



ADVENTURES IN PATAGONIA

FEBRUARY 25 - MARCH 9, 2018

TRIP SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking to the fabled granite spires of Patagonia, including Fitz Roy, Cerro del Torre, and the Towers of Paine
- Seeing the remains of the vast glaciers that carved out this land
- Learning about the natural and human history of Patagonia
- Gaining a firsthand experience of the scope, diversity, and majesty of this awe-inspiring area

TRIP AT A GLANCE

Dates:	Feb 25 - Mar 9, 2018
Location:	Argentina and Chile
Cost:	\$5,250.00
Activities:	Hiking
Arrive:	Lobby of our trip hotel in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at 6:00 pm on February 25
Depart:	Punta Arenas Airport, in Chile, at noon on March 9

TRIP OVERVIEW

Patagonia is one of the most stunning, diverse, and sparsely populated places on earth. Shared by Argentina and Chile, it is known for its pristine wilderness, magnificent snow-capped peaks, dramatic granite spires, sparkling lakes, and immense glaciers. Its spectacular beauty has been preserved both by its remoteness and the parks that protect the outstanding landscapes. On this 13 day trip, we have picked out the places that will stay in your memory forever: the breathtaking mountain environs of Torres del Paine National Park in Chile and stunning Los Glaciares National Park in Argentina. Combining some days of longer hiking with easier days, we will immerse ourselves in the beauty and culture of this unique area.

RATING

This trip is designed for women in excellent physical condition who have hiking experience and want an active exploration of Patagonia. While the level of activity varies each day, you should be able to hike up to ten hours on trails with elevation gains of up to 4000 feet while carrying a daypack weighing 15 - 20 pounds. Altitude is not a problem here. This trip is rated 5. Prior to beginning the trip, participants should be engaged in aerobic conditioning for at least 40-50 minutes 4-5 times a week. Adding some specific conditioning such as strength training, endurance training, and longer aerobic workouts will be necessary; hiking 3 - 6 hours once a week, starting at least 6 weeks before the trip, is also recommended. Rating: 1 2 3 4 **[5]** .

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Experienced guides, including a bilingual Argentinian guide and an AGC guide
- 12 nights lodging: 7 in hotels or inns, and 5 in mountain refugios
- Meals as detailed on the itinerary (12 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 11 dinners)
- Transportation from our hotel in Buenos Aires to the Punta Arenas airport at trip end except for internal flights
- Local National Park guides and associated gratuities
- Entrance fees to the National Parks

What's not included: International and domestic airfare, travel to our hotel in Buenos Aires, alcoholic beverages, 1 lunch and 1 dinner, guide gratuities, Argentina entry fee (\$160), and optional excursions.

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, and new opportunities.

DAY 1

FEBRUARY 25, SUNDAY



We'll meet today in Buenos Aires, a charming city that is easy to explore on foot or metro. Most flights arrive in the morning and we'll provide instructions for transfer to Hotel 725 Continental. You're free to spend the afternoon as you choose including joining the Adventures in Good Company guide in exploring the city. At 6:00pm we'll meet in the hotel lobby for introductions and a trip orientation. Later this evening we'll go out to dinner together and then get to bed early. Overnight Hotel 725 Continental, Buenos Aires (D)

DAY 2

FEBRUARY 26, MONDAY



Depending on flight schedules, we'll transfer today to the domestic airport for our 3 to 4 hour flight to El Calafate (cost of airfare is not included but we will coordinate buying the tickets). From there we transfer across the Patagonian steppes to the mountain town of El Chalten, often called Argentina's Trekking Capital. On a clear day, we'll have spectacular vistas of the Fitz Roy mountain range during our drive. We arrive in time to settle in, perhaps explore the small town a little, and share another dinner together. Overnight [Hosteria Pudu Lodge](#) or similar in El Chalten (D)

