

Patagonia 'W' Trek Variation

© 2012 International Mountain Guides

Trekking in Patagonia is on any outdoor enthusiasts bucket list, and for good reason, it encompasses some of Earth's most spectacular scenery in one location. Huge granite peaks, massive glaciers, and turquoise lakes are just a few of the highlights of this trek.

Our trek starts out at the main entrance to Torres del Paine National Park, and once in the park we'll get right to it. Day one of the trek takes us up the Ascencio Valley along the wild river by the same name, to the base of Las Torres (Spanish for The Towers). The three spectacular granite Towers: Torre D`Agostini (2,850m), Torre Central (2,800m), and Torre Norte (2,600m), are the centerpiece of Torres del Paine National Park. Jaws drop as the towers appear as if from nowhere. We'll spend our first of two nights in this area to maximize viewing and photo taking opportunities.

After enjoying the views of Las Torres we'll make our way west exploring both the Bader Valley (aka The Forgotten Valley) and the French Valley, famous for the hanging glaciers and an amphitheater of granite walls and spires at the head of the valley. Along the way we'll get a peek at some hanging glaciers, glacial lagoons and the occasional condor flying high above it all.

The final day of the trek is spent trekking alongside the Grey Glacier, a massive expanse of ice measuring 17 miles long and encompassing over 104 square miles!

The trek culminates with our ride in the Grey II boat en route back to reality, but not without cruising right up next to the toe of the glacier sipping our fresh pisco sours chilled by glacial ice pulled directly out of Lago Grey.

Our long days on the trail are rewarded by comfortable nights sleeping in the refugios (huts) along the trail. A nice clean bed eliminates the need to worry about a rock in your back ruining your sleep! And hot showers at the end of the day takes care of the rest.

And with breakfasts, lunches and dinners included while trekking, all you'll need is a few bucks at the end of the day for a glass of wine or a Coke.

We've taken care of all the details so we'll see you in Chile in 2013!

Patagonia: Just The Facts

Set Your GPS:

50°56'58"S 72°59'28"W

Torres del Paine National Park

The park was established in 1959 as *Parque Nacional de Turismo Lago Grey* (Grey Lake National Tourism Park) and it was given its present name in 1970.

Where is Patagonia?

Good question. Patagonia is tough to define geographically but generally speaking it is a region covering the southern most part of South America touching both Chile and Argentina.

Should I bring a jacket?

Average temperatures vary year around but in February we'll see temperatures ranging from 40°-65°F.

The Land of Giants?

The name Patagonia comes from the word *patagón* used by Magellan in 1520 to describe the native people that his expedition thought to be giants. It is now believed the Patagons were actually Tehuelches with an average height of 180 cm (~5'11") compared to the 155 cm (~5'1") average for Spaniards of the time.

The Great Grey Glacier

Measures in at a total area of 104 square miles and a length of 17 miles.

Look out for the Guanacos

A relative of the llama, the Guanaco is one of the most commonly spotted mammals in the park and is protected in Chile. Other mammals in the area include the mountain lion and the fox.

DATES: February 10-22, 2013 (led by Tye Chapman)

LANDCOST: \$3,250 US

\$1000 application fee required to confirm a reservation. Final payment must be received no later than 90 days prior to the departure of the trip.

Costs included:

Guide fees, double accommodations in hotels in Punta Arenas on Day 2 and in Puerto Natales on Day 3 & Day 11 (see itinerary for details), shared accommodations in refugios (huts) while trekking, group transportation, park entrance fees, penguin reserve entrance fee, a group first aid kit, emergency sat phone, breakfasts, lunches & dinners while trekking.

Costs not included:

Airport taxes, restaurant meals while not trekking, beverages during meals, personal clothing and equipment (packs, sleeping bag, pad, boots etc.), gratuities of any kind, additional nights in Punta Arenas, porter fees, single supplements (or any changes to hotel/refugio accommodations).

CANCELLATION/REFUNDS

Cancellation and refund policies are discussed in the General Terms and Conditions sheet that was included in the sign up documents package. We encourage you to read that information carefully. Business realities force us to strictly adhere to the conditions outlined in that document.

