



WWF INSIDER JOURNEYS

Patagonia Wilderness and Wildlife Explorer



TRIP ITINERARY

Argentina & Chile with Gabby Ahmadi,
WWF Vice President, Marine Conservation Science

January 20–30, 2025

Flanked by lush coastline, snowcapped volcanoes, and Andean Mountain peaks, Patagonia is a diverse and remarkable place. The area encompasses large parts of southern Chile and Argentina, as well as their southern coastal areas and the Straits of Magellan. The southernmost Andes rise in spires to the sky, their sheer granite heights drawing the eye and spirit upward. Sunrise bathes the peaks in rosy alpenglow and glaciers fill turquoise lakes with floating blue bergs. Patagonia has few peers on Earth when it comes to dramatic mountain landscapes. On our cross-border expedition into Chile and Argentina, look for condors, guanacos, and elusive pumas on guided hikes. Puma sightings are on the increase, and we hope



to get a glimpse of them in Torres del Paine National Park.



During our journey, we'll mostly travel in the interior of the region along the eastern flank of the Andes Mountains, staying at properties unique to the area including a luxury camp with yurts and two Estancias (large guest ranches of southern Patagonian grasslands). Although the trip is primarily inland, you will also learn

how WWF is working alongside partners and the communities of southern Chile's coastal region to create a network of protected areas. Some of these efforts include protecting native coastal forests and collaborating with salmon farmers to put in place environmental and social standards that minimize the impacts of salmon farming and support economic growth opportunities for local people.

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE 11 Days

Day	Date	Location	Accommodation
1	January 20	El Calafate, Argentina	Hotel Kosten Aike
2	January 21	Boat Cruise on Lago Argentino	Estancia Cristina
3	January 22	Estancia Cristina / Upsala Glacier / El Calafate	Hotel Kosten Aike
4	January 23	Los Glaciares National Park—Private Cruise to Perito Moreno Glacier	Hotel Kosten Aike
5	January 24	Estancia Cerro Guido, Chile—Conservation & Gaucho Traditions	Estancia Cerro Guido
6-7	January 25 & 26	Cerro Guido Conservation Safari—Puma Tracking	Estancia Cerro Guido
8	January 27	Torres del Paine National Park	Patagonia Camp
9-10	January 28 & 29	Exploring Torres del Paine	Patagonia Camp
11	January 30	Punta Arenas / Depart	

ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1, January 20: El Calafate, Argentina

Our Patagonia journey begins in Argentina's adventure capital of El Calafate, where we meet our Expedition Leader and traveling companions at a welcome dinner. On the edge of the Southern Patagonia Ice Field, El Calafate was originally a hub for wool traders in the early 20th century. It became an important tourism base when Los Glaciares National Park was created in 1937 and remains so today.

Overnight Hotel Kosten Aike (D)



Day 2, January 21: Boat Cruise on Lago Argentino / Estancia Cristina

Board a catamaran this morning to explore Lago Argentino, the country's largest lake and the third largest in South America. Icebergs frequently litter its teal-blue surface, as the lake is fed by several glaciers that flow down from the 6,500-square-mile Southern Patagonian Ice Field, one of the most extensive non-polar glaciated areas in the world. Across the lake at the head of one of its fjord-like arms lies Estancia Cristina, where we disembark to spend the night. Surrounded by pristine nature and inaccessible by road, the setting offers a rare opportunity to experience the Patagonia wilderness in a truly remote location.



Established as a sheep farm in 1914, Estancia Cristina is contained within the bounds of Los Glaciares National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Once we check in to the lodge, we head out with our Expedition Leader on a hike. Don't forget to look up—Andean condors, with their 10-foot wingspans, are a common sight in the skies overhead. After lunch, explore further on foot or in the ranch's 4x4 vehicles that take us deeper into the Rio Caterina Valley and to viewpoints on high. On our private excursions, solitude reigns, and we feel very small against the scale of this vast terrain. After a day of adventuring, spend a peaceful night

in your private suite in one of the ranch's five casas, with broad valley and mountain views showcased through panoramic bay windows.

