

Patagonia Best Hikes self-guided hiking tour

13 days Patagonia self-guided hiking tour for independent travellers

Explore the most beautiful national parks in Patagonia on self-guided day hikes and immerse yourself in a world of granite rocks and eternal ice. Hike one of the most famous multi-day hikes in Patagonia, the Torres del Paine W - Hike. Admire the famous Grey Glacier and take a boat trip to the deep blue Perito Moreno Glacier. Learn more about this impressive ice field of the southern hemisphere. Hike on your own to the rocky peaks of the mystical Cerro Torre and the legendary Monte Fitz Roy. Explore the glacier capital of El Calafate and the picturesque mountain village of El Chaltén. Experience some of the cultural highlights and enjoy the delicious Chilean and Argentinian cuisine and wines.

Trip Highlights

- Hike **independent on your own** one of the most famous hiking tours in Patagonia, the **Torres del Paine W-Hike**, and immerse yourself in a world of granite and ice
- **Overnight in spectacular campsites** surrounded by superb mountain scenery
- Admire the Torres del Paine granite towers, French valley and **Grey Glacier**
- Get the **best panoramic view** from Loma del Pliegue Tumbado lookout
- Hike self-guided the classic **Cerro Torre and Monte Fitz Roy treks**
- Visit the perpetual ice of the **Perito Moreno Glacier** and take a boat trip across the Lago Argentino
- Look out for condors, magellan woodpeckers and a wealth of other bird and animal life
- Discover the picturesque fishing village Puerto Natales and the **capital of the glaciers El Calafate**

Insider Tip

- Guided **ice hike** on the glistening blue Grey Glacier

Trip Info

Trip length: 13 days

Start/End of the trip: from Puerto Natales / to El Calafate

Group Size: min. 1 person

Departure on request: Depending on the availabilities, you can choose your own private departure

Trip Style: hiking, nature & photography

Best Season: from November to March

What's included from Puerto Natales / to El Calafate

- Accommodation in Torres del Paine National Park: 4 nights in 2-person-tents, fully equipped with sleeping bag and camping mat
- Accommodation in the cities: 8 nights in hotels in double room with private bathroom
- Meals: 12 x breakfast, 7 x box lunch, 4 x dinner
- Transport: all public and private transfers as per the detailed itinerary
- Panoramic boat rides: across the Pehoe Lake & the Argentino Lake
- Local English and Spanish speaking certified guide during Excursion to Perito Moreno Glacier
- Entry Fees/Admission: to the Torres del Paine National Park and to Los Glaciares National Park

What's excluded

- Meals and beverages not indicated on the itinerary
- International and domestic airfare and airport charges
- Trekking guide or porter
- Local payments, tips
- Travel insurance is not included in this tour. Travel insurance is mandatory and must be purchased prior to the start of the trip.

Optionally bookable for an extra charge

- Optional excursions: 3-hour kayak tour Lago Grey (230 USD per person) or 4-hour glacier hike Grey (310 USD p.p.) on the afternoon of day 4 or morning of day 5
- Optional boat trip along the Grey Glacier with private transfer to Puerto Natales
- Overnight stay in refugios in shared rooms with shared bathroom (instead of tent), if available

- Single tent supplement: 4 nights in a single tent and 8 nights in single room - surcharge p.p. USD 590.-
- Airport transfers in & out

Itinerary

Important note: The itinerary described in the program is a planned itinerary or a guide. Changes or deviations of individual travel services from the contractually agreed content of the travel contract, which become necessary after conclusion of the contract and which were not brought about by MOSER Active against good faith, are permitted, provided that these are not significant and do not affect the overall design of the booked trip. MOSER Active will endeavor to offer an equivalent replacement. Additional costs that may arise due to changes to the tour itinerary are to be borne by the participant on site and will not be reimbursed by MOSER Active.

We will send you the detailed day-by-day-description, all tickets, information and vouchers for your self-guided trip approx. 4 weeks before the start of your trip.

Day 1 – Arrival in Puerto Natales

Upon arrival at hotel or guesthouse in Puerto Natales, you will have time to explore this little town on your own. In good weather, the first impressive panorama of the Paine Massif and Monte Balmaceda can be seen from here. In the evening you will meet with one of our team for a briefing about the next days. You spend the first night in a hotel or guesthouse in Puerto Natales in double room with private bathroom. (-/-/-)

Day 2 – Transfer to Torres del Paine National Park – Self-guided trek to Torres del Paine Granit Needles

Please remember to take your original passport and your original “tarjeta de turismo” with you to the Torres del Paine National Park for the check-ins at the campsites. You will receive the “tarjeta de turismo” from the PDI, Policía de Investigaciones, when you enter Chile.