DAY 3

FEBRUARY 27, TUESDAY



Our first day hike is to the lookout of Laguna de los Tres - a turquoise lagoon named because three glaciers drain into it. We head towards Fitz Roy massif, A UNESCO World Heritage Site, with breathtaking views of its iconic spires and peaks. We follow a beautiful trail to our first panoramic views of Mount Fitz Roy. Our trail then continues through forest and open areas to Rio Blanco, the Fitz Roy basecamp where climbers prepare to climb its 11,290-foot summit. From here it is a steep but worthwhile 1300 ft climb to Laguna de los Tres, a striking azure blue lake at the foot of the massif. From the lake we have close-up views of the vertical rock walls of Fitz Roy's east face, the impressive spire called Poicenot Needle, and the dramatic blue of Piedras Blancas glacier. Retracing our steps, we return to the town of El Chalten for a well deserved dinner and night's rest. Hiking: 12.4 miles, 3100 feet elevation gain, 9- 10 hours (B, L, D)

DAY 4

FEBRUARY 28, WEDNESDAY



We walk where the Andean condors fly today. Loma means "hill" in Spanish and Pliegue Tumbado is the name of the grouping of hills at the top. This mountain, 4200 ft tall, is located immediately south of the Cerro Torre valley and offers spectacular views over the mountains, glaciers, and lakes. Our trail starts winding through shrubland and forest as it climbs the slopes of the mountains, arriving at a viewpoint with panoramic views of Fitz Roy, Torre, and the dramatic glacier valley in between both. If we go all the way to the summit, we start climbing a long but gentle path on scree and are rewarded at the top with views of Paso del Viento (Wind Pass) and some of the mountains rising from the Patagonian Icefield. After 6 to 8 hours of hiking we are back in Chalten by late afternoon. Hiking: 12 - 13 miles, 2400+ ft elevation gain, 6 - 8 hours Overnight Hosteria Pudu Lodge or similar in El Chalten (B, L, D)

DAY 5

MARCH 1, THURSDAY



One of the classic treks of El Chalten is to the cerro Torre Lagoon, at the foot of the amazing Adela range, Torre and Grande glaciers, and the incredible Cerro Torre. Mt. Torre is famous for its beauty, as well as for its climbing difficulty. Every year, countless expeditions attempt to reach the summit, but only a few succeed. In comparison to our first two days, our hike today is easier with gentler uphill. Evidence of its glacial past is everywhere as we cross terminal moraines and hike in an ancient glacial valley to a magnificent viewpoint of the area and have lunch with a view, weather permitting. Depending on time we may continue to Laguna Torre. In late afternoon we drive back to El Calafate. Hiking: 13 miles, 1900 ft elevation gain, 7 hours. Overnight Hotel Hainen or similar in El Calafate (B, L, D)

DAY 6

MARCH 2, FRIDAY



Today we experience the Perito Moreno glacier, one of the world's few glaciers that is not receding. The stunning mass of tiny blue ice peaks at the terminus is even more awesome because of constant cracking sounds when pieces of ice break and crash into the water below. Most glaciers calve, or release ice, in deep water, but not Perito Moreno, where the calving rates are higher than on other Patagonian glaciers. Lago Argentino, the lake where Perito Moreno ends, is shallower than the bodies of water at the ends of most glaciers so the ice bergs don't melt as quickly, perhaps one reason why the glacier is still advancing. Hopefully we will see a car-sized chunk of ice calve into the lake below. Weather permitting, we'll have our lunch overlooking the glacier along an expansive boardwalk and view points, then take an hour-long boat ride on the lake for another close-up perspective.

