



www.southernexposuretours.co.nz

PATAGONIA ENCOMPASSED

BUENOS AIRES TO BUENOS AIRES - TRIP DURATION: 22nights/23days

NEAREST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT: Ministro Pistrani International Airport

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the passion of a Tango show in Buenos Aires
- Explore another world of Buenos Aires on a half day trip to the Parana River Delta
- Cross the magnificent Andes from Argentina to Chile on the famous Lakes Crossing
- Marvel at the huge ice falls on the guided tour of Moreno Glacier
- Feel like a pioneer in El Chalten and enjoy spectacular hikes in Glacier National Park
- Breathtaking zodiac ride to start our 5 Day excursion to Torres Del Paine National Park
- Peer into intensely blue crevasses on the terminal face of the Grey glacier, part of the Southern Patagonian Icefield
- See the action at the Punta Tomba Penguin Colony, the largest in South America
- Find yourself at the end of the earth on a stunning Beagle Channel Cruise

IS THIS ADVENTURE FOR YOU?

This adventure tour takes in the best that Buenos Aires, and Patagonia has to offer – Tango that will spark your passion for Latin music, sparkling lakes and mountains of Chile, the magic of the Moreno Glacier, the dramatic Glacier and Torres del Paine National Parks, and the Beagle Channel luring you to explore further. This is an active itinerary designed for the traveler who has the time to do and see as much as possible.

The trekking can be quite challenging due to the unpredictability of the weather, especially the strong winds, and you need to be in reasonably good shape. Except for the Refugio Grey to Pehoe hike of 3 to 4hrs, all the others are day hikes of 5 to 8hrs return to base camp. So how much you want to achieve on any given day is up to you. After all, it's all about you, so you can do it how you please. Typically each day on the trail involves a minimum of 6-8 hours of hiking at altitudes of up to 1600m.

Accommodation is generally simple but comfortable. There may be a couple of multi-share nights, with shared bathrooms in the national parks, though typically the hotels have private facilities.

WELCOME TO THE SOUTHERN EXPOSURE TOURS EXPERIENCE

ITINERARY

DAY 1 & 2

BUENOS AIRES, ARRIVAL DAY

You are free to arrive and check in at any time. There will be a briefing that night and a chance for you to meet your traveling companions and ask questions. The information will be awaiting you at the reception regarding that night's briefing. If arriving late in the evening, don't worry! You will be briefed in the morning and meet the group. For this reason we have our welcome dinner on day 2! On our first full day in this vibrant city, we visit the colorful La Boca district and then start a walking tour from the leafy suburb of Recoleta. **B, D**

DAY 3 & 4

BARILOCHE,

A morning flight takes us to the urban centre of San Carlos de Bariloche. As famous for its chocolate and resemblance to a European alpine resort, as it is for its beautiful location. Bariloche sits on the shores of stunning Lake Nahuel Huapi and is a favourite destination for Brazilian and Argentinian vacationers whose favourite pastime seems to be eating and drinking. Their gusto is understandable; Bariloche has some of the best food in the country. Sample a beefy *parillada*, or a variety of fresh salmon or lake trout, then work it off during a day hike around Cerro Catedral or while practicing your salsa at one of the town's *salsotecas*. We have nearly 2 days to explore the surrounding area, and the half day trip around Circuito Chico offers stunning views of the area, then you may still have time for mountain biking or hiking up Cerro Otto. **2B**

DAY 5

CHILEAN LAKES CROSSING, PUERTO VARAS

There are few areas in the world, which can match the **Chilean Lake District** for scenic grandeur. On today's lakes crossing from Bariloche to Puerto Varas, you'll find everything from snow-capped mountains to deep blue and emerald lakes, smoking volcanoes, forests and glaciers. It's a day you will never forget as we cross the Andes to the western coast of South America and **Puerto Varas**, a charming lakeside village of German style houses. The regional cuisine also reflects this, with many restaurants specializing in *kuchen* and other baked delicacies. Seafood dishes abound in this region. Of particular interest to visitors is the *curanto Chilote*, a hearty seafood stew that'll leave you ready for a siesta. This is a beautiful region with bright flowers and wooded mountain slopes with panoramic views. **B**

