



CHILE – ALTIPLANO & ATACAMA DESERT – TREKKING ADVENTURE

13 days Trekking Tour through the Highlands of the Andes and the Atacama Desert

The Altiplano highlands and the Atacama Desert in Northern Chile rank among the most adventurous trekking destinations for hiking fans on the South American continent. Impressive volcanoes - most of them 6,000 m (19,685 ft) high, glistening salt lakes, colorful lagoons, steaming geysers and the driest desert on this planet define the Altiplano highlands and make them unique.

Join us on this unforgettable trekking trip and experience the most interesting contrasts between the barren and dry Atacama Desert & the lush green Azapa- and Lluta-Valleys.

Immerse into the world of the Aymara-Indigenous and follow the historical Ruta de La Plata (silver route). From a technical point of view, climbing the 5,000 m (16,400 ft) selected summits does not really create difficulties.

Trip Highlights:

- Admire the world's highest volcano lake, the Lago Chungará (4,570 m/15,000 ft) in the Lauca National Park and then enjoy a typical Andean dish, llaita (seaweed) with goat cheese and potatoes
- Visit the salt lake "Salar de Surire", observe flamencos and vizcachas and relax in the natural Polloquere hot springs
- Climb the volcanoes Guane Guane (5,097 m/16,720 ft) & Cerro Toco (5,604 m/18,385 ft) in the middle of the Andean high desert
- Experience the sunrise at the hissing and steaming Geyser El Tatio and enjoy the sunset in the colorful Valle de la Luna (Moon valley)
- Visit the former saltpeter mine Humberstone and explore the desert oasis San Pedro de Atacama

Insider Tip:

- Stroll to the harbor, watch pelicans and sealions and try fresh ceviche, a tasty raw fish dish, in one of Arica's tiny harbor restaurants

Length of the trip:	13 days
Start / End of the trip:	from Arica / to Calama
Group Size:	min. 6 – max. 8 people
Departures:	see set departures on our website
Trip Style:	trekking, volcano climbing & culinary experiences
Best Season:	from March to October

What's included:

- Accommodation in Arica, Putre, Pica, San Pedro de Atacama: 10 nights in hotel or guesthouse in double room with private bathroom
- Accommodation in Parinacota, Guallatiri: 2 nights in mountain lodges (Refugios) in shared bedrooms and shared bathrooms
- Guide: Local English / Spanish speaking certified trekking guide (WFR)
- Meals: 12 x breakfast, 2 x box lunch, 2 x dinner
- Transport: all private transfers as per the detailed itinerary
- Airport transfer in/out
- Entry fees and permits: All entry fees as per the detailed itinerary and climbing permits for the ascents of 5,000 m / 16,400 ft mountains
- Emergency equipment: including a first-aid kit, VHF-equipment and satellite phone

What's excluded:

- International and domestic airfare and airport charges
- Meals and beverages not indicated on the itinerary
- Optional trips, e.g. boat ride on day 2
- Tips, local payments
- Travel insurance is not included in this tour. Travel insurance is mandatory to buy.



Trip Notes:

Multi-day trekking trips, sometimes in high altitudes, for experienced trekkers who are willing to spend time in remote regions without infrastructure and contact to the outer civilization. Team spirit, tolerance and compromise are significant requirements to ensure a successful trip.

Itinerary:

Day 1 – Welcome to Arica

Upon arrival at the airport of Arica, we pick you up and bring you to your hotel. Take some time to refresh and relax or stroll through the little seaport to see the numerous pelicans and sea lions. Later on, you meet with the group for a first briefing with your local team. Overnight: Hotel "**Antay Hotel & Spa**" in Arica in double room with private bathroom. (-)

Day 2 – Seaport Arica

In the morning you walk with your guide up to "El Morro" lookout and to the "San Marcos Cathedral", designed in France by Gustave Eiffel. In the afternoon you can go for an optional boat ride along the Pacific coast, where you will be able to observe a variety of marine fauna such as pelicans, sea gulls or even sea lions and dolphins. Overnight: Hotel "**Antay Hotel & Spa**" in Arica in double room with private bathroom. (B/-/-)

Day 3 – 7,000 years old Chinchorro mummies – Andes Village Putre

Today, you travel through the Azapa-Valley to visit the Azapa Museum in San Miguel. Here you can admire mummies and relics of the Chinchorro culture that are more than 7,000 years old. Later, head for the idyllically situated Andes-village Putre at an elevation of 3,500 m (11,480 ft). On your way to Putre you stop at the viewpoint "Pucara de Copaquilla". Overnight: Hotel „**Terrace Lodge**“ (or similar) in Putre in double room with private bathroom at an elevation of 3,500 m (11,480 ft). (B/-/-)