CONDITIONING

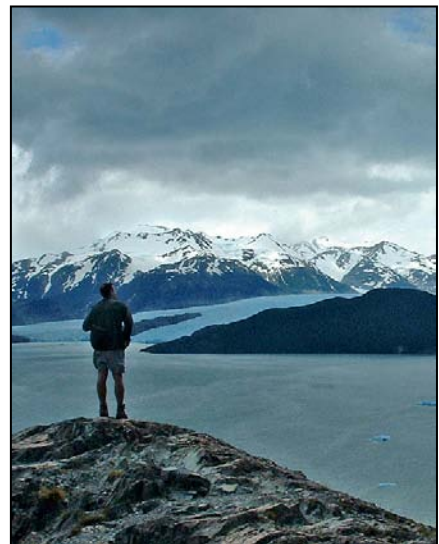
The best training for trekking is trekking (aka hiking). Get outside and log some miles in your boots while carrying a pack. Concentrate on your heart, legs and lungs. Climb or hike at any opportunity. You will enjoy the trip more if you are properly prepared. An aerobic program of running, swimming or bicycling, plus a conditioning program for the thigh muscles is strongly recommended. Running stairs, weight training or similar programs are excellent.

EQUIPMENT

The enclosed PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST is for your guidance. Most items are REQUIRED, a few are optional. Please consider each item carefully and be sure you understand what each piece of equipment's function is before you substitute or delete items from the list. Keep in mind that this list has been carefully compiled by IMG. Check with your equipment outfitter if you are unsure about a particular item. If that doesn't answer your question, call us.

FOOD

Breakfasts, lunches and dinners will be provided while you are trekking. A typical breakfast will include: eggs, toast, cereal, coffee and juice. For lunch we'll have a fresh sandwich everyday with some trail mix and a piece of fruit. Dinners typically include soup, entrée and a dessert. Bringing some supplemental lunch snacks is a good idea. Bring a few personal favorites. See Luggage and customs information below for additional recommendations.



WEATHER

Seasons in the southern hemisphere are opposite of what we have here in the States. Spring is Fall, Summer is Winter and so on. In February we'll likely see high temperatures in the 60's & and lows in the 40's, perfect trekking and sleeping temperatures. Keep in mind harsh weather is always a possibility in Patagonia and wind will likely accompany us on the trail.

PASSPORTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILE

U.S. citizens entering Chile must have a valid passport. U.S. citizens traveling to Chile for recreation, tourism, business, or academic conferences do not need to obtain a visa prior to their arrival to Chile. A Tourist Card will be issued for a stay of up to 90 days upon payment of a reciprocity fee, currently US\$140 (subject to change). Currently, the fee is only charged at the Santiago International Airport. Payment can be made in U.S. currency or by credit card.

LUGGAGE & CUSTOMS

Check in early and clearly mark your luggage though to your destination. Lost bags are a pain for everybody. You'll reclaim luggage in Santiago, clear customs and immigration and then check back in for your flight to Punta. If the bags make it to Santiago, they'll almost surely make it to Punta. Customs is picky about food. Meat, cheese, nuts, fruit are a problem. If in doubt, declare it. Might get confiscated but you don't want to pay a fine. Grocery stores are reasonable in Punta. Bring the Gu, the energy bars, drink mix, candy bars, etc. but it's best to pick up additional lunch snacks (i.e. dried fruit, nuts, salami) in country. We'll have time in Puerto Natales for some last minute purchases.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you consider purchasing a travel insurance policy for your trip. For complete details on travel insurance please visit: <http://www.mountainguides.com/travel-insurance.shtml>. Unanticipated cancellations on your part can be costly. We do not provide any type of trip interruption insurance for you.

PORTERS, PACKING AND TRAVELING SUGGESTIONS

Each trekker is responsible for carrying their own gear. Porters are available to assist (\$70/day @ 15kg max). Sharing a porter between two people is a good way to save a few pounds and a few bucks. Let the office know if you'd like to use a porter for the trek.