DAY 6 & 7

PUERTO NATALES

A stunning flight this morning, takes us along the Andes and Southern Patagonian Ice field to the historic port of Punta Arenas, former hub of the wool boom in the area. After a beautiful 3 ½ hr drive to the quaint town of Puerto Natales on Seno de Ultima Esperanza (Last Hope Sound), we'll get a briefing and a slide show on the days ahead in Torres del Paine National Park. Don't forget dinner to sample that fresh seafood and salmon Chile is so famous for. We also have time for an optional hike up Cerro Dorothea, with stunning views over Last Hope Sound and a visit with a local farming family. **2B,**

DAY 8 to 12

TORRES DEL PAINE NATIONAL PARK

We travel by boat and zodiac for the ride of your life, then at camp relax have a cocktail and get ready for our first hike tomorrow to French Valley, which is one of spectacular views as you walk around the base of the Horns of Paine and up the valley watching ice falling from hanging glaciers on the surrounding mountains.! Early the next morning we hike to the Grey Glacier and Refugio Grey. Along the way we'll pass icebergs of brilliant blue which have been carved off the face of the glacier we will soon be walking on. If you've still got energy to burn we can hike up to a lookout over the glacier before cocktails with 30,000 yr old ice cubes picked from the conveniently washed up ice bergs on the beach.!! After another hearty breakfast, you will be coached in the technical aspects of ice hiking, then it's off to our adventure on the blue. This is another awesome highlight of the trip, and you'll be surprised how easy the ice hiking is. You will even have the chance to try ice climbing. It's fun, safe and a great little challenge. In the afternoon we board the Grey II for a different perspective of the glacier. It's a 2 ½ hr trip back to the end of Grey Lake where we get picked up by our van and taken to the other side of the park, staying in Refugio Torres. The next day's trek is to the namesake of the park, the Torres of Paine. Now it's really time to be at one with your boots. It's about a 7hr round trip stopping for a picnic lunch along the way before the last scramble up the boulder field to a view of the towers you will never forget. You will be back in Puerto Natales by late evening for a for a well deserved rest (and night out). **(5B, 5L, 4D)**

DAY 13 & 14,

CALAFATE, CHALTEN 7 GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

A local bus ride will take us to El Calafate on the shore of Lago Argentino and the next morning a breathtaking visit to the Moreno Glacier. A deep blue relic of the ice age and one of the few advancing glaciers in the world. Once you have torn yourself away from watching the ice plunging into the lake below, we jump on a bus out to the remote village of Chalten (population 900!) The Glacier visit and bus trip to El Chalten does make for a long traveling day so be prepared with some snacks and a good book for the journey! **2B**

DAY 15, 16 & 17

CHALTEN & THE FITZROY RANGE

These next three days are spent hiking among the lakes and moraines of the Fitzroy range at the northern end of Glacier National Park. These granite pinnacles are famous the world over to climbers and hikers. We have time for two day hikes and, if you wish and optional excursion to Laguna del Desierto or horse riding. The hikes are to the base of Mount Fitzroy, Lago de Los Tres, Cerro Torre, and if the weather co-operates and we have plenty of energy then a vast 360' view of the mountains can be had from Pliegue Tumbado. It's a spectacular trek and the view of these jagged pinnacles is well worth it. **3B**

DAY 18 & 19

USHUAIA & TIERRA DEL FUEGO NATIONAL PARK

After boarding the early morning bus to Calafate, we take a short flight to Tierra Del Fuego and the world's southern most city, overlooking the Beagle Channel. The next morning we head out to the National Park and do a scenic coastal walk along the Beagle Channel for 3 to 4hrs. Our last day in the world's southern most city takes us onto the Beagle Channel to explore Bridges Island with its unique flora and fauna. It's a gentle stroll on a protected island which the indigenous Yamana used to use as a shelter point, with evidence of shell middens built up by years of habitation. We join an evening flight to Trelew and the famous Valdez Peninsula, our last stop before returning to Buenos Aires. **2B**

