



Self drive to Torres del Paine National Park

We offer different ways of exploring the Torres del Paine National Park, with a rented vehicle, at your own pace and interests. Whether you prefer the landscapes, photography, hiking, bird watching sharing experiences with gauchos or simply the pleasure of doing nothing (is valid too).

Day 1. Airport-Punta Arenas-Puerto Natales- Torres del Paine National Park. Distance 342 kms. 213 miles. 6 hours aproximately

A representative of Patagonia Trails will greet and you help you through procedures for receiving the rented car from the counter at the Punta Arenas airport. Any last minute shopping can be done either in Punta Arenas or Puerto Natales on the way north. There is a very good, modern grocery worth stopping at on your way out of town in Puerto Natales . You won't have so many options later. To drive from Punta Arenas to Puerto Natales, the last town before you get to Torres del Paine, takes a little less than three hours, all of it on well-paved roads. Head to the park on Route 9, also known as Ruta del Fin del Mundo ("road to the end of the earth"). Likely to see small groups of guanaco — a wild variety of lama — and Rhea, which look like dun-colored ostriches, along the way. It's not heavily trafficked, so it is not unusual to drive for miles without seeing another car. When you do get to Puerto Natales, make sure to get gas there. There are no stations in or near Torres del Paine except to Cerro Castillo village which is not reliable. Your place for the following night will be at the Serrano Sector of the park, this can be reached through different ways, still worth entering the park at Sarmiento Gate. The late sunset in the park invite you to go for a walk in the forest and enjoy the spectacular views you will have right from your hotel window. Along the route you will see for first time the emblematic Towers and Horns of Paine.

Accommodation at Lodge Pampa (or similar) double room with private bathroom.
Dinner included

Day 2. Paine National Park- Mirador Las Torres Hike.

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Suggested hike to Mirador Las Torres: We start our trek today on the famous W, so named for the shape of the trails. First, we head up the Ascencio Valley to the Base of Towers of Paine lookout. The trail involves some steep sections and crossing a boulder field, just before the final lookout where the spectacular towers rise from a turquoise glacial lake. This is the basecamp from which expert climbers start their attempts to scale the sheer forbidding walls of Torres Norte, Central, and Sur. If the weather's right, we'll get that postcard-perfect photograph. We return on the same trail back to our vehicle and drive to our lodge. A well-earned dinner will be waiting for us. Hiking: 12 miles, 4000 ft elevation gain, 8 - 9 hours. Overnight Pampa Lodge. Today on the way back you can enjoy several viewpoints like Salto Grande and Mirador Cuernos which is an easy hour walk with a splendid view of the Lake Nordenskjold and the horns on the backdrop.
(B,BL,D) Distance driving: 47 kms /30 miles.

Day 3. Puerto Natales

After a nice and relaxed breakfast you will pack all your gear and leave the Serrano section to enjoy a full day at leisure to visit the different highlights of the park like Glacier Grey and short walks around. Lago Grey overlooks a lake stained light gray with sediment. Floating on the lake you are likely to see boat-sized azure blue chunks of glacier ice that have broken from Grey Glacier and are pushed by prevailing winds towards the south end of the lake, creating kind of a modern sculpture exhibit of blue ice on the southern shore. Laguna Azul, is on the edge of the park and is worth the drive before driving towards the exit of the park and lodge at Puerto Natales. Accommodation at Hotel IF Patagonia or similar. (B,BL)

Day 4. Puerto Natales -Punta Arenas Airport.

Today we travel south across the barren Pampa of Patagonia, an impressive 3 hour road trip as we journey to Punta Arenas Airport where we will fly back to Santiago. After breakfast and according to your plans is worth going for a morning walk along the waterfront, where a great variety of birds nests here. Black-necked swans are easy to see. Don't forget to fill up the tank before returning your rented car. Back to the airport with enough time to catch your flight or continuation of your trip. End of services. Distance driving: 247 kms/154 miles. 3 hs.

As part of this trip we can arrange further accommodation at Punta Arenas city or continuation of your adventure into Patagonia Argentina.

Packing and Clothing.

- Recommended Backpacks:
- - One 40 litres Backpack - One 20 – 25 litres Backpack por day hikes - • - - Waterproof jacket and trousers (GORE TEX). - Warm clothes (Polar Tec). - Comfortable trousers for trekking. - T – shirts. - Long Sleeved Shirts. - Trekking boots. - Sandals (for showering, resting and crossing streams). - Flash lamp

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- - Enough batteries supplies, as in refugios they produce their own sustainable energy, they do not have places to charge batteries. - Sunglasses. - Towel.
- - Padlock. - Gloves / Sunscreen. - Camera / Binoculars. - Bottle for water (Nalgene). - Ziploc bags (for taking your trash back). - Trekking Sticks. - Swimsuit * Hot Tub – Los Cuernos Cabins. - Warm Hat. - Hat for sun protection.
- Porters can be hired at an extra cost of 250 u\$ per person for the whole trek. Max load is 14 kilos per porter.

Thermal underwear, warm socks, good trekking shoes, wind block, and waterproof gear, lip balm sunscreen lotion, sunglasses, walking poles if needed.

Water bottle. Snacks for the walking day. Medical and first aid kit. The park is far away from any chemist or basic hospital so make sure you bring any extra or spare of what you usually need. Eg: medicine, glasses, contact lenses, etc and keep them in a safe place. A good map of the route and of the park can be found

<http://www.torres-del-paine.org/images/tdp-map09-a.pdf>.

Driving tips.

Be careful with the animals on the road, specially the guanacos, rheas and tiny armadillos. Patagonia is very windy and this you can feel it when you get off the car, just be careful when opening your door and make sure you can pick up a sheltered spot where to stop so the wind is not so strong.

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