

Patagonia Explorer: 18 Days

Information Kit

Chile & Argentina: Ride Patagonia, a world of vast blue skies, deep blue glaciers and towering snow capped peaks.



"When it comes to riding dirt and experiencing spectacular scenery, this is the real deal!" - Adrian, Patagonia Explorer

Few places in the world have captured the imagination of adventurers like Patagonia. Discover a landscape of fjords, glaciers and towering snow capped peaks, live and breathe the Gaucho lifestyle and visit far-flung settlements. Riding Patagonia offers the biker some of the world's finest scenery and a true sense of pure wilderness.

Itinerary

Joining Day: Santiago

Your Santiago airport transfer will take you directly to our joining hotel, ready for an early start tomorrow. Today you will meet your crew for your tour briefing and welcome dinner.

Day One: Pucón

Today we will fly from the capital of Chile, Santiago, 1000 km south to Temuco. From here we will transfer to the tranquil, scenic town of Pucón in the famous Lakes District. Once in Pucón we will see the bikes and have a bike briefing so you can become acquainted with the bike you will be riding on tour.

Day Two: Pucón

An amazing town nestled only a short distance from snow-capped Volcan Villarrica, Pucón stands in the shadows of the volcano as it reveals its changing moods throughout the day. Today, we will have an orientation / safety-ride amongst green fields and forests so that everyone feels comfortable with his or her bike. In the evening there is the chance to get to know each other with a dinner at one of Pucón's many unique restaurants.

Day Three: San Carlos de Bariloche

Leaving Pucón, we will be riding out past scenic farmland and woods towards the Argentinean border where we have our first border crossing. As we head closer to the border, we will see the famous "monkey puzzle" trees that forest this region. Once into Argentina the remainder of the day is spent on well-surfaced bitumen roads that take us up through the stunning Seven Lakes Drive, passing through the beautiful mountain towns of Junin de Los Andes and San Martin de Los Andes. This is an amazing ride; you will feel exhilarated at the end of the day especially when we arrive at the stunning San Carlos de Bariloche.

Day Four: San Carlos de Bariloche

Today we get the chance to explore the incredible town of Bariloche. Situated on the shores of the beautiful lake Nahuel Huapi ringed by lofty snow capped peaks. Bariloche is famous for its chocolate, fresh air and breathtaking scenery. We can spend an afternoon riding the legendary



Circuito Chico taking in panoramic views of the Nahuel Huapi National Park and visiting the famous Llapo Llapo resort.

Day Five: Esquel

We leave Bariloche enjoying the last of the forested mountains as we move down towards the sparsely forested foothills of the Western Chubut province, arriving for a restful night at Esquel, terminus of the legendary Patagonian Express train made famous by *Paul Theroux's* book of the same name.

Day Six: Perito Merino

Today we descend onto the epic Patagonia Steppe; we get our first experience of the real Patagonia and the legendary Ruta 40. The land starts to open out into broad, rugged plains with the Andes ever present. We will ride through some stunning Patagonian wilderness. The road from Esquel to Rio Mayo is paved and then its approximately 130 km / 81 mi of gravel, road works, dust and corrugation. We stop for the night in the remote settlement of Perito Moreno.

Day Seven: Estancia La Angostura

Leaving Perito Moreno we will enjoy easy asphalt for some 80 km / 50 mi and then we have more of the famous dirt roads of Ruta 40 (well packed, not too technical). The winds can be very strong, making for potentially difficult riding. There are also some areas of the route that are under construction; so again, there could be some small detours. Today you will see, possibly, some of the broadest skies that you will ever see; the horizon seems to stretch on forever as we ride down to a beautiful and remote Estancia (Argentinean farm). Prepare yourself for a fantastic traditional Argentinean meal. Tonight is a truly unique experience with our friendly hosts.

Day Eight & Nine: El Chalten

Leaving the estancia, we are on the ripio (gravel) until just before Tres Lagos, and then it's back to the paved road to complete the ride to El Chalten. We spend two nights in the tiny, peaceful village of El Chalten in the shadows of the extraordinary towers of the Fitzroy Range within the Patagonian ice field. There will be plenty of time for us to take a trek into this epic mountain-scape.

Days Ten & Eleven: El Calafate

Back on our bikes we head further south to the town of El Calafate for a two-night stay. Leaving El Chalten we retrace our route back to re-join with Ruta 40. There are great views and photo opportunities of Lake Argentina en-route to El Calafate. The following day we ride to the stunning Moreno Glacier. At 30 km / 18.75 mi long, 5 km / 3.1 mi wide and 60 m / 197 feet high you will be awestruck by the enormity and grandeur of this spectacular glacier. We also include a boat cruise taking us to the north face of the glacier.