DAY 20 & 21

PUERTO MADRYN

This is truly where it's all at. The Valdez Peninsula is famous for its jaw dropping spectacle of killer whales beaching themselves to catch the sea lion pups, is also home to elephant seals and Southern Right whales, which we may have a chance to see. Our first trip however takes us to the Punta Tomba penguin colony. It's a raucous colony of over 1 million birds, the largest in Argentina. Puerto Madryn is also Patagonia's northern most seaside holiday resort so there's always a lot going on and plenty of seafood restaurants by the waterfront, not to mention a beach to relax on for those who just want to take it easy after all that trekking. **2B**

DAY 22

BUENOS AIRES

Our journey returns us on a flight to Buenos Aires and what better way to celebrate the end of a magical tour than a Tango Show! We will spend our last night as a group of friends who have shared in the special adventure of Patagonia. **B, D**

DAY 23

DEPARTURE - HASTA LUEGO AMIGOS, GRACIAS Y NOS VEMOS PRONTO B

IMPORTANT NOTE: S.E.T reserve the right to run this tour in reverse order.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Tango show with dinner, wine and non alcoholic drinks
- One day guided tour to Moreno Glacier
- Day hikes in Glacier National Park
- 5 day guided excursion to Torres Del Paine National Park with bilingual guides
- Ice hiking with optional ice climbing on Grey Glacier
- All breakfasts, 4 lunches and 6 dinners
- Half day guided Beagle Channel Cruise
- Flights from Puerto Montt to Punta Arenas
- All land transport during the itinerary
- The cost of entry for all included excursions
- All hotel accommodation* (on a twin share basis with 4nts multi share Torres Del Paine, including continental breakfasts). * Additional accommodations can be arranged at the clients' request

WHAT THE TOUR DOES NOT INCLUDE

Your international flight to/from South America, transfers to/from international flights, domestic Argentine flights from Buenos Aires to Bariloche, Calafate to Ushuaia and Ushuaia to Trelew and on to Buenos Aires, domestic and international airport departure taxes, pre & post tour accommodation, visas, vaccinations, personal insurance, meals (except those listed) , drinks, laundry, souvenirs, tips, and other items of a personal nature.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

Buenos Aires

ART HOTEL

Azcuenaga 1268

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Tel/Fax: Int. Dialing Code + 54 11 4821 4744

Officially the airport is called **Ministro Pistarini International Airport**, but it is commonly referred to as Ezeiza. It is situated 35 km from the city, about 40 minutes in a taxi. A taxi to the centre cost approximately \$30 USD and can be arranged from the official counter inside the Arrivals area.

There are a few bus companies that can take you to the hotel of your choice in the centre of Buenos Aires. Manuel Tienda Leon is the most well known, and the most expensive at about \$15. Their counter is at the customs exit. Ecuador buses are after this, and charge about \$12 USD. San Martin is after the exit to the hall right as you leave, and charges about \$12 USD. Students get a discount.

There are exchange facilities in the Banco de la Nacion with 1.5% commission, ATM Visa and Mastercard facilities available in all major towns and cities.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned, so you may arrive at any time.

Similarly the last day is a departure day in which no activities are planned.

Your Tour Leader will organize a short meeting soon after arrival, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. Your Tour Leader will contact you at the hotel on Day 1 and make sure you are settled comfortably. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

ITINERARY

All itineraries are given as a guideline only as our tour leaders may need to adjust the travel plan as the tour progresses due to changes in transport schedules or unforeseen circumstances. The tour leader will also try to be in the best place for local holidays and festivals, etc. We endeavor to incorporate any permanent changes into these dossiers as they happen. Therefore, we ask that you consider downloading the very latest dossier for your tour from our website just before traveling (as stated above, at www.southernexposuretours.co.nz).

WHAT TO TAKE

You will be on the go a great deal, so our advice is to pack as lightly as possible. Most people automatically assume that the weather is hot in South America, but because we are going far south, the temperature can be quite cold, especially with the wind chill factor and at night. We recommend the use of a duffel bag or backpack, whichever is easiest for you to carry. A good size daypack of around 10 to 15 litres, big enough to carry your rain gear, lunch, water, camera and hat & gloves is essential. Please note that on this trip a rain poncho is not appropriate due to the high winds, you will need a good rain jacket and pants.

