JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

ACTIVE CHILE: TREK IN TORRES DEL PAINE

13 days from **£4,070pp**

CHILE / SANTIAGO AND THE VINEYARDS / CHILEAN LAKE DISTRICT (SOUTH) / TORRES DEL PAINE NATIONAL PARK / PATAGONIA



WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

- A passion for the region runs through all we do
- All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America
- Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

- Fully bonded and licensed
- ATOL-protected
- On your side when it matters
- Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

- Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks
- We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions
- Let us show you the Latin America we know and love

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Hike for six days in Torres del Paine National Park, one of the best wilderness trekking areas in Chile, and climb to the summit of Osorno, a snow-draped volcano dominating the Lake District.

DAY 1	**Arrive in Santiago. Transfer to your hotel in the Providencia district.**
DAY 2	**Fly to Puerto Montt, transfer to Puerto Varas.**
DAY 3	**Transfer to Refugio Teski.**
DAY 4	**Climb Volcán Osorno.**
DAY 5	**At leisure in Puerto Varas.**
DAY 6	**Fly to southern Patagonia, transfer to Eco Camp in Torres del Paine National Park.**
DAY 7	**Hike the Los Cuernos Trail – part of the W Trek.**
DAY 8	**Trek along the Valle del Francés – part of W Trek.**
DAY 9	**Hike towards the Grey Glacier – part of W Trek.**
DAY 10	**Hike to the foot of the towers, the "Torres" del Paine.**
DAY 11	**Trek to the eastern lakes.**
DAY 12	**Fly back to Santiago.**
DAY 13	**Transfer to airport for international flight home.**

ITINERARY

This Chile trekking holiday includes one of Chile's iconic multi-day adventures in Torres del Paine, the W-Trek, and an ascent of its most photogenic volcano, Osorno.

Chile, with its long Pacific coastline extending from the northern desert through the lush pastures of the volcano-studded Lake District to the glaciers of Patagonia, is one of Latin America's most rewarding countries for trekking with good infrastructure to cater for demand. Chile offers a range of well-supported and guided activities including hikes, volcano climbing, river-rafting, horse-riding and mountain biking through exquisite natural landscapes.

A good level of fitness is needed since you'll be walking for long periods over tricky, sometimes steep, terrain. However, there is nothing overly technical, although you will be wearing crampons and using other provided equipment on the climb above the snow line on Osorno. In the southern summer – November to March – you have a good chance of some clear, sunny days, promising a magical experience.

DAY 1

Arrive in Santiago. Transfer to your hotel in the Providencia district.



Transfer from the airport to your hotel in Santiago, in the pleasant residential and commercial quarter of Providencia. Santiago is set in a broad valley between ranges of the Andes, with lofty snow-capped peaks, and a smaller coastal range with a distinctly Mediterranean feel. Santiago is a huge metropolis, a mix of the old and the contemporary, with quarters of tree-lined avenues and affluent tranquillity and others full of commercial bustle. Poorer districts sprawl on the outskirts. The historic core, although small, has some notable buildings of cultural significance.

DAY 2

Fly to Puerto Montt, transfer to Puerto Varas.

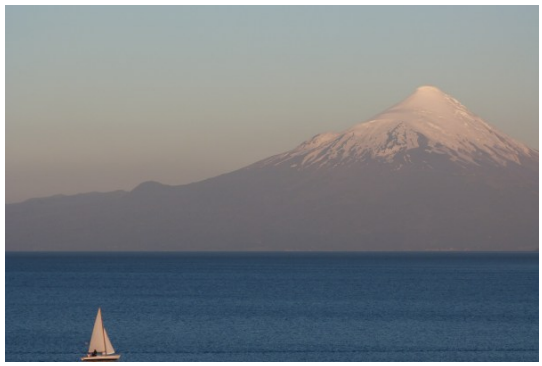


Fly to Puerto Montt in the southern end of the lake district. This is a picturesque region of ancient forests straddling hills lorded over by snow-capped volcanoes, with hot springs and crystalline streams, interspersed by flowery meadows and cattle pasture. It's just a 30min drive to Puerto Varas.

The attractive town is set amid verdant pasture and meadows on the shores of Lake Llanquihue. It was colonised by Germans at the turn of the 20th century and its architecture and sedate style reflects this, but it is now a fast-growing tourist resort. The town's main attraction is a jade alpine lake framed by tree-clad hills and beyond, one of the most perfectly shaped snow-capped volcanoes in the world – Osorno.

DAY 3

Transfer to Refugio Teski.



