Walking in Patagonia



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Patagonia	8	4899kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Travel to the far reaches of South America and discover a land of raw wilderness and natural beauty straddling both Argentina and Chile. The vast Patagonian steppe is where towering, rocky pinnacles overlook turquoise lakes, and the immense Perito Moreno Glacier drops sheets of ice into the waters below. Above it all stands the sheer faces of Mount Fitz Roy – an eye-catching centrepiece to this astonishing landscape. You'll also venture to islands where colonies of Magellan penguins and sea lions thrive, while time in lively Buenos Aires and Santiago provide a complete contrast to exploring one of the world's most remote regions.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the incredible Torres del Paine National Park on foot
- Walking in the Los Glaciares National Park
- Spending time in the Argentine capital, Buenos Aires
- Getting close to Grey Glacier by boat
- Spotting Magellan penguins, rheas, guanacos, and condors
- Visiting La Campana National Park, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow including baggage and transfers
- Guided walks with local leaders
- 12 nights' touring accommodation across Patagonia and Argentina
- 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches & 12 dinners
- All sightseeing and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- All in-destination transport and internal flights

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 DEPART FROM THE UK

Our with-flights guests depart the UK on an overnight flight to Buenos Aires

Day 2 BUENOS AIRES

Once you've arrived in Buenos Aires, you'll set off on a tour to discover the city's highlights. Known as the Paris of South America, Buenos Aires' architecture is enchanting. We'll visit the Avenida de Mayo Boulevard and the Plaza de Mayo, home to the cathedral and city hall, as well as the colourful tin houses of San Telmo de la Boca. We'll wind up in the northern part of Buenos Aires, where parks and wide avenues dominate the cityscape.

Day 3 EL CHALTEN

Fly from Buenos Aires to El Calafate and transfer to El Chaltén

Day 4 LAGUNA DE LOS TRES

Distance: 9km

Ascent: 800m

This is the signature walk in this part of the world, and the closest to Mount Fitz Roy. We'll set off on a long, but well-marked trail that starts in El Chaltén, firstly tackling a steep slope to reach Del Salto Valley. We'll cross the Rio Blanco to arrive at the base camp. From here, we'll continue ascending approximately 400m until we reach Laguna de los Tres.

Day 5 CERRO TORRE VIEWPOINT

Distance: 6km

Ascent: 300m

We'll transfer from El Chaltén to El Calafate to trek to the Cerro Torre viewpoint. Our walk begins with a 20-minute uphill climb through a beautiful lenga forest – Patagonia's native trees. We'll enjoy views of the Fitz Roy River running through the base of the canyon to our left. On the horizon, we'll be able to see the granite formations of the entire massif, Fitz Roy and its surrounding hills. We'll return on the same path, this time soaking up the immensity of the Patagonian steppe and the hills in the vicinity of Lake Viedma.

Day 6 PERITO MORENO GLACIER

From El Calafate, we'll head for the jaw-dropping sight of Perito Moreno Glacier. It's part of the Argentinean southern ice field, an immense ice mass that has buried a huge area beneath it. Admire this natural wonder from various viewpoints, walking along safe and well sign-posted footpaths. With a bit of luck, we'll even experience columns of ice breaking away from the glacier and falling into Lago Argentino with a thundering crash. We'll have dinner at local restaurant this evening.

Day 7 CALAFATE TO CERRO CASTILLO

Today we'll travel from Argentina into neighbouring Chile. We'll need to change our vehicle at the border after custom formalities, from where we'll continue towards Puerto Natales National Park. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant on the Chilean side of the border along the way.

Day 8 LAGO GREY

Distance: 7km

Ascent: 200m

Embark on a three-hour boat excursion to Grey Glacier, the largest in Torres del Paine National Park. Starting at Hotel Lago Grey, we'll cruise up the lake towards the glacier, which stands tall at 30m (100ft) high and 6km (3.7 miles) wide. Pieces of ice both large and small regularly break off from the front of the glacier, falling into the water and floating across the lake like fluorescent blue icebergs. We'll pass in front of the glacier as close as possible for a close-up view of the majestic sight, before returning to the hotel.

Afternoon trek in the Sarmiento sector

Our hike begins after a short transfer to Lago Sarmiento park entrance and takes us northwards to the Laguna Amarga entrance. We'll be able to spot a wide range of flora and fauna, including rheas (large, flightless birds) and wild guanaco (similar to domesticated llamas). What's more, we'll see fascinating rock paintings created by the region's indigenous population.

Please note depending on boat excursion times, we might change Lake Grey navigation to a PM tour and then the trekking will be in the morning.