Overnight Estancia Cristina (B, L, D)

Day 3, January 22: Estancia Cristina / Upsala Glacier / El Calafate

A stunning vista is in store this morning as we drive in 4x4 vehicles to a dramatic lookout over the massive expanse of Upsala Glacier. Thirty-seven miles long and six miles wide, it is the largest glacier on the South American continent. This is the only land-based viewpoint over this enormous river of ice that terminates in Lago Argentino, and with our close access from Estancia Cristina, we are able to enjoy the view before other visitors arrive. As with most of the world's glaciers, Upsala has been in rapid retreat, and the tremendous amount of ice it is constantly calving makes it difficult to view its face up close from the water. We see it from the classic overlook, however, with a crush of blue icebergs along its edge. After one more private walking tour from the estancia, followed by lunch, we board the catamaran back to El Calafate to spend two more nights.



Overnight Hotel Kosten Aike (B, L, D)

Day 4, January 23: Los Glaciares National Park—Private Cruise to Perito Moreno Glacier

A private boat cruise on Lago Argentino takes us into another sector of Los Glaciares National Park where we come face to face with one of Patagonia's premier highlights: Perito Moreno Glacier. We disembark for a short hike along a secluded shoreline to arrive at a viewpoint overlooking the glacier. The most famous of the more than 50 outlet glaciers spilling from the Southern Patagonia Ice Field, Perito Moreno is one of very few advancing glaciers on the planet. Almost 200 feet high, it winds down from the perpetual snowfields of the Andes



to its terminus in the huge lake, calving icebergs into the turquoise water. Back aboard the boat, we get closer to the glacier's imposing blue face, more than three miles across. Stepping ashore again, we follow a maze of boardwalks offering varied vantage points on the glacier and icebergs drifting on the lake.

The glacier has been threatened by the risk of mega dams which

could prevent fish from moving between key feeding and spawning locations and wipe out some of the hooded grebe's most important remaining habitat. You will learn how WWF has been actively advocating for the protection of the Santa Cruz River. Beyond harming species, the dams could flood an area almost twice as big as the capital of Buenos Aires, destroy important archaeology sites, and negatively affect the Perito Moreno Glacier, one of the country's biggest tourist attractions.

Overnight Hotel Kosten Aike (B, L, D)

Day 5, January 24: Estancia Cerro Guido, Chile— Conservation & Gaucho Traditions

Depart El Calafate this morning and cross the border into Chile, driving south on a scenic route to Estancia Cerro Guido, where we spend three nights. On arrival, we check in to the lodge and gather for an orientation to this impressive conservation project. Established by European pioneers at the end of the 19th century, this is the largest cattle ranch in the history of Chilean Patagonia, still a working livestock and agricultural enterprise on nearly a quarter-million acres. Dedicated to conservation leadership, the ranch has sought to achieve coexistence between livestock and wildlife, demonstrating that both can flourish in harmony. Improving the condition of its grasslands has attracted native fauna, including grazing guanacos. Given its location on a biological corridor with Torres del Paine National Park,

wildlife on its vast expanse is abundant, and we frequently spot puma, gray fox, Andean condor and Darwin's rhea, a large flightless bird that is a relative of the ostrich and stands three feet tall.

Cattle and sheep are looked after by gauchos, the traditional Patagonia cowboys who roam the pastures on horseback, and we learn about their history and culture on a tour of the ranch today, which also showcases its conservation

achievements. Visit the stable, learn how sheep dogs work the herds, and see the organic gardens where produce is grown to supply the kitchen that provides our fresh farm-to-table meals. Tuck in at night into luxuriously appointed accommodations in restored 1920s cottages built by original English pioneers.

