

ARGENTINA HIGHLIGHTS TOUR IDEA WITH PATAGONIA

Argentina is an astonishingly diverse country, you can be in the North in a tropical climate & later the same day be in the Glacier National Park in very south of the country. In-between there are many other stunning areas to visit. All this magnificent diversity allows Argentina to boast, quite correctly, that they have something to offer everyone.

If you are travelling between September & April this is the ideal season to visit Patagonia & the Glacier areas. However the Whale season off the coast of Patagonia in the Peninsula Valdes region runs from Mid June to early December. Penguins arrive here mid September until February. The very best months to be able to make the very most of all these amazing sights would be to travel between September – November.

The below itinerary is designed to be a basis to work from and can be adapted to suit clients personal preferences, priorities & budget.

14 night itinerary idea:

Δ 1 night Buenos Aires

Δ 3 nights Peninsula Valdes

With Whale Watching Boat Tour
& tour to see the penguins & Elephant Seals

Δ 3 nights El Calafate

With a tour to the Balconies to view the Perito Moreno Glacier

Δ 4 nights Iguazu Falls – in 2 different hotels

Visit both the Argentinean & Brazil sides

Δ 3 nights Buenos Aires

With a half day city tour
& evening Tango Show with dinner.

Day 1

On arrival into **Buenos Aires** Airport you will be met & have a private transfer to your preferred hotel for 1 night BB. You will get to spend more time in this wonderful city @ the end of the itinerary, or of course we can change the order so you have more time @ the beginning of the trip.

Day 2

Private transfer to the airport to take a domestic flight to Patagonia, the Peninsula Valdes region & the airport of **Trelew**. On arrival have a transfer to your preferred hotel for a 3 night stay. Within the **Patagonia** region the **Valdes Peninsula** is one of the most important wildlife reserves in the country & was designated a World Heritage site in 1999. It is the breeding ground for southern right whales, elephant seals, sea lions & the nesting site for thousands of shore birds – including pelicans, cormorants etc. The whale season runs mid June to early December with the high season months being September, October & November. Nearby is **Punta Tombo reserve** which is home to a large penguin colony. Clients generally fly into Trelew & stay in the town of Puerto Madryn or @ the wonderful El Pedral Lodge – a combination stay is also an excellent idea, having a night in the town of Puerto Madryn & a stay @ the isolated & special El Pedral.

Some of the hotels that we include:

- **Territorio Hotel** is located in Puerto Madryn & is a beautiful 36 room boutique hotel with stunning views of the bay - guests regularly can spot the whales from the hotel. The restaurant offers a fabulous menu & the spa area is wonderfully relaxing.
- **Peninsula Valdes Hotel** is located in the town & therefore ideal to visit the local restaurants & shops. The hotel has a spa but its best feature is its town centre location.
- **El Pedral Lodge** is the most wonderful lodge & a very special place for guests to stay. It is located 1 hour from Puerto Madryn & 1 hour 20 mins from Trelew airport in Punta Ninfas – across from Valdes Peninsula. The lodge will only ever have a maximum of 12 guests to ensure the personalised service they offer, the food is wonderful with freshly baked bread & cakes a real joy. Tours are included & the lodge has its own boat to go out whale watching. You can be as active or relaxed as you wish when staying here, but 3 nights is ideally the minimum time to stay here.

During your stay in this region we can include a boat trip to see the Whales as well as tours to see the Elephant Seals & Penguins.

Day 5

Private transfer back to Trelew airport to take a domestic flight further south & the Patagonia Glacier area & **El Calafate Airport**. On arrival transfer to your preferred El Calafate hotel for a 3 night stay.

On the shore of the largest lake in Argentina – Lago Argentina, is the town of El Calafate. The town now is home to the main airport for visitors to get to the stunning **Parque Nacional Los Glaciers** & its most famous attraction – the World Heritage site, the **Perito Moreno Glacier**. This incredible wall of ice & snow is one of South America's greatest natural wonders. You can visit the glacier by walking the balconies or get really up close on the boat trips & even have a walk on the surface!

From El Calafate other attractions include **Upsala Glacier & Monte Fitz Roy**.

Most hotels are within the town of El Calafate but there are also some very special options available outside of the town. As with Peninsula Valdes you can stay all nights @ the same hotel or combine a town hotel with a more special & more isolated hotel to have a combination stay.

