

CHILE - PATAGONIA WILDLIFE SAFARI



TRIP CODE
CLTSEC5
DURATION
5 Days
LOCATIONS
Chile, Patagonia


INTRODUCTION

EcoCamp is situated in the very heart of Torres del Paine National Park and provides the region's first fully sustainable accommodation, complete with green technology. You enjoy guided treks and wildlife excursions by day and share evening meals with new friends, before falling asleep gazing up at the star-filled sky through your dome ceiling.

Wake up in the middle of the Patagonian wilderness in a cozy geodesic dome, with a panoramic view of the majestic Torres del Paine, ready to pick up the hiking trail!

GREEN POINTS!

- ☑ Natural light and heat energy at Eco Camp is used and electricity comes from hydro and solar energy to reduce emissions.
- ☑ Strict waste management is undertaken on site, all waste is brought in and separated at the source
- ☑ Eco Camp was the first hotel in the Patagonia region to include a compost device used to collect waste from toilets and solid waste which is then processed into filtered water and passed into the ground.
- ☑ Facilities comply with the highest international standards of environment management such as ISO14001

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ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival at Eco Camp

In the morning, you will be picked up by a local representative either from Punta Arenas or Puerto Natales and taken to EcoCamp Patagonia, located in the world-renowned Torres del Paine National Park. Upon arrival at the Eco Camp, you will be immediately greeted by the breathtaking beauty of our surroundings. The camp blends seamlessly with the natural environment, and the eco-friendly design of the lodging domes is inspired by the traditional huts built by the Kawesqar, the indigenous people of the region. Don't let their simple appearance fool you - these domes offer comfort and protection from the elements. After settling in, we gather for a delicious dinner and a warm welcome from our hosts. Over the course of the evening, we receive a comprehensive briefing on the exciting activities available both at the camp and in the surrounding park. Whether you're interested in hiking, kayaking, or simply taking in the stunning natural beauty, our knowledgeable guides will help you plan your adventure. *While most activities are included in your stay at our Eco-camp, a limited number of extra cost activities are available for you to choose from. These optional activities are at your discretion, and any fees associated with them will be paid locally. Note: The available activities depend on a weekly schedule, with three different options offered every day, ranging from easy to difficult. For details on the activities offered on the specific dates of your travel, please inquire with your booking agent.



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DAY 2: Patagonia Exploration

*Please note that the itinerary outlined below is provided solely as an example and may be subject to change due to various factors such as weather conditions and availability. We understand that each of our guests has unique interests and fitness levels, and as such, our knowledgeable guide will collaborate with you to personalize your activities and ensure an unforgettable experience that aligns perfectly with your preferences and abilities. Following a nourishing breakfast, we embark on a scenic walk from EcoCamp to Hostería Las Torres, where we commence our ascent of Ascencio Valley on the eastern face of the Towers. The trail leads us through a variety of breathtaking landscapes, including arid mountain areas, beech forests, and tranquil streams. Our journey culminates as we navigate the challenging moraine, a boulder-strewn terrain that leads us to one of the world's most renowned viewpoints, offering a stunning panoramic view of the Torres del Paine (2,850 m/ 9,350 ft), a trio of imposing granite monoliths created by glacial erosion. After a rewarding uphill climb, we are treated to a full view of the majestic Towers and a glistening glacial lake below. What could be more fitting than having lunch in such a remarkable location? We pause to admire the scenery and enjoy our picnic before retracing our steps through Ascencio Valley and returning to EcoCamp.



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DAY 3: Patagonia Exploration

Today, we commence our adventure with a scenic drive through the park, soaking in the breathtaking views of Paine Grande's snowy peaks and the black, granite spires of Los Cuernos. At Pudeto Dock, we pause to drop off Grey Trek travelers and capture photographs of the abundant guanacos, Andean condors, and unique flora. Our journey continues with a leisurely stroll along the shores of Lake Pehoe, where we witness the powerful Salto Grande waterfall, formed as Lake Nordenskjold spills into Pehoe. Next, we ascend to Grey Lake and explore its stunning beach. A delightful box lunch awaits us by the lake before we embark on a boat tour across the icy waters, towards the towering blue walls of Glacier Grey, offering an incredible close-up view of the glacier. Please note that the Grey Glacier boat tour is subject to availability and weather conditions. It is essential to confirm your reservation to participate on the day of your arrival. During the shoulder season (September, October, April), the boat trip may be canceled if the boat's minimum passenger requirement of 15 is not met. In such cases, we will organize an alternative excursion in the park.



