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PATAGONIA



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Introduction



South America is full of breathtaking destinations. However, a place that stands out for its natural beauty is Patagonia: A region that extends over Argentina as well as Chile. A region that offers travelers exciting adventures and beautiful landscapes and that never ceases to astound its visitors. Patagonia is a dream destination for all those who are longing for space, silence, nature and adventure. Mighty Andes and extensive steppes, lakes as clear as glass and impressive volcanoes, rough coasts and gigantic glaciers are ideal destinations for trekking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering, fishing and much more. Therefore, this destination is perfect for adventure tours.

We have compiled information material about Patagonia for you so that you can get to know this destination better and thus optimally plan and carry out journeys for your customers. Within the material you will find important tips and information on how to enter the tourism business in South America or on how to extend your knowledge in this area.

Our Logistur team has created this guide with great commitment for you and your company - we hope you will enjoy it!





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The history of Patagonia

Patagonia is full of wide and pristine landscapes. Visiting this special place makes you feel like being taken back to the time when this region was still undiscovered by the Europeans - at least one can easily imagine that while being surrounded by this natural landscape.



The region of Patagonia has probably been settled for at least 11,000 years, which is proved by findings like those in the nature reserve Cueva del Milodon (Chile) or Los Toldos (Argentina). The natives were fishermen or hunters of different tribes like the Chonos, Yamana and others.

The history of the discovery of Patagonia by the Europeans starts with the Portuguese sailor Ferdinand Magellan (Fernão de Magalhães) who led the first European expedition to the Southern End of South America. This is why still today the Strait of Magellan carries his name. The sailors discovered an icy paradise with infinite glaciers, huge mountains and deep blue lakes. They met the inhabitants of this region: The Tehuelche, a group of one of the indigenous tribes in Patagonia. The name "Patagonia" also has its origin in Magellan. Inspired by the giant Patagón, a fictional character from the "Novelas de Caballería (Primaleon)", he named the indigenous Tehuelche "patagones", probably due to their impressive stature. These novels formed a collection of knightly tales that attracted much attention in those days.

The Chilean side of Patagonia had been settled by another indigenous group: the Mapuche. “Mapuche” means more or less “people of the earth”. At the time of colonization, the Spanish called them “Araucanos” - a term that the Mapuche did not approve of. They violently resisted the colonization efforts of the Spanish and were ultimately accepted as an independent nation. By the middle of the 17th century, the Mapuche extended their territory across the South Andes to the east. They united with the Tehuelche of Eastern Patagonia who adopted their equestrian culture as well as partly their language, the Mapudungun.

Ever since the foundation of Argentina and Chile there have been fights over the border demarcation in Patagonia. Additionally, since the 19th century extensive settlement programs for Patagonia have been passed. Numerous immigrants, amongst them many Europeans, found a new home here and brought their traditions, culture etc. with them. Due to the increasing settlement and the conflicts as well as diseases associated with it, the Tehuelche culture and many other indigenous tribes died out almost completely. Today, one of Chile’s regions is called “Araucania” - a region in which until today many descendants of the Mapuche are living. They uphold their traditions and customs in gastronomy, handicraft, dances and feasts.





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Patagonia: Places to fall in love with

Patagonia is a dream destination: Vast landscapes, lakes, forests, volcanoes, coasts, wildlife and glaciers await its visitors. However, it should be kept in mind that this region extends over two countries. Thus, there are certain differences between the Argentinean and the Chilean side of Patagonia - even though it is actually the combination of both that makes this destination so special. Let us take you on a trip to the most beautiful places in Argentina and Chile and give you an overview of the highlights of both countries.



Argentinean Patagonia



The extension of Patagonia from north to south is not clearly defined, which makes it difficult to state its exact size. However, the Argentinean part of Patagonia comprises an area of approximately 800 thousand square kilometers (*200 million acres*) and consists of five provinces:

- Neuquén
- Río Negro
- Chubut
- Santa Cruz
- Tierra del Fuego

This eastern part of Patagonia is more densely populated and greatly invests in tourism. Its infrastructure is well developed and there are many hotels, restaurants and transport connections. The most frequently visited and most famous cities in Argentinean Patagonia are El Calafate, Ushuaia, Vila de la Angostura and Bariloche.