Most airlines limit checked luggage to two pieces each weighing no more than 20kg., depending on the airline. Duffel bags are great for trekkers and climbers alike. Use one duffel for your personal gear (clothes for town, etc.) and the other for your trekking gear. Buy two TSA approved locks for use while traveling. In addition to these two bags we like to use a small backpack as our carry on luggage. Then, you have this small rucksack available for day hikes, shopping, and around town use, etc.

We also would suggest that you purchase one of the many money belts that are available or get one of the pouches that you can hang around your neck and place inside your shirt. This is a little safer way to carry your money and travel documents. Experienced travelers will also carry a couple of extra passport photos with them as well as a copy of the first pages of your passport. These should be carried in a place separate from your passport. Having them available will greatly facilitate the replacement of your passport if you ever lost it. Get to the airport early and make sure your luggage gets checked through to the correct destination. Also, make sure that your flight connections aren't too tight. Lost luggage is a pain. Try to keep the number of connections to a minimum when you are making travel plans and use the same airline as much as possible.

Leave expensive jewelry and watches at home. Everyone should wear a watch with an alarm, they are quite handy. Also, it's convenient to have a pen with you for filling in travel forms.

FLIGHT INFORMATION AND TRAVEL PLANS

Seats can sometimes be in short supply to South America and flight schedules can change frequently. Because of this, we encourage you to make your reservations early and strongly urge you to contact Pirjo at CTT Destinations: 800 909 6647 or by email at: img@cttdestinations.com. This is an agency that specializes in group travel. We've worked with them for years and can highly recommend them to help make your travel arrangements. By knowing our programs, they can do a lot to facilitate your travel plans. It is also beneficial for us to have knowledge of everyone's travel arrangements.

ADDITIONAL MEDICAL INFORMATION

While it's always nice to have a doctor as a participant on our trips, we cannot guarantee one's presence and you should be aware of this. We do ask that you carefully fill out the Medical Information form that is part of the sign up packet which you completed as part of the registration procedure. We need to be informed of any allergies you may have, medicines you are currently taking and any medical conditions which could possibly affect your ability to safely participate on a climbing expedition.

In addition to the first aid items listed on the equipment list, there are a few additional medications that you should consider. These should be discussed with your personal physician and will require his prescription. We want everyone to bring a course of the prescription antibiotic Ciprofloxacin. You should also bring some Immodium for treatment of traveler's diarrhea. Please consider both of these medications as part of your REQUIRED equipment list. Any medication should be used only if necessary and use should be discussed thoroughly with your physician and with your guide before you take the medication.

Water purification is also very important. An efficient, effective and inexpensive method is the use of iodine crystals. These are available commercially at mountaineering stores as a product called 'Polar Pure'. Iodine tablets, such as 'Potable Agua' are also available and work well. Filters, such as the ones made by MSR, are also good. Either can be used or both can be used in combination. Bottled water is also readily available.

There are some immunizations that you should consider. Your local health department is the best source of information. They are cheap insurance. Start preparations now so that these vaccinations can be spaced out. We strongly suggest the Hepatitis A vaccination and a tetanus vaccination. Most people like to stay current with these vaccinations regardless of whether they are traveling or not.

We also recommend that each participant brings a small bottle of a hand disinfectant such as Purell. Anything that we can do to stay healthy is worthwhile.

Health issues will be discussed during the expedition and we encourage you to contact us if you have any questions before or during the trip.

"I could go on and on, but the bottom line is that your organization is first-rate in every respect. Thanks for everything... I hope to make use of your services again..."

—Tom G.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at:
www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml

IMMUNIZATIONS

No immunizations are currently required to enter Chile. We do recommend that you consider the following:

- Tetanus/Diphtheria:** There is no natural immunity to the tetanus toxin and since it is found throughout the world, immunization is a universal recommendation regardless of age. A combined tetanus/ diphtheria booster is available, good for ten years.
- Hepatitis Vaccine:** New vaccines are available for both hepatitis A and B.

