

# Patagonia, Glaciers & Eclipse 2020

9 days | Buenos Aires to El Calafate



*Journey from Buenos Aires to El Calafate on this 9-day group tour of Argentina and observe the incredible total solar eclipse in December 2020. Watch this once in a lifetime spectacle from an exclusive observation camp near Piedra del Aguila and take in the incredible scenery of Bariloche. Enjoy a Buenos Aires city tour, relax in charming El Calafate and marvel at the mighty Perito Moreno Glacier in Los Glaciares National Park.*

## HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

### Trip Highlights

- Total Solar Eclipse - marvel at the total solar eclipse of 14 December 2020 from a deluxe observation camp and enjoy gourmet food and wine
- Los Glaciares National Park - discover the incredible Perito Moreno Glacier and get close to the wall of ice as you walk along footbridges and walkways
- Bariloche - enjoy a scenic tour of the Patagonian wilderness including Lake Nahuel Huapi and admire the view from Campanario Hill
- Buenos Aires - take a guided city tour of Argentina's captivating capital to see

highlights including the Plaza de Mayo, colourful La Boca neighbourhood and Recoleta.

- Curva de los Suspiros - get your first glimpse of the incredible Perito Moreno Glacier from this scenic viewpoint on the road from El Calafate
- El Calafate - relax in the charming Patagonian town on the shore of Laguna Argentino which is the largest lake in Argentina

### What's Included

- 8 breakfasts & 1 gourmet picnic lunch with premium Argentinian wines
- 5 nights 4 star hotels and 3 nights boutique hotel in Bariloche (or 3 nights guesthouse, for anyone booking from 01 Dec 2019 onwards)
- Airport arrival and departure transfers on days 1 and 9
- Domestic flights: Buenos Aires - Bariloche and Bariloche - El Calafate
- Full day solar eclipse excursion to an exclusive observatory camp with an astronomer guide
- Eclipse viewing glasses
- Half day Buenos Aires city tour
- Half day Bariloche scenic tour
- Full day excursion to Los Glaciares National Park
- Expert local guides for scheduled sightseeing

- All relevant transfers and transportation in private vehicles
- Maximum group size: 22

### What's Not Included

- International flights and visas
- Items of a personal nature, additional meals and drinks
- Tipping – an entirely personal gesture
- Bariloche Eco Tax - \$2 per day (\$6 in total) to be paid directly to the hotel at time of check in

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1 : Welcome to Argentina



11 December 2020. Welcome to Buenos Aires. You will be met by our representative at Buenos Aires airport and transferred to our hotel in Argentina's captivating capital. Spend the rest of the day at leisure. **Overnight - Buenos Aires**

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## Day 2 : Buenos Aires city tour



This morning we take in the highlights of the seductive city of Buenos Aires on a half day guided tour, including attractions such as 9 de Julio Avenue, the Obelisk and Corrientes Street. The first stop will be in the Plaza de Mayo to visit the Cathedral and the Old City Hall, before we continue to the old neighborhood of San Telmo, with its colonial houses and cobblestone streets. We'll also visit the striking La Boca neighbourhood, with its brightly coloured zinc houses, the exclusive area of Puerto Madero, which was once the old city port, and the scenic Palermo woods.

Finally, we end our tour in Recoleta, which is one of the most elegant neighbourhoods in Buenos Aires. See the Recoleta Cemetery, the resting place of Argentina's most famous figures and spend the rest of the day at leisure. **Overnight - Buenos Aires (B)**

## Day 3 : Fly to Bariloche

Buenos Aires - Bariloche. Today you'll be transferred to the airport for your flight to Bariloche, a scenic city in the northern part of Patagonia. Set on the shore of Lake Nahuel Huapi and within a national park of the same name, Bariloche is surrounded by some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

On arrival in the city, the rest of the day is free to relax at the charming Peninsula Petit Hotel, our base for exploring Bariloche and witnessing the total solar eclipse tomorrow. The hotel is scenically located on the shore of the lake and has its own private beach, so you can get out and make the most of your surroundings.