Set within the Vicente Perez Rosales National Park and on the shores of Lago Llanquihue Osorno volcano (2,656m) offers a spectacular climb along its volcanic rock and year-round glaciers. The hike to the summit is challenging and although previous mountaineering experience is not required, you have up to 10 rs of physical activity. All technical equipment needed to undertake the climb will be provided

The minimum age to take part is 12. Participants are subject to a local fitness assessment by the guides. The hike is not recommended for those who are pregnant or have a serious medical condition.

The adventure begins with an afternoon drive (approx. 1.5 hours) from Puerto Varas to the 'El Refugio Teski' mountain shelter situated at the foot of the volcano at 1,200m. Here you prepare your equipment, register with the mountain's CONAF ranger and enjoy a hearty dinner and early night before the climb the following day.

DAY 4

Climb Volcán Osorno.



Begin the ascent towards the 2,656m summit. Dependent on the time of year, the hike will begin over a floor of volcanic rock and sand before the route continues over snow and ice, when you will need to wear crampons.

The 4-6hrs ascent reveals increasingly spectacular views of the surroundings the higher you climb. You will observe Reloncavi estuary and Puerto Montt and the mountains of Cochamo and Puelo to the south.

The final stretch is steep and requires the help of crampons and ropes, but with the assistance and guidance of the experienced (English-speaking) professional guides accompanying you, you will be in safe hands.

At the summit are stunning panoramic vistas of the picture-book-perfect lakes region including views of Lago Todos los Santos, the Petrohue river valley, Lago Llanquihue, Lago Rupanco and a whole range of snow-tipped volcanoes. On a day of good visibility you can even see the Llaima volcano in the distant Araucania region.

DAY 5

At leisure in Puerto Varas.

At leisure in Puerto Varas. The town is a centre for outdoor activities and you can choose from locally available excursions including kayaking, rafting, hiking and cycling along the lake shore.



DAY 6

Fly to southern Patagonia, transfer to Eco Camp in Torres del Paine National Park.



Fly to Punta Arenas (or Puerto Natales) in southern Patagonia (2hrs). On a clear day you have other-worldly views of the swirling meringue of the southern icecap, its fjords, volcanoes and glaciers. Before touchdown you see the rust-brown stain of the Patagonian steppes, pitted with small lagoons stretching out towards the Straits of Magellan.

The region's fortunes were only briefly revived during a gold rush, and the sheep-rearing business has never really recovered from the collapse of the price of meat and wool. Drive on into Torres del Paine National Park.

This superb wilderness is dominated by a monumental granite massif of smooth rock towers and icy pinnacles. Milky blue and gem-sharp emerald lakes, sinuous rivers, glaciers and wind-scoured steppes have created a remarkable and unique environment. The area is a natural habitat of over 150 species of birds (flamingos, condors, eagles and ostriches) and 25 species of mammal (including guanacos, armadillos, silver foxes and pumas). Guanacos (camelids) graze peacefully while ostriches scamper across the plains and condors soar above.

DAY 7

Hike the Los Cuernos Trail – part of the W Trek.



Head off on your guided hiking adventure, the complete "W" trek, so named after the shape of the route. Start off with a pleasant walk through the sinuous Cuernos trail running alongside Lake Nordenskjold.

During this introduction walk you'll see some of the park's exquisite flora and fauna, experience its capricious, blustery wind and other aspects of the rapidly-changing weather which will accompany you on the upcoming days.

As you walk along the trail you enjoy magnificent views of the park's central lakes and the Paine's cuernos majestic black horn-like peaks of slate atop the battleship grey granite which crown the centre of the Massif. You will camp in tents tonight at the Los Cuernos or El Frances campgrounds,

DAY 8

Trek along the Valle del Francés – part of W Trek.



You'll set off on a beautiful trek to Valle Francés (French Valley) along a steep trail which infiltrates the very heart of the Paine Massif. How deep you go depends on the groups' rhythm. An active walk leads you to the hanging bridge over the Rio Francés at the foot of the south-eastern face of the massif, where there is a truly stupendous view. Then you continue up the trail until reaching the upper section of the valley Here you'll picnic and rest for a while.

An optional trek to the remote, bleaker Mirador Britanico is possible if members of the group don't want to rest. After lunch you descend through a rippling terrain of mixed grassland and light forest until reaching the Paine Grande campground on the peaceful shores of turquoise Lake Pehoe,

DAY 9

Hike towards the Grey Glacier – part of W Trek.



Today you hike from the refuge along the shores of Lake Pehoe to the northern end of glacial Lago Grey. The lake's chilly waters are dotted with icebergs which have broken off from the wall of Glacier Grey which plugs the lake.

Enjoy a picnic lunch before boarding the boat that sails to the forbidding blue face of the glacier. There's plenty of time to marvel at this calving ice monster during the boat ride across the lake. From Lago Grey's southern end you transfer to your Camp.

