



chile & argentina

Stretching from the deserts of Atacama in the north to the rugged wilderness of Patagonia where their southern borders meet, Chile and Argentina define the extraordinary physical beauty of this vast continent.

Squeezed between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean, and affectionately labelled 'the thin country' by the Nobel Prize-winning poet Pablo Neruda, Chile is never more than 110 miles wide but extends some 2,500 miles from north to south. This is a land of fire and ice - within its borders are the driest deserts on earth, lush expanses of alpine forest, a spectacular array of glaciers and isolated coastal fjords, and over 2,000 volcanoes. However, this wild geography has not prevented Chile from becoming one of the continent's most developed nations, and visitors are often surprised by its affluence and by the efficiency of its public services.

Argentina may not be able to count silver amongst its riches, something the early Spanish explorers did not know when they named the country, but the wealth and diversity of its other attractions more than compensate for this. Many of these are well documented but many remain unheralded. Indeed, much of this great country, the eighth largest in the world, remains undiscovered, and few get to explore the beautiful colonial cities in the north, the rugged Valdes Peninsula, the superb wine estates of Mendoza, or the Argentine Lake District, an alpine paradise of snow-capped peaks and trout-laden rivers on the eastern border with Chile.

Patagonia is the name given to the extreme southern tip of the South American continent, one of the world's most magnificent wilderness areas. Here, where the Andes finally end on the Patagonian Ice Cap, great glaciers pour into icy coastal fjords and turquoise lakes, and sculpted pillars of black granite thrust skyward from the windswept pampas. It is a stunning environment of awesome dimensions.

Meet the cultured *portenos* of Buenos Aires, wonder at the sculpted landscapes of the Paine, or explore the rugged beauty of the High Andes on horseback. Whatever your preference, it will be the adventure of a lifetime.

TRAVEL GUIDE

VISA REQUIREMENTS
UK Passport holders currently do not require visas for these countries. Non British Passport holders should check requirements.

HEALTH ADVICE
No vaccinations are currently required for these countries. However, the following are recommended: Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Polio and Tetanus.

FLYING TIME
Santiago 18hrs
Buenos Aires 15hrs 20mins

LOCAL TIME
Chile GMT - 4hrs
Argentina GMT - 3hrs



WHEN TO VISIT

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chile	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Argentina	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓

✓✓ indicates the optimum time to visit

the best of chile



Awasi, Atacama

Situated in the desert oasis of San Pedro de Atacama in the harsh surroundings of northern Chile's vast Atacama Desert, Awasi continues the town's tradition of offering shelter to travellers. This beautiful walled retreat, built of traditional stone, adobe and wood, is itself an oasis of luxurious comfort and relaxing calm.

The eight spacious cottages combine indigenous and contemporary style, with private patio and indoor/outdoor shower. A shady courtyard provides delightful seating areas and al fresco dining round the pool. Each room is assigned a personal guide and 4WD for tailor-made excursions to the numerous dry salt lakes, geysers, volcanoes and desert villages that make the Atacama such a memorable experience.



Zero Hotel, Valparaiso

Housed in a late 19th century classical merchant's house in Cerro Alegre, a vibrantly colourful enclave in the heart of Valparaiso, Zero Hotel is a haven of restful calm. Small, chic and very comfortable, it is an excellent base from which to explore the city, the nearby Casablanca Valley vineyards or the spectacular coast.

There are just nine spacious, light and airy rooms, each furnished in an elegant contemporary style but retaining charming original features. They have views over the garden or the city's harbour and the Pacific beyond, as does the glazed Winter Garden where breakfast and drinks are served. Four terraces descend the hillside below the hotel providing a delightful place to relax after the days adventures.

the best of argentina



Estancia Colomé, Salta

Situated in the Calchaqui Valley south of Salta in northern Argentina, Estancia Colome is not only a luxurious boutique hotel, but also the world's highest winery and vineyard. The breathtaking snow-capped mountain landscape, unparalleled comfort and delicious food and wine, make the estancia an attractive refuge.

There are just nine large, comfortable and beautifully appointed suites, each with private bathroom, heated floor and open fireplace. Some have balconies. Amenities include intimate dining and living rooms, an outdoor pool and sun deck, and even a private Art Museum. Tours of the estancia and winery, riding tours, trekking, cycling, tennis, restorative massages and local excursions are also on offer.



