



Patagonian Insights

16th November - 8th December 2020



Day 1

Monday 16th November – Sydney to Buenos Aires, Argentina

Flight to Buenos Aires, Argentina via Santiago, Chile. Depart Sydney in the morning and arrive approximately 15 hours later in the early evening of the same day!

Two nights accommodation at Casa Sur Recoleta Hotel.

Day 2

Tuesday 17th November – Buenos Aires

We spend the day exploring Buenos Aires on a city tour with local guide. Our first stop is in the historical centre at Plaza de Mayo, the site of the city's foundation in 1580 and focal point for key events in Argentinian history. Wander the cobble-stone streets and picturesque buildings of nearby San Telmo, the city's oldest residential neighbourhood, pay a visit to Recoleta Cemetery, the final place of Eva "Evita" Perón, and get a taste of the old and new in this colourful and fascinating city. We ride the local train to the Tigre district on the Paraná Delta, a myriad of intriguing small canals. Visit the old Puerto de Frutos and take a private cruise on the Tigre Delta with a stop at Gato Blanco Restaurant in the heart of the Delta, where we enjoy lunch. We return to Buenos Aires on the Tren De La Costa. In the evening, our Buenos Aires experience is capped off with a special dinner and tango show.



Buenos Aires

Day 3

Wednesday 18th November – Buenos Aires to Puerto Madryn

Morning flight to Trelew in Chubut Province to begin our exploration of Patagonia. The Welsh settled in Chubut in the mid 1800s and a number of the cities and towns bear Welsh names, including Trelew, picturesque Gamain and Puerto Madryn, and Chubut remains the cultural heart of the Welsh-Argentinian population. We drive through the Chubut River valley, stopping for famous Welsh tea at Ty Te Caerdydd (where Princess Diana enjoyed a cuppa too!) before continuing further south to Puerto Madryn from which we will encounter the incredible wildlife of the Valdés Peninsula tomorrow.

Two nights accommodation at Territorio Hotel, Puerto Madryn.

Day 4

Thursday 19th November – Valdés Peninsula

A full-day excursion to UNESCO-listed Valdés Peninsula and San Lorenzo Penguin Rockery. Richly endowed with marine and terrestrial wildlife, the harsh yet spectacular environment of the Valdés Peninsula offers an incredible opportunity to view massive colonies of sea lions and elephant seals as well as abundant and diverse birdlife, making it one of the premier birdwatching locations in Argentina. Our

excursion includes a gourmet lunch in the outdoors. We also visit Estancia San Lorenzo, a large sheep station bordering San Matías Gulf and home to a breeding colony of approximately half a million Magellanic penguins as well as flightless rhea (a distant relative of the emu) and land mammals such as guanaco and cavies. This special day ends with a sunset whale-watching cruise – and champagne toast! – along the Valdés coastline.

Dinner at our hotel.



San Lorenzo Penguin Rockery



San Carlos de Bariloche

Day 5

Friday 20th November – Puerto Madryn to San Carlos de Bariloche

We journey north to neighbouring Río Negro Province, with lunch served on route, crossing the remote farms and towns of the Patagonian plains to the capital Viedma, on the southern bank of the Río Negro. Guided tour of the city and the historic settlement of Carmen des Patagones across the river, then transfer to Hotel Austral to refresh before boarding our overnight train to the Southern Andes. Tren Patagónico, the once-a-week train to San Carlos de Bariloche, will be our hotel on rails tonight – enjoy a hearty meal in the dining car and be lulled to sleep in the comfortable sleeping cabins as the train journeys to the western reaches of Río Negro Province.

Overnight onboard Tren Patagónico.

Day 6

Saturday 21st November – San Carlos de Bariloche

Wake to Patagonia rolling by your window and take a leisurely breakfast in the dining car as the Andes mountains begin to appear. Arrival at San Carlos de Bariloche, with welcome from our local guide and transfer to our hotel for lunch. In the afternoon, our guide takes us on a gentle hike through the Andean beech and cypress forest with stunning views of the high mountains and glacial lake, Lago Nahuel Huapi. On the shores of the lake taste homemade delicacies and try the favourite warm beverage of South America, *maté*.

Overnight accommodation at El Casco Art Hotel, San Carlos de Bariloche.

