

# The Four Giants of Patagonia

*Patagonia – a word that inevitably awakes associations with rugged mountain worlds and a nature of superlatives. A remote corner of the world, where life is as rough as the weather; and yet, its visitors are hooked once they conquer its mountains and feel the fresh breeze, their gaze wandering into the distance where infinite panoramas await.*

*This trek & drive tour is for all the adventurers out there who want to feel Patagonia in its essence, with their own two feet. It takes you along Patagonia's four most imposing giants: The spectacular castle-like mountains of **Cerro Castillo**, the **Fitz Roy massif** in Los Glaciares National Park, the **Torres del Paine** National Park and, most adventurous of all, the toothlike peaks of Navarino Island in the southernmost extension of the continent, the "**Dientes del Navarino**".*

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Santiago de Chile

Welcome to Chile! After arrival at the international airport, you have time to acclimatize and get a glimpse of this metropolitan capital. Overnight in Santiago de Chile.

### Day 2: Santiago – Balmaceda – Villa Cerro Castillo (approx. 1 h drive – 70 km/43 mi)

Take a flight south to Balmaceda, the main hub to Chile's remote Aysén region. Upon arrival, pick up your rental car at the airport and drive on the Carretera Austral to nearby Villa Cerro Castillo. Overnight in Villa Cerro Castillo.

### Day 3: Cerro Castillo National Park

The majestic mountain world of Cerro Castillo National Park, a true hiking paradise, awaits you today. There are several trails to choose from; a highly recommendable, yet demanding option is the hike up to Laguna Cerro Castillo\*. Overnight in Villa Cerro Castillo.

\*Duration: 8-9 h return / 15 km or 9 mi / high difficulty (1.100 m or 3.608 ft height difference)

### Day 4: Villa Cerro Castillo – Puerto Guadal (4-5 h drive – 180 km/112 mi)

Drive south on the Carretera Austral to Puerto Guadal, a town on the shores of Chile's biggest lake, the General Carrera. On the way, there is the option to visit the lake's spectacular marble caves on a short boat trip. Overnight in Puerto Guadal.

### Day 5: Puerto Guadal – Chile Chico (2-3 h drive – 105 km/65 mi)

Drive along the southern shore of General Carrera Lake until reaching the village of Chile Chico, at the Argentine border. Overnight in Chile Chico.

### Day 6: Patagonia National Park & drive to Los Antiguos (approx. 20 min drive – 14 km/9 mi)

Visit the recently opened Patagonia National Park (former Reserva Jeinimeni) at one-hour distance on a unique hike along ancient cave paintings and the colorful rock formations of the Valle Lunar\*. Afterwards cross the border to Los Antiguos in Argentina. Overnight in Los Antiguos.

\*Duration: 4-5 h loop / 7.4 km or 4.6 mi / low-medium difficulty

**Day 7: Los Antiguos – Gobernador Gregores (5-6 h drive – 415 km/256 mi)**

Continue your journey through the barren pampa landscape of Argentina. The Ruta 40 leads south until reaching the small village of Gobernador Gregores. Overnight in Gobernador Gregores.

**Day 8: Gobernador Gregores – El Chaltén (5-6 h drive – 300 km/186 mi)**

Continue driving south on Ruta 40 (mostly gravel road) until you reach the hiking mecca of El Chaltén, a small village nestled into the Andes Mountains. Overnight in El Chaltén.

**Day 9: Los Glaciares National Park**

Immerse in the spectacular mountain world that surrounds El Chaltén. There are numerous hiking trails of varying difficulties\*; a classic is the day hike that leads to Laguna Torre. Overnight in El Chaltén.

\*Some of the many trails available in El Chaltén:

Trails	Duration	Distance	Difficulty
Laguna Torre	7-8 h return	21 km / 13 mi	medium-high (751 m or 2463 ft height diff.)
Laguna de los Tres	8-9 h return	20 km / 12.5 mi	medium-high (970 m or 3182 ft height diff.)
Viewpoint Laguna Torre	3-4 h return	6 km / 3.7 mi	low (240m or 790 ft height diff.)
Laguna Capri	4-5 h return	9 km / 5.6 mi	low-medium (500 m or 1640 ft height diff.)

