patagonia's far-flung wilderness at an accessible price. Contrast the energy of two of Latin America's greatest capitals with the dominance of nature among glaciers, lakes and mountains at the southernmost end of the continent.

DAY 1	**Arrive in Santiago. Transfer to hotel, afternoon half day bicycle tour.**
DAY 2	**Cycling tour through old Santiago.**
DAY 3	**Fly to Puerto Montt, by road to Puerto Varas.**
DAY 4	**Full day guided excursion to Osorno Volcano and Petrohue Falls with lunch.**
DAY 5	**At leisure.**
DAY 6	**Fly to Punta Arenas; by road to Torres del Paine.**
DAYS 7-8	**Explore Torres del Paine National Park.**
DAY 9	**Public coach to El Calafate.**
DAY 10	**Visit Perito Moreno glacier; boat cruise on the lake.**
DAY 11	**Transfer to airport, fly to Buenos Aires.**
DAY 12	**Guided gastronomic tour in San Telmo, Buenos Aires.**
DAY 13	**At leisure in the capital.**
DAY 14	**Transfer to airport for international flight home.**

ITINERARY

Patagonia is a vast and scarcely-populated wilderness of outstanding natural beauty which straddles the Andean border of southern Chile and Argentina. It is a primeval land of towering granite peaks, frontier-bending expanses of windswept pampa pitted with sparkling glacial lakes, and a huge domed sky which can be egg-shell blue calm or torn apart by angry clouds.

This adventurous and economical private holiday will introduce you to this most extraordinary landscape. It's a trip where you get under the skin of the countries: in Torres del Paine you sleep in fixed tented domes. The trip is book-ended by a few days in the two cosmopolitan capitals, Santiago and Buenos Aires.

DAY 1

Arrive in Santiago. Transfer to hotel, afternoon half day bicycle tour.

Transfer from the airport to you hotel in Santiago. It's in an agreeable and up and coming residential quarter, Lastarria. Santiago is set in a broad valley between ranges of the Andes, with majestic snow-capped peaks, and a smaller coastal range with a distinctly Mediterranean feel. Santiago is a huge metropolis, a mix of the old and the contemporary, with quarters of tree-lined avenues and affluent tranquillity and others full of commercial bustle.

DAY 2

Cycling tour through old Santiago.

In the morning, take a guided tour by bike of the old centre. Cycle through the quiet back streets, plazas and hidden corners of picturesque Barrio Yungay, in downtown Santiago. Moving towards Old Santiago cycle over old streets lined with stately palm trees, through parks and following the city's numerous bike lanes.

After a brief pause for some refreshments in one of the many outdoor cafés in Plaza Brazil you will continue towards the Quinta Normal Park and observe the impressive architecture of the Central train station. Soon you will be passing by the La Moneda Presidential Palace, seat of the Chilean government and one of the most interesting colonial buildings in the city.

DAY 3

Fly to Puerto Montt, by road to Puerto Varas.

Transfer to Santiago airport and fly to Puerto Montt in the lake district, northern Patagonia (2hrs). It seems that each of the royal blue lakes in this region of chocolate-box prettiness is overlooked by its own snow-dipped volcano. On the lake shores are resort towns with an Alpine flavour and traditional villages of neat wooden cottages. The region is carpeted with pine forests and studded with youthful streams. Short drive to Alpine-style Puerto Varas on the shores of Lake Llanquihue.

DAY 4

Full day guided excursion to Osorno Volcano and Petrohue Falls with lunch.

Take a guided excursion to the Osorno volcano and Petrohue Falls. From Puerto Varas the road takes you east along the edge of Lake Llanquihue, to the small and picturesque village of Ensenada. Set in the shadows of the Osorno Volcano, and surrounded on three sides by forest and overlooking the lake, it looks like a sleepy rural backwater. As the forest becomes increasingly dense, continue to the Vicente Perez Rosales National Park, to visit the Petrohue waterfalls. Formed by a lava flow of volcanic rock and set in a 1,000 year-old forest, the falls make an impressive sight. The drive continues towards the almost perfectly conical shaped Osorno volcano. As the road climbs, you'll have the chance to enjoy the crisp air and wonderful views. Lunch is taken at the ski centre on the volcano before you return to Puerto Varas.

DAY 5

At leisure.

At leisure in Puerto Varas. The town was colonised by Germans at the turn of the 20th century and its architecture and sedate style reflects this, but it is now a fast-growing tourist resort. Its main attraction is an alpine green lake framed by tree-clad hills and beyond, one of the most perfectly shaped snow-capped volcanoes in the world – Osorno. If you're lucky enough to be in Puerto Varas on a clear and still evening, the sunsets over Osorno's snowy mantle can be magical.

DAY 6

Fly to Punta Arenas; by road to Torres del Paine.

Transfer to Puerto Montt and fly to Punta Arenas in southern Patagonia (2 hrs). On a clear day you have other-worldly views of the swirling meringue of the southern icecap, its fjords, volcanoes and glaciers.

Approaching Punta Arenas you see the rust-brown stain of the Patagonian steppes, pitted with small lagoons stretching out towards the Straits of Magellan. The region's fortunes were only briefly revived during a short-lived gold rush, and to add to its woes, the sheep-rearing business has never really recovered from the collapse of the price of meat and wool.

From the airport, drive into the awesome Torres del Paine National Park (5 hrs-ish, a wonderful wilderness where you'll see silvery iceberg-dotted rivers, aquamarine lagoons and savagely wind-carved rocks, cliffs and ice-clad mountains. Guanacos (camelids) graze peacefully while ostriches scamper across the plains and condors soar above.

