



TRAVEL PLANNER

ARGENTINA'S PATAGONIA—EPIC LAKES, PEAKS & GLACIERS



WALKING & HIKING | Premiere Hotels

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PATAGONIA—ARGENTINA'S EPIC LAKES, PEAKS & GLACIERS

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 **BACKROADS**



STRAIGHT *talk*

We want to make sure you're on the right trip and that you have the best experience possible. Every Backroads trip is unique and this one is no exception.

TERRAIN & TRAIL SUPPORT

Our hikes through Patagonia's captivating rugged terrain climb rocky and sometimes uneven paths, many of which are remote and do not intersect with roads. Vehicles will get us to and from the trailheads, but due to the nature of these trails, we won't see our vehicles along the route. Ample trail support in the form of water, snacks and encouragement is provided by your Backroads leaders and local guides.

HIKING IN NATIONAL PARKS

Most hikes on this itinerary are inside Argentine national parks and unlike other Backroads walking and hiking trips, regulations require a certified local guide to accompany us. We offer flexibility by dividing into several groups of different paces, with each group hiking in the company of a local guide.

TRAVEL TIME

In order to experience the full grandeur of Argentina's Patagonia region, we spend more time shuttling and on boat crossings on this trip than on a typical Backroads trip. This enables us to explore the incredible variety of ecosystems and scenery this region has to offer (the views from these shuttles are spectacular!).

LEADERS & LOCAL GUIDES

Trips with a small number of guests may be supported by one Backroads Trip Leader and a team of knowledgeable local guides. There will always be at least two people hiking on the trail with you.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Because of Patagonia's extreme weather conditions and strong winds, mid-trip itinerary changes are possible on this trip. Boat crossings can be canceled,

which may prohibit our arrival to or departure from the hotel Estancia Cristina. If severe weather affects our planned activities, your Trip Leaders will find alternate activities that you're sure to enjoy. Expect the unexpected in this remote region, including slow or no internet and the occasional ATM possibly running out of cash.

ESSENTIAL TO YOUR BACKROADS TRIP

US citizens need a passport valid at least 6 months beyond the start date of the trip.

DAY 1

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 8:30 a.m. at Hotel Posada Los Alamos (+54-(0)2902-491144, ext. 502 or 501) located at Ing. Hector Mario Guatti 1135, in El Calafate, Argentina. Please arrive dressed in your hiking clothes and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear and anything else you may want for today's shuttle and hike (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

LATE TO THE TRIP START? See "Arriving & Departing" for more information.

SHUTTLE TO ESTANCIA ESTELA 1½ Hours

LA ESTELA SAND DUNES MORNING ROUTE 1.8 Miles (100' elevation gain)

SHUTTLE TO EL CHALTÉN 1½ Hours

AFTERNOON WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Mirador de los Cóndores Route: 2.5 Miles (400')

Mirador de los Cóndores & Águila Route: 3.8 Miles (600')

¡Bienvenidos a Patagonia! After meeting we shuttle to Estancia Estela where we take a short walk through sand dunes to stretch our legs and get better acquainted over a picnic lunch of regional fare. From our lunch spot take in spectacular views of Lake Viedma, a 50-mile-long glacier-fed lake and perhaps catch a glimpse of 11,000-

foot Cerro Fitz Roy (*cerro* means "mount") in the distance. We then continue by shuttle to El Chaltén, a small mountain town set within Los Glaciares National Park.

Our afternoon hike to Mirador de los Cóndores and Mirador Águila offers us mammoth views—as long as the weather cooperates—across the Torre and Fitz Roy peaks. Afterward, we settle into our home for the next two nights, Los Cerros del Chaltén Boutique Hotel, whose oversized windows offer picture-perfect mountain and valley vistas. This evening we gather for a welcome reception before enjoying our first dinner together.

Lodging: Los Cerros del Chaltén Boutique Hotel



DAY 2

SHUTTLE TO PIEDRAS BLANCAS TRAILHEAD 30 minutes

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Mirador Piedras Blancas Out-&-Back: 4.6 Miles* (700' elevation gain)

Laguna Capri Route: 9.5 Miles (1,200')

Laguna de los Tres Route: 13.4 Miles (2,800')

**with shuttle*

After enjoying breakfast at the hotel we shuttle to the start of today's trek. Warm up your legs on a walk through groves of *lenga* trees for stunning views of the Piedras Blancas Glacier and its lagoon. Arriving at Laguna Capri, choose an ideal lakeside spot to eat your lunch where, if skies are clear, we enjoy unobstructed vistas of the northeastern face of the Fitz Roy mountain range. If you're up for a few more heart-pumping miles, opt for a

bonus out-and-back with our local mountaineering guide and conquer the challenging rocky switchbacks to Laguna de los Tres. When you've reached the top, take a moment to catch your breath and marvel at De los Tres Glacier as it plunges into the lake below, with Cerro Fitz Roy soaring high into the sky just beyond. Carefully make your way back down the switchbacks and back to El Chaltén, passing by Laguna Capri and through some picturesque wetlands along the way.

Back at the hotel, relax your muscles in the whirlpool tub or curl up with a good book in front of the fireplace. Later we try some world-class Argentine wines and are treated to a slideshow presentation about climbing Cerro Torre. Afterward, we gather for dinner in the hotel dining room.

Lodging: Los Cerros del Chaltén Boutique Hotel

DAY 3

MIRADOR CERRO TORRE ROUTE 4.8 Miles (800' elevation gain)

SHUTTLE TO EL CALAFATE 3½ Hours

Begin the day on a rolling trail which takes us along young glacial moraines and over the milky-blue Fitz Roy River. As we follow a rocky trail up the mountainside, occasional stands of *lenga* trees don't detract from the feeling that we can see forever across the broad valley of El Chaltén. Our destination is the *mirador* (lookout) of Cerro Torre, which offers us majestic views of Cerro Torre's iconic razor-thin peak rimed with ice and flanked by the spires of Torre Egger and Cerro Standhardt.

We refuel with a hearty lunch at one of our favorite restaurants in town before climbing into the shuttle and hitting the road to the remote frontier town of El Calafate. One of Patagonia's classic scenic drives wouldn't be complete without a stop at the *parador* (roadhouse) of La Leona, an iconic wilderness outpost along the La Leona River which is made up of a cluster of cabins and a cowboy-friendly saloon. In fact, this lonely spot is where Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid fled to live out the rest of their days once the jig was up in the States! Our legs stretched, we continue on our way to Hotel Posada Los Alamos, our home for the night. Settle into your room and enjoy some downtime or indulge in a spa treatment. (Spa treatments are not included in the trip price. Advance reservations are recommended.)

Dinner is on your own tonight in El Calafate where there are plenty of great restaurants and shops to explore.

Lodging: Hotel Posada Los Alamos

DAY 4

SHUTTLE TO PUNTA BANDERA 1 Hour

CRUISE ON LAKE ARGENTINO 2 Hours

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Cascada de Carnero Route: 4.3 Miles (300' elevation gain)

Cerro Carnero Route: 6.3 Miles (1,300')

After a morning shuttle to Punta Banderas, we set sail on a scenic cruise across Lake Argentino. The vaulting mountains here block most of the moisture rising off the Pacific, creating a starkly beautiful arid steppe on the east side of the park. Photo opportunities abound as you take in the grandeur of awe-inspiring fjords and mountain peaks, as well as a close encounter with Upsala Glacier and, if we're lucky, its icebergs. You may even see Andean condors soaring overhead as we navigate this otherworldly maze of ice and water, enjoying lunch as we cruise.