Day 7

Sunday 22nd November – San Carlos de Bariloche to Puerto Varas, Chile

Today we journey to Chile across one of the lowest passes in the majestic Andes, taking the Lakes Crossing, a series of three lake crossing by ferries and connecting private coach travel. Enjoy magnificent views of the mountains as we cross the border to Puerto Varas, an established lakeside holiday town on the shores of Lago Llanquihue in the aptly-named Región de los Lagos, Chile.

Two nights accommodation at Hotel Cumbres, Puerto Varas.

Day 8

Monday 23rd November – Puerto Varas

Full day touring around the Lago Llanquihue region, heading first to Volcán Orsono, a snow-capped stratovolcano on the eastern shore of the lake, where we take a chair lift to a lookout point. During the mid 1800s many German migrants arrived in Llanquihue area and their heritage in the region remains strong. Puerto Octay and Frutillar are significant German settlements, and in Frutillar we visit the Museo Colonial Aleman, a detailed recreation of the 19th-century settler life. We also visit the Teatro del Lago, a modern stage theatre and concert hall by the shores of Lago Llanquihue that continues the long and vibrant musical history of this UNESCO Creative City of Music. Lunch will be at a traditional German heritage café.



Day 9

Tuesday 24th November – Puerto Varas to Chiloé Island

Depart Puerto Varas by coach to Chiloé Island, one of the last places to be politically united to modern day Chile. Chiloé was home to the Huilliche, Chohno and Cuzco peoples prior to the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the 1500s, and Chiloé continues to bear its Huilliche name. Jesuit missionaries arrived in the 17th century, sparking the construction of the unique Chilota wooden churches, which fused indigenous and European cultural traditions and skills and drew on the abundant timber resources of the island to create this distinctive and UNESCO World Heritage-listed architecture.



Our tour of the northern part of the island encounters the Chilota churches as well as the *palafitos*, the traditional and brightly coloured stilted houses on the coastline. We enjoy a *curanto*, a typical Chilota feast of seafood, meats and potato cooked in an earth pit – archaeological excavations indicate that the same dish has been enjoyed on Chiloé for several thousand years!

Overnight accommodation at Tierra Chile Adventure and Spa Hotel, Chiloé Island.

Day 10

Wednesday 25th November – Chiloé Island to Futaleufú

Depart Chiloé Island by private chartered aircraft. Heading east, we fly to the town of Chaitén, which in May 2008 was almost obliterated by mud flows and ash from a violent volcanic eruption. From Chaitén we join our coach for a scenic journey through the lush beech and conifer forests of what is known as Patagonia Verde (Green Patagonia), to Futaleufú, a small town near the border with Argentina.

Overnight accommodation at Uman Lodge, Futaleufú.



Patagonia Verde



La Trochita



Los Alerces National Park

Day 11

Thursday 26th November – Futaleufú to Esquel, Argentina

Our Argentinian guide and coach meet us at the border for the drive to Esquel, the southern terminus of La Trochita (the Old Patagonian Express), a narrow gauge railway which once extended over 400km from the main line to Esquel. We have arranged to travel on La Trochita in VIP style, complete with heritage steam locomotive and private carriage. Lunch is served on board during the ride to Nahuel Pan and return. Dinner at our hotel.

Two nights accommodation at Las Bayas Hotel, Esquel.

Day 12

Friday 27th November – Los Alerces National Park

Today's highlight is a day trip to Los Alerces National Park, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site and created in the 1930s to protect the alerce cypress – slow-growing giants endemic to the area. We drive to Futalaufquen village, where we visit the park interpretative centre before beginning a walking tour which showcases this landscape of forests and pristine interlinked lakes. A short walk around the Lake Futalaufquen environs, including the ancient *pinturas rupestres* cave paintings. We then head into the heart of the park, stopping at pretty Cascada Irigoyen before crossing a sturdy suspension bridge over the turquoise Arrayanes River. An easy 30 minute walk brings us to a "young" alerce a mere 500 years old – these trees live into their thousands! – before continuing on to Puerto Chucao on Lake Menendez, where we take a guided walk amongst Bosque de Milenarios Alerces, the ancient forest. Picnic lunch included. Return by coach to Esquel.

