

ARGENTINA - PATAGONIA ESTANCIA EXPERIENCE



TRIP CODE

ARTSNAG

DEPARTURE

Select Wednesdays
December - March

DURATION

5 Days

LOCATIONS

Argentina, Patagonia



INTRODUCTION

Nibepo Aike retains the essence of the old Patagonian estancias. It is actually within Los Glaciares National Park on the shores of the southern arm of Lake Argentino, and it covers an area of over 12,000 hectares, reaching as far as the border with Chile. Formerly it was devoted to sheep rearing, but nowadays only a small flock is kept, with its chief activity being the breeding of Hereford cattle. The Hidden Glaciers program proposes exploring on horseback the remotest corners of the Estancia Nibepo Aike and Los Glaciares National Park - pristine nature with a combination of Andean woodland, crystal clear lakes, high mountains, impressive skies and endless glaciers. We get to where vehicles cannot reach, leaving the main buildings of the estancia far behind.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: arrive Estancia Nibepo Aike

This morning depart by shuttle transfer service from El Calafate to Estancia Nibepo Aike. After settling in, your guide will explain the itinerary for the following days. The horses will be prepared and other equipment made ready to set off early the following morning. For the rest of the afternoon and evening, you are free to enjoy the estancia, exploring its surroundings by bike or on foot, finding one's own way along the footpaths and tracks and also taking part in the sheep-shearing demonstration using traditional hand shears. Evening meal and spend night at the Hostelry.



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DAY 2: Puesto La Rosada

Morning ride to climb up the mountain range Cordon de los Cristales, which lies behind the main house. The higher you go, the more clearly Argentino lake's arms stand out. Once you reach the clearing, the track plunges into the Patagonian Andean woods. Pass between lenga trees and guindos, riding along old tracks where the great sheep drives used to pass. Reach a little clear land, where cows graze. There, La Rosada outpost is the home of the "puestero", who is in charge of cattle and carries on the legacy of traditional rural production. He knows every single corner of this part of the land and he can count the cows with just a glance. If one had escaped, he would bring her back within a couple of minutes. There, enjoy a ranch lunch. By the afternoon, we reach an historical point, the International Milestone ('32) that indicates the end of the estancia and the end of Argentina. The sensation to be at the very frontiers of Patagonia is unique. It is the south of the south: wind blows and the flag waves. The landscape and its calmness never end. Free time to explore surroundings. Dinner and night at La Rosada outpost. This outpost has only one room with two bunk beds and dining room. Total capacity is four people with basis facilities.



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DAY 3: Puesto Cachorro & Puesto Laguna

On coming out of the dense woodland the way opens out into the Valley of the Río Cachorro. Notros and calafate bushes here are unusually tall. We start descending towards the lower land until we come to the riverbed. Surprise views of the Frías glacier appear at the bottom and the granite needle called “el Dedo del Cesar” . Riding between rocks and pasturelands and avoiding the marshlands, we reach the corrals of the Río Cachorro outpost where the rangers might be working with the livestock. After a picnic lunch we continue on horseback to Laguna 3 de Abril (3 de Abril Lagoon), a habitat of flamingos and black-necked swans, kaiken and steamer ducks, as well as of numerous salmonidae. Passing the lake, we come to the outpost, and after unsaddling, there will be time to enjoy the surroundings and the cosiness of the refuge. A wood-fired stove and a brick and clay oven, with the gentle light of the lantern, passing the mate round, the evening meal will be prepared while tales of adventures are shared. The outpost has a room with 3 bunk beds and a room that serves as dining room and kitchen where there are another two benches that turn into beds. Basic facilities. Evening meal and overnight at the Puesto Laguna 3 de Abril.



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DAY 4: Puesto Laguna

After breakfast at the refuge, hike to the lake shore to meet Glaciar Sur. This excursion departs from Nibepo Aike’s pier and navigates the Lago Argentino down south to the Hidden Glaciers. The expedition is a combination of navigations and trekking to reach a unique spot between mountains and glaciers, where only few people arrive. Once you board, the boat sails through the Brazo Sur to its southernmost point. After a short walk through the native forest, the first lookout point to the glaciers is reached. At the bottom we can see the Lago Frías which will be sailed in zodiacs a few minutes later. It is 3 km navigation to the other shore where a new trekking begins. It goes along an old river course to reach an amphitheatre facing the glaciers Gorra, Frías and Grande. Enjoy lunch near Laguna de los Témpanos overlooking not only the three glaciers but also the icebergs that decorate the milky waters of the lagoon. This area of Parque Nacional Los Glaciares is almost unexplored, only a few gauchos and cows from Nibepo Aike know the place’s hidden spots and secrets. After spending a good amount of time resting and taking pictures at the feet of the glaciers, return to the outpost. Evening meal and overnight at the Puesto Laguna 3 de Abril. Please note today's hike will take approximately six hours and cover 14 km with little gradient and medium level of fitness. The activity provided by Glacier Sur will be shared with other passengers from El Calafate. Please note both activities are subject to weather conditions. If unable to do than the adventure will be done by foot and horseback.



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DAY 5: Depart Estancia Nibepo Aike


Commence the return journey to El Calafate. Being riding along the shore of the lake until you reach the main buildings of the estancia, about 18km from the refuge. Arrive in time for a typical Patagonian lamb roasted at the stake over charcoal embers, which will be ready just as you arrive. After lunch, a shuttle transfer service will take you back to El Calafate.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

ARGENTINA - PATAGONIA ESTANCIA EXPERIENCE

Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	Accommodation with all meals daily Non alcoholic beverages with all meals Two days horse-riding One day combined trekking/cruise Bilingual guide Return shuttle transfers from El Calafate Exclusions International flights Visa and reciprocity fees (if applicable) Travel insurance Beverages at Estancia on Day 1 & 4 Personal expenses Gratuities for tour guides & drivers Any items not mentioned as included Sleeping bag
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request, contact us for more details.
Notes	Accommodation used has basic amenities Itinerary will vary according to weather conditions Each scheduled departure will operate with minimum 2 riders and maximum 6 riders Private departures available on request. Contact us for details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

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SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu's "Pass it on" programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.
- 4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise

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your impact on both local environments and communities.

5) Chimu Adventures’ offices also take a number of sustainability measures including carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure’s internal processes are also structures to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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