Day Twelve & Thirteen: Torres Del Paine

A mix of paved roads and good gravel into Chile, will take us into one of the most beautiful national parks in the world, the jewel in the Patagonian crown, Torres Del Paine. This 181,000 hectare UNESCO Biosphere Reserve contains steppe, southern beech forest, creeping glaciers, rugged mountain trails, sky blue glacial lakes and most importantly the towering peaks of Torres Del Paine. We will have a full day to hike the rugged trails throughout the park or ride amongst the many winding roads that cover this spectacular region.

Day Fourteen: Cerro Sombrero

Leaving Torres National Park, we ride south to Puerto Natales a beautiful town perched above the waters of Seno Ultima Esperanza. Further on we arrive at the Magellan straights for a short 25-minute ferry crossing. Our accommodation for the night is at a welcoming Hosteria in Cerro Sombrero, a short ride after the ferry crossing. A great home cooked meal awaits us. It's wild, it's remote, it's Patagonia.

Day Fifteen: Ushuaia

110 km / 69 mi of gravel roads take us from Cerro Sombrero to the border at San Sebastian, where we exit Chile. We enter Argentina into a beautiful landscape of forests and mountains known as Terra del Fuego (Land of Fire). We then ride triumphantly into the southernmost city in the world, Ushuaia where Antarctica is closer than the capital Buenos Aires.



Day Sixteen: Rio Grande

There is the opportunity for a morning boat cruise on the Beagle channel (**Optional Excursion**) just as Charles Darwin did or enjoy a ride through the Tierra del Fuego National Park where we truly come to the end of the world. We will leave after lunch for a short ride to Rio Grande where we will overnight.

Day Seventeen: Punta Arenas

We travel north and back into Chile riding alongside the Magellan Straits to the town of Punta Arenas where we will return the motorcycles.

Day Eighteen: Santiago

Your included flight will take you to Santiago for your final night of the tour.

Departure day: Santiago

Spend some time in Santiago or fly home, the choice is yours.

This tour also runs in reverse.

Ride Details

Ride Grade: 4

Grade 4 doesn't mean we are climbing cliff faces and forwarding raging torrents, it means we spend considerable time on dirt roads as opposed to paved roads, these same tracks are used by 2 wheel drive cars and semi trailers, so NOT extreme.

80% of this ride is on pavement; some sections of pavement can be potholed and narrow and in the northern regions of this ride more vehicular traffic can be expected. Riders must be aware that South American drivers adhere less to road rules than we may be accustomed to, a red light is more of a challenge than a directive to stop!!

20% of this ride will be on dirt. The vast majority of dirt is hard packed and is used by heavy transport, so not technical or difficult however there are sections that can have loose gravel, washouts and can be rutted especially where roadwork's are being undertaken or experienced recent rains, generally these sections don't last for long.

Distances

The biggest riding day is 550 km / 340 mi with the shortest being 160 km / 100 mi. Most riding days we average around 200 – 250 km / 125 – 160 mi. There are numerous rest days in our itinerary, where the bike is available for more riding if desired (subject to any maintenance requirements). The total distance is approximately 3500 km / 2200 mi.

Bikes

We operate bikes that need no introduction here, the venerable BMW. Our fleet consists of the BMW F700 (including low suspension) / F800 & R1200GS. All bikes come equipped with crash protection and a topbox and late model with not too many miles on them.

Experience required

Some off- road riding experience is preferred for this tour, mainly due to the fact that we do cover significant distance off road, rather than anything being too technical or difficult. Co-Riders can travel in the support vehicle at anytime, if any dirt becomes too challenging. Although not a requirement, Compass Expeditions does recommend an off road training course that gives riders, of all levels, the tools to tackle off road riding. Contact us for more information on training events and recommended schools.

All riders **must** have a valid motorcycle license.

Weather

It is summer in Patagonia, so we can expect some beautiful sunny ride days. Average daily temperatures around Pucón (the north) are between 7 and 20 degrees C (45 and 67 degrees F). As we head south the temperatures will become slightly cooler. Average November temperatures in Ushuaia are between 4 and 12 degrees C (40 and 54 degrees F). The prevailing winds, from the southwest, are dry, cold, and can be very strong at times. Although not a lot of rain is expected on tour, be prepared for some wet weather riding particularly around Torres Del Paine.



Highlights

- The tranquil lakeside setting of Pucón
- The world famous Seven Lakes Drive
- Stunning mountains and lakes around Bariloche; as well as great dining and world class chocolates
 - Accommodation in an authentic still working estancia
- Spectacular mountain scenery around El Chalten
 - Moreno Glacier
- The unparalleled beauty of Torres del Paine
- Tierra del Fuego, lands end, Ushuaia



Meals

The food options on the Patagonia Explorer are as varied as the landscape. All types of western style meals are available, as well as some local delicacies, such as the famous Cordero al Palo (Spit Roast Lamb), which we will certainly try at our *estancia* stay. On all ride days, we include our legendary picnic lunches, prepared on the spot, in our mobile kitchen. Not pre-prepared sandwiches left festering in your top box all day. Our picnic lunches are wholesome and filling, and our carefully selected and tested restaurants offer both traditional and western style foods. Of course all breakfasts are included.