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DAY 4: Patagonia Exploration

Today, you have the option to embark on an adventure to the Sarmiento Lake & Fauna Trail, a predominantly flat trek offering stunningly diverse natural scenery and the chance to behold a secluded blue lake, unlike any other water system in the area. Along the way, keep an eye out for graceful guanacos and great grebes. The trek begins with an exploration of the area's turbidite rock folds before descending the isthmus separating Lake Sarmiento from Lake Sarmiento Chico. Walking along a gentle slope, you'll amble beside the eastern edge of Lake Sarmiento Chico, eventually reaching an impressive bay on the western side of Lake Sarmiento. Here, you'll admire a breathtaking view reminiscent of a piece of art! The ascent back to the van offers an awe-inspiring, panoramic vista of Lake Sarmiento from its western shore, with its eastern coast glimmering on the horizon. Afterwards, you'll drive back eastwards along the northern shore of Sarmiento Lake to the starting point of the Fauna Trail. Walking northwards, you'll encounter park fauna on the Patagonian plains, including guanacos, ostrich-like ñandús, and perhaps the occasional puma print! Passing by Goic Lagoon, after an approximate 5 km relaxed walk, you'll reach the Laguna Amarga ranger station, where you'll be picked up and driven back to EcoCamp.



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DAY 5: Depart Eco Camp

After your final breakfast at the lodge, you will depart Eco Camp aboard their shared shuttle service to be transferred to the airport for your onward travels. Eco camp includes transfers to either Punta Arenas, Puerto Natales or a bus to El Calafate depending on your itinerary. Note: The shuttle to Punta Arenas departs between 8am and 10am and stops in Puerto Natales along the way. For flights departing earlier than 3pm, an early drop-off service must be booked for an additional cost.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Eco camp domes

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Inclusions	Accommodation at EcoCamp’s Standard Domes. Regular bus tickets Calafate to Natales if starting or finishing in Calafate. Meals as indicated in the price chart. All ground transport as indicated in the itinerary. English speaking guide. Guide ratio 1:12. Max group size: 16 people. Park fees for Cueva del Milodon and Torres del Paine National Park. Boat ticket for crossing Grey Lake* and/or Pehoe Lake. *please check the itinerary
	Excluded Flight tickets. Insurance (it is mandatory you purchase appropriate insurance for this trip). Voluntary tipping of guides and staff. Soft drinks or snacks not served with the meals included at the EcoCamp. Bringing US\$ in cash for buying extra drinks/snacks or souvenirs in Torres del Paine NP is suggested. Items of personal nature.
Difficulty Rating	3 (Average fitness level required)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Private bathrooms only in Superior domes. Trip code: PAT SD5
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

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SUSTAINABILITY

Eco camp has gained an award-winning reputation for its eco-friendly policies and innovative use of green technology. We are leaders in environmentally responsible travel to areas of fragile natural resources and we minimise the footprint of every visitor in Torres del Paine National Park through our careful development strategy and implementation of green technology. Our low impact design and focus on raising guests’ awareness of how to care for their environment highlights our commitment to a greener present and future for tourism. Conservation is central to the philosophy driving our operations, and we have been certified as complying with the highest international standards of environmental management, such as ISO14001.

The design premise behind EcoCamp was to create accommodation where travellers could connect with nature and explore Torres del Paine without leaving a footprint. At EcoCamp guests are immersed in their natural surroundings, hearing the wind race through the sky while looking up at the stars through the ceiling of their cozy dome. All natural light and heat energy is utilised and electricity comes from hydro and solar

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energy. Domes blend naturally into their surrounding environment and flora and fauna continues to flourish on EcoCamp ground.