We return to El Calafate in the afternoon. If you are a dog lover, you might be interested coming with us to visit a center that has a unique way of helping street dogs, which are common in Patagonia. Otherwise, you'll have time to explore the many outdoor stores and artisan shops that offer handcrafts and regional products. Dinner is on your own tonight, with choices from number of great restaurants. Overnight El Calafate. (B)

DAY 7



MARCH 3, SATURDAY

After an early breakfast, we leave for a scenic drive of about seven hours through the spectacular landscape of the Patagonia steppes into Chile and Torres del Paine National Park. We'll see unique wildlife such as herds of guanacos (llama relatives) and lesser rheas (related to emus and ostrich). We'll also see the mountains that make the park famous -- Paine Grande, the Horns, Admiral Nieto and the Towers. After we settle into our lodging at the base of the Towers magnificent rock spires, we'll take a walk to get familiar with the landscape and perhaps, the wind. Overnight at Refugio Torres Central in Torres del Paine National Park. (B, L, D)

DAY 8



MARCH 4, SUNDAY

We start our trek today on the famous W, so named for the shape of the trails, hiking from lodge to lodge. First, we head up the Ascencio Valley to the Base of Towers of Paine lookout. The trail involves some steep sections and crossing a boulder field, just before the final lookout where the spectacular towers rise from a turquoise glacial lake. This is the basecamp from which expert climbers start their attempts to scale the sheer forbidding walls of Torres Norte, Central, and Sur. If the weather's right, we'll get that postcard-perfect photograph. We return on the same trail back to our lodge and a well-earned dinner. Hiking: 12 miles, 4000 ft elevation gain, 8 - 9 hours. Overnight Refugio Torres Central (B, L, D)

DAY 9



MARCH 5, MONDAY

After a hearty breakfast, we leave from our lodge and follow the Paso Los Cuernos (Step of the Horns) trail along the north shore of Lago Nordenskjold. With the soaring Horns of Paine massif on our right and the sparkling lake stretching on the left for our entire hike, it's a hard choice which way to look. We'll have a convivial dinner at our lodge, sharing stories with other hikers and sleep in double cabins tucked beside a waterfall or domes sleeping 8. Cabanas los Cuernos or Los Duomos Frances. Hiking 8 miles, 4-5 hours. (B,L,D)

DAY 10

MARCH 6, TUESDAY



Today we hike up and down the magnificent Valle del Frances (French Valley), considered by many to be the most beautiful part of the W trek. A dramatic and different view of sheer cliffs, hanging glaciers, and dramatic rock formations unfolds with every step. Periodically we hear avalanches crashing down from the glacier in the distance as we hike up to the final viewpoint in a naturally-formed amphitheater encircled by the park's most impressive formations: the Hoja (Blade), Mascara (Mask), Espada (Sword), Catedral (Cathedral), Aleta de Tiburon (Shark's Fin) and Fortaleza (Fortress), plus views of Paine Grande, the highest mountain in Torres del Paine at 2,884m (9,462ft). After coming back down the valley, we continue hiking across the steppe to our mountain lodge at Refugio Paine Grande. Hiking 14 miles, 10 hours (B,L,D)

DAY 11

MARCH 7, WEDNESDAY



We are at the last leg of the W, hiking today on rolling ups and downs above Lake Grey. We'll have impressive views of the Grey glacier, part of the Southern Patagonian Ice field, and the dramatic Paine massif. After we settle into our lodge, those who want a little more adventure can kayak for several hours past icebergs and the Grey Glacier, weather permitting (extra cost approx \$90). Hiking 7 miles hiking, 4 hours. Overnight Refugio Grey (B,L,D)

DAY 12

MARCH 8, THURSDAY



This morning we'll retrace our path from yesterday back to the boat launch near Refugio Paine Grande and for our boat ride across Lake Pehoe. We'll meet back up with our transport for our hour and a half transfer to Puerto Natales and our final celebration dinner. Hotel Weskar or similar. Hosteria Weskar or similar (B,L,D)



We leave early after breakfast for a 3 hour drive to the Punta Arenas airport by noon. Plan your flight after 2 pm; if you are flying directly home, you can return either through Buenos Aires or, if you want to join us in exploring Easter Island, plan to fly to Santiago, Chile. (B)

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

GETTING THERE

Arriving in Buenos Aires, Argentina:

- Fly into the Ezeiza International Airport (EZE), 14 miles south-southwest of Buenos Aires.
- Depending on your departure city, you may have to leave February 24 to arrive on February 25.
- You'll receive detailed instructions for getting to our hotel in Buenos Aires in the Pre-Departure document, sent 6 months prior to trip start.