In poor weather, you'll trek up to the sightseeing point offering a spectacular view of the glacier. Then you'll return on foot to Paine Grande and take a catamaran to Pudeto's dock, from where you're driven back to your accommodation.

DAY 10

Hike to the foot of the towers, the "Torres" del Paine.



Today you walk from the camp site towards Hostería Las Torres and join the uphill path to Ascencio valley on the towers' eastern face. Emerald green southern beech forests and rustling streams border the trail towards the valley.

The big challenge comes as you climb the steep moraine, a mass of boulders leading towards one of the world's most famous views overlooking the towers, gigantic vertical slabs of rocks rising like an open hand towards the sky.

These are the remains of a great cirque sheared away by the forces of glacial ice. After an uphill slog, the towers eventually come into full view, rising majestically before you, with the glacial lake visible below. After feasting on the view and your picnic, you backtrack along the same trail through Ascencio valley and return to your Camp.

DAY 11

Trek to the eastern lakes.



Drive to Laguna Azul passing by Cañadón Macho, home to a rich fauna including guanacos and ñandús. Stop en route to enjoy sight of the Patagonian steppe and the towers from a different angle. At Laguna Azul you'll hike to the viewpoint where you have a gorgeous view of both the lagoon and granite towers. After lunch drive to the northern shore of Lago Sarmiento where the Fauna Trail begins.

As you walk northwards along the path you'll see wildlife on the Patagonian plain: guanacos, ostrich-like ñandús and maybe a puma footprint! You pass by Goic lagoon and after an approximate 5 km relaxed walk you reach Laguna Amarga ranger station where you're collected and driven back to the Camp for a farewell dinner in the park.

DAY 12

Fly back to Santiago.

Return to the airport in Punta Arenas or Puerto Natales and fly on to Santiago for a final night in the Chilean capital.

DAY 13

Transfer to airport for international flight home.

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

- Osorno volcano summit hike with night at mountain refuge
- 6-day W-Trek in Torres del Paine National Park

ESSENTIALS

3 flights (longest 4hrs); 2 scenic road journeys (longest 7hrs).

In Santiago and Puerto Varas you'll be staying in mid-range hotels. 1 night is spent in a mountain refuge on Osorno volcano.

2 nights are in tents at campgrounds in Torres del Paine with access to shower facilities and hot water.

At the Eco Camp you'll spend 4 nights in igloo-type tented domes. The rooms have either double or twin beds and shared bathroom facilities with hot water.

Breakfast daily; lunch day 4; dinner days 3, 6; full board days 7-11.

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 25 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by the latter on their return.

13 days, 12 nights: Santiago 1; Puerto Varas 3; mountain refuge 1, Torres del Paine National Park 6; Santiago 1.

The unit of currency in Chile is the Chilean Peso.

Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds.

We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency, and possibly some travellers' cheques (American Express are the most widely accepted), though these are gradually falling out of use. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money.

It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around US$40 for the few days when you are not on the trekking excursions will cover food, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay more.

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

Travel insurance is essential.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying to the US, or via the US you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket.

TRIP SUITABILITY

This is an active outdoor journey. There are a couple of public coach rides, and 3 internal flights.

The holiday includes hikes in rocky and hilly terrain. You need to be fit and have some hiking experience. The mountain climb involves the use of crampons but you don't need to have used them before: the climb is closely guided.

Be prepared for camping in basic, but comfortable refuges and fixed tents.

In Santiago, October and November and March and April see temperatures between 15 and 25°C and a good deal of sunshine. January and February are hot, around 30°C.

Expect a temperate climate in the lake district, with plenty of warm sun but also showers in summer. December to March is very crowded with local holiday-makers.

In the Torres del Paine National Park, the best months for hiking are March to April. It can be quite busy in summer (December to January). Days are long and mild then but it can be windy, as in spring (September to October).

Bring practical, comfortable clothing and a light-weight jumper. If you plan to eat in smart restaurants, although clothing is not formal (no need for jacket and tie), something quite smart would be appropriate.

For the climb and hikes light and preferably waterproof walking boots with good grip are essential. Protective clothing such as a fleece and GoreTex-type breathable and waterproof outer shell are essential. You may need a sun hat and also a woolly one, gloves and a scarf. That said, it can be hot in the summer, so bring along some shorts and a T shirt and be prepared to carry the rest! Sunscreen is essential, especially during the ascent of Osorno.

Sleeping bags are provided in Torres del Paine. During the Osorno climb, bedding can be rented at the Teski refuge. You may prefer to bring your own sleeping bag with you.

Hiking poles are also an asset.

Please get in touch with the office before departure if you have any doubts. Good equipment is very important and hard to come by in Latin America.

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following: typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. For specific requirements you must consult your GP.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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