Estancia Rincón del Socorro, Ibera Wetland

Lying on the edge of the Iberá wetlands in north-eastern Argentina, Estancia Rincón del Socorro was formerly a 12,000-hectare cattle ranch but has now been turned into a nature reserve. Centred on the restored ranch house, this refined hotel offers a relaxing environment, ideally situated for exploring the wetlands.

The 6 rooms in the main house and 3 bungalows nearby are beautifully appointed and individually furnished in classic Spanish estancia style. Amenities include a screened veranda, a children's game room and a swimming pool in the attractive grounds. Activities include exploring the abundant wildlife of the wetlands with nature walks, bird watching and trips by traditional Iberá canoe, and riding.



Quincho Country Home, Puerto Varas

Located outside Puerto Varas on the shores of Lake Llanquihue, with impressive views of the Osorno and Calbuco volcanoes and the Andes, Quincho Country Home is an exclusive retreat. This sprawling country house, provides a genuine 'home from home' and the ultimate in Chilean hospitality.

The four very individual suites are beautifully furnished and decorated. Each has panoramic windows overlooking the lake, as does the cosy living area with its large open fireplace. All this is complemented by delicious home cooked cuisine. A three-night stay here allows plenty of time to explore the lakes, volcanoes, National Parks and islands of the spectacular southern Chilean Lake District.



explora en Rapa Nui, Easter Island

Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean, some 3,800km from mainland Chile, is the site for the explora group's new hotel, Posada de Mike Rapu, which opened in January 2008. Not only does it bring explora's high standards to the island, but is also the perfect base for exploring this attractive and mysterious place.

Constructed from native volcanic rock and wood, the hotel is in keeping with the style of sister properties in Atacama and Patagonia. There are 30 guest rooms with views over the Pacific radiating from a central guest living area, and the adjoining Casa de Baños Hare Vai, with a swimming pool, massage room and open-air Jacuzzis. A range of excursions and more adventurous pursuits are on offer.



Estancia El Colibri, Córdoba

Set amidst spectacular scenery near Santa Catalina, to the west of Córdoba, the Estancia El Colibri is the creation of hoteliers Raoul and Stéphanie Fenestraz. This attractive colonial-style boutique hotel has a warm and welcoming atmosphere, and is particularly suited to families with children.

Each of the nine individual rooms and suites is spacious and beautifully appointed. The living room, bar and dining room are elegant yet warm and inviting, and there is a heated outdoor swimming pool and spa. There is plenty for guests to do including polo, trekking, riding, learning to cook the authentic *asado* and exploring the countryside. There are also activities specifically for children.



Cavas Wine Lodge, Mendoza

Nestled in a 35-acre vineyard in the idyllic wine growing region surrounding Mendoza at the foot of the Andes, Cavas Wine Lodge is a delightful retreat. Situated in some of the most breathtaking landscape imaginable, it offers guests refined comfort and discreet service in an ambience of understated elegance.

There are 14 spacious rooms around the vineyard. They are superbly appointed in relaxed contemporary design and local artworks, each with separate living room, fireplace, private terrace and plunge pool. Guests are encouraged to indulge in wine tasting, delicious home cooked fare, luxurious spa treatments, and the beautiful surroundings. The energetic can enjoy riding, rafting and guided hikes.

the best of patagonia

The sheer remoteness and scale of Patagonia defines the magnetic draw of this beautiful region. Ever since Hernando de Magalanes first described its wonders in the early 16th century, this vast wilderness of grassland forest, lakes, glaciers and sculpted peaks has held a very special appeal. The selection of hotels, lodges, estancias and boats described below offer a rare opportunity to experience Patagonia's unique attractions.



Patagonia Camp, Torres del Paine

Nestled in dense forest on the shore of Lake Toro facing the dramatic Paine Massif just outside the Torres del Paine National Park, Patagonia Camp is the first luxury camp in South America. It offers exceptional comfort and warm hospitality, making it the ideal place to experience Patagonia's spectacular natural wonders.

The 17 comfortable independent luxury yurts (tent domes) each have Patagonia-style décor, central heating, en-suite facilities and private terrace offering superb views. There is a central restaurant, bar and massage room. Activities include fishing, cycling and treks or excursions into the wilderness of granite peaks, turquoise lakes, glaciers and unique fauna that make up this magnificent landscape.



explora en Patagonia, Torres del Paine

Set in isolated splendour on the shores of Lake Pehóe, amidst the towering peaks and windswept turquoise lakes of Patagonia's Torres del Paine National Park, the explora Group's flagship hotel is a firm favourite. It offers refined comfort and an ideal base from which to explore this awesome wilderness.

