



DISCOVERY GROUP TOURS

CHARITO: PURE PATAGONIA

12 days from **£3,535pp**

**CHILE / SANTIAGO AND THE VINEYARDS / CHILEAN LAKE DISTRICT (SOUTH) /
PATAGONIA / TORRES DEL PAINE NATIONAL PARK / ARGENTINA / EL CALAFATE AND
LOS GLACIARES NATIONAL PARK / BUENOS AIRES**



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 outdoor adventure with guided walking and wildlife spotting in Chilean and Argentine Patagonia, bookended by two cosmopolitan capitals, Santiago and Buenos Aires. This tour includes Chiloé Island, Torres del Paine and Perito Moreno glacier.

	UK clients depart on overnight flight to Santiago, Chile
DAY 1	Arrive in Santiago. Walking tour of the capital.
DAY 2	Optional vineyard tour or visit to Pacific port Valparaíso.
DAY 3	Fly to Puerto Montt and continue to Puerto Varas.
DAY 4	Full day exploration of Chiloé.
DAY 5	Fly to Punta Arenas and continue to Puerto Natales.
DAYS 6 - 7	Walking in the park to see rivers and glaciers.
DAY 8	Drive to El Calafate.
DAY 9	Excursion to the Perito Moreno Glacier.
DAY 10	Fly to Buenos Aires.
DAY 11	Walking tour of the capital.
DAY 12	Depart for international flight or extension. UK clients arrive home the following day.

ITINERARY

This holiday in Patagonia is perfect for anyone interested in the beautiful, fascinating and varied region of southern Chile and Argentina. This is an area of outstanding natural beauty intermingled with a unique culture. From the historical island of Chiloé, wrapped in the mists of time and legends, to a land of towering granite peaks, glacial lakes and huge expanses of windswept pampa, this is a magical part of the continent.

This tour includes a wide range of things to do in Patagonia, exploring cultures still barely touched by the outside world, with architecture, food and customs unlike anywhere else in the world. As you venture further south, hike in some of the most spectacular natural scenery and witness vast glaciers in azure waters. At either end of the adventure are two magnificent cities for you to discover: the vital, cosmopolitan Chilean capital Santiago, and the quasi-belle époque European atmosphere of Buenos Aires.

UK clients depart on overnight flight to Santiago, Chile

DAY 1

Arrive in Santiago. Walking tour of the capital.

Those arriving on an international flight will be met at the airport by the tour leader or a local representative. There will be time to relax before exploring the city and visiting a few of the many museums, markets and parks of this cosmopolitan capital.

In the afternoon your guided city tour takes you to all the major sites of this fascinating city concentrating on Santiago's bustling historic centre, which in recent years has taken on a new lease of life. Awakening from years of neglect, the traditional residential neighbourhood of Lastarria is a delight to explore, replete with shops, arty cafés and characterful hotels. Nearby, leafy Parque Forestal was inaugurated in the early twentieth century to celebrate the first 100 years of the republic. It is just a few blocks from the beating heart of old Santiago, the Plaza de Armas, the capital's main square which is graced by elegant Chilean wine palms with their characteristic bottle-shaped trunks. Grouped around the plaza are Santiago's Cathedral, the main post office, the National Historic Museum and the Municipalidad de Santiago (city hall). From here, if time, visit San Cristóbal Hill by riding the cable car to the top. On clear days there are spectacular panoramic views across the city towards the Andes.

DAY 2

Optional vineyard tour or visit to Pacific port Valparaíso.

Today there is an optional visit to Chile's second city, Valparaíso (2 hrs by bus). This lively seaport is built on a series of hills which form a backdrop to the wide bay, with views over the seaside resort of Viña del Mar. You can wander through the steep, winding streets and among the brightly-coloured colonial homes built for 19th century British and German merchants, or take a ride in one of the creaky wooden funiculars which link the cliff-top communities.

Time permitting, you may wish to visit one of the vineyards close to Santiago, to sample some highly respected Chilean wine.

DAY 3

Fly to Puerto Montt and continue to Puerto Varas.

A 1 hour 45 minute flight takes you south to Puerto Montt, followed by a short drive to Puerto Varas on the shores of Lake Llanquihue in the Chilean Lake District. The town is set amid lush, green, rolling countryside and was colonised by Germans at the turn of the 20th century. Its architecture and sedate style still reflects this. The town's 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.

The afternoon is free to explore the town or travel out to the Vicente Perez Rosales National Park, to visit the Petrohue waterfalls. Formed by a lava flow of volcanic rock and set amongst a 1,000 year-old forest, the falls make an impressive site.

DAY 4

Full day exploration of Chiloé.

Today we have a full day excursion to the mysterious island of Chiloé. Although located just off the coast of mainland Chile it often feels like a world away. We travel by road and ferry to Chacao where we will be met by our local guide. Once here we visit the plaza and the guide will explain the traditional architecture, which includes the famous wooden churches is famous for. We'll continue on to the Bay of Caulin, known for its great birdlife and do a quick oyster tasting before continuing to Ancud for lunch. Travelling through the 'campo' we arrive on the rugged Pacific Coast, where birdlife including penguins congregate on desolate beaches. In the late afternoon we'll return towards Ancud to a family farmhouse for a traditional curanto, a local pitbake and uniquely Chilote experience. Return to Puerto Varas in the evening.