Our adventure on the water ends at the historic ranch-turned-hotel Estancia Cristina, where we settle in for the next two nights. Lace up your shoes for a trek into the Patagonian wilderness, starting along the shoreline of Cristina Bay. Pass a pristine waterfall before beginning a steep ascent through lush *lenga* forest. While fairly strenuous, the remarkable panorama of lakes, mountains and glaciers makes the route completely worthwhile.

Tonight, trade stories of the day's adventures over a rustic dinner at the *estancia*. *Lodging: Estancia Cristina*



DAY 5

SHUTTLE TO UPSALA GLACIER LOOKOUT 45 Minutes

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Mirador Upsala Out-&-Back: 1.5 Miles * (300' elevation gain)

Upsala Glacier & Fossil Canyon Route: 8.7 Miles * (300')

HISTORICAL MUSEUM TOUR AT ESTANCIA CRISTINA 1 Hour

**with shuttle*

This morning we four-wheel it to a breathtaking lookout point over the massive Upsala Glacier and Guillermo Lake before heading over rocky terrain en route to Fossil Canyon. Aptly named, this area features ammonite and marine fossils believed to be millions of years old—see imprints of squid and jellyfish—plus rocks of every color from orange to gold to red. Next head down a gentle section, weaving through picturesque lagoons teeming with coots and black-neck swans.

We pause to enjoy lunch on the trail before heading back to the estancia where you can feel free to take a stroll on the grounds or just relax. Then we join a guided tour of Estancia Cristina's rustic museum to learn about the property's fascinating history. The museum features antique radio equipment, as well as photos and personal possessions of the Masters family, an English immigrant family who called the ranch home for almost 100 years.

After our eventful day, we gather for an authentic

Argentinian *asado* (barbecue) dinner. *Lodging: Estancia Cristina*

DAY 6

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Cascada de los Perros Route: 3.6 Miles (300' elevation gain)

Mirador Cristina Route: 10 Miles (2,000')

or HORSEBACK RIDING 2 Hours

BOAT & SHUTTLE TO EL CALAFATE 2.5 Hours

After fueling up with breakfast, you have the opportunity to hike through the stunning Patagonian terrain on our route through the picturesque Valle del Río Caterina. Next ascend the face of Cerro Mesón to Mirador Cristina. Pause for a break to eat lunch and take in the surrounding mountain and glacier vistas. You can also choose to take it easy this morning and enjoy a leisurely breakfast and lunch at Estancia Cristina.

This morning you also have the chance to try your hand at being a gaucho! Get a taste of South American cowboy life on a horseback ride with local guides. In addition to an abundance of Patagonian flora, there's plenty of wildlife to see along the route—condors and grazing *guanacos* (related to the domesticated llama) may even make appearances.

This afternoon we bid farewell to Estancia Cristina, cruise across Lake Argentino to Puerto Punta Bandera and shuttle to remote Eolo, our magnificent Relais & Châteaux home for the next two nights. Settle into your room and take some time to soak in the blissfully remote surroundings. Tonight dinner is at your leisure in the Eolo dining room. *Lodging: Eolo*

DAY 7

SHUTTLE TO PERITO MORENO GLACIER 1¼ Hours

TEMPANOS ROUTE 2 Miles (300' elevation gain)

SHUTTLE TO EOLO 1¼ Hours

Get ready to be awestruck by your first glimpse of the enormous Perito Moreno Glacier. Admire this spectacular

glacier from its famous balconies, a series of platforms providing bird's-eye views of one of the world's great marvels. Have your camera ready for a potential glacier calving!

After lunch back at our luxurious hotel, enjoy some downtime or continue exploring. Options include settling into the library and enjoying the breathtaking views, enjoying a spa treatment or touring the vast Patagonian steppe on your own, on mountain bike or on foot. If you're curious about yerba maté, the caffeinated brew enjoyed out of those gourd-shaped cups that locals seem to whip out at every possible occasion, join your leaders for a demonstration and tasting.

Tonight sit down to a delicious farewell dinner at the hotel's dining room with its stunning view. *Lodging: Eolo*



DAY 8

CERRO FRÍAS ROUTE 2 Miles (600' elevation gain)

Enjoy one last morning walk on the sweeping land of Eolo, through the Patagonian steppe, on the foot of the Cerro Frías.

Our Backroads trip officially ends at Eolo at 10 a.m. Your onward transfer is included in your trip price, so please coordinate with the front desk at Eolo for your transfer back to El Calafate or the El Calafate airport. Note that checkout is around noon. Please see "Arriving & Departing" for end-of-trip logistics.

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

We are always seeking opportunities to enhance this itinerary. We'll be certain to notify you of any important changes prior to departure; other changes may be communicated on trip by your leaders.

SHIFT GEARS

Our trips are designed to be flexible, giving you the freedom to experience the best of the region the way YOU want. Feel like you're ready to go, go, go? We can show you the way! Want some downtime or prefer to head out on your own? No problem!

Your Trip Leaders will make sure to tell you the best days to take time for yourself (if you want it) without feeling like you're missing out.

So feel free to shift gears and make it your day!

ENTER TO WIN!

BACKROADS GUEST PHOTO CONTEST



Share your favorite trip images
for the chance to win

1 of 5 GRAND PRIZES

up to \$5,000 in Backroads Trip Credit
or Honorable Mention

\$250 in Backroads Trip Credit awarded to 75+ photos

FOR RULES GO TO BACKROADS.COM/PHOTO_CONTEST

TRIP ACCOMMODATIONS

Premiere Hotels*



2 Nights (Casual Hotel)

Los Cerros del Chaltén Boutique Hotel

Enjoy spectacular views of the Chaltén valley and the Río de las Vueltas from your room, and access stunning hikes right out your doorstep. (spa) | El Chaltén |

www.loscerrosdelchalten.com.ar | +54-(0)5460-0213

1 Night

Hotel Posada Los Alamos

Beautifully constructed from timber and stone, this hotel is set in the heart of El Calafate and overlooks El Pinar, the only golf course in the area. (pool, spa) | El Calafate |

www.posadalosalamos.com | +54-(0)2902-491144

2 Nights (Pictured)

Estancia Cristina

A favorite among our guests, this remote historic ranch founded in 1914 offers the perfect launching point for hikes into Patagonia's wilderness; it's accessible only by boat, after a cruise on Lake Argentino past the dramatic Upsala Glacier. (This hotel is solar powered; no electricity 11 p.m.–6 a.m.) | Upsala Glacier |

www.estanciacruzina.com | +54-(0)2902-491133/491034

2 Nights

Eolo

"Sophisticated yet homey—the kind of place where you don't worry about kicking off your muddy boots when you return from a hike," says *Travel + Leisure* about this remote country lodge on the Patagonian steppe. A Relais & Châteaux member. | La Anita Valley | www.eolo.com.ar | +54-(0)11-47000075

**With 2 Casual Hotel nights at Los Cerros del Chalten Boutique Hotel*



ARRIVING & DEPARTING

After reviewing the following information, please inform us of your arrival and departure plans on your *Personal Information Form*.