Overnight Estancia Cerro Guido (B, L, D)





Day 6 & 7, January 25-26: Cerro Guido Conservation Safari—Puma Tracking

The next two days hold exciting adventures as we learn in-depth about Cerro Guido's impressive conservation values, goals and achievements. On two all-day safaris, we participate in Cerro Guido's puma research project, launched in 2019. Each morning, rise early to head into the field with professional puma trackers dedicated full-time to studying pumas that live on the ranch. "Puma" is the name the Incas gave to this agile predator, which is also known as a cougar or mountain lion. Through observation with binoculars, review of camera traps, presentation of video material and informative talks, the research team shares their daily work with us, noting achievements and explaining challenges. We'll learn a great deal about Patagonia's most magnificent feline predator as well as the varied wildlife of the region and how to facilitate coexistence between livestock and these native dwellers in the wild. Along the way, we keep a close watch for pumas, with cameras ready for possible sightings, which are increasingly frequent.

Overnight Estancia Cerro Guido (B, L, D)

Day 8, January 27: Torres del Paine National Park / Patagonia Camp

Today we cross the steppe to reach Chile's famous Torres Del Paine National Park, stopping at overlooks to admire the staggering views and capture photos. A UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the park is home to a host of wildlife including puma, guanaco, fox, huemul (South Andean deer), and armadillo. An impressive array of birdlife is here, too: look for eagles, hawks, rheas, buzzards, owls, flamingos and South American condors back from the brink of extinction. Dominating the horizon are the famous Torres del Paine—the Towers of Paine—dark igneous rock spires millions of years old.



Notice how the ecosystem changes as our journey continues and we move from sprawling tawny steppe into rolling mountain foothills covered in native beech forest. Our destination is Patagonia Camp, a “rustic luxury” outpost on Lago el Toro surrounded by 84,000 acres of private land adjacent to the national park. This unique ecolodge is comprised of 20 spacious yurts tucked within the forest, with views of the lake from private decks. Comfortably spaced apart for seclusion, the deluxe yurts feature the appointments of a fine hotel. Common amenities include a large, shared lounge yurt, a dining room built of warm native wood with woven wool textiles, and expansive wooden terraces overlooking the lake and mountains beyond. This afternoon holds our first chance for an excursion into the wild nature surrounding us.

Overnight Patagonia Camp (B, L, D)



Days 9&10, January 28-29: Exploring Torres del Paine & Patagonia Camp

Our stay at Patagonia Camp offers a host of options and flexibility to tailor excursions around personal interests and Patagonia’s notorious wind-and-weather whims. We’ll have two Sprinter vans for our group’s private use, plus two local guides who will join our Expedition Leader, allowing us to split up according to varied activity preferences.

A range of walks and hikes offer opportunities to observe the Paine massif from different angles, with roaming guanacos, Andean condors and native flora in the foreground. Classic Magellanic subarctic forest species are on display here—lenga, ñire and coihue, a tall evergreen that can reach 140 feet. We may spy the Magellanic woodpecker and, if we’re lucky, the huemul, a rare Chilean deer that is a national symbol found on the coat of arms on Chile’s flag. Guests who want to tackle more challenging hikes to famous national park

destinations such as the French Valley, Base of the Towers, or Mirador Condor will have an opportunity to do so. Mellow hike options with rewarding views include Mirador Los Cuernos, a vista overlooking the famous outcrop of dark granite horn-like spires. There are also easy outings that depart directly from camp, including Los Azules lookout and Toro’s Waterfall. Those who prefer more independence can also choose self-guided walks from camp.



Lakes and waterfalls are highlights of Torres del Paine, with brilliant blue Lake Pehoe reflecting the serrated peaks like a mirror. We follow its shoreline to Salto Grande Falls, which thunders down from Lake Nordenskjold above. In the northern part of the park, the view from Laguna Azul offers a different angle on the imposing towers. We may also stop at Cascada del Rio Paine to admire this series of terraced waterfalls. As we explore, keep an eye out for wildlife. It's possible to spot pumas here, especially along the Sendero de La Fauna—the animals' trail—so named for the many guanacos that frequent the route. It winds through a favorite puma hunting ground where we may see remains of camelids that the tawny cats have preyed upon. High rock formations flank the path, providing dwellings and lookouts for these stealthy felines. While pumas are notoriously elusive, we have seen them quite regularly in recent seasons.