There are 50 spacious, comfortable en suite bedrooms and suites, all with views of Macizo del Paine or the Salto Chico waterfall. Amenities include a dining room and bar with panoramic windows, a heated indoor swimming pool, a sauna, massage rooms and open-air Jacuzzis - ideal after the day's guided excursion through the park on foot, mountain bike, horse-back, or in 4WD vehicles.



Las Balsas, Villa La Angostura

Las Balsas lies on the shores of Lake Nahuel Huapi some 44 miles from Bariloche, in one of the most beautiful parts of the Argentine lake district. Constructed entirely from wood, and painted a distinctive blue, the lodge sits in harmony with its surroundings. This, and its reputation for hospitality, guarantees a memorable stay.

There are 15 well-appointed rooms and suites, each uniquely decorated and furnished with antiques, with stunning views of the lake. Amenities include an attractive restaurant, indoor and outdoor pools and a spa. A variety of activities are available such as walking, mountain biking, riding, fly-fishing, sailing and rafting, and excursions to the pretty town of Villa La Angostura and beyond.



Hosteria Alta Vista, El Calafate

Located half an hour from El Calafate in southern Patagonia, Hosteria Alta Vista is housed in a 1930's farmhouse built by Yugoslav pioneers, that is part of a 160,000-acre sheep farm. This charming 'inn', which lies in magnificent landscape, has an intimate and cosy ambience – a restful 'home from home'.

The 'inn' has 7 comfortable and traditionally furnished en suite rooms, together with comfortable guest areas and delightful historic gardens. There is plenty for guests to do here, from walking and riding on the estancia or along Andean trails, to bird watching, fishing, and a visit to the famous Perito Moreno glacier where you may witness large chunks of ice carve off the glacier face into the lake.



Estancia Tipiliuke, San Martin de los Andes

Lying on a 50,000-acre working ranch to the north-east of San Martin de Los Andes in the foothills of the Andes, Estancia Tipiliuke is one of the most delightful lodges in the Argentine lake district. The beautiful 90-year-old ranch house is surrounded by lush gardens and forest and has a unique charm.

The main lodge has nine stylish en suite bedrooms, and a further five bedrooms in a separate house. There is a lovely sitting room and dining room, and a shady terrace around a swimming pool, whilst activities include walking or riding in the surrounding valleys and hills, watching the gauchos at work on the estancia, hunting (in season) or trout fishing on the Chimehuin River for which Tipiliuke is renowned.



Cruceros Australis

One of the best ways to explore Patagonia's spectacular coastline is to join an expedition cruise aboard the M/V Mare Australis or M/V Via Australis. Built for these waters, each comfortable vessel has 64 en suite cabins over 4 decks, all with panoramic windows, and a range of amenities providing passengers every comfort.

Cruises, which last 3 or 4 nights, sail between the Chilean port of Punta Arenas and Ushuaia in Argentine Tierra del Fuego. The circuitous journey through the Straits of Magellan to Cape Horn and the glaciers of the Beagle Channel offers a dramatic insight into this vast and challenging wilderness whose place names - Last Hope Sound, Desolation Island - evoke the struggles of early explorers.



Ultimate Chile

From the Atacama Desert to the Patagonian Ice Cap

From the Atacama Desert in the north to the Patagonian Ice Cap in the south, this captivating journey explores the awesome beauty of this wonderful country.

From Santiago you fly north to Calama to explore the oasis town of San Pedro and the arid desert beauty of the Atacama, with its dry salt lakes, geysers, volcanoes and charming villages. Following a delightful interlude at the picturesque lakeside town of Puerto Varas amidst the verdant beauty of the Chilean Lake District, you travel the length of the country to the Torres del Paine National Park to explore the glaciers, lakes and mountains of this awesome wilderness on the very edge of the Patagonian Ice Cap, Chile's most spectacular natural wonder. This fascinating journey ends with a stay in Chile's delightful wine region near Santiago.

Sample itinerary:

Day 1: Depart London. **2:** Arrive Santiago. Overnight W Hotel. **3/5:** Fly to Calama. Local exploration of Atacama Desert. Overnights Tierra Atacama. **6/8:** Fly to Puerto Montt via Santiago. Drive to Puerto Varas. Local exploration. Overnights Hotel Puelche. **9/12:** Fly to Punta Arenas. Drive to lodge. Explore Torres del Paine National Park. Overnights Cerro Guido. **13:** Fly to Santiago. Drive to Santa Rita Vineyard. Overnight Casa Real. **14/15:** Fly to London.