**Day 10: Fitz Roy Mountain (Los Glaciares National Park)**

Without a doubt one of Patagonia’s most iconic treks is the one to Laguna de los Tres, at the feet of Fitzroy Mountain. This demanding day hike is worth the sweat! Overnight in El Chaltén.

**Day 11: El Chaltén – El Calafate (3-4 h drive – 215 km/134 mi)**

Continue your way south to El Calafate today. In the afternoon, you have time to visit Perito Moreno, arguably Patagonia’s most impressive glacier. It is one of the few that is growing rather than shrinking. Overnight in El Calafate.

**Day 12: El Calafate – Puerto Natales (4-5 h drive – 355 km/220 mi)**

Cross the border to Chile and continue driving to the town of Puerto Natales, the main touristic hub for Torres del Paine National Park. Drop off your rental car in the city office. Overnight in Puerto Natales.

**Day 13: Puerto Natales – Torres del Paine (2 h bus ride)**

The multi-day W-Trek takes you to the highlights of Torres del Paine National Park. Travel by public bus from Puerto Natales to the park’s Torres sector, where you start the trek on the morning to follow. Overnight in Refugio Sector Torres.

**Day 14: Trekking to Base Las Torres**

A demanding full day hike\* leads up to the viewpoint of the towers (“torres”) that give the park its name. Overnight in Refugio Sector Torres.

\*Duration: 8-9 h return / 20 km (12.5 mi) / medium-high difficulty (700 m (2300 ft) height difference)

**Day 15: Trekking Refugio Torres – Refugio Los Cuernos**

The trek continues today with stunning views of Nordenskjöld Lake, until reaching the Refugio Los Cuernos\*. Overnight in Refugio Los Cuernos.

\*Duration: 4-5 h / 11 km (6.8 mi) / low-medium difficulty

**Day 16: Trekking Refugio Los Cuernos – Valle Francés - Refugio Paine Grande**

Today’s hike takes you into the spectacular French Valley\*. Afterwards, continue on until reaching Refugio Paine Grande. Overnight in Refugio Paine Grande.

\*Duration: 9-10 h / 21 km (13 mi) / medium difficulty

**Day 17: Trekking to Grey Glacier – Return to Puerto Natales (30 min ferry + 3 h bus ride)**

A day hike leads you to the impressive glacier Grey\*, before returning to Paine Grande in the late afternoon. Cross Pehoé Lake by boat and continue your journey by public bus to Puerto Natales. Overnight in Puerto Natales

\*Duration: 8 h / 22 km (13.5 mi) / medium difficulty

**Day 18: Puerto Natales – Punta Arenas (approx. 3 h bus) - Departure**

Take the public bus from Puerto Natales to Punta Arenas today. Get off at the airport if you want to end your journey here with a flight back home via Santiago, or continue to the city center in order to do the world’s southernmost trekking on Navarino Island.

<b>Extension: The world’s southernmost trekking “Dientes de Navarino” (6 days / 5 nights)</b>
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Arrive by bus from Puerto Natales to the city of Punta Arenas. Overnight in Punta Arenas.

**Day 1 (19): Flight from Punta Arenas to Puerto Williams (approx. 1.5 h flight)**

In the morning, fly from Punta Arenas to Puerto Williams on the remote island of Navarino, south of Tierra del Fuego. A transfer takes you to the nearby lodge. Overnight in Lodge.

**Day 2 (20): Trekking Rio Robalo – Laguna del Salto**

Your multi-day trekking adventure begins today together with a professional guide. After the first ascent enjoy panoramic views of the town, the Beagle Channel and Tierra del Fuego. Continue until reaching Laguna del Salto and set camp\*. Overnight in tent.