Overnight Patagonia Camp (B, L, D)

Day 11, January 30: Punta Arenas / Depart

Depart Patagonia Camp early this morning and drive approximately four hours south to Punta Arenas, the main airport in the southern part of Chilean Patagonia along the Straits of Magdelin. The unique ecosystems in Southern Chile are currently threatened by several human activities, including intensive salmon farming, unsustainable logging, residential and industrial coastal pollution, bycatch in some fisheries, increasing maritime traffic and other poorly regulated and/or uncontrolled industrial activities.

Departing flights should be scheduled no earlier than 2:30 pm.



Meet Our Expert



Gabby Ahmadia, WWF Vice President, Marine Conservation Science, Oceans

Dr. Gabby Ahmadia is a director of marine conservation science on the Ocean Conservation team at WWF where she provides programmatic and technical support on a range of marine issues. Currently, she is working with WWF-Chile to support local communities on expanding and strengthening coastal management of their marine resources. Gabby is interested in how we better design and implement conservation programs at the intersection of communities and coastal ecosystems (primarily coral reefs and mangroves). She has expertise in tropical marine ecology, community-based conservation, area-based management (i.e. LMMAs, MPAs), monitoring design and implementation, and impact evaluation of marine conservation interventions. Originally hailing from Hawaii, Gabby has a wealth of experience, ranging from monitoring and eradication programs for invasive plant species in Natural Area Reserve Systems in Hawaii to marine ecophysiology to developing rapid vulnerability and resilience assessments for coral reefs. She has worked for over 15 years on marine science and conservation issues across the Pacific Ocean and into the Coral Triangle, with a recent expansion into Coastal Africa. Gabby completed her PhD in Coastal and Marine Systems Science from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, investigating factors that structure coral reef fish assemblages.

What to Expect and Physical Requirements

This adventure is considered Easy to Moderate. This immersion in the spectacular scenery and wildlife of the Southern Andes includes a diverse range of activities, from short hikes to boat excursions and scenic drives. Weather is extremely variable in Patagonia, and travelers should be prepared to experience the possibility of high winds, intense sun, heavy rain and very cold temperatures. Most hikes are easy to moderate in terms of challenge and exertion, though all guests must be able to walk a minimum of 2 miles over hilly, uneven terrain that may cross wet or slippery surfaces. Elevations generally range between 500 and 2,000 feet above sea level. Since Patagonia encompasses such a large area, and we aim to see a broad sampler of its natural beauty, we will have one long driving day between Argentina and Chile, though most vehicle transfers between destinations will be relatively short, with stops along the way.

Accommodations



Hotel Kosten Aike

Located in the center of charming El Calafate, Hotel Kosten Aike takes its name from the words kosten (wind) and aike (place), a nod to the frequent fresh winds of Patagonia. But its name is not the hotel's only tribute to indigenous Tehuelche culture: it is filled with the work of Argentine artists who have incorporated ancestral Tehuelche designs into every element of the property, including bedspreads, curtains, covers, ironwork and paintings, all of which exhibit the Tehuelches' exacting geometry and visual symbology. Rooms have extra-long beds, a small table and chairs, work desk, cable TV, mini bar, safe deposit box and Wi-Fi. An upper-level gym and spa under the eaves offers views of Lago Argentino as you walk on the treadmill or soak in the Jacuzzi. A sauna and massage services are also available. A buffet breakfast is served in the Ariskaiken restaurant, while the cozy Aura bar offers coffee and cocktails. The lobby lounge, warmed with heavy timbers, hardwood floors and a stone fireplace, offers comfortable seating plus tables and chairs for socializing.



Estancia Cristina

Across the vast expanse of Lago Argentino, tucked at the head of one of its fjord-like arms, lies Estancia Cristina, one of the most exclusive places to stay in Patagonia. Surrounded by pristine nature and reachable only by boat, the setting offers a rare opportunity to experience the Patagonia wilderness in a truly remote location. An estancia is a working ranch in Patagonia, and this one was established as a sheep farm in 1914. Now located within the bounds of Los Glaciares National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the property offers unparalleled access to the park's wild backcountry via hiking trails and 4x4 excursions. Set in a glacial valley protected from the wind, it is also the only accommodation on the shoreline of Lago Argentino with a lookout point over Upsala Glacier.



