

ATACAMA ADVENTURE

5 days through the world's driest desert - Chile

On this tour you will discover the world's driest desert with all its splendid beauty. You will see the most colorful sunsets from the valley 'Valle de la Luna' and from the salt lake 'Salar de Atacama'. After a day's trek through desert lands and bizarre canyons you refresh and relax in thermal springs. The Tatio geysers' roaring vapor-columns and gushing waters will give you a breathtaking performance of nature wonders. The oasis San Pedro de Atacama with its characteristic adobe-houses will host you and be the starting point for your daily tours.

Trip Highlights:

- Explore the **desert oasis & hippie village San Pedro de Atacama**
 - Discover the world's driest desert and admire the **roaring Tatio Geysers**
 - Enjoy the **colorful sunsets** at the Valle de la Luna
 - Visit the **Salt Lake Salar de Atacama** & drive through the Salt Flats Route
 - Relax in natural **hot springs**
 - Observe **local wildlife**: flamingos, vicuñas and vizcachas
- Insider Tip
- Try the **llama anticuchos** (meat skewers) or empanadas (filled dumplings)

Trip Info:

Length of the journey: 5 days
Season: from January to December
Start/End of journey: from / to Calama
Group Size: min. 1 person
Departures: individual on request (excursions in international mixed groups)

What's included:

- Accommodation: 4 nights in a hotel in double room with private bathroom (HOTEL LA CASA DE DON TOMAS or similar)
- Meals: 4 x breakfast
- Local bilingual english/spanish speaking guide
- All transfers and excursions in international mixed groups as per detailed itinerary
- Transfer to and from Airport Calama
- Fees: Entry fee to Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley, day 1)

What's excluded:

- Entry fees/admission to all National Parks as well as to the Lagoons (appr. USD 60 p.p.)
- Not appointed meals and beverages
- Optional trips
- Tips/gratuity, local payments
- International and domestic airfare and airport charges
- Travel insurance is not included in this tour. Travel insurance is mandatory and must be purchased prior to the start of the trip.

Itinerary:

Day 1: San Pedro de Atacama – Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley)

After your arrival at the airport in Calama we will directly take you to San Pedro de Atacama (transfer without a guide). On an elevation of 2,400m (7,874 ft), the little town that has never lost a certain hippie-flair welcomes you with a variety of restaurants and bars.

From here, you will take short hikes into the bizarre desert world, visiting its famous rock formations: the Tres Marías, the Cañón and the Amphitheater. Together, you will wait for the sun to set in Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley). The sunsets play of colors is absolutely breathtaking. Excursion of approx. 4.5 hours (pick up from the hotel around 3:00 p.m. / return around 7:30 p.m.).

Overnight: Hotel in double room with private bathroom (HOTEL LA CASA DE DON TOMAS or similar). (-/-/-)

Day 2: Thermal Springs of Purilibre o Puripobre – Hidden lagoons of Baltinache

Today, your tour will lead you through the spectacularly rocky Guatin-Canyon (Quebrada de Guatin, altitude between 2,500 and 3,000 meters). You start an hour uphill trek, walking through a canyon with giant cactuses. Here you can marvel at the region's typical flora. Although the Atacama desert is extremely droughty, it brings out all sorts of cactuses among which you will certainly find the eye-catching Cola de Zorro.

Please note: in order to guarantee this hike they need a minimum group size of 4 people (international mixed group).

Afterwards you will take a replenishing bath in the thermal springs of Puripobre, the volcanic groundwater natural hot springs in the Puritama River. After having a good moment and relaxing in the thermal baths, you will return to San Pedro de Atacama. Excursion of approx. 4.5 hours (pick up from the hotel around 8:30 a.m. / return around 1:00 p.m.).

In the afternoon, you will start leaving San Pedro de Atacama towards the southeast to reach the entry of the Baltinache hidden lagoons. You will follow the trail that will take you to the seven lagoons which form this wonderful landscape. The last one can be used for bathing while admiring the color variation of the desert landscape. Due to the amount of salt that the lagoon contains, you will experience the flotation effect like in the Dead Sea. On the way back, you will see the sunset in the desert, before arriving to San Pedro downtown. Excursion of approx. 5.5 - 6 hours (pick up from the hotel around 1:30 p.m. / return around 7:30 p.m.). Overnight stay in the same hotel. (B/-/-)

Day 3: Ruta de los Salares – Tour trough the Salt Flats Route

This tour will take you to the east of San Pedro de Atacama, towards the Andes Mountain Range. Your first stops will be the Licancabur Volcano lookout and the wetland of the Quepiaco River, where you will admire the contrast between vegetation and mountain range.

After that, you will go to visit the monjes de la Pacana (Pacana Monks), big stone pillars that rise up lonely in the middle of the desert. Afterwards, you will visit the Quisquiro Salt Flat, which is at more than 4,000 m (13,123 ft.) of altitude. Here you will have time to rest and enjoy the surroundings. Finally, on your way back to San Pedro de Atacama, you will pass by the Aguas Calientes Salt Flat, known for its coloured waters.

Excursion of approx. 6.5 hours (pick up from the hotel house around 8:00 a.m. / return around 2:30 p.m.). Overnight stay in the same hotel. (B/-/-)

Day 4: Tatio Geysers – Salt Lake Salar de Atacama: „Cejar“ and „Piedra“ Lagoons – „Ojos del Salar“

You will leave San Pedro de Atacama early in the morning and set off towards the Altiplano, going up the hills and mountains of the Andes. You will arrive at El Tatio Geysers after an hour and a half to find a one-of-a-kind natural sight in the world, with 80 steaming geysers at an altitude of 4,200 – 4,320 meters (13,780 ft.). With this natural scenery, you will enjoy a breakfast and then explore the geothermal camp. The geysers roaring vapor-columns spread like ghostly wafts of mist over the thermal springs. On the way back to San Pedro de Atacama, you will stop at the Putana River to observe the native flora and fauna of the area. Excursion of approx. 7 - 7.5 hours (pick up from the hotel around 4:30 a.m. / return around 12:00 a.m.).

An excursion in the afternoon takes you to the Salar de Atacama (salt lake), Chile's largest salt flat, to the famous turquoise colored Cejar Lagoon and Piedra Lagoon with their white salty rims. In the Piedra Lagoon, you will enjoy swimming with a flotation effect similar to the one in the Dead Sea. Before you head back to San Pedro you will visit "Ojos del Salar" - two deep freshwater wells in the middle of the desert - and Laguna Tebinquinche. Meanwhile, the evening sun will have dipped the surrounding volcanoes into a bath of purple light. Excursion of approx. 5.5 – 6 hours (pick up from the hotel around 1:30 p.m. / return around 7:30 p.m.). Overnight stay in the same hotel. (B/-/-)

Day 5: Calama

Transfer to the airport in Calama (without a guide). (B/-/-)

Difficulty:

Day tours that will challenge you moderately. Differences in elevation (day tours at altitudes of 2,400 to 4,300 meters) but also in temperature will be the most challenging part. Higher elevations should not create problems for you.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.