Please consult your physician or local health department for their recommendations. You should also ask your physician for a prescription for a course of the antibiotic Ciprofloxacin. Please consider this to be part of your required equipment.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Casual attire is the rule for most of our activities. It's nice to have a clean shirt with a collar and a pair of pants for evenings in town. Shorts are mostly frowned upon for men in South America. Women should dress fairly conservative; think longer skirts, loose pants and short sleeves rather than sleeveless attire. Cash should be carried in the form of U.S.dollars. Well-known credit cards are also accepted at better business establishments. Plan to take about \$500 cash. That's probably more than you'll spend but it's always nice to have extra dollars.

Patagonia 'W' Trek Variation Itinerary

Day 1 (10 Feb., 2013) Depart home.

Day 2 (11 Feb., 2013) Arrive Punta Arenas. Overnight in Punta Arenas. Group dinner and a gear check.

Day 3 (12 Feb., 2013) Private transfer from Punta Arenas to Puerto Natales with a stop at a local penguin refuge area along the way. This evening we'll relax, enjoy our official welcome dinner at our 4 star accommodations.

Day 4 (13 Feb., 2013) We'll enjoy an early morning breakfast before our private transfer from Puerto Natales to Torres del Paine National Park where we begin our trek up the Ascencio Valley along the wild river (of the same name) making our way through a forest of Lenga trees getting closer and closer to the towers eventually reaching the glacial moraine. In the late afternoon the towers (weather permitting) will appear right before our eyes as if they came from nowhere! We'll arrive at the towers in the early afternoon. After soaking in the moment and snapping a few photos we'll make our way back down to Refugio Chileno for the night.
(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner) • Trekking: 7hrs • Distance: 11km)

Day 5 (14 Feb., 2013) Today we wake up nice and early to explore the area. We'll leave the bulk of our weight at the hut and head up the Silence Valley making a side trip back up to Los Torres if the weather prevented viewing them the day before. We'll break out of the trees and onto the moraine eventually wrapping around to the north side of the towers for a view of that most people don't get to see. A little extra effort goes a long way here! Once we've taken it all in, we'll make our way back down to Refugio Chileno where we'll stay for the night. (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner • Trekking: 9hrs • Distance: 18km)

Day 6 (15 Feb., 2013) After breakfast we will trek along Lake Nordenskjold (named after the Swedish geologist whose studies formed an important contribution to world glacial geology) and below the hanging glaciers of Mount Almirante Nieto, where we will reach the base of Los Cuernos. Today is a touch easier than the previous two days giving our legs a bit of a break. We'll stay the night lakeside at Refugio Los Cuernos.
(Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner • Trekking: 5hrs • Distance: 11km)

Day 7 (16 Feb., 2013) After breakfast we'll head into Bader Valley with light packs. The Bader Valley, also known as the Forgotten Valley, is one of last virgin areas in the park and is surrounded by the granite walls of Mascara (Mask - 2,300 meters), Hoja (Leaf - 2,200 meters) and Espada (Sword - 2,500 meters). The huge surrounding walls, glacial lagoons, is a unique experience for anybody who gets to visit this hidden gem of a valley. Lodging back at Refugio Los Cuernos. (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner • Trekking: 7hrs • Distance: 10km).

Day 8 (17 Feb., 2013) Today we'll trek to the famous French Valley . This valley, the most beautiful in the park and one of the most unique in the world, is surrounded by hanging glaciers (where you can see and hear the ice calving off at various times during the day) and an amphitheater of granite walls and spires. There are amazing views throughout this trek and the further you trek into the valley the better they become! After the French Valley we'll make our way over to Lake Pehoe where we'll board our first boat of the trek. We'll cross Lake Pehoe and hop in our waiting van and head to the perfectly located Hosteria Tyndall for the night, but not before checking out the signature waterfall in the park, Salto Grande. (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner • Trekking: 9hrs • Distance: 17km)