All prices are in US dollars and subject to change.

Meeting Time & Location

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 8:30 a.m. at Hotel Posada Los Alamos (+54-(0)2902-491144, ext. 502 or 501) located at Ing. Hector Mario Guatti 1135, in El Calafate, Argentina. Please arrive dressed in your hiking clothes and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear and anything else you may want for today's shuttle and hike (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

Arriving Late to the Trip Start?

If you have a delay or emergency on the day your trip starts and need to contact Backroads, please email your Trip Leaders (you'll receive an email 48 hours prior to the trip start with their contact info) or call the Backroads office at 800-462-2848 (domestic) or 510-527-1555 (international).

If you are delayed and miss the pickup in El Calafate, call our first hotel, Los Cerros del Chalten Boutique Hotel, at +54-9-11-5460-0213 to arrange a transfer to Los Cerros either later on Day 1 or early in the morning on Day 2. Or, you can coordinate your own private transfer with El Calafate transfer company, Patagonia Backpackers SRL (www.patagonia-backpackers.com):

- Email: Luciana Lanfranco at operaciones@glaciar.com
- Phone: +54-9-11-5045-3600 (or from a local land line: (011) 15-5045-3600)

Also please leave a message for your Trip Leaders with the hotel, letting them know when you plan to arrive. You will be responsible for the cost of the necessary transport to reach the group if you miss our official pickup.

Conclusion of the Trip

On the last day of the trip, we end at Eolo at 10 a.m. Included in your trip is an onward transfer to either the El Calafate airport or downtown El Calafate. You can coordinate directly with the hotel's concierge for the transfer time you need, but please keep in mind the hotel's official checkout is at noon. If you plan to fly out of El Calafate today, please note that the drive from Eolo to the El Calafate Airport is about 1¼ hours, so please book a flight that departs after 1 p.m. If you would like to take an earlier flight, no problem, just coordinate your transfer with Eolo for when you need to depart that morning, but please note you might need to opt out of the early walking activity.

Flight Arrangements

This trip starts and ends in El Calafate, Argentina. International flights into Buenos Aires typically fly into Ezeiza International Airport (airport code: EZE; www.aa2000.com.ar). We recommend flying into and out of Ezeiza and connecting to/from El Calafate Airport (FTE; www.aeropuertoelcalafate.com) on a domestic carrier such as Aerolíneas Argentinas/Austral (www.aerolineas.com.ar) or LATAM Airlines (www.latam.com/en_us). (At the time of printing, LATAM canceled all domestic flights in Argentina, but it may be worth researching current flight schedules at your time of booking.)

Please be aware that all passengers, whether staying in Buenos Aires or continuing on to a connecting flight (regardless of the airline), need to collect their baggage in Ezeiza airport and pass through customs. If you are connecting to a flight elsewhere in Argentina and departing from Ezeiza, recheck your luggage in the departure area of the terminal of your connecting flight after you have cleared customs. Luggage will not be automatically transferred to the domestic flight, even if the tags indicate a final destination other than Buenos Aires.

Please also note that there are two airports in Buenos Aires: international flights transit through Ezeiza International Airport, while domestic flights transit through Newbery Municipal Airport. **While there are some exceptions, it is standard practice to transfer between these two airports for flight connections. We recommend double- and triple-checking the airport name on all your Buenos**

Aires flights so that you can plan accordingly. If you do need to change airports, we recommend allowing at least 4 hours between flights.

For help arranging air transportation to and from your Backroads trip, please work with your own travel advisor, or you may work with our travel agency partner. Their professional expert travel advisors are ready to share their insiders' knowledge of Backroads and our worldwide destinations and are available to assist you with any of your travel needs. Please note that they are an independent travel agency and consulting and ticketing fees may apply, based on the services requested. Simply ask your Backroads Trip Consultant to connect you! You can also book directly with the airline, or through a travel website.

Transportation Between Buenos Aires' Ezeiza International & Newbery Municipal Airports

Manuel Tienda León (www.tiendaleon.com.ar) provides shuttle service between Buenos Aires' Ezeiza International (EZE) and Newbery Municipal (AEP) airports, with buses departing about every hour around the clock; the one-way fare is approximately \$15 and the ride takes between 45 minutes to one hour. Manuel Tienda León's fixed rate for taxi (*remis*) service between the two airports is approximately \$50. You can purchase transport upon arrival. Visit www.aa2000.com.ar for more information on Buenos Aires' airports and shuttle services.

Transportation Between El Calafate Airport & Town

A taxi ride from the El Calafate airport into town is about 12 miles and costs around \$22. You can also take an airport shuttle for approximately \$8; you can buy your ticket at the airport's transportation kiosk upon arrival.



PRICES & SCHEDULES

All prices and schedules were current at the time of printing, but are subject to change at any time.

DURING YOUR TRIP

Backroads On Trip App

Enjoy the convenience of your itinerary details in one place, including daily snapshots, routes, elevation profiles and more. We'll send you an email seven days before your trip starts with the link and code for your itinerary. We encourage you to download the app and the trip experience before you depart (your leaders can help you on trip if needed). Just search for "Backroads" in the Apple App store or the Google Play Store.

Trip Leaders

Each of your Trip Leaders plays many roles during your vacation: guide, host, caretaker, naturalist, chef, historian, troubleshooter, interpreter. These remarkable individuals have highly developed instincts for making people comfortable, for seamlessly handling the logistics of travel and for successfully navigating a wide range of unexpected situations. They're passionately committed to ensuring you enjoy an exceptional vacation—smooth, flexible and tailored to your needs. According to past guests, the caliber of our leaders is what sets Backroads apart from all other travel companies. With their knowledge, professionalism, enthusiasm and service ethic, they're the number-one reason people return to travel with us again and again. We look forward to having you meet them.

A Word about Gratuities

We think our leaders are unparalleled at what they do—you be the judge.

Gratuities for most services during your trip are included in the price, including all tips for local support staff (guides and drivers). While we've thought about including a Trip Leader tip as part of the overall trip cost, we acknowledge that gratuities are often customary as a way to recognize excellent service on a more personal level.

We offer specific Trip Leader tip recommendations because our guests have consistently asked for them.

Our recommended gratuity for this trip is \$250 per guest.

While cash gratuities are always preferred, PayPal is

another available option. If you prefer to tip via the PayPal app or website, please note that your account must be set up prior to departing the US. At the beginning of the trip you'll receive a contact list with your leaders' email addresses, which also serve as their PayPal IDs. Regardless of the number of leaders on your trip, you can pay the full amount to any one of them. All gratuities are then divided among your leaders.

When traveling on your own in Argentina, keep in mind that it is customary to tip waiters in restaurants and cafés about 10 percent and porters approximately \$.50–\$.75 per bag.

It is not expected to tip taxi drivers, but you may want to round up the fare for convenience or if the driver has helped with luggage.

Accommodations

All rooms have private baths. Single room availability is limited on this trip.

