

CHILE Patagonia Trek

This is an Open Challenge itinerary; you can take part on the dates shown and raise money for a charity of your choice. Itineraries for bespoke trips (run for sole charities) may differ slightly, and will have different dates and pricing schedules.

Duration: 11 days / 10 nights

Trip Grade: Moderate

Dates:

26 Nov – 6 Dec 2011

24 Nov – 4 Dec 2012

Payment Options:	2011	2012
Fundraising:		
Registration Fee	£499	£499
Min. Fundraising Target	+ £3900	+ £3950
Self Payment:		
Registration Fee	£499	£499
Trip Cost	+ £1560	+ £1580

Please note Registration Fee is in addition to Trip Cost / Fundraising Target

Patagonia, Chile's final frontier, provides some of the best scenery on the planet and some of the best trekking in the southern hemisphere. This is a superb, rewarding challenge for anyone with a sense of adventure and a love for the great outdoors.



We trek via glaciers and turquoise-blue lakes to the renowned granite towers of Torres del Paine National Park, the jewel of Patagonia. The countryside is wild and rugged, and our route passes towering wind-carved cliffs and mountains, moorland, forests and rich grasslands. We cross ice-cold, pure mountain streams and camp in beautiful locations, continually watching out for the graceful condors that wheel in the skies far above us.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart UK for Santiago

Day 2: Santiago – Puerto Natales

Arrive in Santiago, transfer to internal flight to Punta Arenas (approx 4 hours); we then transfer by bus to Puerto Natales – a journey that introduces you to the huge remote landscapes of Patagonia. This is a long day, but it's a long way to get this far south! We check into our hotel and have dinner and a short briefing; you can then relax! Night hotel.

Internal flight approx 4 hrs; drive approx 4 hrs

Day 3: Puerto Natales – Lago Pehoe

After a good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast we leave Puerto Natales, heading north for the 120km drive to Torres del Paine National Park. We pass large *estancias* and see many sheep grazing in what otherwise looks wild, untamed country. Keep an eye out for guanacos, rheas and even condors as we near the National Park. Our trek starts with a

relatively gentle afternoon walk across the pampa to our lakeside campsite at Pehoe. Night camp.

Drive approx 3-4 hrs; Trek approx 13km / 4-5 hrs



Day 4: Lago Pehoe – Glaciar Gray – Lago Pehoe

A hearty breakfast sets us up for the day as our first big hike takes us up towards Glaciar Gray, a 3-4 hour walk. Our route takes us from open moorland through forested hills and the way becomes steadily rockier and steeper as we progress. As we get closer to the glacier, we enjoy fabulous views of Lago Gray as our path undulates along the cliffs and hills bordering the lake. Look out for small ice-floes on the lake before the glacier comes into view. We visit the *mirador* (lookout point), where we can watch as chunks of the icecap tumble into the water. After soaking up the amazing scenery we retrace our steps and overnight once more at Campamento Pehoe. Night camp.

Trek approx 14km / 7-8hrs



Day 5: Lago Pehoe – Cuernos del Paine

We leave the beautiful Lago Pehoe and follow largely flat or undulating narrow paths as they meander through scrubland and open heath towards the opening of Valle del Frances. Our path changes as we climb up along one rocky side of the valley, our views dominated by the spectacular hanging glacier which the valley is named for. We can usually hear the cracks and rumbles of the glacier from some distance. After spending some time admiring the permanent ice and the views of the surrounding mountain peaks, we return back down the valley to Campamento Italiano, then head east for our last section, which undulates above the stunning Lago Nordenskjold to our campsite at Los Cuernos Refuge. Our legs will be tired by this stage and there are many short sharp inclines, but the scenery is stunning and our camp is set below the strangely weathered Cuernos del Paine. Look out for condors circling high up around the Cuernos. Night camp.