Day 13

Saturday 28th November – Esquel to San Carlos de Bariloche

Morning departure by coach for San Carlos de Bariloche, stopping at El Bolsón, which is known for its *feria artisanal*, an atmospheric market featuring a diverse selection of regional handcrafts and art. After lunch, we visit Lago Puelo National Park before arrival at San Carlos de Bariloche. Free afternoon before a special dinner tonight at Butterfly Patagonia, an elegant and intimate restaurant with stunning views over Lake Nahuel Huapi. We enjoy a degustation menu blending Patagonian identity with Spanish and French influences.

Overnight accommodation at El Casco Art Hotel, San Carlos de Bariloche.

Day 14

Sunday 29th November – San Carlos de Bariloche to El Calafate

Morning flight to El Calafate, the gateway to the Los Glaciares National Park. Transfer to our hotel with the rest of the day at your leisure. Dinner at our hotel.

Two nights accommodation at Xelena Hotel and Suites, El Calafate.

Day 15

Monday 30th November – Los Glaciares National Park



Day trip to Los Glaciares National Park. Skirting Lake Argentino to Brazo Rico we stop at Mirador Curva de los Suspiros, an aptly named observation deck which will be sure to elicit sighs (*suspiros*) as you catch your first view of Perito Moreno Glacier across the lake! Continuing on, we get up close to the glacier foot – almost 4km of steel catwalks and balconies, and a glass *refugio* for inclement weather, allows us to experience the raw and changeable beauty and power of the ice field. Advancing up to 2m per day, the sight – and sound – of an iceberg calving is not uncommon!

Day 16

Tuesday 1st December – El Calafate to Ushuaia

Morning flight to Ushuaia on the island of Tierra del Fuego and transfer to our hotel for lunch. In the afternoon, buckle up for an off-road lakes tour by 4WD through subantarctic forest, across rivers and muddy tracks to Lago Escondido (Hidden Lake), tucked away at the bottom of the Andes, and the huge Lago Fagnano, whose waters are shared by Argentina and Chile. At our destination in the middle of the forest, dine al fresco at a private shelter with dinner specially prepared by a chef.

Overnight accommodation at Arakur Ushuaia Resort and Spa, Ushuaia.

Day 17

Wednesday 2nd December – Tierra Del Fuego, Patagonian Explorer Cruise

Today we visit the famous Tierra Del Fuego National Park and ride the End of the World Train. Tierra Del Fuego shelters at the foot of the southern Andes and boasts a unique eco region of Magellanic subantarctic forests and a varied landscape of mountains and glaciers, lakes and rivers. Our tour will take in Ensenada Zaratiegui and Lapataia Bay on the famous Beagle Channel and the lakes and rivers winding through the landscape. Heading back from the park, near Acigami Lake we board our private carriage on the End of the World Train, with lunch served on board. Returning to Ushuaia, we board the Stella Australis sailing in the evening for an unforgettable 5-day journey to Punta Arenas around the isolated archipelagos and glaciers of the far south.



Pia Glacier



Cape Horn

Day 18

Thursday 3rd December – Patagonian Explorer cruise – Cape Horn, Wulaia Bay

Journeying south, if weather permits, we go ashore in the Cape Horn National Park, an archipelago where windswept rocky Cape Horn overlooks the waters of the Drake Passage. Sailing across Nassau Bay, we anchor at Wulaia Bay on Navarino Island – visit a museum in the old radio station chronicling histories of the indigenous Yámana people and European missionaries, and enjoy a choice of varied hikes around the bay.

Day 19

Friday 4th December – Patagonian Explorer cruise – Pía Glacier, Garibaldi Glacier

Re-entering the Beagle Channel after rounding the western shore of Tierra del Fuego, we enter Pia Fjord and disembark into Zodiacs for a shore excursion to Pia Glacier. Further west along the Beagle Channel we drop anchor near the Garibaldi Glacier at the head of a long fjord. Here, you have the option of taking a more demanding hike through steep Magellanic forest to a glacial waterfall and spectacular viewpoints of the Glacier. Alternatively, stay onboard and enjoy the icy blue view from the upper decks.



Darwin Range



Magdalena Island

Day 20

Saturday 5th December – Patagonian Explorer cruise – Agostini Sound

Sail through Cockburn Channel to Agostini Sound, where glaciers descend from the Darwin Mountain Range right to the sea. From here we visit Águila Glacier and Cóndor Glacier and may even be lucky enough to spot Andean condors!