Some of the hotels that we include:

- **Alto Calafate** is a alpine lodge designed hotel located on the hill overlooking the lake, just out of the town but does have a free shuttle service available to guests. The views from the hotel of the lake are wonderful & it is a comfortable hotel to be based.
- **Design Suites** is a modern hotel located on the lake outside of the main town – but does offer a free shuttle service for guests. The pool & spa area is stunning.
- **Los Sauces** is a luxury boutique hotel, or casa, with all rooms being suites. The property has 10 hectares & beautiful gardens. The Spa & fitness centre are wonderful. Each suite is named after a flower & have their own dominant colour so each is individually designed & unique.
- **Los Posadas los Alamos** is the big 5* hotel of the town & even has a 8 hole golf course. It is a comfortable hotel, with a beauty room, swimming pool & spa.

Outside of the town are some very special lodges.

- **Eolo** is a stunning property with 17 suites – all beautifully designed. 30 minutes away from El Calafate, on the way to Perito Moreno Glacier, Eolo is strategically located in La Anita valley, on the eastern side of Mount Frías. It stretches over a 3,000 hectare property. The food here is wonderful & they have a huge choice of wines & special tea's.
- **Los Nostros Hotel** is a small & intimate 32 room hotel located as close as you can get to the Perito Moreno Glacier & the only hotel with a view of the glacier. The views of the glacier from the hotel are outstanding & by staying here you can walk to the balconies whenever you wish.
- **Hosteria Alta Vista** is part of Estancia Anita, a working sheep estancia & has 7 rooms available to guests. This is the most authentic way to experience this area as you stay with a working estancia, be able to go horse riding, do some bird watching - whilst also being able to visit the glacier. The estancia is a huge 74,000 hectares with over 20,000 sheep & over 100 horses with 20 available for guest use. Horse riding, treks, mountain bikes are included for all guests.

Day 6

Tour to the Balconies that give visitors stunning views of the Perito Moreno Glacier.

Day 7

Day at leisure, depending on which hotel you are staying with, as some lodges offer horse riding, trekking, spa treatments etc. Or take the boat trip to get up close to the glaciers.

Day 8

Transfer back to El Calafate airport to take domestic flights, via Buenos Aires, to **Iguazu**. This spectacle is one everyone's "must see" list & after visiting many of the hotels we can recommend splitting the stay between 2 hotels. It is definitely worth staying @ the only hotel located in the Iguazu national park – the Sheraton Hotel. By staying here you have direct access to the walkways over & around the waterfalls & can continue enjoying this area after your guide has left you.

Iguazu Falls: Are the most spectacular waterfalls in the world & acts as a natural border between Argentina & Brazil. On the Argentine side you are more within the falls & so close to the powerful water. There are several nature trails & the iron work walkways over the river & some falls are wonderful. You can easily spend a full day enjoying the numerous walkways. A really fabulous walk is the route that takes you across the upper river to the Devils Throat, where the water plunges 240ft. It is also worth having a half day visit to the Brazil side of the falls as from there you get the magnificent panoramic view of the falls. On the Brazil side there is only 1 walking route, so it gets busy & we recommend getting there for opening time before the coaches arrive, before it gets too hot & most important before the sun comes around inhibits the view.

This is a very busy, touristic region & there are several hotels to choose from. You can stay on either the Brazil or Argentine side – or even both. We tend to prefer the Argentine side hotels.

For the first 2 nights we recommend staying @ the Sheraton Hotel in a falls view room.

- **The 5* Sheraton Iguazu Hotel** is the perfect choice for clients that like walking & want to spend the maximum amount of time around the falls, enjoying the nature trails etc with no time constraints. The hotel itself is not particularly wonderful but its location is. This is the only hotel within the Iguazu National Park & therefore has stunning views of the falls. We recommend paying the supplement for a room with a falls view so you can enjoy the falls from your private balcony.

Day 9

Guided tour of the Argentinean side of the Falls.

Day 10

If clients want a longer stay in the tropical climate area then it is a good idea to stay in another hotel outside to the national park,. You then can eat in a local restaurant & some of the hotels have amazingly close views of Brazil & Paraguay across the river!.

This morning you will be collected from the Sheraton Hotel, with all luggage, to travel across to Brazil to visit the Brazilian side of the falls & experience a completely different view. It is advisable to

get to the entrance as they open to avoid the crowds & also in the afternoon the sun comes round to face you so is hard to see the view.