DAY 5

Fly to Punta Arenas and continue to Puerto Natales.

Transfer back to Puerto Montt for your flight south to Punta Arenas. On a clear day you have views of the southern icecap, its fjords, volcanoes and glaciers. Approaching the city you see the rust brown Patagonian steppes, pitted with small lagoons, stretching out towards the Straits of Magellan. On the other side of the water rise the mountains of the windswept island of Tierra del Fuego.

Punta Arenas which was once an important, British-influenced trading centre before the opening of the Panama Canal turned it into a backwater; the region's fortunes were only briefly revived during a short-lived gold rush. To add to its woes, the sheep-rearing business has never recovered from the catastrophic collapse of the price of meat and wool. It's now a gateway to Chilean Patagonia and the nearby National parks.

From here continue by bus to Puerto Natales, a small town with a frontier feel on the shores of Last Hope Sound, frequented by pelicans, black-necked swans and cormorants and your base for 3 nights to explore the nearby Torres del Paine National Park.

DAYS 6 - 7

Walking in the park to see rivers and glaciers.

For 2 full days the group will explore the Torres del Paine National Park by private vehicle and on foot, leaving early in the morning and returning to the comfort of Puerto Natales by evening. Whilst exploring the park they'll be stops to visit some of the best viewpoints such as Lago Nordenskjold and Salto Grande. The scenery is overwhelming; the granite massif of the Cuernos, milky lakes dotted with icebergs and, soaring above, condors riding against perpetual fierce winds. Spend the rest of your days exploring the national park on foot. Follow a number of different walking trails winding alongside the glacial lakes and rivers with close-up views of tortured rock towers and needles rising 3,000m into a tempestuous sky.

The difficulty and length of the available walks in the park vary hugely, and some may not be suitable for all passengers. The most famous hike is to the 'base of the towers', but this is also the most strenuous lasting at least 8hrs. There should however be something for everyone, so consult your tour leader about which hike would be best suited to you or for alternatives such as horse riding. Water and windproof clothing, as well as suitable footwear, are essential as weather can be very unpredictable.

DAY 8

Drive to El Calafate.

Travel by comfortable coach towards Argentina across the Patagonian steppe: a bleak and scantily-populated landscape. Keep a look out for guanacos, rheas, and flamingos, as well as for the views over Lago Argentino, the largest lake in the country.

On the shores of the lake is El Calafate, where you are based for the coming days. This small frontier town has grown rapidly over the last twenty years and is a tourist hot spot for visiting the local scenery of stunning lakes and steep mountains as well as the stopping off point for visitors to the Perito Moreno glacier, one of the most dynamic in the world. You arrive in the afternoon and if you wish there should be time to visit the fascinating Glaciarium Museum, located in an interesting building with fantastic views just outside town. Once you have spent time learning about all things glacial, there is also an ice bar on the premises for a relaxing drink.

DAY 9

Excursion to the Perito Moreno Glacier.

This morning drive out towards the huge wall of ice which is the Perito Moreno Glacier, still one of the most dynamic in the world. The road follows the lake before turning up a wooded valley, dense with beech and birch trees, and continues alongside shimmering lagoons bordered with bright crimson and heather lichens.

Just looking at the cliff-edge of the glacier, which towers 60m above the water surface and is an extraordinary 5km 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.

There is an optional mini-trek on the glacier. Walking out on the ice is an extraordinary experience; atop this immense ice sheet you feel exposed to the elements, and you can explore the craggy, desolate landscape, peering into crevasses and deep water pools, squinting against the incredible blue of the ice. It is a 1-2hr walk on the ice led by a local guide, and crampons are provided this is one optional excursion we book in advance to maximise the chances of availability. There are age limits in place so please talk to your consultant for more details).

DAY 10

Fly to Buenos Aires.

Fly to the Argentine capital, Buenos Aires (3.5hrs), an elegant and cosmopolitan city famed for its fascinating districts and being the birthplace of the Tango and Diego Maradona. Evenings can be spent sampling the juicy world renowned steak, tasting the famous local wines or enjoying an evening tango show.

There is plenty of time to explore its lanes and boulevards as well as make the most of some free time to shop, have a drink and a pastry in a tea-room or peruse the items on display in one of the many markets.

DAY 11

Walking tour of the capital.

A guided tour of the city takes you to the most famous spots the city has to offer. Starting in the centre of the city, the historic heartland, where government buildings and churches mingle with chic shopping districts, which have a nostalgic, Parisian feel. The quintessential district La Boca with its cobbled streets and brightly painted houses is a must, as is the bohemian district of San Telmo, full of quaint old houses interspersed with antique shops, tango bars and expensive restaurants. Slightly further out of town is the Recoleta district, even more evocative of belle époque French and Italianate architecture. The area is home to the cemetery where Evita is laid to rest, and huge tombs line the alleys.