Trek approx 12km / 8 hrs



Day 6: Cuernos del Paine – Las Torres

After a comfortable night, we set off on a relatively short day's trek, following the turquoise Lago Nordenskjold to our riverside campsite at Las Torres. The track climbs upwards for some time along the lake, presenting magnificent views of Paine Chico and the Torres del Paine ahead of us, and the Cuernos behind. We descend for approx half an hour, crossing several gushing rivers over the rolling forested terrain and then climb steeply away from the lake over a pass. We come to a flat stretch around a small lake and then gradually descend to Las Torres, our riverside campsite. Night camp.

Trek approx 10km / 6 hrs



Day 7: Las Torres – Torres del Paine – Las Torres

An early start today as we set off up the Torres valley to Las Torres del Paine. The huge granite towers are a truly magnificent sight, and will make up for all the challenges you've faced to get here. Our five hour trek begins with a long, steep climb with Paine Chico (2668m) on our left, before descending gradually to the river and the spectacularly situated Chileno refuge. It's a further two and a half hours of tough climbing up the huge glaciated valley to the towers themselves, the last stretch over rocks and boulders. After spending some time at the towers absorbing the views, we return to our campsite for a final evening camping and a traditional *asado* (Chilean BBQ) at Las Torres. Night camp.

Trek approx 18km / 11 hrs



Day 8: Las Torres – Puerto Natales

We break camp for the last time and head out of the park, en-route to Puerto Natales. After a well-earned hot shower we head out into the town for a slap-up celebratory meal. Night hotel.

(Dinner not included)

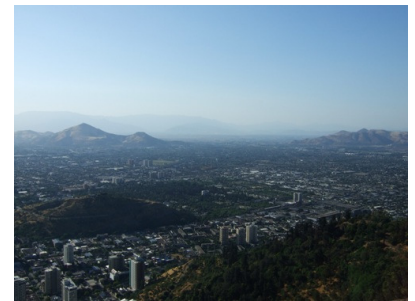
Trek approx 3 hrs; 3-4 hrs drive

Day 9: Puerto Natales – Santiago

We transfer to Punta Arenas for our flight back to Santiago. Weather permitting, the flight provides us with great views of the Campo de Hielo Sur, the Southern Patagonian Icecap. We arrive for an evening

in the bright lights of Santiago de Chile, capital of one of the most diverse countries in the world, and home to over 4 million people. Night hotel.

(Dinner not included)



Drive approx 4 hrs; internal flight approx 4 hrs

Day 10: Depart Santiago

A chance for a touch of shopping and exploring, or just lapping up the atmosphere in the numerous cafés in this cosmopolitan city, before heading to the airport in time for our flight back to the UK.

(Lunch not included)

Day 11: Arrive London

GENERAL INFORMATION TOUR COST

All accommodation is included as well as all flights and transfers, internal air tax, camping equipment (except sleeping bag and sleeping mat), all meals except three as specified in the itinerary, entrance to the National Park and all other sites visited as part of the itinerary.

Experienced Discover Adventure leaders and doctor (depending on final group size) are also included, along with a local support crew of guides, horses, drivers and cooks (see Trip Support below).

It does not include personal travel insurance, airline fuel supplement if charged by the airline, three meals as

specified, tip for local crew, or international departure tax. It also does not include any entrance fees to any optional sites or attractions.

Costs in Chile

We recommend you budget for the following costs in-country:

- Tips for Local Crew (see below): US\$40
- Meals not included: US\$30-40
- Departure tax: US\$25

Remember to allow extra for drinks, souvenirs & other personal expenses.

This recommendation is a guideline only. Please note that costs may fluctuate and we have no control over any changes.

We strongly recommend you carry a credit card in case of personal emergency.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Group flights leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).



We are most likely to fly with Iberia and LAN airlines. However, we don't always fly with the same airline so this is a guideline only. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure.

Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline.

Connecting Flights

If you book flights to Heathrow or Gatwick, it is your responsibility to allow plenty of time to connect to the group flight and to cope with any flight schedule changes. Please be aware that the best deals allow little flexibility if you need to change them. We regret that we are unable to book connecting flights for you.