After the Brazil visit you will be taken to your preferred Hotel for a 2 night stay. The length of stay can amended to suit clients. There is also the option of visiting the wonderful Yacutinga Lodge.

Some of the hotels in the area of the town are:

- **The 5* Iguazu Grand Hotel.** This is the probably the best hotel away from the falls & is only a 2 minute drive to the entrance to the Brazil falls. The rooms & gardens are beautifully designed & the Spa is wonderful. The only downside is that the property does also have a popular Casino, but this does have a separate entrance.
- **Panoramic Hotel,** is owned by the same group as the Grand hotel but is a smaller & less formal property. It is located @ the meeting point of the Iguazú and Paraná rivers, dividing the borders of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay & therefore has a wonderful view of the 3 countries. The hotel is also within walking distance of the town & its local restaurants & shops.
- **Amerian Iguazu** is so close to the river that Brazil & Paraguay are incredibly close – 100 metres. The hotel is a modern property & the pool area is wonderful & they also have an indoor pool & Jacuzzi area, spa & gym.

Day 11

Have the day at leisure, relaxing in the tropical climate

Day 12

Transfer to the airport to take the flight to Buenos Aires. On arrival you will be met & transferred to your preferred hotel for your final 3 nights in Argentina staying at your preferred hotel BB.

Some of our hotel recommendations include:

- **Alvear Palace** is without doubt the most luxurious hotel, part of the exclusive “Leading Hotels of the World” group & has won the title “Top Luxury Hotel in Latin America” . It was built as a hotel, in a French style, and is a historical landmark in itself. The 210 rooms are on 8 floors, with each floor having a butler on duty to meet all guests’ requirements. Each room has fresh flowers provided by the 6 staff employed just to take care of the flower arrangements throughout the hotel. The hotel offers a superb English afternoon tea in the Winter Garden, the spa & swimming pool area was new in 2007 & boasts a superb Kinesis system gym.
- **Park Hyatt** is a beautiful combination of a modern hotel & the historical palace. The way they has combined the modern & the historical is exceptionally well done. The hotel has a total of

165 rooms, 142 in the modern part & 23 in the Palace. You can either walk through the art gallery & past the fragrant flower shop or the garden to get between the 2 buildings.

- **The Sofitel Hotel** is located in the heart of the antique & art gallery area – Arroya Street. On the last Friday of every month the galleries stay open at night & visitors can meet the artists. The Hotel has retained its colonial house feeling & has kept the original gates as a feature of the hotel front. There are 173 rooms in total with a small gym & swimming pool.
- **The Faena Hotel & Universe** is a very special place to stay in Buenos Aires & perhaps not to everyone's taste. The hotel, in the newly redeveloping Puerto Madero area, was designed by **Andrew Starck** & was originally an abandoned grain warehouse. This unusual and innovative property is the complete opposite of the Four Seasons and Alvear Palace. They have their own tango show in the El cabaret bar – which has a really intimate atmosphere. www.faenahotelanduniverse.com
- **Boutique Hotels** in Buenos Aires are popping up all the time. Some do not really understand the concept of “boutique Hotels” & are probably best described as Urban hotels. However the best boutique hotels we have found are: **Llegado Mitador, Esplendor, Vain & Vitrum Corriti**.

Day 13

Half Day Buenos Aires City tour.

This cosmopolitan & vibrant city is sometimes referred to as the “Paris of Latin America” because of its style & exuberance. It is split into very distinct districts (barrios) from the colourful Italian area of La Boca, chic Recoleta – home to Evita's mausoleum, to the very chic fashion design area of Palermo – a popular residential area for the rich & famous. Palermo Soho & Hollywood are now the trendiest areas of the city with new boutique hotels opening up & an abundance of lively cafes, restaurants & bars. Buenos Aires is a great city to walk around & there are some beautiful parks. The shopping is fabulous all over the city & a Tango Show is a must on any visit to Argentina – to see professional Tango dancing is incredible!

In the evening be collected from your hotel to go to an **evening Tango Show**, with dinner included.

Day 14

Day at leisure in this wonderful city, to shop or walk around the park areas etc.

Day 15

Private transfer to the airport to check-in for your flights back to the UK.

Other areas that clients may like to include may be the wine region of Mendoza, the NorthWest region of Salta & JuJuy or stay with an authentic & working Estancia.