In the morning you take a regular bus to the Torres del Paine National Park and will see some of the native wildlife of this fantastic region like Guanacos and Ñandus (departure at 07:00 a.m., driving time approx. 2 hours, distance approx. 130 km).

Upon arrival in the park, your first self-guided hike leads you to the famous 'Torres' granite needles. At first you hike up to the Ascencio Valley where you take a break at the Refugio Chileno next to the Ascencio River. After 2+ hours and a tough ascent, you are rewarded for your efforts: You will stand in front of the impressive Needles with a green lagoon lying at your feet. Altitude Las Torres Lookout: 900m. Return to Camp Torre Central (or Chileno).

Appr. walking time: 8 hours, walking distance: 21 km (13 miles), elevation gain of approx. 950 m (3,116 ft) ascent and 950 m (3,116 ft) descent.

You spend the night at **Campsite Central (alternatively at Camp Chileno)** in 2-person-tent, fully equipped with sleeping bags and camping mats. The campsite is equipped with toilets, hot showers and a refugio. Dinner and breakfast are served in the Refugio, which is located near the campsite. Meals included: breakfast, dinner.

Day 3 – Self-guided hike along Nordenskjöld Lake

Today, you hike on your own along Lago Nordenskjöld and the gigantic Monte Almirante Nieto to the wonderful campsite Cuernos, close to the lake and the “Cuernos” or “the Horns”. Near the camp you will have a picturesque view on the Paine Grande massif. There will be enough time to enjoy this inviting campsite while sitting together and sharing your one-time impressions. Appr. walking time: 4-5 hours, walking distance: 11,5 km (7,1 miles), elevation gain of approx. 350 m (1,150 ft) ascent and 350 m (1,150 ft) descent.

Overnight: **Campsite Cuernos (or Frances)** in 2-person-tent, fully equipped with sleeping bags and camping mats. The campsite is equipped with toilets, hot showers and a refugio. Dinner and breakfast are served in the Refugio, which is located near the campsite. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch / dinner.

Alternative itinerary (if the campsites Cuernos and Frances are fully booked):

Today you go on a half day hike along Nordenskjöld Lake with its colorful waters. Passing Monte Almirante Nieto (2,640 m), you can probably watch condors circling in the sky. Appr. walking time: 4 hours, walking distance: 10 km (6 miles).

In the afternoon you continue your journey in a public transfer to “Pudeto sector” (approx. one hour panoramic trip). Afterwards, you cross the beautiful Pehoe Lake with a catamaran (approx. 30 min). The Lodge / Camp Paine Grande will be your "base camp" for the next two days.

Overnight: **Campsite Paine Grande** in 2-person-tent, fully equipped with sleeping bags and camping mats. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch / dinner.

Day 4 – Self-guided trek to the French Valley

Today you will hike up to the camp Italiano. From there you walk further up until you reach a superb viewpoint of the Valley Frances. You will see the impressive “Circuito de Granito” which looks like a colosseum. Afterwards you descent to the next campsite near the emerald green Lago Pehoe. Appr. walking time: 6-7 hours, walking distance: 17 km (10,5 miles), elevation gain of approx. 600 m (1,970 ft) ascent and 600 m (1,970 ft) descent.

Overnight: **Campsite Paine Grande** in 2-person-tent, fully equipped with sleeping bags and camping mats. The campsite is equipped with toilets, hot showers and a refugio. Dinner and breakfast are served in the Refugio, which is located near the campsite. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch / dinner.

Day 5 – Self-guided trek to Camp Grey- Optional Kayak-tour or Ice hike

In the morning you continue on your own to the “Camino de los Vientos” until you reach a nice viewpoint from where you can admire a striking view over the Glacier Grey. Afterwards, you scale down along the impressive Grey Lake to your next camp. Appr. walking time: 5 hours, walking distance: 12 km (7,5 miles), elevation gain of approx. 350 m (1,150 ft) ascent and 350 m (1,150 ft) descent.

The afternoon is free to relax, for example to hike to a bay of Lake Grey, which is often framed by blocks of ice that thunder from the front of the Grey Glacier into the lake. If you would like to go on a longer afternoon hike, you can hike up to the suspension bridge at the “Los Guardas” viewpoint, from where you have a fantastic view of the Grey Glacier.