Transit Stops

When booking group flights we endeavour to find the best flights that match our itinerary. There are often no direct flights to our destination, so do be prepared for transit stops: bring a good book or chat to your fellow trekkers! Airlines that do offer direct flights rarely offer competitive rates for groups. Please remember that the main purpose of our trips is to raise money for charity!

Flying Separately

If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost. You will be responsible for making your own arrangements for meeting the rest of the group, though we can advise you. We need to know if you do not require our group flight as early as possible; please complete the form in the information pack you'll be sent with your booking confirmation.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation ranges from camping for five nights to hotel accommodation for three. The campsites vary from well-used campsites with good facilities to more remote, basic sites. There are always opportunities to wash or shower but



at the more remote camps the water may be invigoratingly cold! Hotels range from small, traditional hotels or *hospedajes* to a clean, comfortable 2-3* hotel in Santiago. Please do not expect the same standards as you would in a tourist hotel in the UK!

FOOD

All food is included when trekking. The food is good and will give you plenty of energy for the long days of trekking. Three meals as specified in itinerary are not included.



Dietary Requirements

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Please do not expect as much variety as you would have access to at home – we will be in rural areas and among people of a different culture who may not understand your requirements, however willing they are to help. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

Other Meals

Any meals not included are listed in the itinerary and are generally when we are in towns or cities and you are free to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit every budget.

PASSPORT, VISA & VACCINATIONS

A valid ten-year passport is essential; it should be valid for at least six months after arrival in the country. There is currently no visa requirement for UK citizens. Other nationalities should check entry requirements.

We insist that you have had a Tetanus injection in the last ten years, and highly recommend protection against Polio, Hepatitis A and Typhoid. A Yellow Fever certificate is necessary if arriving from an infected country.

You should always check with your GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!

For most people, the main attraction of travelling to a different country is to see new sights and enjoy new experiences. Sometimes those new experiences can make life harder or more inconvenient than you may like, such as toilet hygiene or different food, or simply a different attitude to solving problems. This is all part of the challenge you are signing up for!

Travelling exposes us to different challenges – all of which help broaden our horizons. We can guarantee that coming face-to-face with experiences outside your normal 'comfort zone' will help you bond with your fellow trekkers and provide you with plenty of things to laugh about! A sense of humour and sense of adventure are two of the most important things to bring with you!

TREKKING INFORMATION

Terrain

We will be trekking over very varied terrain ranging from wide dirt tracks to narrow rock-strewn paths. We cross several small streams – many have boulders or planks to help you cross. The level of water depends on recent rainfall! Some sections of path may be muddy and boggy. At times our route crosses large rocks and boulders and there is some scrambling. If you are unsteady on your feet you will find trekking poles useful. Much of the time we are trekking up or downhill – there is not much flat in the National Park! This is a diverse, challenging and stunningly beautiful trek.



Trekking Distances

You will trek approximately 70km on this trip overall. Because of the varied terrain and lack of accurate maps, it's impossible to give more accurate daily distances. It's also much more useful when training to think about the hours

you need to walk for and the terrain you will be trekking over!

We are always happy to talk through the trip in more detail with you if you are worried about your fitness at any stage.

FITNESS WARNING: DESIGNED TO BE CHALLENGING!

This trek is designed to be challenging for those of good health and fitness, and is achievable for most people provided they train well in advance. We will supply you with a thorough training guide when you have registered. Training for the challenge is all part of the preparation and requires commitment! Without it, you will find the trek less enjoyable – and we want you to have the time of your life!

Clothing & Equipment

We are travelling through remote mountains where we could be exposed to bad weather at any time. The information below gives you an idea of the climate, but be prepared for all weathers and temperatures. Weather conditions can change quickly in the mountains. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, as well as details on useful

discounts you are entitled to as a Discover Adventure customer. We are always available if you need advice.