If you want to visit one of the city's iconic Tango shows speak to your tour leader who can arrange one for you for the evening.

DAY 12

Depart for international flight or extension.

UK clients arrive home the following day.

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

Santiago: walking tour of city

Chiloé: full day tour of the island

Torres del Paine: 2 full days in the national park

El Calafate: Perito Moreno Glacier

Buenos Aires: city tour

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

ABOUT OUR GROUP TOURS

To find out more about how our group tours including group sizes, solo travellers and why to choose us. Please click [here](#).

TOUR LEADER

On this tour, you'll be accompanied from start to finish by one of our exceptional Journey Latin America tour leaders. From the moment you land in Latin America until the day the tour ends they will deal with all the practicalities, expertly adapting to the circumstances and individual needs of the group. Rather than different guides in different cities, your leader will get to know the group and keep you informed and entertained as you go.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

12 days, 11 nights: Santiago 2; Puerto Varas 2; Puerto Natales 3; El Calafate 2; Buenos Aires 2.

ACCOMMODATION

For our Discovery Journeys we aim to use good quality, value-for-money accommodation, in a mix of larger more modern and smaller family run hotels. All the properties we use are well maintained and rooms will have a private bathroom with hot water.

The focus of these trips is on getting outside, seeing the sights, and experiencing local restaurants and cafes, therefore a few hotels may not have evening dining facilities. If you prefer more luxurious accommodation, please see our classic tours range.

We use the following properties on this tour:

- Santiago: Almasur Providencia
- Puerto Varas: Hotel Puelche
- Puerto Natales: Martin Gusinde
- El Calafate: Cauquenes de Nimez
- Buenos Aires: Hotel Kenton Palace

On very rare occasions these hotels can change, however please speak to one of our consultants who can provide full details for each departure if you have any doubts. Address and contact details will be sent out with your final documents.

TRANSPORT

3 flights (longest 3 hours). We use a mixture of private and public vehicles for the road transport. Where the journeys are done by public transport (2 in total) we use comfortable tourist coaches.

MEALS

Breakfast daily, lunch day 4.

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

On this tour the price includes excursions in all the places you visit as per the itinerary. There will however likely be some free time when you may choose to take part in an optional excursion. These are booked locally through your tour leader once you are in Latin America, however we are more than happy to advise you of what is on offer in advance of your holiday so you can best plan the excursions that suit you.

TRAVELLING ALONE

There is no extra cost for single travellers who are willing to share a room. You will be accommodated with a same-sex member of the group who is usually also travelling solo. For single travellers who wish to be sure of having their own room there are a limited number of single rooms available, which carry a surcharge.

TRIP SUITABILITY

Although not a walking holiday the nature, location and environment mean that the main activities of the tour do take place on foot. Hikes can vary in length and difficulty (some with steep ascents or more uneven terrain). Note that most

walks are linear and along good paths, (although some can be slippery in wet weather), so you can follow them as far as you feel comfortable. All trekking excursions are optional and your tour leader is always on hand and with the help of the local guides will always try and make sure that all levels of ability can be catered for and alternatives offered.

CLIMATE

This holiday only operates from October through to March. As a broad overview Chile and Argentina have the opposite seasons to the UK, meaning November to February tend to be the warmest summer months. The further south you travel in the country the cooler it gets, although this varies with altitude. A comprehensive overview of the weather in all the regions you are visiting can be found in our Destination pages. Our Travel Experts can answer your questions on climate and further details will be sent with your confirmation documents.

CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT AND LUGGAGE

A daypack is essential for carrying rainwear, snacks, books/tablet and a water bottle. To ensure your comfort while walking in Patagonia, you should bring good waterproof walking boots/shoes (tried and tested so you don't get blisters) as well as a good water/windproof (not just shower-proof) jacket and trousers, a warm hat and a scarf. Some walkers find hiking poles helpful, and binoculars are useful for bird and wildlife spotting. Bring a hat with a visor, sunglasses and sun block. Because the weather can be changeable, we recommend wearing layered clothing for excursions.

Please take note that Aerolineas Argentinas (who will operate some of the internal flights) permit a maximum of 15kg hold luggage on most domestic flights. Excess luggage can be paid for locally for a small fee. Please get in touch with the office before departure if you have any doubts.

MONEY

Please see the Country Info tab on this holiday for our latest currency information and advice about how to take your spending money. Tipping in Latin America is almost always done using cash. It is customary to tip tour leaders, local guides, drivers, boat crews and other service providers such as restaurant staff and porters. Full tipping guidelines are sent with your confirmation documents as is advice on local costs.

HEALTH, ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND INSURANCE

For health information on travelling to Chile and Argentina including recommended vaccinations, please see <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

All Latin American countries have specific entry regulations related to Covid 19. Please also check our Travel Hub for further information.

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports should be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Other nationalities should enquire with us or check with the consulates.

Travel insurance is essential. Details of our recommended policy can be found on the Travel insurance website.

Our full briefing dossier contains more information on vaccinations, visas and insurance and will be provided with your final travel documents or can be requested from your travel consultant at any time.

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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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