However, you also have the option of taking an optional 3 hours kayak excursion on the Grey Lake along the icebergs of the Grey Glacier or an optional 4-5 hours ice hike on Glacier Grey (extra costs; advance booking highly recommended; excursion may be canceled due to weather conditions). The age limit for these excursions is 65 years.

Overnight: **Campsite Grey** in 2-person-tent, fully equipped with sleeping bags and camping mats. The campsite is equipped with toilets, hot showers and a refugio. Dinner and breakfast are served in the Refugio, which is located near the campsite. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch / dinner.

Day 6 – Self-guided hike to Camp Paine Grande - Catamaran across Lake Pehoe - Puerto Natales

This morning you have more time for optional excursions around Camp Grey.

In the afternoon, your self-guided hike will take you past Laguna Los Patos along the “Path of the Winds” back to Camp / Lodge Paine Grande, which is beautifully situated on the turquoise-colored Lago Pehoe. Appr. walking time: 5 hours, walking distance: 12 km (7,5 miles), elevation gain of approx. 350 m (1,150 ft) ascent and 350 m (1,150 ft) descent.

You then cross Lake Pehoe by catamaran in the early evening (journey time approx. 30 min.). The public bus takes you back to Puerto Natales in the evening (journey time approx. 2 hours, **arrival in Puerto Natales around 10 pm at the latest**).

You spend the night in a hotel or guesthouse in Puerto Natales in double room with private bathroom.

Meals included: breakfast / box lunch.

Alternative itinerary

Instead of hiking from Camp Grey back to Camp Paine Grande, there is the option of taking the “Grey III Catamaran” from Camp Grey, passing along the wall of the icy glacier and crossing the beautiful Grey Lake to the south shore, from where a private transfer will take you back to Puerto Natales (this option must be booked in advance and is subject to additional costs).

Day 7 – By regular bus from Puerto Natales to El Calafate

In the morning: Transfer with a regular bus through the wind shaped Pampa to El Calafate in Argentina (departure 08:00 a.m., driving time including border formalities approx. 5-6 hours, driving distance approx. 270 km). In the afternoon you have time for shopping or for trying one of the famous Argentine steaks. The bird sanctuary “Laguna Nimez” on Lago Argentino also invites you to visit. Overnight: Hotel in El Calafate in double room with private bathroom. Meals included: breakfast.

Day 8 – By regular bus from El Calafate to mountain village of El Chaltén

Today you are heading to El Chaltén with a regular bus (departure 08:00 a.m., driving time approx. 3 hours, driving distance approx. 215 km), taking a break at the Estancia La Leona. El Chaltén is a lovely village in the mountains that will be your starting point for the next days. In the afternoon you have some time to discover this idyllic place on our own or to do a short hike to the waterfall “Chorillo del Salto”. Overnight: Hotel in El Chaltén in double room with private bathroom. Meals included: breakfast.

Day 9 – Self-guided hike to Laguna Torre - Cerro Torre lookout

Today, a 6-hours self-guided walk leads you to Laguna Torre where you have a great view to the Cerro Torre (3,102m / 10,180 ft) with its glaciers. Later on, you take a break at the Agostini Camp that is the base camp for all Cerro Torre mountaineers. Appr. walking time: 6 hours, walking distance: 18 km (11 miles), elevation gain of approx. 250 m (820 ft) ascent and 250 m (820 ft) descent. Overnight: Hotel in El Chaltén in double room with private bathroom. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch.

Day 10 – Self-guided hike to Laguna de los tres - Monte Fitz Roy lookout

At 08:00 a.m., an approx. 30-40 minute panoramic drive (in a shared transfer) takes you to the starting point of the next hike.

Today you hike on your own to Laguna de los Tres and the viewpoint of Laguna Sucia. You also pass the Base Camp Rio Blanco that serves all Fitz Roy Mountaineers. Your efforts will be rewarded with an unforgettable view on the Monte Fitz Roy (3,406 m / 11,175 ft) and the surrounding mountains. Appr. walking time: 8 hours, walking distance: 24 km (14,9 miles), elevation gain of approx. 750 m (2,460 ft) ascent and 750 m (2,460 ft) descent. Overnight: Hotel in El Chaltén in double room with private bathroom. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch.

Day 11 – Self-guided hike to Loma del Pliegue Tumbado lookout – Back to El Calafate

Today you can go on a full day hike to "Loma del Pliegue Tumbado" (highly recommended in good weather) or you can choose an optional half day or full day excursion to the lake "Lago del Desierto". Or you have some time to discover this pristine place on your own and go on short hikes to the viewpoints "Condorez & Aguilas".