Places of interest in Argentinean Patagonia

EL CHALTÉN AND FITZ ROY

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El Chaltén is regarded as one of the most beautiful cities in the region. It only has 500 inhabitants, but every year it is visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists. For that, numerous hotels, restaurants, car rentals and tour operators are located there. The reason? El Chaltén not only is a city worth seeing, but also a point of departure to the highest peaks of Patagonia like the famous Cerro Torre and Fitz Roy. That's why El Chaltén is seen as the capital of trekking in Argentina. There are numerous possibilities to go hiking between mountains, valleys and lakes with a spectacular view - starting with easy trails for all target groups up to mountain climbing. Especially the Fitz Roy attracts visitors: Even though it is a long way to get there, visitors are rewarded with glaciers, snow and a breathtaking view. The route of the Laguna de Los Tres leads to the lookout point closest to the impressive Fitz Roy.



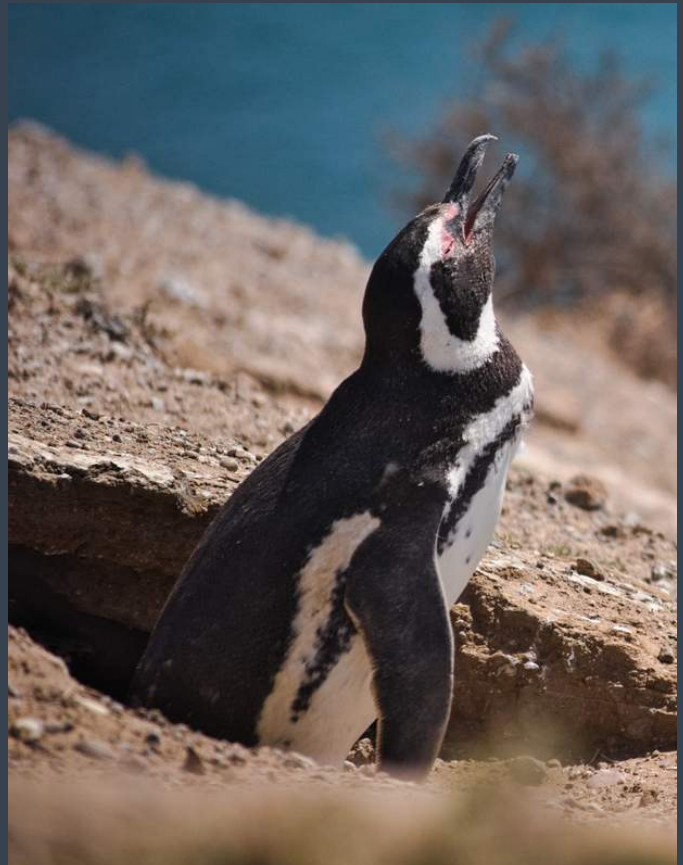
DIE PENÍNSULA VALDÉS

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The Atlantic coast of Patagonia is one of the best places in the world to watch marine animals. Trelew, Puerto Madryn and the peninsula Valdés are located 1,450 kilometers (*900 miles*) away from Buenos Aires in the province of Chubut. Already in the nineteenth century the natural scientist Charles Darwin was fascinated by the enormous diversity of species and the breathtaking landscapes there. Penguins, dolphins, sea lions, elephant seals and other animals can be watched here at close range. It is also a great place for anglers, hikers and enthusiasts of diving. One of the highlights is a whale watching tour: At a distance of 100 kilometers (*62 miles*) from Puerto Madryn you can see different species of whales in their natural habitat. With a bit of luck, it is even possible to spot these marine animals from the coast, but a boat tour is the best way to get closer to the whales.

The best months for a visit are October and November as you can encounter all the different kinds of species. The following overview shows you when exactly you can see which animals:

- Southern right whale: June to December
- Killer whale: October to April
- Sea elephant: all year round
- Penguin: September to February



NATIONAL PARK LOS ARRAYANES

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The national park is located in the province of Neuquén, north of Lake Nahuel-Huapi and near Bariloche. It welcomes its visitors with 18.5 square kilometers (*4,600 acres*) of beautiful nature as well as numerous animals like foxes, deer and wild boars. Even though it is not possible to stay overnight in the park itself, there are various options for accommodation in Villa La Angostura and Bariloche.



NATIONAL PARK NAHUEL HUAPI

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The first and thus oldest national park of Argentina amazes its visitors with its natural beauty. It is located in the province of Río Negro, 1,500 kilometers (932 miles) away from the capital Buenos Aires. A total of 500 kilometres (310 miles) of hiking trails in the park allows visitors to explore the area on foot: Snow-covered mountains, deep blue lakes and green valleys await the visitors. Also a great place for winter sports enthusiasts who can go skiing here.



