

BOLIVIA - SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA TO UYUNI



TRIP CODE

MCTSSPU

DURATION

4 Days

LOCATIONS

Chile, Bolivia



INTRODUCTION

Enjoy the unparalleled scenery of Bolivia and Chile on this 3-day trip. Start your journey in the world's driest desert - the Atacama Desert, before crossing to Bolivia passing volcanoes and colourful lagoons until you reach the world's largest salt lake - the Salar de Uyuni. This vast salt desert has a landscape that is unforgettable - stark yet awe-inspiring, a dazzling white that stretches to the horizon, interspersed with geysers and coloured mineral lagoons.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: San Pedro de Atacama to Hito Cajon

This morning you will be transferred from San Pedro de Atacama to Hito Cajon, the mountain pass on the border between Chile and Bolivia. You will be met at the border by your Bolivian guide.



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DAY 1: San Pedro de Atacama - Hito Cajon - REA - Villamar

From the border we enter the REA Reserve. Covering an area of over 700,000 hectares, the reserve features salt pans, volcanoes, snow-capped peaks, thermal springs and geothermal geysers and is home to unique species of fauna that have adapted to the extreme conditions of the region. We visit "Laguna Verde", a beautiful green lagoon at the foothills of the Licancabur volcano (5,865 metres), where flamingos are often seen. We continue through the high desert of Pampas de Dali to Chalviri lagoon, the hot springs of Polques and the geysers Sol de Mañana with their active fumaroles and volcanic craters. The crater bottoms display boiling lava and the fumaroles emit spouts of mixed water and superheated steam that reach heights of 80 to 100 metres. We have a picnic lunch and continue on through the desert landscape to Laguna Colorada (4,278 metres), declared a RAMSAR site due to the 30,000 Andean flamingos that nest here. Laguna Colorado is characterised by the red colour of its water and it is the most important flamingo site in the region. You may also see vicuñas, llamas and vizcachas. Finally we reach Villamar where we overnight. Dinner is included at the hotel.



NO IMAGE AVAILABLE

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DAY 2: Villamar to Colchani

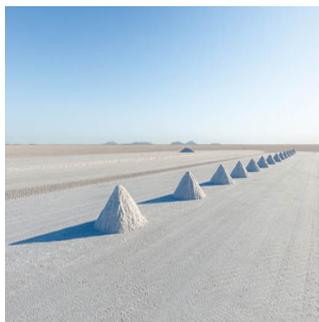
This morning after breakfast we continue across Valle de las Rocas, a famous rock formation caused by wind erosion. We pass the villages of Alota, Culpina K and San Cristobal. Culpina K features artwork designed by the Bolivian artist Gaston Ugalde, including several metal trees. The town is built from natural materials and the houses painted with natural pigmentation. San Cristobal was relocated from its original location because of the zinc and silver deposits in the vicinity. The San Cristobal silver mine is one of the largest silver mines in the world. The colonial church was moved stone by stone from its original location. Continuing to the Trains Cemetery to finally reach Colchani Village on the shores of the Uyuni Salt Flats. A picnic lunch is included in today's services. Dinner is included at tonight's hotel.



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DAY 3: Uyuni Salt Flat - Uyuni

This morning after breakfast we set off across the Great Salt Flats to Colchani village, where we observe the methods of salt extraction and salt processing. We continue to Incahuasi Island (better known as Fish Island) - an oasis with a unique and isolated ecosystem that features algae and fossils. The area is covered with giant columnar cacti up to 10 metres high, some over 100 years old. Against the backdrop of the salt flats extending to the horizon, this landscape makes for spectacular photos. After a picnic lunch, we travel north to visit the pre-Colombian Pucara de Ayque fort and the nearby chullpares on the foothills of Thunupa volcano. We then head east to Uyuni to the airport where you will travel to La Paz. Lunch is included in today's service. Uyuni, founded in 1889 by Bolivian president Aniceto Arce, is still an important military base. It lies in south-western Bolivia, 3,670 metres above sea level and situated on the edge of the Salar de Uyuni, the largest salt flat in the world. The Salar de Uyuni covers over 10,000 square kilometres of the Bolivian Altiplano and is fringed by the mountains of the Andes. Beneath it lies the world's largest lithium reserve estimated to be about 100 million tons and accounting for around 70% of the world's lithium reserves. The salt in the salt flats is over 120 metres deep. The area is remote, arid and cold, stark, yet stunning, boasting extraordinary beauty and a silence that is captivating.



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DAY 4: Depart Uyuni

This morning you will be transferred to Uyuni airport for your onward flight.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

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Inclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services and meals included as mentioned in the itinerary • English speaking guides • All entrances fees • Private Service <p>NOT INCLUDED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything not listed in the itinerary • Air Tickets • Tips • Airport taxes
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more 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 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.