Suggested List:

Documents:

- *Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- *Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- *Passport (with photocopies)
- *USD cash and travelers cheques (see personal spending money)
- *Credit card (see spending money)
- *Debit card (see spending money)
- *Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

Items Clothing

- First-aid kit** • Fleece top
- Sunblock • Windproof/waterproof jacket
- Sunglasses • Small towel and swim wear
- Toiletries (biodegradable) • 4 shirts/t-shirts
- Watch or alarm clock • Sun hat
- Water bottle • 1 pair of shorts
- 2 pairs of long trousers
- Pocket knife • 1 pair hiking pants/track pants
- Small flashlight • Hiking boots/ sturdy walking shoes
- Sport sandals

****First aid kit** should contain lip salve, Aspirin, Band Aids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re-hydration powder, extra prescription drugs you may be taking.

Optional

Camera and film, reading/writing material, binoculars, cover for backpacks, collapsible walking poles

Recommended for this trip:

- Inner sheet (for sleeping bag)
- Fair sized daypack
- Wool hat, mitts or gloves (preferably water proof)
- Rain pants
- Strong plastic bags to help keep gear dry
- Sleeping bag for Torres del Paine, though this can also be hired locally for approximately \$6USD/day-these are high quality and warm.
- Anti-inflammatory tablets (e.g. Ibuprofen)
- Thermal underwear (merino is best)

PLEASE NOTE: All other camping equipment for the Paine trek is provided and included in the cost of your trip. You may leave the bulk of your gear stored in Puerto Natales. Except for the walk from Refugio Grey to Lake Pehoe, which is a one way trek, all other hikes are loops out of a base camp and you will only need to carry your daypack for the duration of each hike.

TRIP PREPARATION

Please contact your physician or travel clinic for the most up-to-date health requirements. Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE THE CORRECT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION.**

Optional Activities List

All prices are per person in US dollar amounts. Prices are subject to change, and can fluctuate in relation to the high/low season and the number of people on a specific excursion. Not all excursions listed here may be available due to season or weather conditions.

Buenos Aires

City tour \$15 - \$30

Day tour to Colonia (Uruguay) \$50

Day tour to Estancia \$60

Bariloche

Mountain bike rental \$5/hour

Horseback riding \$25-\$45

Puerto Varas/Puerto Montt

Mountain bike rental \$15/day

Kayak rental \$10 - \$25

Rafting (Petrohue River) \$35 - \$65

Puerto Natales

Horseback riding \$110

Sea Kayaking full day \$110, half day \$70

El Chaltén

Horseback riding \$25-\$45 (half day)

Trip: Laguna del Desierto \$25

Ushuaia

Horseback riding \$35-\$65

Ski lift \$5 (return)

Entrance museum \$7

SPENDING MONEY

We recommend US\$30 per day to cover the cost of meals, snacks, drinks, some souvenirs, laundry, tips etc. It is necessary to bring your spending money in US\$ only. This should be in the form of cash (small denominations are advisable for every day use and debit cards for cash withdrawals. In 2002 the currency of Argentina has devalued dramatically and there is now also a black market to change cash. Credit cards are also widely accepted especially Visa & MasterCard. Both credit and debit cards are often the best way to carry your money although we do not recommend that you rely on this as your **ONLY** means of bringing funds in case authorization is denied due to poor computer connections or other problems, which are quite common!

You can use your debit or credit cards to draw out cash in local currency from ATM's in all but one of the towns we visit on this tour. However credit card commission charges can be high and you should check with your bank about their particular charges on foreign transactions, before leaving home. As a backup an amount of US\$ travelers cheques are handy, though more time consuming to exchange. Make sure you record your travelers cheques numbers and to cross them off when used. All US\$ cash bills should be in good condition and torn or dirty notes are not usually accepted. You should only carry amounts you feel comfortable with. Please note all cash and travelers cheques should be in small denominations of US\$ only - no other currency is widely accepted for exchange.

BUDGET TO HELP YOU:

Meals not included - \$500 USD. All meals are included while camping.