**Please Note - the Peninsula Petit Hotel in Bariloche is now fully booked. Anyone booking this tour from 01 December 2019 onwards will stay at the Hosteria Katy in Bariloche. Overnight - Bariloche (B)**

## Day 4 : Total Solar Eclipse



14th December 2020. Experience the incredible astronomical event that is a total solar eclipse today. We have a full day excursion to an exclusive Nomad observatory camp, at a privileged location along the central path of the eclipse, near Piedra del Aguila. Departing Bariloche with our local guide early this morning, enjoy an incredibly scenic drive to the vast steppe lands in the east of Nahuel Huapi National Park. Arriving at our eclipse camp, you can have a drink, relax and await the eclipse in comfort or go for a short hike in the stunning Patagonian wilderness.

The big event begins with a partial eclipse at 11:45 local time. 13.08 is the start of the total eclipse, with totality lasting for just under 2 minutes. We'll be in the perfect spot to watch this incredible spectacle unfold (subject to weather conditions). Eclipse glasses will be provided to ensure you can watch this natural phenomenon safely.

Solar eclipses usually occur twice a year, however total solar eclipses are rare. A total solar eclipse is when the moon perfectly aligns in front of the sun, plunging the entire area into total darkness. Look out for Baily's Beards as the eclipse unfolds - these small blots of lights appear just before the total eclipse and are caused by gaps in the mountains and valleys on the Moon's surface allowing sunlight to pass through in some places but not others.

After the mesmerising eclipse, we'll enjoy a delicious 'Campestre' picnic lunch at our camp, accompanied by premium Argentinian wines. Relax and reflect on the spectacle you just witnessed before we return to the hotel in Bariloche, arriving late afternoon. **Overnight - Bariloche (B, L)**

## Day 5 : Bariloche Scenic Tour



We spend our final day in Bariloche exploring the staggeringly beautiful Patagonian hills. Our sightseeing tour of the region will take in the breathtaking vistas of Lake Nahuel Huapi and Victoria Island. We also head through pine forest and past towering rock formations to the top of Campanario Hill. The incredible views from the top of the hill were voted one of the "Top 10 Views in the World" by National Geographic. The rest of the day can be spent further exploring Bariloche and its surrounding area at leisure. **Overnight - Bariloche (B)**

## Day 6 : Fly to El Calafate

Bariloche - El Calafate. It's time to say goodbye to Bariloche and fly south to El Calafate, a Patagonian town nestled on the shore of Argentino Lake. The lake is the biggest in Argentina and is just one of the natural attractions that El Calafate is renowned for. El Calafate is the gateway to Los Glaciares National Park, home to the famous Perito Moreno Glacier. After hotel check in the rest of the day is free to explore the town or take a stroll by the lake. **Overnight - El Calafate (B)**

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updated on 11-01-2020 06:05:24

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## Day 7 : Perito Moreno Glacier



Discover the natural wonders of Los Glaciares National Park today. Driving from El Calafate, we stop briefly at Bajo Las Sombras Port before reaching the park. Here we get our first glimpse of the giant Perito Moreno Glacier at the Curva de los Suspiros viewpoint. The glacier is bucking the worldwide trend in the face of climate change, and is actually advancing rather than shrinking like most glaciers in other parts of the world.

Reaching the glacier, we'll get to enjoy walking along the footbridges and walkways which pass close to the glacier, allowing for amazing views of this massive wall of ice. An optional nautical safari tour is available to book locally, to see the glacier by boat. After exploring the park, we return to El Calafate where the evening is at leisure. **Overnight - El Calafate (B)**

## Day 8 : Free time in El Calafate

Spend the day at leisure in El Calafate where you can explore the southern sector of Los Glaciares National Park independently or simply relax by Lago Argentino. There are also plenty of activities available to book locally, allowing you to enjoy the incredible Patagonian scenery - perhaps take a horse-riding excursion or visit Bosque Pertificado La Leona, a petrified forest with fossilised trunks and dinosaur bones. **Overnight - El Calafate (B)**

## Day 9 : El Calafate

19 December 2020. Your Argentinean Adventure comes to an end today. After breakfast in the hotel, there's an included transfer to El Calafate airport for your onward flight.

If you wish to extend your stay to explore more of Argentina or return to Buenos Aires, we can make the necessary arrangements for you. (B)

### HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

**Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.**

### Hotel Grand Brizo Buenos Aires

Conveniently located in the heart of Buenos Aires, the 4 star Hotel Grand Brizo offers comfortable and spacious guestrooms, which are well-equipped with modern amenities. Free WiFi is available throughout the hotel and a tasty buffet breakfast is served daily. The hotel's restaurant offers international cuisine and the property also has a bar, outdoor swimming pool and fitness centre for those looking to unwind from the hustle and bustle of the city. Popular places of interest near Hotel Grand Brizo Buenos Aires include The Obelisk of Buenos Aires, July 9 Avenue and the Colon Theater, while Plaza de Mayo Square is just 1 km away.