Day 21

Sunday 6th December – Punta Arenas to Santiago

Overnight sail through Magdalena Channel and the Strait of Magellan to Magdalena Island, formerly a supply point for navigators and explorers and now home to an immense Magellanic penguin colony. Weather permitting, we go ashore at dawn, having the opportunity to observe the penguins and to visit the distinctive 1902 lighthouse, before boarding again to sail south to our final destination, Punta Arenas, disembarking at 11.30. *Contact us for more information about the possibility of taking an Antarctic expedition from Punta Arenas at the conclusion of our South American touring.*

Early afternoon flight to Santiago to connect with our Sydney-bound flight. Overnight in flight.

Day 22/23

Monday 7th/Tuesday 8th December – Santiago to Sydney

Cross International Dateline in flight. Arrive into Sydney mid-morning. Connections available to other destinations.

End Of Tour

... Planes, Trains, Automobiles ...

We're going on an adventure... it's fitting that our mode of transport is not just comfortable (it is!) but include a little history and a sense of place. We'll journey by planes, trains, road coach and boat!

Planes

Flights to South America are with LATAM (formerly LAN Chile) from Sydney. Other city connections are available – please contact us for details of flights and supplement. We fly Aerolíneas Argentinas within Argentina and LATAM within Chile.

Chartered Cessna Caravan turbo-prop aircraft for the flight from Chiloé Island to Chaitén.

Road Transport

Chartered air-conditioned coach for most road travel and transfers.

Trains

Tren Patagónico (Patagonia Train) is a once-weekly overnight train with sleeping cars and dining car running on very broad gauge 5ft 6in tracks. The cabins are bunk style with toilets located at the end of each carriage.

La Trochita is a 1922 narrow gauge steam train.

The Train at the End of the World, is a restored steam train which transported prisoners from the Tierra del Fuego prison to the forest work camp. Trainex Turismo operates three restored locomotives from the United Kingdom, South Africa and the first Argentine-built loco.

Ships

Australis Cruises operates two modern vessels with comfortable cabins and maximum views, Ventus Australis and Stella Australis, built in 2017 and 2010, and carrying a maximum of 200 passengers.



General Information & Booking Conditions

Cost

The cost of this tour is AUD 26,990.

Single accommodation is available for an additional cost of AUD 5,270.

Tour cost includes:

- economy class flights ex Sydney to Buenos Aires and return from Santiago. Contact us for Premium Economy or business class fares
- if you wish to depart from a city other than Sydney, this can easily be arranged: please contact us with your request
- all Argentinian flights in premium economy class to provide you with 20kg luggage allowance
- accommodation for 15 nights on a twin share basis in first class hotels or best available lodges

- 4 night Ushuaia to Punta Arenas cruise aboard the Stella Australis
- 1 night onboard Tren Patagónico in sleeping berth cabin
- all road transport by air-conditioned coach
- all sightseeing excursions, guided touring and entrance fees to all places as specified in the itinerary.
- all meals
- all taxes, tips and gratuities
- services of Insights Tours' tour escort throughout the tour
- drinking water at lunch and dinner daily

Additional costs:

Drinks, travel insurance and items of a personal nature any other cost not included in tour cost.

Single Accomodation

As always we negotiate the best possible tariff for our single guests and we pass on only the direct additional costs. Unique to this tour are the cruises which entail a very substantial single supplement. This is due to the charge being per cabin regardless of how many guests occupy it. The published single supplement is therefore the best arrangement that we can offer.

Booking and deposit

This tour is for a maximum of 16 guests.

To secure your place on the tour, please complete the enclosed booking form and return it to Insights Tours with your deposit.

Deposit is AUD 2,000 per person, payable at time of booking and non-refundable if you cancel. The balance is due no later than Friday 31 July 2020.

Cancellation policy

Due to the impositions placed on us by the various providers' terms and conditions, if you cancel:

- prior to or on Friday 31 July 2020, the deposit of AUD 2,000 per person is forfeited;
- after Friday 31 July 2020, the total tariff is forfeited, that is, there is no refund at all.

