



BUENOS AIRES, USHUAIA, EL CALAFATE

2009/2010

10 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

DAY 1 PARIS / MADRID / BUENOS AIRES

Departure from **PARIS CDG** to **BUENOS AIRES** via **MADRID** on regular flight **AEROLINEAS ARGENTINAS**.

Dinner on board

DAY 2- PARIS / MADRID / BUENOS AIRES

Breakfast on board.

Reception by your English speaking guide at the airport

More European than South American in flavour, **Buenos Aires'** heart boasts bustling streets, grand avenues, old-time cafes and stylish restaurants. The locals are renowned for their flair and cockiness, even in times of adversity. It's a city of tragedy and elation; a vibrant, cosmopolitan capital.

Transfert to downtown

Luggage truck direct to the hotel

Departure from the hotel to a Buenos Aires City Tour to discover the city:

BUENOS AIRES CITY TOUR

First of all, let's discover its main avenues: "9 de Julio", the widest in the world; "Corrientes" with its countless theaters, cinemas, book shops and restaurants; and "Avenida de Mayo", an important avenue with a significant Spanish, mainly Galician, influence both on the design and architecture of its buildings and on the presence of shops and Galician centers.

The obelisk, a 65-meter-tall shaft, is located in the 9 de Julio Avenue at the crossing of important avenues. Also in the 9 de Julio Avenue you will find the Opera House Teatro Colon, built in 1936 and one of Argentina's architectural jewels and will be able to see the Plaza de Mayo

(Mayo Square) located just in front of the Pink House, the current Government palace.

Then, the visit continues to Puerto Madero, by the channel.

Lunch at a restaurant in Puerto Madero, by the channel

Discover **La Boca**, the first port in the city. One its main attractions is Caminito street, where you will find several humble houses built with metal sheets (using materials recovered from ships and painted with different colours), works inspired in poets and painters. La Boca is still flooded when the nearby river overflows its banks. This explains the surprising high sidewalks that may even reach 60cm.

San Telmo, a historical neighbourhood that in the beginning was a mere corridor that linked Plaza de Mayo to the port. With the passage of time, artisans and workers related to port activities settled in this place and contributed to the growth of the neighbourhood.

SAN TELMO MARKET (Only available on Sundays)

San Telmo's core is the Market of Antiques, which for the last 35 years has been making an appointment with visitors at Plaza Dorrego Square, between Defensa and Humberto 1° Streets, every Sunday from 10am to 5pm. The cafés, their tables and chairs, their colours and elegantly dressed waiters contribute with their colour to our journey back in time.

Recoleta is the quintessential residential neighbourhood where you will find several restaurants, bars, discos and other entertainment places. The neighbourhood is charming with thanks to its parks and squares.

Return to the hotel.

Accommodation - Time at leisure

Dinner and overnight at hotel

DAY 3 BUENOS AIRES / USHUAIA

Breakfast at hotel ñ Check out

Transfer to the airport

Flight to USHUAIA (3 hour flight)

Transfert to the hotel

Tierra del Fuego is an archipelago formed by some twenty islands including Isla Grande or Tierra del Fuego. This area is separated from the mainland by the **Magellan Strait**. Chile and Argentina share this archipelago that was named by Magellan after the bonfires that could be seen at night on its shores. The region offers multiple landscapes: river, sea, mountains, and dense vegetation.

Ushuaia is a small city at the end of the world, sheltered from the winds by its wonderful bay. It is the capital of the region and the southernmost city in the world. Argentine people refer to it as 'The End of the World'. Its people, origin, mysticism and natural scenarios are revealed with every step.

Arrival at the hotel

The city was originally named by early British missionaries using the native Yamana name for the area. During the first half of the 20th century, the city centered around a prison built by the Argentine government to increase the Argentine population here and to ensure Argentine sovereignty over Tierra del Fuego.

The prison was intended for repeat offenders and serious criminals. Escape from Tierra del Fuego was difficult. The prison population thus became forced colonists and spent much of their time building the town with timber from the forest around the prison. They also built a railway to the settlement, now a tourist attraction known as The End of the World Train (Tren del Fin del Mundo), the southernmost railway in the world.

Lunch at a local restaurant

Singularly picturesque, with its old-fashioned wood and metal houses, with steeply-sloping metal roofing to avoid accumulation of snow, Ushuaia reflects strong links with the past in its urban layout and architectural design.

Here you can visit the old octopus-shaped prison that now houses the Museo Maritimo with miniature models of ships and artifacts from the days of exploration and settlement; in the cells, the Museo Penitenciario that relates the history of the prison.

In the Eng of the World Museum (Museo Del Fin del Mundo), you will get information about the indigenous Yamana people, artifacts and a collection of local birds. The Museo de Maquetes Mundo Yamana recounts the history and extinction of the Yamana people.