Dates: To suit individual requirements.

Price: From £3,925 (based on 2 people travelling).

Ultimate Argentina

From Tierra del Fuego to Iguazu – the best of Argentina

This is the perfect introduction to this diverse and beautiful country, from the rugged beauty and great glaciers of Patagonia to the peaks and lakes of the Andes and the sub-tropical jungles of Iguazu.

You begin in Argentina's cosmopolitan capital, Buenos Aires, before flying south to Tierra del Fuego, land of fire and ice at the very tip of the continent, to explore the mountain scenery of the Lapataia National Park and the majestic Beagle Channel. You then fly north across the pampas to Calafate and the Los Glaciares National Park where the great glaciers of the Patagonian Ice Cap pour into the lakes. After a few days relaxing in the beautiful Lake District around Bariloche, this memorable journey ends at the spectacular Iguazu Falls, a breathtaking expanse of some 240 cascades set in sub-tropical rainforest.

Sample itinerary:

Day 1: Depart London. **2/3:** Arrive Buenos Aires. Overnights Sofitel Hotel. **4/5:** Fly to Ushuaia. Overnights Los Cauquenes Hotel. **6/7:** Fly to El Calafate. Self-drive excursions to the Perito Moreno and Upsala Glaciers. Overnights Hosteria Altavista. **8/10:** Fly to Bariloche. Self-drive excursions in the Lake District. Overnights El Casco. **11/12:** Fly to Iguazu. Explore Iguazu Falls and National Park. Overnights Sheraton Hotel. **13:** Fly to Buenos Aires. Overnight Legado Mitico. **14/15:** Fly to London

Dates: To suit individual requirements.

Price: From £3,245 (based on 2 people travelling).



Wild Argentina

Waterfalls and wildlife

This unique journey explores not only Argentina's vibrant capital but also lesser-known but equally exciting parts of the country, encompassing Spanish colonial heritage, spectacular natural wonders and abundant wildlife.

The journey begins at the magnificent Iguazu Falls, an incredible expanse of some 275 waterfalls and cascades set in sub-tropical rainforest. Continue, via fascinating Jesuit missions, to the Ibera Wetlands, an extension of the Pantanal on the border with Paraguay and Brazil and home to wide variety of water birds, reptiles and mammals. After a stay in Buenos Aires, Argentina's vibrant capital city, fly south to the Valdes Peninsular and, from your base at Puerto Madryn, explore by self-drive car, visiting penguin and sea lion colonies and, at the right time of year, viewing whales by boat. This remarkable tour ends with a brief but fascinating stay at a traditional estancia on the pampas.

Sample itinerary:

Day 1: Depart London. **2/3:** Arrive Iguazu (via Sao Paulo). Explore Iguazu Falls and National Park. Overnights Panoramic Hotel. **4:** Drive to Puerto Valle visiting missions en-route. Overnight Puerto Valle Hotel. **5/6:** Continue to the Ibera Wetlands for wildlife explorations of the wetlands and savannah. Overnights Rincon del Socorro. **7/8:** Fly to Buenos Aires. Overnights Loi Suites. **9/11:** Fly to Trelew. Explore the Valdes Peninsula by hire car and boat. Overnights El Territorio. **12/13:** Fly to Buenos Aires. Overnights Estancia El Rocio. **14/15:** Fly to London.

Dates: To suit individual requirements.

Price: From £3,100 per person (based on 2 people travelling).



Northern Chile & Argentina

Across the Andes from Santiago to Buenos Aires

This unique journey across the Andes explores the magnificent and diverse landscape, intriguing Inca and Conquistador legacy and abundant wildlife of some less travelled but fascinating parts of northern Chile and Argentina.

Your journey begins in Santiago, Chile's cosmopolitan capital with its spectacular mountain backdrop, before visiting Valparaiso with its impressive setting and well-preserved 19th century buildings. Continue to the Atacama Desert, a spectacular arid desert landscape, then cross the Andes in to north-west Argentina. Based near the beautiful colonial town of Salta, explore the ancient hill towns and Inca legacy of this spectacular region with its diverse landscape of mountains, canyons, salt lakes, cloud forest and sierras. Fly south to Mendoza, a delightful city nestled in the shadow of the Andes which is the heart of the country's wine region, before ending this remarkable journey in the capital, Buenos Aires.