Departing from Punta Arenas Airport, Chile:

- We will arrive in the Punta Arenas airport (PUQ) at noon on March 9. Plan your flight after 2:00 pm. You can either return to Buenos Aires or, if you are joining us on the Extension to Easter Island, fly to Santiago (SCL).

If you would like help with any travel plans we recommend our travel agent Barbara Nelson, Scan East West Travel, at bnelson@scaneastwest.com or call 206-623-2157.

ACCOMMODATIONS

We will spend 7 nights in double occupancy rooms with ensuite bathrooms in hotels or small inns (hosteria). While on the W trek, we will also spend 5 nights in Torres del Paine in mountain refuges or hostels (refugio), which have dormitory-style sleeping (4 - 8 people to a room) and shared bathrooms.

Vegetarian diets can be accommodated although there may be fewer choices than you are accustomed to. People with vegan and gluten free diets will need to bring supplemental food.

WEATHER

The seasons, weather and climate in Patagonia are reversed from those in our Northern hemisphere. March is equivalent to our September when average daytime highs range from 65-70 Fahrenheit in the sun to the low 40's. Night temperatures are typically in the mid to upper 30's. The weather is extremely erratic in Patagonia. It varies from warm sunshine to drizzle, to rain and/or sleet in a matter of minutes, and returning to sunshine just as quickly. Wind is a constant factor, ranging from strong breezes of 15-20 mph to gale forces up to 60 mph. Bring what's on the packing list and you'll be prepared.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND TRIP CANCELLATION/TRIP INTERRUPTION INSURANCE, WHICH COVERS YOUR COST IF YOU NEED TO CANCEL OR INTERRUPT YOUR TRIP for medical reasons, trip delay, lost baggage, and other unforeseen emergencies. Adventures in Good Company will send you information about travel insurance with your registration information, or you may purchase coverage through your own insurance company. In order to avoid disappointment and expense in the event that you must cancel your trip we strongly urge you to purchase some type of insurance coverage. You can also sign up for it online at [Travelex Insurance](#). To get the best rates, use 20-0016 as your location number on the Get A Quote page.

PACKING LIST

Note: For the W Trek, you will need to carry clothes for the 5 days you will stay at the refugios. Our luggage with the rest of our clothing will be transported to our hotel in Puerto Natales.

FOOTWEAR

- 1 pair of midweight hiking boots, must be waterproofed
- 1 pair of comfortable shoes for general use
- 3-4 pairs of hiking socks (wool or synthetic equivalent: Smartwool, Thorlo, Darn Tough)

CLOTHING

- 2 - 3 pair of comfortable supplex/nylon long pants for hiking - zip-offs work well
- 1 pair of shorts (should be quick-drying nylon)
- 2-3 synthetic or lightweight merino wool T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts
- 2 lightweight, long-sleeved shirts for hiking - button up front is the best
- 1 pair lightweight long underwear top – silk, wool or synthetic equivalent
- 1 pair lightweight/midweight bottoms - silk, wool or synthetic equivalent
- 1 medium-weight top layer – synthetic or wool pull over - fleece or wool vest works well for this layer
- 1 warm fleece or lightweight down jacket
- 1 rain jacket and rain pants – waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex - not a plastic poncho
- Underwear/nightwear
- 1 pair wool, Capilene, or Polartec gloves
- 1 warm/lightweight wool or fleece hat
- 1 wide brimmed or baseball style hat for protection from the sun/rain
- 1 – 2 changes of casual clothes to wear at end of day

TOILETRIES (small everything)

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, hand sanitizer, shampoo, contact lens paraphernalia, sanitary supplies
- Sunscreen and lip protection with sunblock of at least SPF 15
- Personal first aid/patch kit - Band-Aids, 1 safety pin, moleskin, compeed (or blister bandages), ibuprofen, electrolytes/vit C, peptobismol tablets, any personal medications

Please note: Individuals who have had or have the potential for a severe allergic reaction to insect stings, specific foods or medications must bring an epi-pen. Please consult your physician and tell your guide.