In the evening you get back to El Calafate with the regular bus (departure 06:00 p.m., driving time approx. 3 hours, driving distance approx. 215 km). Overnight: Hotel in El Calafate in double room with private bathroom. Meals included: breakfast / box lunch.

Day 12 – Guided Full day Glacier Perito Moreno – Boat ride Argentino Lake -

Today, you participate in a full day guided and shared excursion to the incomparable Perito Moreno Glacier in the Los Glaciers National Park that is part of the Southern Patagonian Ice Field. If you are lucky you will witness the glacier calving. Altitude Perito Moreno Glacier Lookout: 200m. Furthermore, you take a boat ride over the Argentino Lake along the imposing ice walls of the glacier (appr. 1 hour). Overnight: Hotel in El Calafate in double room with private bathroom. Meals included: breakfast.

Day 13 – Goodbye El Calafate

After breakfast, you will continue your individual journey. Meals included: breakfast.

What does "self guided" mean?

This multi-day trekking tour is suitable for experienced and independent hikers who like to hike on their own and at their own pace. You love the physical challenge and have no problem finding your own way along the marked hiking trails without a guide. In the event of illness or injury during the trek, you can easily take care of yourself.

Notes for the Torres del Paine W Hike:

- A very good physical fitness is a necessary requirement for this tour.
- Furthermore, you should be able to walk with your daypack (40 to 50 liter) up to 6-8 hours a day with some strenuous ascents and descents.
- Your personal items must be carried by you (rain gear, fleece or light down jacket, trekking poles, gloves, cap, camera, lunch and water for the day; in addition vanity bag, trekking towel, extra-set of clothes).
- You will spend the 4 nights in Torres del Paine National Park in roomy, high quality 2-person-expedition-tents (equipped with sleeping bags and sleeping mats).
- All campsites are equipped with toilets, showers and refugios (mountain huts/lodges). Breakfast and dinner are served in the dining rooms of the Refugios/mountain huts which are always close to the campsites.
- All the rest of your luggage, which you do not need on the Torres del Paine trek, will stay locked at your accommodation in Puerto Natales.

Notes for the Cerro Torre & Fitz Roy Treks:

- On the day hikes you need to carry just your own day-backpack.
- The following items and clothing are packed in the daypack: Rain jacket, rain pants, fleece or light down jacket, gloves, beanie, trekking poles, camera, lunch, sun cream, sun hat and water for the day.
- The rest of your luggage, which you do not need during the day hikes, stays locked at your hotel room in El Chaltén.

Gear Checklist Patagonia Best hikes - self-guided

Official Papers

- Valid passport
- Airline tickets
- (Vaccination card)
- Cash (USD) / credit card and/or debit card

Luggage

- Duffel bag or travel bag or suitcase, big enough for the remaining luggage, which you do not need on the Torres del Paine trek (to be stored / locked at your accommodation in Puerto Natales)
- Backpack (40 – 50 liter) for the trek
- Rain cover for your backpack
- Luggage tags
- Passport pouch, wallet or money belt

Clothing

Bring a few lightweight, easily washable items - for using as layer clothing system "onion principle"

- Hiking pants, lightweight, synthetic and loose-fitting – quick dry
- Hiking shorts, lightweight and synthetic
- Shirts (long sleeve)
- T-Shirts, synthetic
- Polypropylen Underwear or similar
- Hiking socks, blister-free

- Windstopper-Fleecejacket - Sweater
- Light Down or synthetic Jacket
- Rain jacket, waterproof and breathable (Goretex, Sympatex etc.)
- Rain pants, waterproof and breathable, side-zip pants are highly recommended

Clothing Accessories

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

Footwear

- Sturdy hiking boots, waterproof, lightweight, broken in, aggressive tread - over ankle
- Sandals or flip-flop (thongs)

Travel Accessories

- Water bottle – 500ml-750ml (throughout the treks you can refill water appr every two hours in the little creeks)
- Headlamp or Meg lite
- Sunglasses and retainer strap
- Sun blocker + 20 and lip balm

- Toiletry kit
- Towel
- Hand sanitizer gel
- Personal prescription medication
- Insect repellent / Mosquito repellent
- Watch with alarm or travel clock
- **Trekking poles**

Optional equipment

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

Provided Gear by MOSER Active

- Tents: roomy, high quality 2-person expedition-tents, which you will find all set up when you arrive at each camp.
- The tents are equipped with sleeping bags and foam mats / sleeping mats.

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

MOSER ACTIVE Trekking Team