### Peninsula Petit Hotel

This enchanting boutique hotel is set in an idyllic location, on the shore of picturesque Lake Nahuel Huapi. With attractive Patagonian decor and modern amenities including WiFi, the well appointed guest rooms all offer incredible views of the lake, native forest and surrounding hills. The hotel's restaurant and tea house serves delicious home cooked meals and guests can enjoy leisurely strolls through

the beautiful gardens down to the private beach. Located in San Pedro's Peninsula, the property is 12.4 miles from downtown Bariloche, which can easily be reached by bus or taxi.



### Hosteria Katy

Anyone booking this tour from 01 December 2019 onwards will stay at Hosteria Katy. Surrounded by lush woods, rugged snowcapped mountains and pristine lakes, Hosteria Katy is a charming family-run inn which offers a real home away from home. The property has seven cosy en-suite guestrooms, which are simply furnished, with garden views and free WiFi. There's a comfortable living room and dining room where you can enjoy a wonderful variety of organic products fresh from the garden, delicious home-made bread, jams and tasty cakes. Located in the picturesque and peaceful village of LLaO LLaO, away from the hustle and bustle of Bariloche town centre, you'll find several excellent places to eat within easy walking distance and given its convenient location inside the Nahuel Huapi National Park there's a wonderful range of walking trails and lake activities to enjoy nearby. Bariloche city centre is 16.2 miles away.



### Mirador del Lago

Looking out over Redonda Bay and Patagonia's vast Argentino Lake, the 4 star Mirador Del Lago Hotel boasts an enviable location, just a short stroll from the centre of the picturesque tourist town of El Calafate. This attractive hotel is designed in local brick and wood, with stylish and

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spacious guestrooms, equipped with modern amenities including cable tv, mini bar and WiFi. The hotel has a comfortable lounge and bar to relax in after a busy day exploring Los Glaciares National Park, while the gourmet restaurant serves a distinctive menu of regional and foreign delicacies.



## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

### Argentina Country Guide

#### Argentina - Fact File

- Official Name: Argentine Republic
- Capital: Buenos Aires
- Population: 38 million
- Total Area: 2.8 million square kilometres
- Official Language: Spanish
- Religions: Roman Catholic 92% (less than 20% practicing), Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 4%
- Voltage: 220 volts. Argentina has European type two-pinned round sockets in most old buildings and the Australian style three-pin flat sockets in most new buildings.
- Dialling Code: +54
- Time Difference: GMT/UTC -3
- Airport Departure Tax: US\$18

#### Argentina - Visas

UK, Australian, Canadian, US, South African and New Zealand passport holders do not require a visa for entry into Argentina for up to 90 days.

For entry into Argentina you must:

- Hold a passport valid at least six months on entry with one blank visa page
- Hold proof of sufficient funds
- Hold proof of onward/return airline tickets
- Hold documents showing proof of purpose of trip
- Hold all documents required for the next destination

- Confirm with their airline that boarding will be permitted without a visa as these conditions are subject to change

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours.

#### Argentina - Climate

The Argentine climate ranges from hot and humid in the north to cold and windy in the south. In northern Argentina, summer is hot and winter fairly mild while in contrast, Tierra del Fuego, at the southern tip of Argentina, is quite often cold with continual winds, rain at times and freezing winter temperatures.

Buenos Aires, due to its position in the central region, has a Mediterranean climate with well-defined seasons. Spring, between September and November is mild, which contributes to the flourishing green colour of the plants and trees in the lush parks. Summer, between December and February, is dry and hot and winter can be cold. It usually begins to rain in April and reaches its highest level during June and July, then decreases gradually to almost nothing in November.

Visit [www.worldclimate.com](http://www.worldclimate.com) to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

#### Argentina - Money

##### Important

In Latin America you will have problems changing the US\$100 CB B2 2001 series notes and it is important you do not bring them. In some countries banks won't even take them. The serial number is located in the top left hand corner and bottom right hand corner on the side with the President's face. This serial number starts with CB and then a few more numbers and then directly under that B2. At the bottom of the note near the signature of the Treasurer it says which series of notes it is and it is there that it says 2001 series.