Please note that Estancia Cristina uses a solar-powered energy system that is shut off at night from 11 p.m.–6 a.m. If you have any devices or appliances that need to be powered or charged overnight, please bring batteries or a battery backup power source. Please contact your Trip Consultant if you have any questions regarding this situation prior to your trip.

Cell Service & Internet Access

Cell phone and data service is extremely limited in the locations we visit on this trip. Internet access is available at some of our hotels, although the connection is slower than ideal and at times unavailable



Meals

Food is an important part of the Backroads experience. For lunch we look for the best way to capture the essence of the region. It may be a Backroads Grand Picnic, when your Trip Leaders prepare the freshest and healthiest local fare at a carefully chosen setting along the day's route; a boxed lunch; a packed lunch; a meal together at a favorite restaurant; or the opportunity to have lunch on your own.

While Argentina is known for its steak, Patagonia also has its own unique cuisine, which includes regional specialties like barbecued lamb and fresh trout. Fresh salmon and chicken are also usually offered in restaurants as an alternative to traditional red meat dishes.

On this trip we often dine according to local custom, which may mean that meals progress at a leisurely pace. We understand that on some nights you may want to retire earlier, so feel free to opt out of dessert, or when possible, request it in your room. You're always welcome to opt for dinner on your own; check with your Trip Leaders to find out what other options might be available.

All breakfasts, seven lunches and six dinners are included in the trip price. One dinner is on your own.

Be aware that vegetarian/vegan, gluten-free and low-carb dishes are not always available. If you have special dietary requirements, please indicate them on the *Personal Information Form*. Your Trip Consultant will pass

on the information to your Trip Leaders. Alcoholic beverages at meals are not included in the trip price, unless otherwise noted.

Recommended Dinner Attire

“Sophisticated-casual” attire is acceptable at the restaurants on this trip. For men we recommend wearing polo or collared shirts with jeans or khakis. For women, skirts or pants are appropriate.

Holiday Travel Considerations

If your trip is over a holiday or during the holiday season, be prepared for higher costs, increased traffic, larger crowds and slower service in many areas—these are popular times to travel in the region. We do our best to avoid the crowds when possible, which means that activity logistics and transportation times may vary.

Lost Luggage

On any flight, there is the possibility of lost luggage. Backroads believes that it's a great idea to take a small carry-on bag with enough clothing and supplies to last a day or two. Also be sure to bring with you any personal gear you deem indispensable on the trip. This way, in the event of lost luggage you won't have to spend time replacing essential items and miss activities while you wait for your bags to catch up. Please note that Backroads does not assume responsibility for any luggage lost or damaged during your trip.

Security

When traveling, there is always a possibility of theft. While you're enjoying the sights, remember to stay alert and always be aware of your immediate surroundings, especially in crowded locations and tourist areas. The best rule of thumb is to carry only the cash you need for the day, along with a copy of your passport, on your person and leave the rest in a locked safe in your room. If no safe is available, it's a good idea to keep your cash and passport in a money belt worn under your clothes. For more safety tips, refer to the Country Specific Information page on the US State Department's website at travel.state.gov.

Luggage Restrictions

There is a space limit for luggage on the boat that takes us to and from Estancia Cristina on Days 4 and 6.

Please bring a smaller duffel bag in your luggage that you can pack separately with clothes for three days of hiking—don't forget layers!—two casual dinners, rain gear, sleepwear and toiletries. There are no specific size or weight restrictions for this smaller bag, but please try to keep it close to the size of a standard airplane carry-on.

When downsizing your luggage the night of Day 3, your Trip Leaders will be happy to provide advice for last-minute adjustments to ensure that what you have packed is sufficient for Days 4–6. The rest of your luggage will be safely stored until we return to Eolo on Day 6.

Please also bring a backpack for carrying packed lunches and personal hiking and rain gear and a lightweight windproof layer.

Trip Guest List

During the trip, leaders will distribute a guest list that includes the names and contact information of everyone on the trip. If you do not want your contact information to appear on the guest list, please inform your Trip Consultant at least 30 days prior to the trip start.

Spa Treatments

Spa treatments are not included in the trip price. Advance reservations are recommended. Also, be sure to review the spa's cancellation policy to avoid any unexpected charges on your credit card.

Days 1 & 2

Los Cerros del Chalten Boutique Hotel: On **Day 1** book an appointment for after 5 p.m.; our welcome reception starts at 7 p.m. On **Day 2** book an appointment for after 4 p.m.; our evening gathering starts at 6:30 p.m.

Day 3

Hotel Posada Los Alamos: On **Day 3** book an appointment for after 5:30 p.m.; dinner tonight is on your own.

Day 7

Eolo: On Day 7 book an appointment for after 3 p.m.; our farewell gathering starts at 7 p.m. and dinner starts at 7:30 p.m.



DESTINATION DETAILS

Climate

Because Argentina is in the southern hemisphere, seasons are the opposite of those in North America; summer occurs from mid-December through mid-March and temperatures in southern Patagonia are generally cool. Although it is mostly dry during the summer months, there is still a high chance of rain, wind and cold dense fog at some point during your trip, and Patagonia is notorious for its seasonal strong winds. **Wearing layers is the key –be prepared for all types of weather to ensure that your trip is enjoyable. (You'll be glad you packed that hat, lightweight wind shell, windbreaker and warm gloves!)**

El Calafate

Average:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
High °F	66	67	61	55	47	43
Low °F	44	44	40	35	31	28
Precip. inches	0.7	0.6	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.4
Average:	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
High °F	41	44	51	59	62	66
Low °F	27	28	32	36	39	43
Precip. inches	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5

Temperatures in this region are measured in degrees Celsius. Zero degrees Celsius is 32 degrees Fahrenheit. For a quick conversion, double the Celsius reading and add 30 to determine the approximate temperature in degrees Fahrenheit.

Time Zone

During the months of November through March which make up South America's summer, Argentina is 2 hours ahead of eastern time and 5 hours ahead of Pacific time. Since Argentina does not observe Daylight Saving time, those who visit in March or November may find that Argentina is only one hour ahead of eastern time and four hours ahead of Pacific time, depending on the date.



MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT

We are delighted to support World Bicycle Relief's mission of providing bicycles to rural workers, students and healthcare providers worldwide, especially women. Our involvement with WBR complements our efforts to promote and improve biking in communities where our guests live and visit.

VISIT WORLDBICYCLERELIEF.ORG

Phone Facts

Many US cell phones can operate internationally. Check with your service provider before leaving home for information about international calling and data plans, and on making and receiving international calls. If your cell phone is unlocked and operates using a SIM card, you may want to consider purchasing a SIM card from a local cell phone company. These should be readily available at airports and convenience stores, and typically come loaded with prepaid credit which can be used for domestic and international calls and data service. Rates will vary.

Alternatively, it may also be possible to rent a phone for use during your international travels. We recommend Cellhire, which offers a wide range of wireless rental options in more than 180 countries. Visit www.cellhire.com or call 877-244-7242 for details and reservations.

International Dialing Instructions

The international phone numbers in this Travel Planner are listed using the following formats:

+54-(0)##-#####

54 is Argentina's country code, followed by a 0 (used only when calling **within** the country), an *area code* and *local number*. The number of digits in the area code and local number may vary.