Weather

Figures below show average min-max temperatures for Punta Arenas:

Jan/Feb	7-14°C	Oct/Nov	3-11°C
March/April	4-12°C	December	6-14°C

Rainfall is low, averaging 30-40mm throughout the year. June - Sept sees heavy snowfall. It is often windy in exposed areas, and can be cold at night in the mountains. The weather in Patagonia is unpredictable so you must be prepared for all conditions.



Fitness Levels

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience and fitness, all ages and backgrounds. We expect all participants to train hard in advance to achieve this challenge, but we respect everyone's limits. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners will find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

TRAINING WEEKENDS: £119 SPECIAL OFFER!

Only when you book online at the same time as registering for your main challenge

Discover Adventure Training Weekends in Snowdonia National Park are designed help you prepare for your challenge. Whether you use the weekend to gauge your fitness, get your training back on track, boost your confidence, get advice or meet other trekkers, you're bound to find it incredibly useful!

For dates and further information see our brochure or website.

TRIP SUPPORT

Discover Adventure Crew

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any

situation that arises. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.

All our leaders are from the UK or other English-speaking countries. Most work for us on an ad-hoc basis and have 'real' jobs in-between trips! We never send our leaders to the same destination for months on end – we want them to be as enthusiastic about your trip as you are.

Although our leaders are trained in expedition first-aid, they are accompanied by an expedition doctor or medic (dependent on group size), who is there to look after the well-being of the whole group and deal with any incidents. They help the leaders to ensure the trip runs smoothly and encourage you when things get tough.

The number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but an average-sized group in Chile would be led by two leaders and a doctor. At Discover Adventure we pride ourselves on our high leader: trekker ratio and believe it leads to greater trip enjoyment as well as excellent trip safety.

Local Support Crew

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, drivers and cooks, and horses where appropriate. Your local guide knows the local area well, and is a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. Drivers and cooks do not always speak much English but are very friendly and approachable. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.



Tips for Local Crew

Your leader will arrange a collection of tips for the local support crew at the end of your trek. Tipping is not obligatory, but once you see how hard they work on your behalf you will be happy to donate something! See 'Costs in Chile' above for a guideline amount; your leader will let you know if there is any change to this guideline.



Luggage

Vehicles will drop us off at the start of the trek and pick us up at the end. Your luggage and kit will be transferred from camp to camp by vehicles or horses.

Space is limited and hard-sided luggage is not suitable, so it is essential that your kit is packed in a soft sailing bag, rucksack or expedition kitbag. Ask us about our specially-designed low-cost kitbags if you don't have one already.

You should also bring a small daypack to carry for items needed during the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until each evening.

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with radios and emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. They always have access to our 24-hour emergency back-up in the UK. Our leaders are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary should local conditions dictate.



Pre-trip administration – such as compulsory medical questionnaires and travel insurance – is all done with your safety in mind.

Please contact the Discover Adventure office with any queries using the contact details at the foot of the page.

Copyright Discover Adventure 2009/updated 2010

WORLDWIDE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Long before 'Responsible Tourism' became a recognised phrase, we designed and ran our trips to ensure they made minimum impact on the environment and a positive impact on the local communities we pass through. AITO, our Trade Association, has recognised the work we do in this area and has awarded us 4 stars as a Responsible Tour Operator.



Discover Adventure Projects

We are supporting a tree-planting project in Peru and a children's home in Tanzania on a long-term basis. If you would like to 'give something back' please consider donating £5 to our projects when you sign up. Please see our website for more details.

Carbon Offsetting

We encourage all our customers to offset emissions connected with their trip. You can offset at any time in the lead-up to departure by visiting Climate Care via our website and making a donation to a worthwhile project supported by them. Alternatively, if you wish to take more practical action in the UK you can volunteer for a day with BTCV and work on an environmental project local to you. Work may include construction footpaths, dry stone walling, creating wildlife habitats or planting trees in your community. Make your volunteer pledge by going to www.btcv.org/dapledge