Day 9 TREKKING TO LAS TORRES BASE VIEWPOINT

Distance: 18km

Ascent: 650m

We'll climb upwards into the Asencio Valley, stopping to admire the marvellous views of Nordenskjöld Lake and Almirante Nieto Mountain (2,670m) behind you. After resting at Refugio El Chileno, we'll continue for about an hour and a half, passing through an age-old lenga (beech) forest and crossing plunging streams to the Campamento Torres.

Here, we'll climb steeply up the side of the valley, through a rock-covered glacial moraine to the Las Torres Base viewpoint. This magnificent spot rewards with memorable views of the Torre Sur at 2,850 m, Torre Central (2,800m), Torre Norte (2,600 m), and Cerro Nido de Cóndor.

Day 10 PUNTA ARENAS

We'll travel to Punta Arenas, the capital of the Magellan region, which thanks to its location on the Magellan Strait, prospered and continues to be used by merchant ships to this day.

We'll drive to the Cerro de la Cruz viewpoint for far-reaching views of the city and the Magellan Strait. Then we'll head to the main square, Plaza de Armas, which is lined with 19th century mansions.

Day 11 SANTA MARTA AND MAGDALENA ISLANDS

This 4.5-hour shared boat trip takes us through the icy waters of the Strait of Magellan to the islands of Santa Marta and Magdalena. The islands are home to an enormous colony of Magellan penguins, as well as many other animals, including cormorants and petrels.

We'll set off from Laredo Bay to Santa Marta Island, home to a colony of sea lions, along with cormorant nesting grounds. After a tour of Santa Marta, we'll venture to Magdalena Island, also part of the Los Pingüinos Natural Monument protection area since 1982. Each year, from October to March, over 60,000 pairs of Magellan penguins converge to nest and fledge their young. We'll visit an environmental interpretation centre for more information on the Magellan Strait and its ecological richness.

There's time for lunch followed by condor watching at Estancia Olga Teresa, home to 60 to 100 Andean condors. Under professional guidance, we'll be able to marvel at these creatures through a telescope. Your guide will explain everything about them and their behaviour.

Day 12 SANTIAGO

After our flight from Punta Arenas to Santiago, we'll enjoy a sunset visit to the Sky Costanera observation platform, atop the tallest building in South America. With clear skies, you'll even be able to see the ski centres in the Andes.

Day 13 LA CAMPANA NATIONAL PARK

Distance: 3km

Ascent: 400m

An early transfer brings us La Campana National Park, named after La Campana mountain (1,910m/6,267ft). The park encompasses one of the few protected central regions of Chile that still retains its original flora and fauna, and was added to the UNESCO World Biosphere list in 1985.

Our hike leads through an impressive natural forest and a particular highlight are the palm groves here, in the northern Ocoa sector of the national park. Towards the end of the hike, we'll reach a viewpoint with panoramic vistas of the entire valley. In the evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at local restaurant in Santiago.

Day 14 DEPARTURE DAY

Our with-flight guests transfer to Santiago airport to begin our return journey back to the UK

Day 15 ARRIVE UK

With-flight guests arrive back in the UK

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Challenging walking grade 8

Challenging walks for fit, experienced walkers. Expect rugged or mountainous terrain, or some longer distances than typical for this grade. Typically, 12-13 miles (19-21km) with around 2,300ft (700m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Diego de Almagro, Punta Arenas - Patagonia

The modern Hotel Diego de Almagro Punta Arenas is located along the waterfront, just a few minutes' walk from the city centre. Rooms are large and well-furnished, many with an unbeatable view of the historic Strait of Magellan. The hotel features a fitness room, a sauna, a jacuzzi, a heated swimming pool, and restaurant.

Four Points by Sheraton, Santiago

The upmarket Four Points by Sheraton lies in the heart of the Providencia district, near boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, and bars. Rooms feature views of the city or the Andes. Plus there's a restaurant and a bar that serves up pisco sours every night of the week.

Eurobuilding Hotel Boutique - Buenos Aires

Set in a modern building on a bustling, tree-lined avenue this upscale hotel is centrally located. Amenities include a rooftop terrace with a jacuzzi and a lounge area overlooking the city. Rooms have TVs, safes, free Wi-Fi and tea and coffee making facilities.

Hotel Lunajuim - El Chalten

Set in a picturesque mountain village dotted with hiking trails, this relaxed hotel is modest and warmly furnished. All rooms offer free Wi-Fi, cable TV and minibars. Additional amenities include a library and a cozy lounge area with a fireplace, plus a laid-back, colorful bar.