To place an international call to a land line in Argentina, dial + or the *international access code* of the country from which you are calling (e.g. 011 from the US) - 54 - *area code* - *local number*. **Important note:** If there is a 0 listed, always omit it when calling from outside the country or your call will not go through. **If calling a cell phone**, add a 9 after the 54 country code (e.g. from the US: 011 - 54 - 9 - *area code* - *local number*). If you are given a cell number starting with 15, omit the 15.

To place an international call from Argentina, dial + or 00 (Argentina's international access code) - *country code* of the country to which you're calling (e.g. 1 for the US) - *area code* - *local number*. For example, to call the US, dial 00 - 1 - *area code* - *local number*.

To place a call from a land line or cell phone to a land line within Argentina, drop the country code 54 and dial: 0 - *area code* - *local number*. When calling from

within the same local area, just dial the local number.

When placing a call from a land line to a cell phone, add 15 after the area code.

For additional information on placing international phone calls, visit www.countrycallingcodes.com.

Money Matters

The standard unit of currency in Argentina is the Argentine peso (ARS). At the time of printing, 200.73 ARS = 1 USD. For the most up-to-date exchange rate, visit www.xe.com (Universal Currency Converter).

We recommend bringing US dollars in cash (crisp, undamaged/unmarked \$50 and \$100 bills) for your money needs while traveling in Argentina. The country's inflation situation means that not only is USD usually accepted (and appreciated!), paying USD in cash will often result in lower prices. ATMs, especially outside the capital, are limited, unreliable and often charge heavy exchange penalties, while credit cards are not universally accepted and may also incur heavier fees.

Note that exchange rates in Argentina can vary significantly. Exchange bureaus generally charge the highest rates, banks charge only slightly less, and a variety of lower exchange rates can be found at places such as airports, train stations, post offices and some tourist offices. You can connect with your Trip Leaders or a trusted local (e.g. hotel reception) regarding where to find optimal exchange rates. To learn more about Argentina's unique economic situation, we recommend reading up on the "blue dollar", the name used for the dollar as circulated in Argentina as an unofficial second currency.

In case you do intend to use ATMs, it's a good idea to verify with your bank that your card will work overseas and inquire whether or not your financial institution has a local partner bank that will waive ATM fees. Most international ATM keyboards have only numbers, so if your PIN contains letters, make note of the corresponding numbers. Additionally, most international ATMs only accept four-character PINs, so if yours is longer, arrange to have it changed before your trip.

Electric Current & Estancia Cristina Power Schedule

Argentina's electricity runs on a 220-volt, 50- to 60-cycle current. A plug adapter is necessary if you plan to bring

appliances from home. You may also need a converter, but many newer appliances, such as computers and digital devices, are designed to work/charge over a wide range of voltage levels. Check the manufacturer's label on the back of your appliances to see what level of input they can handle. Converter/adaptor kits can be purchased at travel, hardware or electronics stores for \$40–\$60; an adaptor alone costs about \$4.

Important Note: Again, please be aware that on nights 4 & 5 our hotel **Estancia Cristina shuts off electricity between 11 p.m.–6 a.m.** If you have any devices or appliances that need to be powered or charged overnight, please bring batteries or a battery backup power source. **If you have a medical or other critical need for 24-hour access to power, you should consider an alternate trip. The hotel is unable to make any exceptions to their schedule—they must adhere to strict fire regulations and they have limited gas supplies to run their generators.**

Health Precautions

As country-specific entry requirements for COVID change, please see the latest information at www.backroads.com/why/testing. For travel to the regions on this trip, we also highly recommend checking with your doctor to make sure your diphtheria-tetanus vaccination is up to date.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has also warned of mosquito-borne illnesses, including dengue and Zika, in countries bordering **Argentina**. To reduce the chance of mosquito bites, use a good insect repellent and cover bare skin at night. If you get sick within a year after your trip, you should let your doctor know that you have traveled to a foreign country.

The most common health risk for visitors is "traveler's diarrhea," which can be caused by bacteria, parasites or viruses transmitted through food or water. There are many over-the-counter remedies available to relieve upset stomachs, although it's a good idea to bring some from home.

It is usually risky to purchase food from street vendors unless the food has been cooked and is still hot. However, if you purchase fruit or vegetables from street vendors, we recommend that you buy products that you can peel

or wash in purified water, and always wash your hands before eating. All foods served as part of the trip are prepared and washed with purified water.

In general, tap water is safe to drink, but bottled water is provided at our hotels. Purified water is also available in Backroads vehicles.

The combination of warm temperatures and strenuous exercise greatly increases your body's need for fluids. It's extremely important to drink lots of liquids to protect yourself against heatstroke and dehydration. Drink as often as possible—don't wait until you are thirsty!

If you are taking any medications, be certain to bring enough to last throughout your trip.

For more specific and up-to-date information on health precautions, consult your doctor, the consulate in your area or the CDC at www.cdc.gov/travel or 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636). For World Health Organization disease outbreak reports, visit www.who.int/csr/don/en. For general travel advisory information, visit the US State Department's website at www.travel.state.gov.

Visitor Information

Tourism Office

www.turismo.gov.ar

All About Argentina

www.allaboutar.com

RECOMMENDED READING



The more you know about your destination before you go, the more you'll appreciate all that you see when you get there. We've selected a few of our favorite books to help capture the essence of the region.

–*In Patagonia*, Bruce Chatwin

–*Collected Fictions*, Jorge Luis Borges

–*Patagonia: A Cultural History*, Chris Moss

–*Argentina: A Traveler's Literary Companion*, Jill Gibian (Editor)

–*Natural Patagonia: Argentina & Chile*, Marcelo D. Beccaceci

TRIP DOCUMENTS & MORE

Travel Documents

A passport valid at least 6 months beyond the start date of your trip is required for travel to Argentina.

Please visit your Backroads account (go.backroads.com/res/) to enter your passport information.

Be sure to check the expiration date and physical condition of your passport and verify the travel document requirements with the consulates of the countries you are planning to visit during your trip. Passports issued to minors under the age of 16 are set to expire every 5 years. Check your expiration dates carefully.

We recommend that you make two photocopies of your airline ticket/e-ticket confirmation and your passport. Leave one set of copies at home with a friend or relative, and bring one set with you, keeping it separate from the original documents.

Travel Protection Plan

Backroads' travel protection plan, offered through our insurance partner, provides coverage for trip cancellation or interruption, trip delay, medical expenses and evacuation/repatriation, lost baggage, and more. Given the active nature of our trips (and our guests!) we know that the unexpected sometimes happens and we strongly recommend protecting your travel investment with our Travel Protection Plan. Our plan offers competitive pricing and excellent customer service and can be purchased up to 15 days before your departure. If you're interested in purchasing the plan, give us a call at 800-462-2848.

Cancellations & Refunds

If you must cancel your reservation, a fee will be charged. Please review your trip invoice for cancellation policy details. **Exceptions to this policy cannot be made for any reason**, including those of weather or personal emergencies. There is no refund for joining a trip late or leaving early. Private rooms and staterooms, bike rentals and internal air charges are considered part of the trip



Helpful Information

Visit www.backroads.com/trip_prep for links to other websites offering helpful travel information.

price and are subject to cancellation fees. You are required to provide a signed *Release of Liability, Assumption of All Risks and Arbitration Agreement* and a completed *Personal Information Form* prior to your trip departure. If you fail to provide a signed release form, you will not be allowed to join the trip and will be subject to Backroads' cancellation policy. For complete details on our cancellation policy, see www.backroads.com.