EL CALAFATE & PERITO MORENO GLACIER

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El Calafate is located in the province of Santa Cruz, close to the Chilean border and 80 kilometers (*50 miles*) away from the national park Los Glaciares. Its approximately 21,000 inhabitants are well aware of the fact that most of the visitors end up in El Calafate because of the famous glacier Perito Moreno, which is an absolute Must during a trip to Patagonia! The glacier was declared a World Cultural Heritage Site by the UNESCO and with a surface of 250 square kilometers (*62,000 acres*), it is even bigger than Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. On boat trips, travelers can get close to its edge where the glacier reaches a height of 60 meters above sea level (*197 feet above sea level*). Perito Moreno is one of the few glaciers in the world that does not retreat.



TIERRA DEL FUEGO

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Tierra del Fuego is a group of islands at the southern tip of South America. It is separated from the mainland by the Strait of Magellan and its main island is the Isla Grande Tierra del Fuego. Since 1881, Argentina and Chile have been sharing this region: The province of Tierra del Fuego belongs to Argentina while the region of Magallanes is part of Chile. The most important towns of this region are Ushuaia and Río Grande on the Argentinean side as well as Porvenir on the Chilean side.

If you wish to receive further information on this unique destination, please review our guide: [Tierra del Fuego & Antarctica.](#)



USHUAIA

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Besides Puerto Williams, Ushuaia is the most southern town in the world. An excellent place for skiing, snowboarding, hiking, boating and watching penguins. But Ushuaia has so much more to offer: The city is surrounded by snow-covered Andes mountains and lies on the banks of the Beagle Channel. The charming city with the busy port is at the top of the list of many travelers, as it is, after all, considered the end of the world. You can visit the museum at the end the world or get a stamp of the end of the world in your passport. Another great travel tip to learn more about the culture of the first natives of Tierra del Fuego is the Yamana museum.



BEAGLE CHANNEL

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Since 1881, this waterway has been forming the border between Chile and Argentina. The Beagle Channel has a length of 240 kilometers (*150 miles*) and is perfect for all animal lovers. You can watch sea lions, whales, dolphins, orcas, different fish, crabs and much more. Furthermore, the Beagle Channel is home to the famous Magellanic penguins, gulls, albatrosses, cormorants and other birds. Usually, it is possible to explore the Beagle Channel by ship departing from Ushuaia.



ROUTE NACIONAL 40

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Route 40 extends from north to south through the whole of Argentina, from the border with Bolivia down to Patagonia, crossing several national parks, rivers and mountain ranges. It has a length of 5,200 kilometers (3,230 miles) and is perfect for all those who want to cross Argentina.



Chilean Patagonia



The Chilean part of Patagonia is smaller and extends from the Reloncaví Strait in the north to the Strait of Magellan in the south. The area covers around 240 thousand square kilometers (*60 million acres*) and shows a significantly lower population density than the Argentinean part: In Chilean Patagonia, on average only one inhabitant lives on one square kilometer. The perfect destination for all those who are looking for wild and remote regions.



Places of interest in Chilean Patagonia

THE CHILEAN LAKE DISTRICT

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Starting in the town of Puerto Varas, you can discover the most beautiful nature in the national park Puyehue until you reach the volcano Osorno. Another highlight is the island of Chiloé which thrills its visitors with colorful over water houses built on piles. This spectacle of nature is complemented by numerous deep blue lakes in this region. From here, you can travel to Bariloche, Argentina, to visit Lake Nahuel Huapi and enjoy the view from Cerro Campanario.



LAGO GENERAL CARRERA & MARBLE CAVES

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On your way south you should make a stop in Puerto Río Tranquilo at the General Carrera Lake. From here, you can take a boat trip to the Marble Caves, also known as Marble Cathedral (Catedral del Marmol) and Marble Chapel (Capillas del Marmol). The rock formation in the lake was formed by erosion, which led to the creation of unique caves. For more than 6,000 years, the wild currents of Lake Lago General have created a masterpiece of stone, color and light.



PUNTA ARENAS

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Punta Arenas is an important connection point for cruise ships. Even though there is not too much to see in the city itself, it is worth taking a walk to Plaza de Armas, the museum, the monument Monumento al Ovejero and the viewpoint with magnificent views of the city and the adjacent Pacific coast. The actual reason why so many tourists come to Punta Arenas is Isla Magdalena: An island full of penguins that can be observed at close range. A real highlight for animal lovers!



PUERTO NATALES & TORRES DEL PAINE

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Puerto Natales is a small Chilean town between the sea and the mountain range and is characterized by its good infrastructure with hotels, restaurants and shops. But not only that - Puerto Natales is also the starting point for many tours to the famous Torres del Paine National Park!

