



ROUTE 40, PATAGONIA

La Cueva de Las Manos + Lago Posadas + PN Perito Moreno + El Chalten + El Calafate

The program along Ruta 40 Patagonia Stretch is the most complete and original ever seen. An authentic adventure crossing, designed by Argentinian Explorer, knowing the classic sites but getting into the Perito Moreno National Park, lodging at the shores of Belgrano Lake, a wild and virgin destination, where massive tourism doesn't get.



9 days - 8 nights

Itinerary



From Comodoro to the José Ormaechea Petrified Forest up to Los Antiguos

Welcome at the airport in Comodoro Rivadavia. We leave the city of Comodoro Rivadavia, going past Caleta Olivia, we go bordering the San Matías Gulf along the coasts of the Southern Atlantic Ocean. As we move on, we go further away from the coast, travelling east to west direction to cross the wild Patagonia along the route 43. Before our final destination: Los Antiguos, we make a very important archaeological stop. We visit the José Ormaechea Petrified Forest Provincial Reserve, near Colonia Sarmiento, only 40km away. The park shelters a coniferous forest whose age is 70 million years, in the Paleozoic era.

The lunar landscape presents red veinings with some remaining of petrified araucarias among the canyons and the plateau. All the fossilization process of this coniferous is incredible, the stone trunk shows the knots and layers that have been forming with time. The old sub-equatorial forest that was located on an old maritime bank, today are big paleontological and archaeological remains. Our journey route continues up to the town called Los Antiguos, located on the southern bank of the Buenos Aires Lake, very near the boundary with Chile.



Roballos Pass, Monte Zeballos, Los Antiguos and Buenos Aires Lake

Breakfast at hostelry. We set off in the morning along a mountain path taking Route 41 towards the Roballos Pass and the Monte Zeballos, going some 180km along a mountain path, between the Cordillera de los Andes and the Buenos Aires Lake plateau. We will be able to see the second biggest lake in South America (after the Titicaca Lake): the Buenos Aires Lake, it flows into the Pacific Ocean through the Baker River. This lake is ideal for trout and salmon fishing. After midday we move on towards Los Antiguos. It is located in a wonderful valley, with a special microclimate, at the shore of Los Antiguos River and near the Buenos Aires Lake. Every year, during January, the Beer National Feast is celebrated. We can observe agricultural ventures dedicated to cultivation and production of fine fruit, such as raspberries, strawberries, morello cherries, etc. We arrive at the lookout points at the Los Antiguos and Jeinimeni Rivers – International boundary Argentine-Chilean- and the Buenos Aires Lake.

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Cueva de las Manos by Bajo Caracoles

Breakfast in the hotel. We will go to the Cuevas de las Manos. It is one of the most important archeological places in Patagonia, as the Estancia La María in Santa Cruz. Its cave paintings are very meaningful and are 7,500 years before Christianity old. The cave has many eaves where the paintings, reflecting the nomadic people´s habits who were principally hunters, are. The best known is the negative image of the silhouette of the hands, superimposed. Old airbrushed methods have been used. Other figures are representing animals, such as the choique and the guanaco.

There are typical scenes of the hunting of these animals. The human figure appears but in less proportion, with more lineal and geometric outlines, as the example of the spiral drawings. They drew with fruit, plants and animal blood. Different times of evolution are evident in the lines and geometrical drawings. We early set off from Perito Moreno to go 120km along the Patagonia Agreste (Wild Patagonia), most of these km are on Ruta 40. We start the visit to the Cave walking some 600 meters till we are near the Cave Paintings with more than 8,000 years old. After that a trekking along the canyon of the Pinturas River. We return along Bajo Caracoles to take Ruta 40 again towards El Chaltén.

Our itinerary will be different depending on the place where we enter.

We can arrive crossing the canyon of the Pinturas River with a mini-trekking or by entering the cave by Bajo Caracoles. It depends if we want to walk or simply arrive directly to the place...towards the Posadas and Pueyrredón Lake.

Otherwise if we enter by estancia Los Toldos, the way is shorter, we do 60km without waking up so early. Once inside the estancia, we go 7km up to the manor, then we continue along the path some 16km more until we reach the canyon of the Pinturas River. At this moment is when the real adventure begins, when we have to descend to the Pinturas River, trekking almos 2,500 meters. Then we must descend to the other end of the canyon to reach the cave paintings. After lunch and a short rest, we take the same way to reach the vehicle and to continue along Ruta 40, travelling up to the Posadas Lake. Then we continue towards the Cordillera de los Andes (Andean mountain range), to the west to arrive at Posadas Lake.

Note: *If you want our opinion, don´t hesitate to cross the canyon, it is a real adventure. To walk, special trekking shoes are highly recommended. The route is difficult because the canyon is steep and the ground is unstable when descending, specially in the first stretch.*



Posadas & Pueyrredón Lakes, Cerro San Lorenzo and Río Oro Canyon

Breakfast in the hostelry. We start along the zone of the Posadas and Pueyrredón Lakes, enjoying a special sight of the Cerro San Lorenzo of 3,706 meters high, together with the Cordillera de los Andes. When passing the isthmus or small tongue of land of 100 meters long and 5 meters wide, that separates both lakes, we can appreciate the different colours between both lakes, the Posadas in green and the Pueyrredón in blue. It is located on a very wide glacier valley which limits the plateau of the Buenos Aires Lake from the Cerro San Lorenzo range. We walk this valley surrounded by the most beautiful lakes in the Patagonia, with pretty formations and an autochthonous fauna that inhabits the damp.