Transfers

With the exception of Private and Custom Trips, you may transfer from one trip to another without penalty, within the parameters of your trip's transfer policy. When transferring to a different date or trip, if the trip costs more than your original trip, you are responsible for the difference in cost. Please review your trip invoice for additional transfer policy details. After the allowable transfer date, our cancellation policy applies. Cancellation penalties will not be charged if you are able to fill the vacancy with another guest(s).

Itinerary Changes

If unforeseen circumstances require a change in the trip itinerary, Backroads will make every effort to select alternative accommodations of the same quality and to keep the activity modifications minimal.

Electronics & Other Valuables

It is best to leave valuables at home. If you must bring valuables on the trip, please understand that they are 100 percent your responsibility, regardless of what anyone (including leaders) might tell you. Cash, jewelry and passports are especially important to keep in your possession. It's not safe to leave valuables in Backroads vans; while not common, break-ins do happen. You may choose to lock them in your room's safe, if one is available to you.

Although we will transport your valuables during your trip as a convenience, **we do not assume responsibility for any damage or loss.** This policy applies to personal electronics as well as other items, such as luggage, jewelry, and fragile and delicate accessories, whether purchased on the trip or otherwise.

After your trip ends, if you realize that you've accidentally left an item behind in Backroads' possession, we'll do our best to honor return requests. However, we're not able to guarantee returns based on leader availability limitations

to find and send items (our leaders are on the go!) and possible shipping issues. If you've left an item at a hotel, please contact that hotel directly to make arrangements.

On-Your-Own Activities

During, before or after your Backroads trip, there may be time for you to enjoy some of the area's special activities on your own. These activities are not included in your Backroads trip itinerary and are not options sponsored by Backroads, but they can often be a highlight for those who choose to participate. We mention them so you are aware and because you might enjoy these activities on your own. Please understand that Backroads is not responsible for any problems which may occur during any on-your-own activities.



MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT

We are delighted to support World Bicycle Relief's mission of providing bicycles to rural workers, students and healthcare providers worldwide, especially women. Our involvement with WBR complements our efforts to promote and improve biking in communities where our guests live and visit.

VISIT WORLDBI CYCLERELIEF.ORG

GETTING ACTIVE FOR YOUR TRIP

NAVIGATION OPTIONS ON THIS TRIP

Turn-by-turn paper directions included for some days of this trip, but not included for others due to remote unmarked trails and the requirement to be accompanied by a certified Argentine guide when in national parks.

Downloadable GPS files available for use on your own device—log into your account at Backroads.com 2 weeks before your trip for more details.

Activity Level

The routes on this trip are rated Levels 2–5.

ACTIVITY LEVEL	Avg. Time in hours	BIKING		WALKING	
		Avg. Miles	Max Elev. Gain in feet	Avg. Miles	Max Elev. Gain in feet
1	2-3 hrs	8-22	1000'	2-5	800'
2	2-4 hrs	18-32	2200'	4-7	1300'
3	3-5 hrs	26-42	3400'	5-9	2000'
4	4-6 hrs	36-54	4400'	6-11	3000'
5	5-7+ hrs	48-70+	4400'+	7-13+	4000'+

Review the "Activity Level" section on the web for more details on daily route options.

Terrain

Most walks and hikes on this trip involve a mild altitude gain, normally between 600 and 2,300 feet, starting from just above sea level. Trails are sometimes narrow and, depending on the weather, can be muddy and slippery. Also, note that the more technical route options require a degree of agility and balance traversing rocks, tree roots and uneven terrain.

Conditioning Tips

Every Backroads trip is designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests and fitness levels. We know your pace may vary from one day to the next—and your traveling companions' may differ somewhat from yours. So we present a range of mileage options, and each day you decide exactly what and how much you want to do.

Before your trip, we suggest walking and hiking regularly and hitting a few hills whenever you can. Review the route options in the daily itinerary for the range of mileages offered on this trip. But mostly, just show up and have fun!

Pacing & Endurance

Here are a few suggestions for increasing your endurance while on your Backroads trip:

- Make sure your muscles are warmed up before you start walking.
- Walk and hike at a steady pace that you can maintain throughout your walk—don't push yourself too hard at the beginning.
- Eat high-energy snacks throughout your walk or hike, and drink water often—before you are thirsty—to avoid dehydration. (Your leaders will have plenty of food and water on hand.) Some people find that a water-pack hydration system, worn like a backpack and equipped with a plastic tube for drinking, is a good accessory on long outings or in hot climates, since it enables you to carry more water and drink regularly without having to stop.
- Perhaps most important, make sure your shoes fit properly and have been broken in before the start of the trip.

Resources

The American Hiking Society website is packed with all sorts of useful information related to walking and hiking. Visit americanhiking.org.

Your local outdoor store can be an excellent resource too; ask to speak with an experienced employee.

Staying Comfortable: FAQs

Q: Do I need to bring hiking boots for my trip?

A: Varying weather conditions and terrain can make any trail challenging, whether you're hiking up a mountain or walking through a valley. We recommend hiking boots or sturdy hiking shoes (sometimes called "light hikers") with robust tread, ample ankle support and waterproofing. Your average running shoes often have inadequate tread and stability for terrain like gravel and mud—though even these may be suitable if you know that's what works for you. Most importantly, your shoes should be comfortable and well broken in before your trip starts.

Q: It's not really going to rain during the trip, is it?

A: Well, it just might! Rain is possible no matter where you travel. Your best bet for staying comfortable during a shower is to wear quality rain gear that is both waterproof and breathable.

Q: Does wearing layers really make a difference?

A: Yes! The trick for staying comfortable in fluctuating temperatures is to wear three basic non-cotton layers of lightweight clothing: innerwear (to wick moisture away from your skin), insulating garments (for warmth) and outerwear (to protect against wind or rain). The different layers let you add or remove clothing in response to changes in the weather or your internal temperature.



WHERE TO STAY BEFORE & AFTER YOUR TRIP

For help arranging hotel accommodations for before and after your Backroads trip, or an extension to your trip, please work with your own travel advisor, or you may work with our preferred travel agency partner. Their team of professional travel advisors are ready to share their insiders' knowledge of Backroads and our worldwide destinations and are available to assist you with any of your travel needs. Please note that they are an independent travel agency and consulting and ticketing fees may apply, based on the services requested. Simply ask your Backroads Trip Consultant to connect you! You can also book directly with the hotel, or through a travel website.

Please note that Backroads does not block rooms and does not offer special rates for pre- and post-trip stays. If you plan on extending your stay at our first night's hotel before the trip starts or our last night's hotel when the trip ends, let the hotel reservations agent know that you're traveling with Backroads—you may be able to avoid changing rooms. **We recommend booking your rooms as early as possible, especially during peak travel season!**

Alternatively, you may choose to extend your stay before your trip at **Hotel Posada Los Alamos, our meet location on Day 1 and our accommodation on Day 3**. Located at Ing. Hector Mario Guatti 1135, in El Calafate, Argentina, the hotel is beautifully constructed from timber and stone and set in the heart of El Calafate and overlooking El Pinar, the only golf course in the area. Contact the hotel by phone at +54-(0)2902-491144 (ext. 502 or 501) or via their website www.posadalosalamos.com.