\*Duration: 4-6 h / 7 km (4.3 mi) / high difficulty (900 m (2950 ft) height difference)

### **Day 3 (21): Trekking Laguna del Salto – Laguna de los Dientes**

After packing up your tent, the route surrounds the Dientes massif until reaching the Southern part of the island, with great views to “the end of the world”. Continue until reaching the camping spot between Laguna de los Dientes and Laguna Escondida\*. Overnight in tent.

\*Duration: 4-6 h / 9 km (5.6 mi) / high difficulty (575 m (1886 ft) height difference)

### **Day 4 (22): Trekking Laguna de los Dientes – Laguna Martillo**

Today’s trek takes you through a fairytale landscape with the Dientes mountain range as a backdrop. Continue ascending via the Ventarrón and Guerrico passes, before reaching scenic Guerrico valley. Reach a camp spot between Laguna Martillo and Laguna Zeta in the evening\*. Overnight in tent.

\*Duration: 4 h / 7 km (4.3 mi) / high difficulty (350 m (1148 ft) height difference)

### **Day 5 (23): Trekking Laguna Martillo - Lodge**

The last ascent to the highest point of the tour to Virginia Pass awaits you today. Enjoy amazing views of the Beagle Channel and Tierra del Fuego mountains, before descending. Arrive at the lodge in the evening. Overnight in Lodge.

\*Duration: 8-10 h / 16 km (10 mi) / high difficulty (930m (3051 ft) height difference)

### **Day 6 (24): Departure via Punta Arenas or Ushuaia**

Your adventure on this remote island ends today. A transfer takes you to the pier or airport, depending on your further travel arrangements. Take a boat to Ushuaia in Argentina (approx. 4 h) and a flight from here to Buenos Aires, or fly back via Punta Arenas and Santiago de Chile.

### **Dientes del Navarino - please keep in mind:**

- *The trekking is available between 30.10.2020 and 05.04.2021*
- *The Dientes del Navarino Trekking is a very demanding trekking that requires participants to be in good physical shape, and to have the ability and disposition to carry a backpack by themselves. A porter is available at additional charge, yet the idea is to divide the group trekking equipment between all participants.*
- *The trekking includes a minimum of 2 nights tent camping, which can be extended to 3 nights if the climatic and participant’s physical conditions make it necessary. In case of arrival back to the lodge on Day 4 (after 2 nights camping), the last day is at leisure at the lodge.*
- *It is possible to do this trekking as a self-guided trip with GPS only (without meals and guide). However, this is only recommendable for clients experienced in multi-day trekkings in remote places. Please enquire for rates.*

### **Regular Itinerary Includes:**

- 13 nights accommodation in 3-star-hotels with breakfast
- 4 nights in shared rooms in mountain huts with full board in Torres del Paine
- Private transfers with guide to/from hotel in Santiago de Chile, private transfers without guide to/from bus station in Puerto Natales, public bus Puerto Natales-Torres del Paine-Puerto Natales-Punta Arenas, ferry on Pehoé Lake
- Car Rental: Category F2 (SUV 4x4) for 11 days incl. airport charge with CDW (240 USD deductible; exceptions of coverage apply), second driver FOC, Argentina permit (6-15 days), One-Way Drop Off Fee Balmaceda-Puerto Natales
- GPS
- Torres del Paine Entrance Fee

<b>Dientes del Navarino Extension Includes:</b>
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- private transfers without guide from bus station/ to Punta Arenas Airport
- 1 night 3\*Hotel in Punta Arenas with breakfast
- Flight Punta Arenas – Puerto Williams
- Flight Puerto Williams – Punta Arenas **OR** Ferry Puerto Williams - Ushuaia
- 5 nights accommodation on Navarino Island with Full Board, of which 2 *or* 3 nights tent camping and 2 *or* 3 nights at the lodge
- Trekking Guide
- Group trekking equipment: tents, camp stove, cooking utensils, cutlery
- Personal trekking equipment: Gaiters, backpacks, walking canes, sleeping bags, liners, sleeping pads.