

Mapuche Life at Budi Lake (4 days / 3 nights)

Budi Lake is home to numerous communities of the Mapuche, the largest indigenous group in Chile. Seize this unique opportunity to immerse yourself in their culture while spending a few days in the community of Llaguepulli.

The Mapuche defended their homeland, the Araucanía region south of Bio Bio River, for many centuries; both the Inca and the Spanish conquerors could not defeat them. It was not until the late years of the 19th century that the Mapuche territory was annexed to (at that time already independent) Chile.

Despite the adverse circumstances, the proud inhabitants of the village of Llaguepulli and the entire region around Budi Lake have been able to preserve their ancestor's traditions and way of life. For ten years, the local school of Llaguepulli "Kom pu lof ñi Kimeltuwe" has been successfully run by the Mapuche themselves, as one of the few schools in the country. The bilingual education promotes and preserves their language Mapudungun, their world view and their culture.

DAY 01: TEMUCO - LLAGUEPULLI AT BUDI LAKE (L, D)

Begin your journey at Temuco Airport, in Southern Chile's Araucanía region. A transfer takes you from here to Budi Lake, which is located right by the Pacific coast. After around 1.5 hours, you reach the first houses of the town of Llaguepulli, where you will spend the next days.

One of the most beautiful and at the same time most important elements of the Mapuche culture is its music and dances. On the day of arrival, you are invited to watch one of these original performances and, if you wish, participate yourself.

Overnight in cabin or Ruka (traditional housing) of a Mapuche family

DAY 02: MEDICINAL HERBS & COOKING (B, L, D)

Discover the secrets of the Mapuche's increasingly popular natural medicine during a visit to the medicinal herb garden today. A tremendous variety of plants and herbs awaits, each with a clearly defined purpose and healing process. Learn about the so-called "Machi", a medicine man or woman that heals diseases that cannot be cured by traditional medicine, using only wisdom and the help of natural plants. Not all communities have a Machi, for Machis cannot be sought or hired, but are individuals that naturally possess the special abilities required for this function. In the afternoon, the Mapuche women show their culinary skills and, if you wish, allow you to participate in the food preparation. The result is enjoyed together for dinner.

Overnight in cabin or Ruka (traditional house) of a Mapuche family

DAY 03: MAPUCHE HANDICRAFT & LLEPU ISLAND (B, L, D)

In the morning you have the opportunity to work hand in hand with the craftspeople. They use traditional techniques in order to fabricate and color products out of textiles. Take your self-made handicraft product back home as a souvenir.

A visit to Llepu Island awaits in the afternoon. The trip leads along the western shore of Budi Lake, which is one of the few saltwater lakes in South America. With more than 130 species, many of them endemic, it features an extraordinary variety of birds. After crossing over to the island by boat, there is plenty of time to visit its small museum and to explore the surroundings, nowadays home to only 17 people. In the evening return to Llaguepulli.

DAY 04: BUDI LAKE –TEMUCO (B)

Your experience along the shores of Budi Lake ends after breakfast today. A transfer takes you back to Temuco Airport, from where you can continue your journey or catch a flight back home.