EQUIPMENT/ESSENTIALS

- Passport and copy of passport**
- 1 pair Trekking poles
- 1 daypack (see notes on packing list for recommended capacity)
- Rain cover for your daypack
- Capacity to carry 2 liters of water (Please see Notes on Packing List)
- Sunglasses (100% UV protection) w/retention strap
- Small headlamp or flashlight
- Ear plugs (for a good night's sleep!)
- Tupperware-like container for sandwich/lunch
- 1 – 2 bandanas/buff
- Wristwatch/travel alarm clock
- extra ziplock bags

OPTIONAL (personal preference, not required)

- Camera (extra battery) and film/memory card
- Book, notebook, journal, pencil/pen
- Binoculars
- Your favorite snack (snacks will also be provided)
- 2 pair synthetic, lightweight liner socks (optional -- not everyone uses sock liners)
- Short Gaiters

NOTES ON PACKING

Adventures in Good Company's packing list covers everything you need to assure your safety and comfort. You may not use everything you bring; however, you need to come prepared for all possible weather conditions. At the same time, you must be able to carry your own luggage, sometimes up and down stairs. As space for luggage on our trips is limited, please stick to the packing list as closely as possible.

Daypacks: Your daypack should be large enough to hold the following items: 2 liters of water, rain gear, snacks and clothes for 5 days, sun screen, warm layers, personal first aid kit, lightweight gloves, warm hat and personal items such as camera, etc. We recommend a daypack with a capacity of between 2000 and 2800 cubic inches with a hip belt, padded shoulder straps, and 'lifters'. Have an elasticized pack cover that fits snugly over it. Before you leave home check to be sure that it is comfortable to wear all day and has sufficient space for all of your items. Note: Fanny-packs and hydration packs are not large enough to hold all the items you will need for the day.

Footwear: Well-fitting boots are very important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes before your trip. For general hiking, lightweight or midweight cordura or leather boots with a Vibram sole work well. If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get boots that come above the ankle— you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain. Remember to waterproof your boots before the trip. Even boots billed as 'waterproof' need to be treated with a waterproofing product.

Personal First Aid Kit: Bring a small first aid kit with familiar medicine and first aid supplies you might need. Recommendations include the following: blister or foot remedies like moleskin, Compeed, blister bandages, or similar, a small roll of duct tape (always useful!), remedies for respiratory ailments, stomach ailments, sore muscles or joints. The guides will have a first aid kit but having what you know works well for you is a good idea.

Clothing: The clothing listed on the packing list has been chosen for your specific trip conditions and for its versatility for layering. NO COTTON for your active wear! It should all be made from synthetic/synthetic blends, down/down blends or wool/wool blends. Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity.

Rain Gear: You will need a parka or jacket made of a coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. Be sure it keeps water out. Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Your wind/rain pants should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your pants on over your boots. An inexpensive plastic poncho will both leak and tear easily and is not recommended.

Hydration: Being able to easily access your water without assistance, so that you can drink frequently, is important to your safety and enjoyment. One method is to have a water bottle attached to your waist strap. Another option is to use a **HYDRATION SYSTEM** such as CamelBak, Platypus, and MSR bladder bags, which are collapsible water bags with a hose attachment that you drink from. The bags fit inside or outside your pack with the hose positioned over your shoulder so that you can access your water as you hike. Bladder bags can hold 1 - 3 liters of water.

Trekking Poles: Trekking poles are required for this trip. Trekking poles contribute to your safety by improving your balance and stability, and to your health by saving stress on your hips and knees. If you are not familiar with trekking poles, read this blog post that addresses the most commonly asked questions: <http://blog.adventuresingoodcompany.com/blog-women-travel/bid/154714/Trekking-poles-for-hiking-trips-the-4-most-common-questions>.