Dinner and overnight at the hotel

DAY 4 USHUAIA / TERRE DE FEU / USHUAIA

Breakfast at hotel

Transfer to the port

Navigation along the Beagle Channel

We will depart from the 'Don Eduardo Arturo Brisighello' tourist port, on the coast of Ushuaia, where you will have a magnificent view of the Maritime Museum (old prison), the End of the World museum, and the industrial area created in the 80s. You will find an uncommon landscape formed by a combination of the sea and the mountains; from there, you will easily see the Olivia and Cinco Hermanos hills, the Fique and Tunel ranches, the Escarpados hills and the Encajonado River.

Near the centre of the Beagle Channel, we find the des Eclaireurs lighthouse just in the heart of the des Eclaireurs archipelago. Near the lighthouse, you will find the remains of the «Monte Cervantes», a German vessel that wrecked in 1930.

On the way to the isle of seals, you will enjoy the beautiful natural show of the seals and, in silence; we will sail around the island to take a glimpse of their environment and way of life. Then, the catamaran will head to the Los Pájaros Island. The Los Pájaros Island is home to thousands of sea birds: imperial shags, albatross, and petrels.

Lunch at a local restaurant

Excursion Tierra del Fuego National Park

The mythical Beagle channel borders on the National Park that encompasses lakes and rivers and is only 11 kilometres from the city. We will reach the side of the Susana hill departing to the southwest from the port at Maipú Avenue, and then taking national route no. 3 to leave the city. The Susana hill is the witness to the work of the prisoners that built this "Tierra del Fuego" train. You will be able to take an optional tour from there.

We will follow along the Pipo river valley to the mouth of the Ensenada Bay. You will be wondered by the Redonda and Estorbo islands and, on the other side of the Beagle Channel, the snow capped peaks of the Sampaio (Chile) range.

We will take national route no. 3 again, a narrow and beautiful road towards Roca lake. We will walk along the lake and the Lapataia River, the natural drainage of the lake. At this place you will be able view the landscape marked by the breathtaking Condor hill, the peak of which marks the border with Chile.

Then, we will travel to the other side of the park where national route no. 3 ends, at the Lapataia Bay, where you will appreciate the Verde and Negra lakes. Finally, we will visit the beavers' dike in the road leading to the Lapataia Bay.

Dinner and overnight at the hotel

DAY 5 USHUAIA / EL CALAFATE / 4X4 PATAGONIA

Breakfast at your hotel ñ Check out

Transfert to the airport

Flight to **EL CALAFATE** (1H10 hour flight)

Regular flight to El Calafate with Aerolíneas Argentinas (1h10)

Reception by your guide

Transfert to the hotel

Its name comes from a little bush with yellow flowers very common in Patagonia, with dark blue berries

The history of El Calafate began in the first decades of the twentieth century. Originally, it was just a place of shelter for wood traders. It was officially founded in 1927 by the government of Argentina to promote an increase in its population. But it was not until the creation of the national park that the little village, already with electrical power, started to grow slowly, and better roads were built to reach it. Its name comes from a little bush with yellow flowers very common in Patagonia, with dark blue berries.

El Calafate is located 320 kilometres north of Río Gallegos, at the foot of the Andes mountain range. This small town has a population of 3,000 and was founded in 1927 on the shores of Lago Argentino. Its current growth results from the ongoing development of the tourism industry in the region. El Calafate is located at the entrance to Los Glaciares National Park, declared a world heritage site by UNESCO.

Lunch at a local restaurant

After lunch, Excursion to Hill **Cerro Huyliche**

Passengers will travel through the Patagonian steppe, enjoying wonderful views and finding exclusive places that have been barely exploited by men. After leaving Calafate in our 4WDs, we will climb up to 1,050 meters above sea level. We will reach the first balcony where passengers will discover an amazing panoramic view of El Calafate and a portion of the Argentino Lake. If the sky is clear, we will watch the Chalten hill, the Torre hill and the flight of condors. Then we will continue climbing the hill in our 4WDs to the Laberinto de Las Piedras (Stone Labyrinth), a formation 85-million years old dating back to the Cretaceous.

Dinner and overnight at hotel

DAY 6 - EL CALAFATE / UPSALA CRUISING / EL CALAFATE

Breakfast at your hotel.

Departure by bus in the morning to the port **PUNTA BANDERAS**

This trip leaves from Puerto Bandera, located 50 kilometres to the west of the city.

Boarding in the catamaran ñ Navigation on the Argentine Lake (Lago Argentino) It is the biggest freshwater lake in Argentina, with a surface area of 1,466 km², and the third in the South America. The lake lies within the **Los Glaciares National Park**.

It is the largest Argentine national park and is undoubtedly the scenario of the most breathtaking views with its millenary icebergs that run into the park's lake waters. Indeed, this 600,000-hectare park boasts 13 huge glaciers, including the colossal Perito Moreno; the most famous (15-km long and 5-km wide) and one of the world's last glaciers still advancing considerably. However, Upsala is the largest glacier (with a 595-km² surface, greater than Buenos Aires) and is certainly worth visiting. Excursions also offer lookouts of Onelli Bay and Spegazzini Glacier.