The Torres del Paine National Park is undoubtedly the greatest tourist attraction in Chilean Patagonia and is located 154 kilometers (*95 miles*) northwest of Puerto Natales and 400 kilometers (*250 miles*) from Punta Arenas. Visitors will see giant icebergs, turquoise blue lakes, lush forests, raging rivers and vast pampas in this mountain massif. With a bit of luck, you might get a glimpse of guanacos or even a puma. You can stay overnight in the park at the campsites or in one of the few hostels.



Due to its famous hiking routes like the W-, O- or Q-trek, the national park Torres del Paine is a paradise for fans of trekking.

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The **W-trek** is the most popular route in the park. It enables hikers to see the top highlights of the national park, including the "Towers" (Torres) which give the park its name.

Duration: 4 to 5 days

The **O-trek** is a circular route through the entire park and thus extends the W-trek. This route is recommended for visitors who have more time and want to dive deep into nature - since there are fewer tourists, this route is quieter.

Duration: 9 days

The **Q-Trek** adds another branch line to the O-trek for which you should plan an additional day. Perfect for all those who still haven't had enough of the beauty of the park.

Duration: 10 days



MILODON CAVE

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In 1890 the German Hermann Eberhard discovered the remains of a huge sloth in a large cave northwest of Puerto Natales. The sloth belonged to the Milodon species, a giant sloth from South America with a size of up to 4 meters (*13 feet*) which probably died out thousands of years ago. In front of the 200-meter-long (*656-feet-long*) Milodon Cave you will find a life-size replica. In addition, signs of the first humans in Patagonia were found here, which is why this place is definitely worth a visit for anyone interested in paleontology.

The Milodon Cave is an ideal short stop during a tour to the national park Torres del Paine.



CARRETERA AUSTRAL

This road has a length of approximately 1,200 kilometers (*745 miles*) and connects the towns of Puerto Montt and Villa O'Higgins passing through the most scenic corners of the region. Its infrastructure is not fully developed, but actually it is exactly this remoteness that makes the Carretera Austral so special.



GLACIER CAMPO DE HIELO SUR

The third largest continental ice surface in the world and the largest glacier area in South America (outside Antarctica) are situated in the southern Patagonian Andes between Argentina and Chile. Still today there are parts that have never been entered by humans. Dozens of glaciers feed this huge block of ice, for example the Brüggen or Perito Moreno Glacier. The magic of this place is completed by volcanoes located under the glaciers: 49 in total, including the famous Lautaro.

The most beautiful glaciers are:

Jorge Montt, Brüggen, O'Higgins, Bernardo, Tyndall and Grey in Chile as well Upsala, Viedma and Perito Moreno in Argentina.



ISLA NAVARINO & CAPE HORN

Cape Horn is the last piece of land before the Antarctic - the end of the world, one could say - and impresses with wild, undiscovered nature. Visiting the shore of Cape Horn is only possible as part of a cruise between Ushuaia and Punta Arenas - by dinghy across the stormy sea. An alternative for all those who like it a bit less adventurous is a visit of the Isla Navarino. Here lies the town of Puerto Williams, the southernmost town in the world! Isla Navarino can be reached by boat (38 hours sailing on turbulent water but passing by beautiful fjords and landscapes) or by plane (about 1.5 hours) from Punta Arenas or Ushuaia.

If you wish to receive further information on this unique destination as well, please review our guide: [Tierra del Fuego & Antarctica.](#)





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Planning a Trip



Patagonia has so much to offer that it would take you forever to get to know all parts of it. However, it only takes a day to convince travelers of the beauty of this region. The giant mountains of the Andes, blue lakes, snow-covered peaks and interesting flora and fauna offer many opportunities for adventure. Selecting destinations in advance and planning an appropriate itinerary allows you to see all of your personal highlights in a short time.

Travel time

Patagonia is worth a visit all year round. In spring and summer (December to February) nature decides to stage a beautiful spectacle for our eyes. The days are longer, giving you more time to enjoy the diverse landscapes. It is the ideal time for all those who are interested in flora and fauna. And even though it can be cold to some extent, the climate is still the mildest at this time of the year. Autumn (March to April) is the colorful season: red and yellow trees form a wonderful contrast to snow-covered mountains and blue lakes. Winter (May to November) is the perfect time for all winter sports enthusiasts, July and August are the most popular months for these activities: It rains little and is very cold.



Culture

Prepare yourself for cultural diversity: Both Argentines and Chileans are very hospitable. Certain customs, languages and traditions are still being preserved in Patagonia. In both countries you can notice differences in language and in the way that people behave towards each other. Additionally, you can look forward to trying delicious local food like Argentinean steaks or Chilean empanadas de pino!