Day 9 (18 Feb., 2013) A leisurely morning at the hotel or some optional horseback riding – it's up to you. Late in the morning we'll head back into the park for a hike up to the lookout on Mt. Ferrier – one of the best views of the park. The entire park is on display from this lookout location. Truly amazing! After our 3 hour afternoon trek we'll make our way back down to Hosteria Grey for an afternoon snack before our second boat ride of the trek. We'll take the Grey II across Lago Grey enjoying the views of the floating icebergs along the way. Dinner awaits as does another bed and hot shower. Overnight at Refugio Grey. (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner • Trekking: 4hrs • Distance: 7km)

Day 10 (19 Feb., 2013) Today we trek alongside the Grey Glacier trying to digest the massive size of this glacier. We'll make our way up to the first significant lookout and if the weather & our legs permit, we'll head on up to John Garner Pass eventually making our way back down to Refugio Grey for the night. (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner • Trekking: 8hrs • Distance: 12km)

Day 11 (20 Feb., 2013) We' will enjoy nice a casual breakfast today before walking down to the beach to see the icebergs that have run ashore. After enjoy a mid-morning nap with the icebergs we'll head back to the hut for lunch and to pack up before boarding the Grey II For our final boat ride of the trek. En route back across Lago Grey we'll cruise right in front of the Grey Glacier hoping to see catch glacier calving of a chunk or two of ice all while sipping a fresh pisco sour chilled by glacier ice pulled right out of the lake. A perfect end to a wonderful trek. After the boat ride we'll make our way back to Puerto Natales via private transfer for a little afternoon souvenir shopping and our celebration dinner. Our final night of the trek will be spent in 4-star accommodations. (Spa services available for an extra charge).

Day 12 (21 Feb., 2013) We'll have an early breakfast before heading back to Punta Arenas for afternoon flights home.

Day 13 (22 Feb., 2013) Arrive home with time to spare before work next week. Unpack at your leisure, shake off that jet lag and get the photos off your camera and start bragging to all your friends!

“From the initial contact, through the whole trip planning process, to the expedition itself, everything was highly professional and first class in every respect. It appears that you set the standard in guided mountaineering, and I thank you for making possible this once in a lifetime experience for my son and me...”

—Michael B.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml

International Mountain Guides ♦ www.mountainguides.com ♦ email: office@mountainguides.com

PO Box 246 ♦ 31111 SR 706 E ♦ Ashford, WA 98304 ♦ phone: (360) 569-2609 ♦ fax: (866) 279-7455

PATAGONIA EQUIPMENT LIST

(Please Read Carefully)

Gear

- 40-50L Pack (rain cover optional)
- Trekking Poles

Upper Body (torso)

- Short-sleeved synthetic or wool base layer t-shirt (x1)
- Long-sleeved synthetic or wool base layer t-shirt (x1)
- Softshell jacket
- Gore-Tex rain shell jacket
- Lightweight Insulated jacket (down or syn. filled 'puffy')
- Fleece pullover or sweater to change into at the huts. (Evening attire, but functional while trekking).



Lower Body (legs)

- Lightweight long underwear synthetic or wool (optional)
- Softshell pants or convertible nylon trekking pants
- Gore-Tex pants
- Lightweight quick drying pair of shorts (optional)

Feet

- A pair of mid-weight Gore-Tex hiking boots that have been worn & tested
- 3 pair of socks (and liners if you wear sock liners)
- A **lightweight** pair of sandals/shoes for around the refugios
- Lightweight gaiters (optional)

Misc.

- Sunscreen & lip balm
- Small first aid & toiletry kit for simple personal care (TP, blister care, small cuts, etc.)
- 1 wide mouth water bottle
- Earplugs
- Watch with alarm
- Small pocketknife or Leatherman.
- Camera (extra battery); USB for sharing photos with team
- Headlamp with fresh batteries
- 2 trash bags



Head

- Sun hat or baseball hat
- Warm ski hat
- IMG Buff™ (Provided upon arrival in Punta Arenas)
- Sunglasses (Polarized with UV protection)

Hands

- Mid-weight softshell

Sleeping

- Down or synthetic sleeping bag rated 20°F up to 45°F