Additional sightseeing – please see optional activities list above

Local Payment - \$450 USD

Departure tax - \$18 USD,

Tipping suggestions- Local guide tip pool: \$30-\$40USD approx

S.E.T. leader: \$5-10 USD / week

PAYING LOCALLY

Most of our adventure tours involve a local payment. Paying locally allows us to keep the overall cost of our tours competitive and pass the savings on to you. These funds are put towards local expenses. In some developing countries the transferring of funds is at times problematic so this is a way to help us serve you whilst saving you money. This is especially true of Argentina after their devaluation. Payment is to be made to your leader upon arrival in cash.

TIPPING

Many restaurants expect a tip (10%) for service. Also, there are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers. You may do this individually, or your Tour Leader may offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Also at the end of each trip, if you felt your SET Tour Leader did an outstanding job, a tip is always appreciated but never expected.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY/FITNESS

Adventure tours are designed for the relatively fit and healthy. The trails can be quite challenging due to the long days and some fairly steep terrain so you need to be in reasonably good shape but there is the option of going just as far as you please on all but the walk from the Grey Glacier to Pehoe. Though the object of most of the walks are to reach a lookout point for that particular trail. Please be aware that we are NOT allowed to administer first aid or drugs to clients for legal reasons so please be fully prepared with your own medical kit.

FOOD

Eating out is one of the highlights of any tour to Latin America; therefore you are free to choose which type of restaurant to eat in, in order to give you flexibility in the type of cuisine you prefer. When in remote areas where there are no restaurants we do include meals. Meals are included on the camping excursion in Torres Del Paine National Park, as well as a continental breakfasts when applicable.

Professional cooks prepare these. At other times you can make your own arrangements with the advice/recommendations from our Tour Leader. You can eat as a group, with friends or with the locals. Since its all about you, you can cater for your own tastes around your budget. Generally the food in this region is not spicy and western style breakfasts are readily available. There are plenty of international restaurants throughout this tour. Most meals come with just the meat or fish and often lack a variety of other vegetables, though salads are great. Italian, Chinese and even Indian foods are available in many areas. Chilean wines (considered one of the best in South America), local beers and soft drinks are obtainable everywhere.

WEATHER

This tour covers 2 main climatic zones; Buenos Aires which is warm and can be quite dry in summer (Nov to March), with temperatures of around 25 to 30C. Patagonia is cooler and can be very windy, and you will probably experience 5 or 6 variations in weather during the course of one day. The constantly changing climatic conditions make for dramatic photography and a challenge when deciding what to wear. Layers are the best way to go and will ensure you can be warm, dry and comfortable no matter what the elements have in store for you. We find that the weather, though far from being balmy and tropical, is one of the highlights.

SECURITY

Like anywhere in the world, you can be in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, traveling with a Latin American expert increases passenger safety greatly because our crew know the good and bad places in each city and can warn our clients about the local tricks. You should be especially careful when wandering about the capital city on your own, particularly at night. Tourists are easy prey for individual pickpockets or groups of two or more people working as a team on the streets. Pay particular attention to anyone who “accidentally” spills anything on your clothes or belongings (mustard, etc.), then apologizes and offers to help clean up. They will clean you out instead! Be safe and leave your passport, credit cards, travelers cheques and cash funds you won't be using immediately, within the hotel's safety deposit box. Most *Porteños* are honest and genuinely helpful and friendly, but be safe and enjoy the city!

We suggest clients always use the hotel safes wherever possible and obtain a good money belt before leaving home. Security of our passengers is our tour leaders' number one concern. They provide all necessary information during the pre-departure meeting.

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS AT BEGINNING OR END OF A TOUR

If your flight connections are a little tight, don't worry, as we are fairly flexible and can usually assist you in joining the group a few hours or even a day. Therefore, if your plans don't exactly match our itinerary, contact us for advice on the best method and place to join the group. Please note that your joining/departure city will have interesting sights to see so if you have the time it is nice to allow a day or two extra in these cities and this will also allow you time to relax before your tour begins.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Should you need to contact S.E.T during an emergency situation. Emails are checked daily and a list of contact numbers and itinerary will be left with the joining hotel and given to all tour participants on day1. info@southernexposuretours.co.nz

The information supplied in this dossier is subject to change. It is an indication only and cannot be viewed as a contractual obligation on the part of the company. For the most up to date and current dossier, visit www.southernexposuretours.co.nz