In addition, the following is a selection of recommended properties that span a range of prices, amenities and locations, and are listed by price in descending order. Refer to the Hotel Room Rate Guide for the starting double-occupancy rates, which were accurate at time of printing. Note that rates are subject to change and some hotels may require a minimum stay. **Again, book early, especially during peak travel season!**

HOTEL ROOM RATES	
IN US DOLLARS PER NIGHT	
\$501 and up.....	◆◆◆◆◆
\$300 to \$500.....	◆◆◆◆
\$201 to \$300.....	◆◆◆
Up to \$200.....	◆◆

El Calafate

Please keep in mind that hotels in the Calafate area are often fully booked during high season (December–April). Also please note that some of the hotels have a Christmas or New Year minimum night stay requirement. We strongly recommend that you make reservations as far in advance as possible.

Hotel map: bit.ly/ElCalafateHotels

Esplendor by Wyndham El Calafate

This contemporary and comfortable hotel is set on a hillside just a short walk from the town center. Enjoy panoramic lake, mountain and downtown views. (pool) | Avenida Perón 1143 | www.wyndhamhotels.com/esplendor/el-calafate-argentina/esplendor-el-calafate/overview | +54-(0)2902-492485 | 57 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆◆

Alto Calafate Hotel Patagónico

Enjoy outstanding views of the lake and snow-capped mountains at this four-star hotel, situated just outside El Calafate. Alto Calafate provides free transfers to and from town until 11 p.m. (pool, spa) | Calle 2000 No. 141, Villa Parque Los Glaciares | www.hotelaltocalafate.com.ar | +54-(0)2902-494110 | 103 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆◆

Hotel Kosten Aike

Located in downtown El Calafate, Hotel Kosten Aike has a friendly atmosphere enhanced by Argentine artists who've recreated ancestral Tehuelche designs throughout the hotel. A four-night stay may be required. (spa) | Gobernador Moyano 1243 | www.kostenaike.com.ar | +54-(0)2902-492424 | 80 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

Kau Yatún Hotel & Estancia

This elegant country-style hotel is set at the foot of Mount Calafate on 10 forested acres just outside town. | Estancia 25 de Mayo | www.kauyatun.com | +54-(0)2902-491059 | 44 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

La Cantera Boutique Hotel

One of the first boutique hotels in the area, La Cantera provides superb hospitality, excellent views and a cozy atmosphere. | Calle 306 No. 173 | www.hotellacanteracalafate.com | +54-(0)2902-495998 | 18 suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

Linda Vista Home Apart Hotel

The cabins at Linda Vista Home Apart Hotel feature views of Lake Argentino, spacious accommodations and useful kitchenettes. A 10-minute walk from the main street, the location can't be beat, and the owners are more than happy to help arrange tours and activities for guests. | Avenida Agostini 71 | www.lindavistahotel.com.ar | +54-(0)2902-493598 | 12 cabins | Rates: ♦ ♦

Mirador del Lago Hotel

This simple yet comfortable hotel is just a few blocks from the town center and offers views of Lake Argentino, as well as a bar, sauna and La Bahía restaurant, featuring specialties such as Argentine beef and trout fresh from the lake. | Avenida del Libertador 2047 | www.miradordellago.com.ar | +54-(0)2902-493213 | 69 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦



Buenos Aires

Hotel map: bit.ly/BuenosAiresPPH

Alvear Palace Hotel

A Leading Hotels of the World member, the Alvear Palace lives up to its prestigious reputation. *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List; *Travel + Leisure* World's Best. (pool, spa) | Avenida Alvear 1891 | www.alvearpalace.com | 844-414-0415 (from the US) or +54-(0)11-4804-7777 | 197 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Four Seasons Buenos Aires

The Four Seasons Buenos Aires is the crème de la crème of the Argentine capital. *Travel + Leisure* World's Best. (pool, spa) | Posadas 1086/88 | www.fourseasons.com/buenosaires | +54-(0)11-43211200 | 165 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Palacio Duhau - Park Hyatt Buenos Aires

If you'd like to stay in downtown Buenos Aires' ultra-exclusive shopping district, head to the luxurious Palacio Duhau. The hotel features an art gallery, tango classes and complimentary bicycles to take around the city. *Travel + Leisure* World's Best. *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List. (pool, spa) | Avenida Alvear 1661 | www.buenosaires.park.hyatt.com | 800-633-7313 (from the US) or +54-(0)11-51711234 | 165 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Park Tower Buenos Aires

Set in the heart of the city overlooking Río de la Plata, the Park Tower is an ideal place to unwind while exploring Buenos Aires. (pool) | Avenida Leandro N. Alem 1193 | www.marriott.com | + 54-(0)11-43189100 | 181 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Casa Calma Hotel

A breath of fresh air in the heart of the city, Casa Calma's concept centers around a natural and organic atmosphere, with living garden walls and natural wood floors. The hotel is also the first Zero Contamination hotel in Argentina, and one of the few eco-friendly hotels in the country. | Suipacha 1015 | www.casacalmahotel.com | +54-(0)11-43125000 | 17 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆

Fierro Hotel

Set in the Palermo Hollywood neighborhood, this is a boutique hotel on a cobbled street with a rooftop pool and top-rated restaurant. (pool) | Soler 5862 | fierrohotel.com | +54-(0)11-32006800 | 27 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆

Scala Hotel

The Scala Hotel offers a modern stay for a great value in the San Telmo neighborhood, said to be the birthplace of tango. | Bernardo de Irigoyen 740 | www.scalabuenosaires.com | +54-(0)11-43450118 | 143 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆

Palladio Hotel Buenos Aires MGallery

Modern luxury mixes with an opulent flair in this MGallery property overlooking the leafy Plaza Rodríguez Peña. | Avenida Callao 924 | palladiohotelbuenosaires.com/en | +54-(0)-11-4700-7500 | 113 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Mine Hotel Boutique

This is a cozy and contemporary small hotel in the heart of Palermo Soho with a lovely garden and colorful décor. (pool) | Gorriti 4770 | www.minehotel.com/en | +54-(0)11-48321100 | 20 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆

Sofitel Buenos Aires Recoleta

Nestled in the heart of the most sophisticated and desirable residential area of Buenos Aires, Sofitel Buenos Aires Recoleta Hotel (formerly Brick Hotel) boasts an enviable location near the beautiful boutiques, homes and sights of La Recoleta and El Patio Bullrich. (pool) | Posadas 1232 | www.accorhotels.com | +54-(0)11-48191100 | 175 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆

Buenos Aires Ezeiza Airport

If you have a long layover in Buenos Aires, the following hotels offer daytime use.