Prices

In general Patagonia is quite an expensive destination, but there are also options for small travel budgets. Due to its remote location, accommodation, restaurants and transportation are limited. High accommodation prices in Patagonia are the result of increasing tourism.

Entry Regulations

Travelers with EU or North American citizenship do not need a visa to enter Chile and Argentina if they stay in the country for a maximum of 90 days. In any case the passport is a mandatory document. It must be valid for at least six months upon entry. In some cases, the presentation of a return or onward flight ticket may be required upon entry: The requirements of individual airlines may differ from governmental regulations, so you should check with the airline before departure.

For entering Chile and Argentina there are no compulsory vaccinations required. However, the following vaccinations are recommended: Hepatitis A, typhoid, rabies and yellow fever as well as the standard vaccinations recommended for the EU or North America.

Currency exchange

In Chile, payments are made with Chilean pesos (CLP), whereas the currency in Argentina is the Argentinean Peso (ARS). Travelers can exchange money at airports as well as hotels. In addition, credit cards are accepted in most of the places and there are enough ATMs to withdraw money in the local currency, for example directly at the airport.

Climate

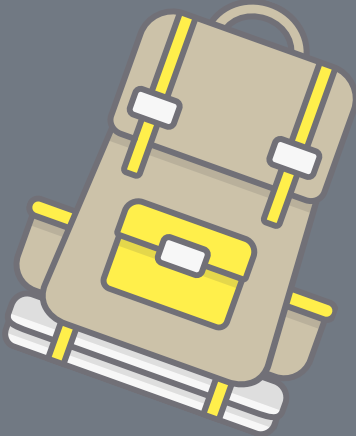
In general, it is rather cold in Patagonia. In winter (May-August) the temperature sometimes drops down to $-10\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($14\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$). Even in summer (December-March) temperatures vary between $5\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ and $20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ (41°F and $68\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$), which still is quite fresh, but much milder than in winter. You should therefore always bring a thermal jacket or wind jacket with you.



Packing list

In addition to a thermal jacket, you should bring thermal pants for the cold seasons. Furthermore, a hat, scarf, gloves and warm socks should be part of your luggage. If you plan to go trekking in this region, you should not forget to bring appropriate hiking boots. To sum up we have prepared a packing list for you.

PATAGONIA PACKING LIST



CASH AND CREDIT CARD



PASSPORT, VACCINATION CARD
AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



SMALL DAYPACK FOR WALKS/
TREKKING BACKPACK FOR MULTI-
DAY HIKES



SUNGLASSES, SUN HAT,
SUNSCREEN & INSECT SPRAY



REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE



HIKING SHOES



THERMAL UNDERWEAR & WARM
CLOTHING



THICK SOCKS, HAT, GLOVES



WARM RAIN JACKET & RAIN PANTS



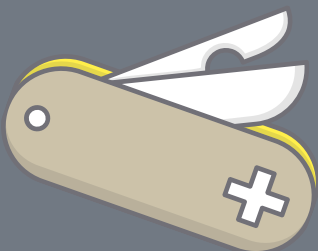
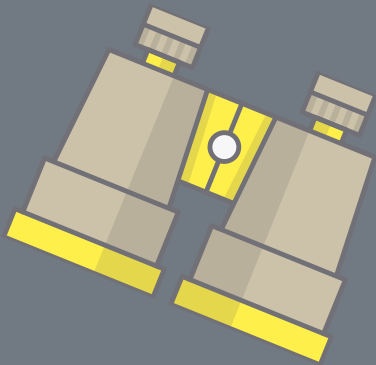
PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT



FLASHLIGHT, TOILET PAPER



CAMERA, POWER BANK,
BATTERIES, CHARGERS





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Summary

We have reached the end of our Patagonia guide. It serves as a small basis for you and your company to plan, sell and carry out trips to Patagonia. Of course, there is much more to know - after all Patagonia is a really impressive destination - but we hope we could give you a little insight into this region. We also invite you to arrange a meeting with our specialists to learn more about Patagonia or other destinations in South America.

[CONTACT A SPECIALIST](#)



→ Would you like to offer your customers travels to Patagonia and enter the tourism business in South America? We invite you to inform yourself about our [travels to Patagonia](#).



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About Logistur DMC



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Logistur plans, implements and carries out journeys to various destinations throughout South America, according to the specific requirements of each of our partner agencies.

We have a team of experts and the necessary technology to facilitate the operational work of your agency. Put everything in our hands and you will be able to focus on the most important thing: the satisfaction of your customers and your sales.

Do you know someone for whom this e-book might be useful?

We invite you to recommend the Logistur Academy to others and to [share this link](#).