The **Upsala Glacier** is a large valley glacier in Argentina's Los Glaciares National Park. It flows out from the Southern Patagonian ice field, which also feeds the nearby Perito Moreno Glacier. The terminus of the glacier is at Lago Argentino. The Upsala Glacier is well known for its rapid retreat.

The **Upsala-Onelli glacier cruise** ñ it is an excursion on a catamaran cruising on Lago Argentino to view glaciers. At the northwest end of Lago Argentino, and after about a 2 hour navigation, is the **Upsala Glacier**, considered one of the longest glaciers in South America, considered one of the longest glaciers in South America at more than 36 miles long and more than 2 miles wide. The catamaran leaves from Punta Bandera (31 miles from Lago Argentino), and stops at Glacier Spegazzini and at Bahía Onelli for a walk through a magnificent forest to Lago Onelli, a quiet ice-berg studded lake with great views to the glacier and mountains.

The national park, created in 1937, is the second largest in Argentina. The name comes from Uppsala University, which sponsored the first glaciological studies in the area. The glacier's almost continual recession up until 1999 has recently slowed (as of 2003). The previous acceleration in ice motion during the two decades preceding 1999 may have been augmented by the release of back stress when the glacier retreated beyond the islands in Brazo Uppsala.

Box lunch, to best enjoy the site

1 hour walk through wooded terrain will lead you to the shore of the ever-impressive Onelli Lake and Onelli Glacier. Boarding on the catamaran, and return to **Punta Bandera port**, sailing on **Argentino Lake**, between the magnificent icebergs

Arrival at the port and return by bus to **El Calafate**

Dinner and overnight at hotel

DAY 7 EL CALAFATE / PERITO MORENO (160 km) / EL CALAFATE / BUENOS AIRES

Breakfast at hotel

Transfer to the National Park to visit the famous **Glacier Perito Moreno**.

It's said that a visit to the National Park Glaciares is a must in a life time. Glacier Perito Moreno is, no doubt, the most beautiful of all the glaciers at the National Park Los Glaciares. It originates at the Continental Ice field, and descends through colossal mountains, to penetrate the waters of Argentino Lake (Lago Argentino). This unique landscape is framed by the greenest of forests, and the most colourful flowers. In 1981 UNESCO declared National Park Los Glaciares a World Heritage Site.

The 250 km² (97 sq mi) ice formation, and 30 km (19 mi) in length, is one of 48 glaciers fed by the Southern Patagonian Ice Field located in the Andes system shared with Chile. This ice field is the world's third largest reserve of fresh water. The Perito Moreno Glacier is one of only three Patagonian glaciers that are not retreating. The terminus of the Perito Moreno Glacier is 5 kilometres (3 mi) wide, with an average height of 74 m (240 ft) above the surface of the water of Lake Argentino, in Argentina. It has a total ice depth of 170 metres (558 ft).

Periodically the glacier advances over the L-shaped Lago Argentino ("Argentine Lake") forming a natural dam which separates the two halves of the lake when it reaches the opposite shore. With no escape route, the water level on the Brazo Rico side of the lake can rise by up to 30 meters above the level of the main lake. The enormous pressure produced by the height of the dammed water finally breaks the ice barrier holding it back, in a spectacular rupture event. This dam/rupture cycle is not regular and it recurs naturally at any frequency between once a year to less than once a decade.

Visit to the viewpoints and belvederes.

OPTION:

Nautique Safari: boats sail across the Rico Branch, participants get quite close to the glacier wall

OPTION:

Nautique Safari & Mini trekking on the glacier

Box Lunch to best enjoy the site

Return to **El Calafate**, and then transfer to the airport

Flight back to **BUENOS AIRES** - Snacks on board

Arrival at Buenos Aires - Accommodation at hotel

Overnight at the hotel

DAY 8 - BUENOS AIRES / ESTANCIA / BUENOS AIRES

Breakfast at hotel

Departure for a Full day Excursion to a Estancia in San Antonio de Areco, cradle of the gaucho and its traditions, located at 110 km. from downtown Buenos Aires, one hour and a half drive west.

Participants will discover the gaucho atmosphere and traditions from la Pampa, as well as folklore music and traditional dances.

Typical Barbecue Lunch at estancia.

One of the main attractions is the gaucho shows, horse ring races as well as other open air competitions.

Return to Buenos Aires in the afternoon

Dinner and overnight at hotel

OPTION:

Dinner & Tango Show (beverage package included)

DAY 9 : BUENOS AIRES / EZEIZA / MADRID

Breakfast at hotel ñ Check out

Morning at leisure for personal visits or shopping

Lunch not included

OPTION: Lunch at hotel

OPTION: Lunch on sighting cruising on Rio de La Plata:

Transfer to the airport ñ Flight to **PARIS** via **MADRID**

Dinner and overnight on board

DAY 10: MADRID / PARIS

Breakfast on board

Arrival to **Madrid**. Connexion flight to **Paris**

Arrival to **PARIS**

END OF OUR SERVICES