Day 4 – Trekking tour to acclimate

Your hike today will show you Putre's surrounding area: the breathtaking landscape and Vilacaurani's "Pinturas Rupestres" (rock paintings). See alpacas and llamas and get to know the typical flora of this region. In the evening you can taste alpaca meat and quinoa at a typical local restaurant. Appr. walking time: 5-6 hours, elevation gain of approx. 400 m (1,310 ft) ascent and descent. Overnight: Hotel „**Terrace Lodge**“ (or similar) in Putre in double room with private bathroom. (B/-/-)

Day 5 – Trekking tour to acclimate on a smuggler trail

After breakfast, a short transfer will bring you close to the Nevados de Putre mountains, on an elevation of 4,200 m (13,780 ft). You will hike back to Putre on a very old path which was used in the past by smugglers. After this trek through the breathtaking Altiplano scenery you deserve some time to relax. Appr. walking time: 4 hours, elevation gain of approx. 700 m (2,300 ft) descent. Overnight: Hotel „**Terrace Lodge**“ (or similar) in Putre in double room with private bathroom. (B/-/-)

Day 6 – Suri Plaza & Mars Valley – Cosapilla mountain ridge (5,100 m / 16,730 ft) – Lago Chungará

After breakfast, you head up to one of the Altiplano's best kept secret, to Suri Plaza. After an hour and a half drive you arrive at the "Mars Valley" - so called because of the deep reddish and orange sand and mountains around there. On this trekking tour you will hike up to an amazing viewpoint on the Cosapilla mountain ridge (5,100 m / 16,730 ft). From there you will gain an unforgettable view over the vast Suri Plaza mountains and from a distance you can also see the "Payachatas", the Twin-Volcanos. A very emotional moment which leaves you speechless! After this hike you will drive to the picturesque village Parinacota at an elevation of 4,390 m (14,400 ft), well known for the little church. Appr. walking time: 2-3 hours, elevation gain of approx. 250 m (820 ft) ascent and descent. In the afternoon you will drive through the Lauca National Park, UNESCO biosphere preserve that was founded in 1970. Passing the highest volcano-lake on earth – Lago Chungará (4,570 m / 15,000 ft), reflecting the two twin-volcanoes Parinacota (6,342 m / 20,810 ft) and Pomperape (6,282 m / 20,610 ft) magically on its water's surface.

Afterwards, you drive back to Pure. A delicious dinner will strengthen you for tomorrow's climb.

Overnight: Overnight: Hotel „**Terrace Lodge**“ (or similar) in Putre in double room with private bathroom. (B/-/D)

Day 7 – Summit Cerro Guane Guane (5,097 m / 16,720 ft) – Andes Villages Parinacota & Guallatiri

Get up early in the morning and start your trekking trip to the top of Cerro Guane Guane (5,097 m / 16,720 ft). The incredible view from the summit onto the vast Altiplano with its olive-colored peatlands (Bofedales) and salty-



white rimmed lagoons will reward you splendidly for the long way up. In good weather, you can even see Bolivia's highest peak - the Sajama (6,520 m / 21,390 ft). You can find archaeological remains of the Aymara culture around the summit, proof of religious ceremonies dating back hundreds of years. Appr. walking time: 4 hours ascent and 2 hours descent, elevation gain of approx. 700 m (2,300 ft) ascent and descent. In the afternoon, drive to the picturesque village Guallatiri at an elevation of 4,280 m (14,040 ft). Overnight: in the **Refugio** Guallatiri (or nearby) in shared bedrooms and shared bathrooms at an elevation of 4,280 m / 14,040 ft. (B/BL/D)

Day 8 – Salar de Surire – Pampa de Tamarugal – Oasis Pica

Today you drive to the Salar de Surire. The Salar (salt lake) is part of the Nature Preserve Las Vicunas. Las Vicunas is not just superbly located – it presents an absolutely rich wildlife: vicunas, lamas, alpacas, ñandus and flamingos call this paradise home. The thermal springs of Polloquere (elevation 4,200 m / 13,780 ft) will invite you for a relaxing bath.

In the afternoon you leave the Chilean Andes Highlands. The road trip takes you through the highly diversified landscape with its unique fauna so that the drive will offer you an unforgettable natural spectacle. Along the way, marvel at one of the largest archaeological representations of a human being, the Atacama Giant, and visit the famous church of the pilgrimage site of La Tirana. You will then reach the oasis Pica, famous for its limes. This cozy little village offers the ideal spots to relax from the long transfer: The soothing natural springs called “cochas” will invite you. Overnight: Hotel in Pica (or nearby; „**El Huarango - Eco Retreat**“) in double room with private bathroom at an elevation of 1,100 m (3,600 ft). (B/BL/-)

Day 9 – Former saltpeter mine Humberstone – San Pedro de Atacama – Sunset Moon Valley

In the morning you visit the former saltpeter mine Humberstone. Afterwards you drive through the amazing Pampa del Tamarugal, passing former saltpeter mines and salt pans. In the late afternoon you will reach San Pedro de Atacama. On an elevation of 2,400 m (7,870 ft), the little town that has never lost a certain hippie-flair welcomes you with a variety of restaurants and bars. Relaxing from the long transfer day, enjoy the sunset in Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley). The sunsets play of colors is absolutely breathtaking.