Breakfasts: **19**

Lunches: **10**

Dinners: **7**

Accommodation

Our hotels are generally 3 and 4 stars, and are chosen for their location, cleanliness, suitability for motorcycle groups and ambience. On a couple of occasions, such as the *estancia*, the accommodation will be more basic. Some hotels have restaurants and bars attached.

Accommodation is an important part of your ride experience, and after many years in South America, we believe we offer a superb mix of excellent boutique hotels.

Accommodation: **19 nights**

Tour Inclusions

- Airport Transfers
- Motorcycle rental as per your selection.
- Flight Punta Arenas to Santiago or reverse, depending on direction of travel
 - Fuel
 - Tolls
- Support vehicle with passenger carrying ability
- Services of ride leader and support vehicle driver
 - Pre-departure material and route maps
 - Access to satellite phone, pay per minute
 - Compass Expeditions polo shirt
- Entrances to all national parks mentioned in the itinerary
 - Moreno Glacier boat cruise

Your Responsibilities

Riding equipment

You will need to bring the following riding gear:

Riding jacket and pants: Patagonia can be cold, even in the height of summer, and some rain should be expected, therefore a multi layer jacket and pant are essential. The jacket and pants, ideally need to have internal removable liners and Kevlar crash protection, as well as a waterproof pocket for your documents and small camera. Preferably your jacket and pants should be 100% waterproof, or carry a set of waterproofs in your top-box.

Helmet: Your helmet should be full faced and of a good quality. Ensure you have a spare visor or replace before departing if scratched. Motocross style helmets are unsuitable for long distance rides, on what may be sometimes dusty surfaces, as you will experience considerable dust ingress. Internal drop down tinted visors are great, but not so if you need prescription sunglasses.

Boots: Ideally, motocross style boots would be best, but bulky and impractical to carry. When choosing a boot, it is essential to choose a boot that offers the most rigid ankle protection possible; ankle injuries are the most common injuries we experience. Pack a set of walking boots in your top-box for those off bike excursions.

Gloves: We recommend the use of both summer and winter (ideally waterproof) gloves, as the weather is extremely changeable.

Additional items: Silk neck warmer, great for keeping the wind out. Earplugs, great for keeping the noise out.

Travel insurance

It is compulsory to have travel insurance to tour with us. It just makes sense! Your insurance must cover you for any incident you may have whilst riding a motorcycle 700 cc and over. We have negotiated a 10% discount with various insurance providers around the world, who WILL offer coverage for you, for the activity of riding a motorcycle 700cc and over in foreign lands. For more information return to the "tour page" and click on the "insurance" tab.

Passport & Visas

Your passport will need to be valid for at least six months **AFTER** completion of your ride. Your passport should have at least one full page available, for each country you will be visiting. Compass Expeditions has teamed up with the world leaders in visa procurement, CIBT, who have created a special Compass Expeditions visa application page. They have offices in Australia, USA, Canada, UK, Mexico, Brazil, Singapore and numerous European countries. Tour participants can obtain their own visas if preferred, however, for a small charge, CIBT can obtain your visa and negotiate any issues that might arise. Links to CIBT / Compass page for visa applications, for other nationalities please contact us directly:

Australia: <https://visalink.com.au/compassexp>
Canada: <http://www.cibtvisas.ca/compass>
USA: <http://www.cibtvisas.com/compassexp>
France: <http://www.cibtvisas.fr/compassexp>
UK: <http://cibtvisas.co.uk/compassexp>

Most nationalities do not require a visa for Chile or Argentina. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure they have any visas that may be required. This ride visits Chile and Argentina.

Vaccinations

A Yellow Fever vaccination is mandatory for travel within South America, and may well be asked for when returning to your home country. We highly recommend that you speak with your doctor, and/or check out the World Health Organization website at www.who.int/country and have a look at their excellent International Travel and Health book, available online. In Australia, visit the Australian Medical Centre website at www.traveldoctor.com.au or phone 1300 65 88 44. For our U.S clients, visit www.cdc.gov/travel/ and for our U.K clients, go to www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice/, for travel health recommendations in general, go to www.mdtravelhealth.com, now part of red travel.



You've made a booking, what happens next?

Once a booking has been made, you will receive an automated booking confirmation. Soon after, you will receive a "welcome" email, and then receive our comprehensive pre departure booklet in the post. This booklet will prepare you for your adventure and has more details on what to bring and what to expect. We email a "tour dossier" 90 days before departure; this dossier is full of information, including historical and country information. The more you read, the more you will get out of your ride.



Thanks for spending your time reading this information kit. We hope it has inspired you to challenge yourself, if not riding with us then just riding and enjoying this remarkable world that we live in.

If you have further questions, please contact us.

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