Estancia Cerro Guido

Offering an immersive encounter with Patagonian nature and culture, Estancia Cerro Guido provides luxury lodge accommodations on a historic sheep ranch in view of the famous Paine massif. Still a vital working ranch, the estancia was founded by European pioneers at the turn of the 20th century as part of the Sociedad Explotadora Tierra del Fuego, the largest livestock network in the history of Chilean Patagonia. The well-preserved houses and facilities from its origin still stand as a testament to the cultural heritage of Patagonia. At almost a quarter-million acres, the ranch today is the largest in the region.



Patagonia Camp

Set within native beech forest in rolling mountain foothills overlooking Lago el Toro, Patagonia Camp is an exclusive private outpost on the edge of Torres del Paine National Park. It manifests the vision of a group of Chilean nature enthusiasts and outdoor adventurers who liked the idea of providing a comfortable, luxurious retreat after bracing expeditions in the mountains, lakes and fjords. Guests today can choose from an array of varied outings in the national park or utilizing the camp's own trail network to explore our entrancing surroundings.

About WWF Insider Journeys

WWF Insider Journeys is a special conservation travel program for our closest supporters to see first-hand the positive impact World Wildlife Fund is making. Each of these curated journeys is accompanied by WWF experts and offers exclusive opportunities to discover the wildlife and ecosystems we protect; meet community members whose lives are being improved because of our work; and immerse yourself in the worlds of our staff and partners on the ground. Come explore the best of the natural world alongside other WWF supporters and see how together we are making a difference for our planet.

About Our Travel Partner



This journey is being arranged by Natural Habitat Adventures of Boulder, Colorado. For more than a decade, WWF has partnered with Nat Hab to take travelers to view nature's greatest sights. WWF selected Natural Habitat as its partner because of its long-standing commitment to conservation and the exceptional quality of its adventures.

Reservation Information & Trip Details

For reservations and additional information, please contact Aly Jacobsen at Natural Habitat Adventures (888) 993-8687 or alyj@nathab.com.

DATES: January 20 – 30, 2025

LAND COST: \$15,995 per person in double occupancy

Single supplement: \$3795

(Prices are based on 2024 and are subject to change slightly in 2025)

DATES: \$500 per person (nonrefundable)

GROUP SIZE: Limited to 10 guests

INCLUDED: Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s) and local staff, travel for WWF Expert(s), all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, regional wines with dinner, most gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

NOT INCLUDED: Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

PAYMENTS: A nonrefundable deposit of \$500 confirms your space. Payments are accepted by credit card.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS: Cancellations must be received in writing at NHA by US mail, email or fax. At the time WWF receives your written cancellation, the following per person penalties apply: 121 days or more before departure: lose deposit. 120 to 61 days before departure: forfeit 50% of tour cost. 60 days or fewer before departure: no refund.

INSURANCE: Since the areas we travel to on this trip are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require medical evacuation insurance for our guests' safety. If you decline the medical evacuation insurance coverage offered by Natural Habitat Adventures, we request that you send us documentation of the independent coverage you have selected. We will add the cost of a medical evacuation policy to your tour invoice until you provide our office with proof of coverage including your insurance company's name, contact number and your individual policy number. Thank you for understanding that our policy exists exclusively in the interest of our guests' safety.

GETTING THERE & GETTING HOME:

Arrival: Please arrive in El Calafate, Argentina no later than 4 pm on Day 1 in order to attend a welcome dinner at 6 pm.

Departure: Guests are free to depart from Punta Arenas, Chile at any time after 2:30pm on the final day.

We can best serve you if our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk makes your reservations, since we are intimately familiar with the special requirements of this program and can arrange the most efficient travel. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer you the best possible rates available to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may find special web rates or better fares online.

While WWF Insider Journeys are intended for WWF's closest supporters and enhanced with WWF Experts, exclusive site visits, and enriched content, a minimum number of guests is required to run each trip. To avoid canceling, WWF and Nat Hab may fill remaining available spots with WWF and non-WWF members.