We trek along the canyon of the Río Oro that is born in the Cerro San Lorenzo and flows its cold waters into the Pueyrredón Lake. We start walking at the Posadas Lake, to a western direction, towards the Pueyrredón Lake. The way crosses mounts and canyons, being able to watch guanacos, ñandúes (Patagonian ostrich) and choiques. We cross over the bridge on Río Unión, between Posadas and Pueyrredón Lakes, we observe the ecosystem of the lakes of the peninsula where ducks, flamingos, avutardas, long black neck swans and bandurrias nest. We continue to Valle del Oro, 15km away, we cross over its bridge and ascend along the path up to the river gorge, with its 150 meters in free fall. We enter the legendary ñires and lengas (beech) forests, following the path of the slopes that embrace the forest. When it is sunny, we can enjoy the Cerro San Lorenzo presence. Before dark we leave the town Irigoyen to overnight in a Patagonian estancia on the shore of the Belgrano Lake.



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day
5

Perito Moreno National Park

Breakfast in the estancia. The Perito Moreno National Park is one of the most beautiful and wild ones in all Patagonia, it keeps many secrets, carefully hidden, thanks to the fact that massive tourism does not reach those lands. Thanks to Argentinian Explorer and its exclusive program along Ruta 40, we are able to discover this natural paradise. The estancia is in middle of the Patagonian steppe, very near the colossus Cerro San Lorenzo. We can taste typical food prepared with vegetables from their own vegetable garden and greenhouse and first class meat from the estancia. We can choose between a visit to the park or horse riding or walking along the neighbouring areas. The Perito Moreno National Park is only 15km away from the estancia. The National Park Post has many different start-points to the Burmeister, the Belgrano and the Volcán Lakes.

We can trek to the Sendero del Viento (Wind Path) or the Mansilla Lake. Along the Sendero del Viento we arrive to a moraine, where we have unique sights to one of the sides of the Perito Moreno National Park and the Valley of the Belgrano River on the other side, we cross the river over a bridge to return to the manor of the estancia. The trekking to the Mansilla Lake is special to those who enjoy bird watching. Another alternative is to ride on horseback along the Águila plateau, with the help of a local, enjoying fantastic sights of the park, of the Cerro San Lorenzo and of the lakes. There are farmyards made by the Tehuelches natives which are investigated by anthropologists who call them parapets.

day
6

Los Glaciares National Park: Entering El Chaltén

Breakfast in the hotel. Today we have to go back on Ruta 40 some 440km to go to El Chaltén, the trekking national capital. We will have a free afternoon to rest or stroll around this small town located on the foot of the Fitz Roy & Torre Mounts.

day
7

Trekking to the Capri lagoon

Breakfast in the hotel. The trekking to Laguna Capri offers a unique relaxing view for the eyes and it is ideal for those who do not have the time to take a whole day walking, like going to the Laguna de Los Tres or Laguna Torre. Our main objective is to arrive to the first viewpoint of the Fitz Roy Mountain. We begin from the town of El Chaltén, it is an easy trekking although the slope is pronounced for a stretch of about 2 hours, rising some 350 metres. The first part is the same as Los Tres track until we arrive at a natural rocky viewpoint where we can turn off to the south until the camping site. At the viewpoint we will have a privileged view of the Torre Mountain and its surrounding ice needles such as Poincenot, Saint Exupéry, Mermoz and Guillaumet. We stop just a few minutes before entering the Capri Camping Site in order to see the Laguna Capri. We return by the same trail to our lodgings in the town.

day
8

Visit to the Perito Moreno Glacier

Breakfast in the hotel. Early in the morning we make our way to the most famous glacier in the world. It was declared as a Heritage Humanity in 1981 by UNESCO and it is considered unique for many characteristics such as its continuous advance, its comfortable access to its best viewpoints and the possibility to walk over it. The name was given in honour of the great explorer of the Patagonian area, Perito Francisco Moreno. We walk along the edge of the southern side of the Argentino Lake, before crossing the rivers Centinela and Mitre, at the same time we discover post card views of the pre Andean Mountain Chain.

We arrive to Brazo Rico and enter Los Glaciares National Park. While we tour along the Rich Lake we see the huge blocks of ice drifting along and walk until we have a full panoramic view of this giant glacier. If the weather conditions are favourable, we can have the privilege of attending this unique spectacle in the

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argentinean Patagonia... the ice landslides from the southern falls in which huge ice floes cover the homonym channel as they are accumulated there or in the Brazo Rico. Here it is possible to get to know the glacier from different panoramic and viewpoints by walking the footbridges whilst we are informed about its history, characteristics and settings. In the afternoon we return to the Hotel.

Note: *The Perito Moreno is a glacier in continuous advance; this is different to the great majority of such giant glaciers that are in a severe regression. In its advance it surrounds the cold waters of the Brazo Rico, that are originated from the Argentino Lake which causes some pressure over the ice that make the level of water increase in that part of the lake and has the effect of generating a tunnel of almost 45 metres through which flows from the Brazo Rico and in to the Argentino Lake. The continuous erosion by these waters causes parts of the dome to collapse producing fantastic spectacles.*



El Calafate

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to Calafate Airport.

END OF THE SERVICES