Sample itinerary:

Day 1: Depart London. **2/3:** Arrive Santiago. City sightseeing. Overnights Santiago Park Plaza. **3/4:** Drive to Valparaiso. Overnights Casa Higuera. **5/7:** Fly to Calama. Local exploration of Atacama Desert. Overnights Alto Atacama. **8:** Transfer to Purmamarca, Argentina. Overnight La Comarca. **9/10:** Purmamarca & Salta sightseeing. Overnights El Bordo de las Lanzas. **11/12:** Fly to Mendoza. Vineyard excursion. Overnights Club Tapiz. **13/14:** Fly to Buenos Aires. City sightseeing. Overnights Casa Sur. **15/16:** Fly to London.

Dates: To suit individual requirements.

Price: From £3,975 per person (based on 2 people travelling).

riding in south america

With a long tradition and expertise in all things equine, and a landscape eminently suitable for the horse - from the dizzying heights of the Andes to rolling grassland plains and swathes of pristine Atlantic beach - South America is a continent uniquely suited to great riding.



Riding in Ecuador

Most riding adventures in Ecuador take place in the highlands, following ancient Inca, Conquistador and Spanish colonial trails through breathtaking scenery. You can cross vast plains, ride through sleepy valleys, follow the spectacular 'Avenue of Volcanoes' skirting snow capped volcanic peaks, and climb through forests into the mountains.

Some rides include nights at historic 17th and 18th century working Hacienda hotels, hosted by charming local families. As well as marvellous scenery and unique accommodation, visits along the way could include the famous Otavalo market and fascinating traditional weaving centres. You will also have many encounters with local people, whose customs and rhythm of life has changed little over the centuries.



Estancia Los Potreros, Argentina

Straddling the Sierras Chicas between the pampas and the Andes, in the heart of the beautiful Córdoba region, Los Potreros is the quintessential Argentine estancia. This exclusive 6,000-acre working cattle farm, which has remained in the same Anglo-Argentine family for four generations, is steeped in history.

Accommodation is in comfortable en suite rooms, charmingly furnished with eclectic family pieces, whilst delicious meals are taken in the family dining room. The pleasures of life on an estancia cannot be overstated - riding is the main attraction be it 'stick and ball' polo or rides in the spectacular countryside, but there are also enjoyable walks, local excursions or you might relax by the pool.



Estancia Huechahue, Argentina

The estancia is a quintessential part of Argentine folklore, and nowhere is this better illustrated than at Huechahue, Jane Williams' 15,000-acre working cattle ranch in the Andean foothills of the lake district. Life here is always an adventure, and a stay in this unique and beautiful place is a delightful experience.

There are three comfortable guest lodges, housing a total of 8 attractive en suite rooms, just a short stroll from the main house. Each lodge has a communal sitting room whilst meals are taken in the main house. Riding is the main attraction here and ranges from gentle outings on the estancia to full treks. Guests can also swim or fish in the Alumine River, enjoy superb bird watching or take local excursions.



Riding in Peru

From the Sol y Luna ranch in the heart of Peru's Sacred Valley of the Incas, riding tours of varying lengths through a dramatic landscape of meadows, valleys and mountains provide a unique insight into Peru's ancient history and rural way of life. The Peruvian Paso horse offers the smoothest riding in the world.

Rides follow a route up through mountain pastures where smiling Quechua Indian children herd sheep and cattle, to highland terraces and charming mountain villages in the shadow of majestic Andean peaks, passing famous Inca and Pre-Inca sites. Nights are spent in comfortable lakeside camps with breathtaking views of snow-covered peaks, or in charming simple inns.



Riding in Uruguay

One of the best ways to explore this small and little known country is to join an 8-night riding adventure. In the company of entertaining and skilled gauchos, these rides combine the diverse landscape with special visits, magnificent wildlife and nights spent at authentic working estancias and comfortable beachside hotels.

The journey takes you across the rolling grassland pastures of large estancias and into the forests of National Parks, over shifting sand dunes and along spectacular deserted beaches on the Atlantic coast, through palm groves, and past wetlands teeming with wildfowl. The pace is fast but the grassy pastures and firm beaches allow this on the wonderful Criollo horses. A very special adventure.