Viability of tour

In the event that the economic minimum number of guests is not reached, the tour will be cancelled by Insights Tours no later than Friday 7 August 2020 and we will refund in full any money paid. In the event of the Australian dollar falling below our nominated exchange rate threshold before the due date of the final balance, we will write to you and advise of any required supplement.

Changes to the itinerary

There is always the chance that our itinerary could be delayed or curtailed in some way beyond our control. Except for prolonged or unexpected events, the tour will be conducted as closely as possible to the itinerary stated above. Every reasonable endeavour will be made to conduct the advertised itinerary however we reserve the right to alter the itinerary in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Insurance

Insights Tours accepts your booking only on the proviso that you have comprehensive travel insurance. It should cover cancellation fees, costs incurred due to delays, medical assistance, repatriation and lost luggage.

We are an accredited agent of Aussie Travel Cover insurance and can assist with arranging your insurance.

Health & Medical

Insights Tours recommends that to fully enjoy this tour you should be comfortable walking up to 3kms over well-trodden bush/forest tracks. Most of the walking will be in national parks and reserves accompanied by expert local guides with the aim of seeing the unique flora and fauna.

Please be aware that in the regions of Argentina and Chile in which we will be travelling, there are very limited infrastructure and services so please be mindful that the medical facilities may not exist at the standard as in Australia. Insights Tours strongly recommends that you consult your dentist and a travel medicine practitioner in regards to inoculations, vaccinations and precautions, at least 6 weeks prior to departure.

Visas

Australian passport holders do not require a visa for entry into Chile or Argentina however, passports must be valid until at least 8 June 2021. If you will be travelling on other than an Australian passport, please confer with us when you book.

Luggage

Please limit your luggage to one suitcase and one piece of hand luggage per person.

To comply with the most restrictive weight on any of our flights, maximum checked luggage weight is 20kg per person. Maximum hand luggage weight is 7kg per person. These weights apply for the charter flight on Day 10. Portage of luggage will be provided at hotels and wherever practicable throughout the tour. However at major airports you will need to manoeuvre your own luggage.

Guides

Insights Tours has engaged licensed expert, English speaking guides for all guided touring throughout the itinerary.

Tour Escort

As with all Insights Tours' itineraries, this tour is fully escorted. Your tour escort is there to ensure that all of the pesky administrative and operational aspects of the tour are fulfilled and that the tour runs as smoothly as possible.

About Insights Tours



Insights Tours is a tour company operated by Paul, Brigitte and John Tuckerman. We arrange tours which utilise chartered trains, coaches and aeroplanes, and provide passengers with spacious and ample accommodation. Our philosophy is to provide a tour with a spectrum of interesting visits, inspections and conveyances. Each tour is uniquely arranged to encompass the most interesting sights of the regions visited. Insights Tours engages our own guides to ensure that our passengers have the best insight into the location being visited.

Passenger numbers are limited to ensure a commodious travelling experience and to ensure that visits and guided tours are of maximum benefit. Each of our tours is personally escorted, ensuring you can relax in the confidence that all of the pesky administrative details and arrangements are taken care of.

If you would like details or assistance with any booking, please contact John:

Telephone: (+61) 02 4268 6581

Email: john@insightstours.com.au

Postal: PO Box 180, Thirroul NSW 2515

In person (by appointment): 14 Allenby Parade, Bulli

Booking Form

Patagonia

Departing 16 November 2020

	Guest 1	Guest 2
Name (exactly as on Passport)		
Address		
Telephone		
Email		
Passport Details		
Passport #		
Date of Birth		
Expiry Date		
Nationality		
Emergency Contact Person & Telephone		
Any special requirements or requests (especially dietary)		
Room type (please indicate)	<input type="checkbox"/> Twin (2 beds) <input type="checkbox"/> Double (1 large bed) <input type="checkbox"/> Single Supplement is an additional AUD 5,270.	
Deposit	<input type="checkbox"/> Cheque enclosed - Please make cheques payable to "Insights Tours" - or - <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic transfer/direct deposit Account Name: Insights Tours Client Travel Account BSB: 062607 Account Number: 10131313	

I/we acknowledge the terms and conditions of booking

Signature/s

Guest 1

Guest 2

Please return to:

Insights Tours
PO Box 180
THIRROUL NSW 2515
or via email to john@insightstours.com.au