Overnight: Hotel „**La Casa de Don Tomas**“ (or similar) in San Pedro de Atacama in double room with private bathroom. (B/-/-)

Day 10 – Valle de la Muerte & de la Luna – Salar de Atacama / Chaxa Lagoon

Today, hike through the sparkling and twinkling Cordillera del Sal (Salt Cordillera) to the Valle de la Muerte (Death Valley) and the Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley, elevation 2,600 m / 8,530 ft).

After a lunch break in San Pedro de Atacama you spend the afternoon at the Chaxa Lagoon, an extraordinary pool of water in the middle of the salt desert and observe the many different flamingo species that call this desert zone home. The sunset will give the scene surrounded by volcanoes a purple glow when you head back to San Pedro de Atacama. Walking time: approx. 3 hours. Overnight: Hotel „**La Casa de Don Tomas**“ (or similar) in San Pedro de Atacama. (B/-/-)

Day 11 – Ascent of the extinct Volcano Cerro Toco (5,604 m / 18,385 ft)

Today, climb the extinct Volcano Cerro Toco (5,604 m / 18,385 ft). From its top, you have a stunning panoramic view on the bizarre desert world surrounding the summit. Elevation gain of approx. 400 m (1,310 ft)

ascent/descent; walking time approx. 4 hours. Overnight: Hotel „**La Casa de Don Tomas**“ (or similar) in San Pedro de Atacama. (B/-/-)

Day 12 – Geyser “El Tatio” – Guatin-Canyon

Early in the morning, you visit the Geyser “El Tatio”, at an elevation of 4,330 m (14,200 ft). To experience the sunrise there is simply fantastic: the scenery with its hissing geysers dipped in all shades of red will leave you speechless. Afterwards a short hike will lead you through the Guatin-Canyon (Quebrada de Guatin) where you get to know the typical flora of the usually absolutely dry Atacama Desert. You will find all kinds of cactuses, among them the flamboyant Cola de Zorro. Then it's back to the desert oasis of San Pedro de Atacama.

In the afternoon, you have some time on your own for optional excursions (e.g. horseback riding, sand boarding or bathing in Laguna Cejar) or to relax.

Overnight: „**La Casa de Don Tomas**“ (or similar) in San Pedro de Atacama. (B/-/-)

Day 13 – Airport drop-off

Private Transfer to the Airport of Calama. (B/-/-)



Gear list “Altiplano & Atacama – Trekking Adventure”:

Official Papers

- Valid passport
- Airline tickets

Luggage

- Duffel bag - extra-large for all the rest of your luggage, which you do not need on trekking days
- Backpack (appr. 35 liter – 8kg / 17 lbs) for the treks
- Rain cover for your backpack
- Passport pouch or money belt

Footwear

- Sturdy hiking boots, waterproof, lightweight, broken in, aggressive tread - over ankle
- Sandals or flip-flops
- Second pair of light shoes like sneakers

Clothing

- Bring a few lightweight, easily washable items for travel and evening wear during nights spent in hotels or refugios
- Windstopper – fleece jacket - sweater
- Hiking pants, lightweight, synthetic and loose-fitting – quick dry
- Hiking shorts, lightweight and synthetic
- Shirts (long sleeve)
- T-Shirts, synthetic or merino wool
- Underwear, Merino wool or synthetic or similar
- Hiking socks, blister-free
- Light down jacket
- Rain jacket, waterproof and breathable (Goretex, Sympatex etc.)

Clothing Accessories

- Sun hat
- Hat (warm) - Beanie
- Bandana – Scarf
- Gloves – Fleece

Travel Accessories

- Water bottle – minimum 1,5 liter
- Headlamp or Meg lite
- Sunglasses and retainer strap
- Sun blocker + 30 and lip balm
- Toiletry kit
- Towel
- Hand sanitizer gel
- Personal prescription medication
- Insect repellent / Mosquito repellent
- Watch with alarm or travel clock
- Trekking poles
- Sleeping bag for the night in the Refugio (comfort range plus 5 degrees / rated to approx. 40° Fahrenheit)

Optional equipment

- Camera, memory cards and batteries
- Small binoculars for bird watching
- Thermos
- Spare contact lenses or glasses
- Ear plugs
- Several Ziploc plastic bags

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