The road takes you across inhospitable plains, battered by perpetual winds. The scenery becomes more dramatic as you approach the towering massif which looms up on the horizon. You'll be staying in fixed dome tents with proper beds and shared bathroom facilities.

DAYS 7-8

Explore Torres del Paine National Park.

Choose from a menu of guided excursions and adventure activities from the camp. There is a programme of activities divided into 'easy' or 'active' tours, which have fixed schedules and are shared with other guests. The excursions included during your stay will vary depending on your arrival day, but the emphasis is on exploring these wonderful surroundings on foot. Typically, there is a choice of easy trails to the western lakes, Laguna Azul and the Mirador del Toro viewpoint.

More active guests may enjoy the day-long trek to the base of Torres del Paine or a hike in the French Valley. Excursions to Glacier Grey are offered twice-a-week (usually Tuesday and Friday) subject to local conditions and minimum numbers being reached. It might be possible to organise a private excursion locally at additional cost. Horse riding may also be arranged locally at extra cost.

DAY 9

Public coach to El Calafate.

It's an all-day public coach journey towards and over the frontier to Argentina across the bleak and scantily-populated Patagonian steppe, but the beauty of the mountainous scenery is staggering. In the afternoon you reach the shores of the milky turquoise Lago Argentina, and the little town of El Calafate, where you are based for the coming days.

This resort town is on the southern shore of Lago Argentino. Tourism in the last twenty years has transformed it into a bustling entrepôt for access to the nearby scenery of glaciers, lakes and impossibly steep peaks. It still has a bit of a frontier feel, though it is very busy in summer. Your hotel is a brisk walk along the lakeside, out of town.

DAY 10

Visit Perito Moreno glacier; boat cruise on the lake.

Guided excursion to Perito Moreno Glacier. It's an early morning departure from El Calafate to Los Glaciares National Park, a 90 min drive to the walkways and viewing platform overlooking the glacier. The thundering shards of falling ice are a breathtaking 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 five kilometres wide and stands 60m above the surface of the lake. Its ice masses are fed by the southern continental ice field from the west, and from other smaller surrounding glaciers.

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 11

Transfer to airport, fly to Buenos Aires.

Transfer to airport and fly to Buenos Aires (3hrs). This 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 where the tango was born, and where 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. 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 12

Guided gastronomic tour in San Telmo, Buenos Aires.

Take a guided culinary-themed lunchtime walking tour, guiding you and the other participants around Buenos Aires' best off-the-beaten-track eats tasting authentic Argentine dishes, including from the city's traditional hole-in-the-wall parrillas. Learn about culture and cuisine on this relaxed, sociable tour with up to 12 participants. Visiting several venues, sample traditional street foods choripan, provoleta and empanadas; a variety of classic parrilla cuts of meat; wines; and artisanal 'heladeria' ice creams.

Tours are conducted in the company of an English-speaking expert and last just under 3 hrs. You need to make your own way to and from the meeting point (to be advised before departure), in San Telmo neighbourhood to join your guide. Food and wine is included.

DAY 13

At leisure in the capital.

At leisure. Make the most of your free time to shop, have a drink and a pastry in an enticing coffee bar or peruse the items on display in one of the many markets. Take a stroll round Puerto Madero, the refurbished port district where former dock installations and features have been preserved alongside a string of excellent restaurants and loft conversions.

DAY 14

Transfer to airport for international 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

Guided cycling tour of Santiago

Full day hike in Desolation Pass, Lake District

Excursions and outdoor activities in Torres del Paine National Park

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 3.5hrs); 2 scenic road journeys (longest 6hrs).

ACCOMMODATION
This holiday offers economical modest mid-range accommodation, from functional, modern and well-equipped hotels in the cities to small and homely lakeside properties. You'll be camping in eco-domes in Torres del Paine, but there are proper beds and (shared) bathroom facilities.

MEALS
Breakfast daily, lunch day 12; dinner day 6; full board days 7, 8.

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: Santiago 1; Puerto Varas 3, Torres del Paine 3, El Calafate 2; Buenos Aires 3.

CURRENCY
The unit of currency in Chile is the Chilean peso; in Argentina it 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.

DAILY SPEND
It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around US$35-50 per day should cover the cost of meals not included in the holiday itinerary, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay considerably more.

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.

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.

TRIP SUITABILITY

In Torres del Paine National Park all walks are optional. Hikes vary in length (between 2 and 8 hours) and difficulty (most are easily followed and relatively flat). If you find time to walk around Bariloche, trails are undulating but not strenuous.

Be prepared for some early mornings, and for extreme weather conditions (mainly down South). However, throughout the holiday, there is time to relax and explore on your own if you wish.

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 temperatures, October to November and March to April are between 15 and 25°C and there is a good deal of pleasant sunshine. January and February are hot, around 30°C.

The lake district has weather not dissimilar to our own, but a bit sunnier in summer and rather rainier in the winter months.

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.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

A day pack is essential for carrying rainwear, snacks, books and a water bottle. Outside summer, those who feel the cold might take thermals. To ensure your comfort while walking in Patagonia, you should bring a good waterproof, walking boots (tried and tested so you don't get blisters!) as well as a good waterproof top, trousers and a warm hat and a scarf.

That said 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 bird 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 South America.

VACCINATIONS

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following: typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. You should consult your GP for specific requirements.

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

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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