Sent Calafate, El Calafate

Sent Calafate lies a 20-minute walk from the centre of charming El Calafate. Perched on the southern shores of Lake Argentino, the town is known as the gateway to the mighty Argentinian glaciers. Offering comfortable rooms complete with free Wi-Fi, plus a complimentary buffet breakfast, this hotel is the perfect base for a Patagonian adventure.

Remota Patagonia Lodge, Puerto Natales

The 72 bedroomed lodge is designed to allow visitors to experience and feel Patagonia from inside as well as out. The prize winning architect, German del Sol proposes a work in keeping with its environment, where nature is always the main stage, inspired by the old Patagonian shearing sheds inclined by the wind. Hotel Facilities include a heated pool and Sauna, shop, bar, lounge and restaurant. The comfortable rooms feature panoramic views of the mountains around the Última Esperanza Fjord and include a hairdryer and safe.

Savoy Hotel – Buenos Aires (November 2026)

The centrally located Savoy Hotel first welcomed guests in 1910 and has set the standard for gracious service and personalised hospitality ever since. The hotel's refurbishment gives modern sophistication in one of Buenos Aires's most enviable locations. Facilities include a fitness centre, restaurant and lounge/bar. Room facilities include modern

furnishings, a minibar, air-conditioning and a safety deposit box.

SAFETY ON YOUR HOLIDAY

Safety information

Please inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions and other directions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services.. Please then call our emergency number (sent in your final dispatch) and let us know there is a problem.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements and we will do our best to meet your needs.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information for Patagonia

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see if any health precautions are needed. The following websites provide a wealth of information on travelling and health: www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk

Vaccines: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Typhoid & Tetanus vaccinations are recommended. Rabies is sometimes recommended too.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information for Patagonia

Passports

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long. We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visas

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Travel independently

If you prefer to book the holiday without flights and make your own travel arrangements you will still be able to make use of the return group transfers between the airport and hotel, which are included in the cost of your holiday. You must contact us on +44 (0)20 3974 8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk at least 8 weeks before your holiday start date to provide your flight details if you wish to join the transfers. If you do not contact us, we will assume you are making independent travel arrangements.

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives. If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Language Information for Patagonia

Spanish is spoken in both Chile and Argentina; some basic pleasantries include:
'Hola' – Hello
'Adiós' – Goodbye
'Sí' – Yes
'No' – No '
Por favor' – Please
'Gracias' – Thank you
'¿Habla usted inglés?' – Do you speak English?

LUGGAGE

Luggage information for Patagonia

Luggage allowance

Please check details of your airline's baggage allowance, as shown on your e-ticket. Remember to also check any connecting flights you may have booked.

If you have chosen to upgrade your international flight, please be aware that any internal or connecting flights may have a lower baggage allowance. In these cases, the baggage allowance of the internal flight will apply for the whole journey.

Lost/damaged luggage

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may decide to settle your claim immediately.

You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport.

LOCAL CURRENCY

Spending money advice for Patagonia

We recommend you budget on needing approximately US$60-70 per person, per day as spending money to cover your drinks, meals which are not included – and, of course, any souvenirs you may wish to buy

Local currency for Patagonia

The unit of currency in Chile is the Peso and in Argentina, the Argentinian Peso. Neither is easy to obtain outside of their respective countries, so it is advisable to take US$ which is the preferred foreign currency.

Dollars in cash are easy to exchange and can often be used in everyday transactions – particularly in Argentina, less so in Chile. Major credit cards are accepted in most places. You should ensure that you have access to emergency funds, probably by means of a credit card. Traveller's cheques are not advised.

LOCAL TIME

Local time for Patagonia

GMT/UTC -3 hours

ELECTRICITY

Electricity information for Patagonia

In both countries, the supply is 220V, 50Hz. Round two-pin plugs are used but flat threepin plugs may be needed in Argentina. We recommend you take a universal plug to cover all options.

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Patagonia

There are also cash-point machines at airports and town centres which can be used to withdraw cash

SUGGESTED READING & MAPS

Suggested reading and maps for Patagonia

Suggested reading

- Lonely Planet, Argentina (Aug 2018) and Chile & Easter Island (Oct 2018)
- Bruce Chatwin, In Patagonia (Dec 1998)
- Footprint Handbook, Patagonia (Nov 2016)
- Moon Handbooks, Patagonia (Dec 2017)

Maps

Although you won't need them, if you'd like any maps of the destination, you can obtain some in advance from The Map Shop: www.themapshop.co.uk

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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