Our premise from the start has been to take comfort to the limits of what is sustainable and for this reason we resist the concept of luxury because environmental conservation will always be prioritised over any luxurious amenities or practices which could be detrimental to the park.

EcoCamp’s dome design was inspired by the The Kaweskars (Alacalufes), a group of nomadic Patagonian inhabitants whose presence in Torres del Paine is documented. They arrived by canoe in the 15th century and made no demands on natural resources as they travelled from place to place, setting up and dismantling their semi-circular huts built from simple materials, leaving no trace behind. To keep warm they lit fires inside the domes.

EcoCamp is a tribute to the ancient Kaweskar dwellings and way of life and the essence of their dome homes has been kept by maintaining a simple nomadic design in the midst of natural surroundings. Just like the Kaweskars, EcoCamp respects nature and aims to leaves no footprint behind in the wilderness.

All of our electricity (which is very little as most of our efforts go to efficiency and electricity saving) comes from a micro-hydro turbine and photovoltaic panels. Energy is gathered together in a 24V battery bank to power all of EcoCamp’s refrigerators, lighting, electrical appliances, stereos etc. Propane gas is only used to heat water and superior domes. A pilot scheme to heat shower water with solar energy is in motion.

Water from the river enters the micro-hydro turbine at 5 litres per second with a net pressure of 38 meters delivering a steady power of 800 Watts. An inverter is used to switch from the 24V DC in the battery bank to 220 AC, the standard voltage in Chile. An array of 1700 Watt photovoltaic panels - also connected to the battery bank - collect the extra energy needed at Ecocamp.

Electricity is limited and only available to guests for charging camera batteries and laptops, not using hairdryers or electric razors. Solar energy is very efficient in summer when Patagonia receives up to 17 hours of sunlight daily.

Domes have skylight windows so natural light and heat can be utilized. This not only allows guests to follow natural light patterns but saves electricity, leaving us confident that our renewable energy sources are sufficient and fossil fuels are not needed. Suite domes have a wood stove for warmth, recycling dead wood from the park and avoiding the need to use diesel.

EcoCamp’s sustainable design, structure, implementation and maintenance is all the direct work of the owners themselves. Javier Lopez and Yerko Ivelic, both Chilean engineers, worked to design a hotel concept which would allow them to rely almost entirely on green energy. They then installed the micro-hydro turbine and composting toilet devices and taught a team of skilled workers how to work and maintain these features. To this date, ten years after EcoCamp’s opening, the owners continue to travel to Torres del Paine to oversee implementation and maintenance of the sophisticated structure they put in place all those years ago.

We have a basic policy of environmentally-sensitive waste management which includes

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bringing as little paper, tin and plastic into the wilderness as possible. All waste brought in is separated at the source and stored according to its recycling status: organic, paper, glass, and dangerous or toxic materials. All non-organic materials are removed and sent to the closest town of Punta Arenas to be recycled or disposed of and organic material is fed to a neighbouring pig farm.

Guides ensure guests leave no rubbish en route during treks, and that all non-biodegradable material is brought back to EcoCamp to be properly disposed of. Guests reuse zip-lock lunch bags and water flasks.

We choose all of our suppliers extremely carefully, ensuring they are all aware of and meet with our environmental standards. We buy in bulk so as to limit individual packaging and our suppliers limit packaging brought into the park to an absolute minimum.

Guests recycle their lunch bags everyday and use the same flask which they re-fill with water en route during their trek. We have a traveller handbook in all domes informing guests of our ecological practices and their responsibilities while in the park, which include staying on the raised wooden walkways, never smoking inside domes, using biodegradable hygiene products, always returning waste to the recycling point at EcoCamp, taking batteries back home, minimising time in the shower and sharing transport to and from EcoCamp.

EcoCamp has the world's southern-most composting device, and the first in the hotel industry in the whole of Chile and Patagonia. Composting chambers collect waste from toilets and solid waste remains in the chamber, mixed with paper and wood chips, and is heated to keep microorganisms alive and the compost process active. Liquids are passed through a cleaning chamber, filtered, then passed into the ground. Due to the low temperatures in Patagonia, great effort is required to maintain the active process

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