##### Local currency

The monetary unit in Argentina is the Argentine peso. For up-to-date exchange rates with your own currency visit [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

#### Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

We recommend that you bring cash/travellers cheques in US dollars only. Visa, Mastercard, Diners and American Express are the best credit cards to bring however there can be problems at times getting money out from ATMs, so make sure you have sufficient cash for emergencies.

There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that you may bring into Argentina, however very large sums should be declared on arrival. There is often a general lack of small change and we recommend maintaining a supply of small denomination notes and coins.

#### Argentina - Local Transport

Much of Buenos Aires can be visited on foot. Most sightseeing in Buenos Aires can be reached on foot from our hotel, with La Boca being the furthest at about an hour's walk. There is also a good, if rather dated, underground metro system (called the "subte") which has 5 lines and is very cheap at approx \$0.30 per journey.

There are local buses called "colectivos", which are also inexpensive, but you MUST have the right change (ask hotel reception for prices) as you have to drop the money into a machine. We recommend you use taxis (black & yellow) at night as they are fairly cheap and usually have meters fitted. Just make sure that the driver turns it on when you get in. Remember that you will pay more for taxis at night.

#### Argentina - Food & Drink

As a guideline a simple snack (e.g. a sandwich) can cost as little as US\$1, a light meal will cost around \$5-\$6, and even a meal in one of the better restaurants in Buenos Aires costs very little in comparison to what you would expect to pay at home. Obviously this depends on what you order and if you have wine or other drinks, which will certainly increase the bill. If you eat in Puerto Madero or Recoleta in Buenos Aires you are likely to pay quite a bit more, however there is a huge choice of good reasonably-priced restaurants in the city centre where you can get a good meal (and great steaks).

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Your tour leader will be able to recommend restaurants.

All drinks such as water, soft or alcoholic drinks are at your own expense at all times. The following is a guideline for drinks bought in a shop in the street. Prices in restaurants and hotels can sometimes be more than double the prices specified below;

- 1 litre of water US\$0.70
- 30cl bottle of soft drink US\$0.50
- 30cl bottle of beer US\$0.70
- 50cl bottle of beer US\$1.00
- Food

## Food

In Argentina the basic diet focuses around meat mostly with french fries (papas fritas), mashed potatoes (pure) or 'papas sufle' (local typical deep fried potatoes that blow up like little balloons and are delicious). As there is a large Italian population you'll have no problem getting pasta dishes or pizzas. In fact, in the larger cities, you'll have no problem getting all types of food.

For breakfast it's normal to eat croissants (media lunas) with a good strong coffee. Most Argentines would have a large lunch at around 1pm then at around 5pm, they all head to the 'confiterías' for tea, sandwiches and cakes. Dinner is usually eaten around 10pm and is often grilled beef (asado) in different forms. Other dishes include 'lomo ala pimienta' (pepper steak), giant ribs (asado de tira) and mixed grills (parrillada) which include beef, intestines, offal, blood sausage (morcilla) and spicy sausage (chorizos) or thick grilled steak (churrasco). 'Bife de chorizo' is a rump steak (nothing to do with the sausage of the same name) and 'bife a caballo' is steak topped with a fried egg. Although seafood is not so common you can get fish (pescado) which can be served grilled, pan fried with breadcrumbs (apanado) or with a sauce. There are also plenty of chicken (pollo) dishes available. 'Milanesa de pollo' (boneless chicken cooked with breadcrumbs) is a favourite.

For a cheap and hearty meal 'tenedor libre' restaurants offer a fixed price buffet. These

are usually very good value and you can eat as much as you like.

## Vegetarians

If you are a strict vegetarian you may experience a distinct lack of variety in the food available, especially in small towns. However vegetarian alternatives are becoming more popular particularly in south Argentina. Our tour leaders will do their best to provide interesting vegetarian alternatives for included meals, but your patience and understanding is requested.

## Drink

You should be wary of drinking the local tap water. Bottled water, carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices are widely available and much safer. Argentina also has some of the best coffee in the world.

In Argentina some of the hotels we use have bars or serve alcoholic drinks. If there is not a bar in the hotel then there is sure to be one within walking distance. Imported beers and spirits are available but local spirits tend to be cheaper. There is an array of rums, gins and brandy and the fabulous Argentine wines can be extremely cheap (from US\$1 a bottle) There are also various brands of beers including Quilmes, Rubia, Negra Ahumada, and Negra Extra XXX.