Holiday Inn Buenos Aires Ezeiza Airport

Conveniently located next to the international airport, this comfortable hotel features a fitness center and several dining options on-site. (pool, spa) | Martín Miguel de Güemes 4718 | www.holidayinn.com | 888-465-4329 (from the US) or +54-(0)11-63802200 | 114 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆

InterContinental Buenos Aires

Within walking distance of restaurants, museums and the chic Florida Street shopping area, this hotel offers spacious rooms and an elegant patio dining area. (pool, spa) | Moreno 809 | www.ihg.com/intercontinental | +54-(0)11-43407100 | 309 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆

EXTENDING YOUR VACATION

Chances are you've come a long way from home for your Backroads trip. Why not extend your vacation to experience more of this incredible part of the world? Below are some cities, regions and other attractions that may be of interest.

If you'd like assistance in planning an extension in Argentina or Chile, we recommend contacting Chile Nativo Expeditions. Their English-speaking guides are very knowledgeable; their specialty is Patagonian trekking in Torres del Paine, Chile and other Chilean extensions. (www.chilenativo.com; 800-649-8776 from the US or +56-(0)2-2717-5961)

Argentina

Buenos Aires

This vibrant metropolitan hub is a wonderfully dramatic contrast to the remote regions of Argentina that we visit on trip. Spend time exploring the lively Avenida Corrientes or check out the famous Teatro Colón, one of the most stunning opera houses in the world. Wander through the fashionable barrio of Recoleta, discovering cafés, restaurants and the splendid *cementerio* where Evita Perón and many members of Argentina's aristocracy are buried. Pay a visit to colorful La Boca, the birthplace of the tango. Music fills the air and young couples dance the tango on street corners while sidewalk artists vie for customers along the Caminito.

Tierra del Fuego

Follow in the footsteps of Magellan, Fitzroy and Darwin with a journey to Tierra del Fuego, a stunning region of blue lakes, glaciers, jagged snow-blanketed peaks, expansive beech forests and flower-filled meadows that's split between Chile and Argentina. Separated from the mainland by the Strait of Magellan, the Tierra del Fuego archipelago (consisting of Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego and many smaller islands) is largely uninhabited. Flights land in the port town of Ushuaia, Argentina, the region's largest city, which offers a wealth of hotels, travel agencies and tour operators.

Chile

Patagonia: Torres del Paine National Park

Head south into the heart of Chilean Patagonia and discover some of the most remote and spectacular scenery in the world. Pay a visit to Torres del Paine National Park, an area of pinnacles and pristine lakes.

The modern and sophisticated mountain retreat, **Explora Patagonia's Hotel Salto Chico**, is located here on the banks of Salto Chico waterfall. Called "one of South America's best hotels" by *Travel + Leisure*, the resort blends "stylish sensibility with respect for the land." Treat yourself to a massage, take a dip in the pool or soak in the outdoor hot tub. (pool) | www.explora.com/explora-patagonia | 866-750-6699 (from the US) or +56-(0)2-2395-2800 | 49 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Northern Chile

The beautiful Atacama Desert in Northern Chile is one of the driest spots in the world. It's an area of deep canyons and rocky, lunar-like altiplanos (high plateaus) set against a backdrop of high Andean peaks. We highly recommend the following properties:

Alto Atacama Desert Lodge & Spa | Camino Pukará s/n, Suchor, Ayllú de Quitor, San Pedro de Atacama | www.altoatacama.com | +56 (0)2 2912 3945 | 42 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Awasi: All excursions are privately guided. | A Relais & Châteaux member | Tocopilla 4, San Pedro de Atacama | www.awasi.com | 888-880-3219 (from the US) or +56-(0)2-2233-9641 | 8 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Santiago & San Fernando

Chile's capital—and largest city—offers plenty of sights to fill an entire day or a week, if you're so inclined. Visit the Pablo Neruda museum, the Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, or take in the sights around the Plaza de Armas, the city's historical center.

Just over an hour south of Santiago in San Fernando, you'll find the spectacular and unique **Vik Chile**, a serene property with beautiful views and its own vineyard, pool and spa. Hacienda Vik, Millahue Sin Número | www.vikchile.com | +56-(0)9-5668-4853 | 22 rooms & suites | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

There are many museums, shops and other attractions in the area worth visiting. And if you enjoy Chilean wines, you're right in the middle of the country's main wine-producing region, Colchagua Valley. Follow the "Ruta del Vino," exploring world-class vineyards and sampling fine Chilean vintages along the way. Interested in visiting nearby vineyards? Check out Colchagua Valley (chile.travel/en/intereses-destacados/rutas-del-vino/colchagua-valley) for more information.

Easter Island

With its location in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, Easter Island is home to a culture whose origins and evolution are still largely unknown, making it an attractive and mysterious destination. A mild year-round climate allows for island walks and travels along the coast of numerous *ahus* that are home to the gigantic sculptures called *moai*. We strongly recommend staying at the all-inclusive eco-friendly (the first LEED-certified lodge in South America) **Explora Rapa Nui**. | Easter Island | www.explora.com | 866-750-6699 (from the US) or +56-(0)2-2395-2800 | 30 rooms | Rates: ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

LUGGAGE REMINDERS

Please limit your luggage to one medium-sized suitcase (we recommend 25"–28", preferably not hard case) and one small carry-on bag.

Also, please bring a smaller duffel bag in your luggage that you can pack separately with clothes for three days of hiking—don't forget layers!—two casual dinners, rain gear, sleepwear and toiletries. There is no specific size or weight restrictions for this smaller bag, but please try to keep it close to the size of a standard airplane carry-on.

Be sure to mark your luggage with your contact information.

Essential

Travel Items

- international travel documents (i.e. passport, visa, etc.)
- photocopy of front page of passport (kept in a separate place from passport)
- wallet (credit cards, bank cards, ID)
- cash for incidentals & leader gratuities
- airline tickets/e-ticket confirmation details
- sealable, quart-size plastic bags for stowing small liquid containers, swimsuit, etc.
- toiletries (including sunscreen & lip ointment)
- medications & copies of prescriptions
- list of important addresses & contact numbers
- insect repellent
- small duffel bag

Active Clothing & Gear

- waterproof hiking boots/shoes (well broken in)
- hiking socks (with liners if preferred)
- walking/hiking shorts and lightweight pants
- non-cotton base layers of varying weights
- lightweight hiking jacket or vest
- hat with brim & chin strap (for strong wind) & bandana, buff or sweatband (for potential dust on trails)
- backpack (for lunches, water, rain gear, camera, etc.)
- sunglasses (with retention strap)
- sport sandals and/or flip-flops
- swimsuit
- small flashlight or headlamp

Rain Gear & Cold Weather Clothing

These items are necessary to stay comfortable in case of rain or unseasonably cold weather.

- windproof (for strong wind) & waterproof (breathable) rain jacket & pants
- waterproof/water-resistant warm gloves
- warm jacket (easy to pack)
- warm hat (that covers ears)

Non-Active Clothing

- clothing & shoes for downtime & restaurants
- lightweight jacket (like fleece) or warm sweater

Backroads provides water bottles & hiking poles.

Optional

- camera & charger (**remember to enter our Guest Photo Contest!**)
- cell phone & charger
- voltage converter/plug adapter (if applicable)
- CamelBak or similar hydration backpack
- guidebook and/or field guides
- notebook/travel journal & pens
- reading material
- earplugs