



## **“Futaleufu Rafting Adventure”**

*Patagonia, Chile*



*‘Rivers are places that renew our spirit, connect us with our past,  
and link us directly with the flow and rhythm of the natural world.’*

Ted Turner

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## ITINERARY SNAPSHOT

<b>Day 1</b>	Arrive in Santiago, Chile. After completing customs, board a domestic flight to Puerto Montt. Transfer to the scenic town of Puerto Varas on Lago Llanquihue. Overnight in Cabanas Del Lago Hotel. (D)
<b>Day 2</b>	Take a short, scenic flight to Chaiten. We then drive through the temperate rainforest, passing countless waterfalls and hanging glaciers surrounded by jagged mountain peaks! We will pause for a short hike and a picnic lunch in Pumalin National Park. Arrive early afternoon at camp: camp orientation, swim, hot tub, and welcome happy hour. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 3</b>	Start the day with a Yoga class, or catch up on some sleep after long international travel. After a Breakfast of Champions, get ready to raft the Futaleufu river! Today's introduction and "warm up" is complete with safety briefing and paddle training on the famous Bridge to Bridge section. In the afternoon you may choose from mountain biking, hiking, fly-fishing class and our popular intro to hard shell, river kayaking clinic. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 4</b>	Step-up the rafting today! Raft from camp to below the Casa de Piedra rapid – class V (option to take a short walk around the intense rapids and continue). The afternoon is a scenic float to take in the magnificence of Patagonia. Then, return to camp. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 5</b>	Introduction and training for the inflatable kayaks on the Rio Azul. This is your chance to guide your own craft and navigate the stunning Azul Valley. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 6</b>	Horseback ride deep into the pristine wilderness of the Rio Azul. Option to enjoy a quick nature hike to one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the Patagonia region. Gallop, or trot, back to base camp. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 7</b>	Drive to the Pueblo of Futaleufú and raft the Inferno Canyon from the Rio Espolón to Rio Azul. A five-mile canyon of class V whitewater, walk around the Dynamite, Zeta and Throne Room rapids, four-mile class II float, then five miles of class IV. For those not interested in adrenaline Class V, there is the option to only raft the rapids below Inferno Canyon, which are Class II & III Rapids. Return to camp from the Azul and enjoy the comforts of camp while you celebrate the accomplishments of your day. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 8</b>	Raft from the Rio Azul through the Terminator, Kyburz, and Himalayas rapids. Lunch at camp. Raft from camp again to below Casa De Piedra. Optional hiking, mountain biking or fly-fishing activities available as well. Last night in camp: lamb roast/Chilean "asado feast" and party. (B+L+D)
<b>Day 9</b>	Early morning drive back to Chaiten and 45 min. flight back to Puerto Montt. Take connecting flights home or to next destination! Depart PMC at 2PM or later. (B)
<b>Optional Extension</b>	Extend your trip by visiting the world-renowned Torres Del Paine National Park. Enjoy breath-taking vistas while trekking the numerous trails that have made this a top outdoor destination. (Details below.)

Please note: This is a sample itinerary. The rafting sections may change due to water levels. Activities can be interchanged depending on your preference for the day.  
(Legend: B = Breakfast included , L = Lunch included, D = Dinner included)



## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day One

Arrive in Santiago, Chile. Collect your luggage, pass through Customs and then re-check in for your domestic flight to Puerto Montt: gate way to Patagonia!

Please look for a BBX representative to transfer you 30 minutes to the beautiful town of Puerto Varas, Located on the shores of Lago Llanquihue, which is Chile's second-largest lake! You may experience stunning views of Volcano Osorno, weather permitting. Enjoy strolling the streets, famous for its wooden homes built by German immigrants. Depending on your arrival time, rafting, fishing, or a tour to Lago Todos los Santos and Saltos de Petrohue can be arranged. (Not included in trip price)



We will meet at 7:00 pm in the hotel lobby bar for introductions and a welcome briefing to be followed by a group welcome dinner at one of our favorite restaurants where you can indulge in a steak off the parilla or try Chile's famous seafood! Overnight in the lovely Cabanas del Lago Hotel right on the lake.

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### Day Two

After breakfast we will board our private vehicle for a 20-minute drive to the La Paloma Airport, where we will board one of the most scenic flights imaginable. In only 30 minutes we will arrive Chaiten, a small fishing village and a gateway to Patagonia. Here you will get an immediate sense of wild and scenic Patagonia! Depending on time, we will take a short hike in Pumalin National Park; one of the largest and most diverse conservation efforts in South America. The 715,000-acre Pumalín Park is located in the Palena Province of Chile, and stretches from the heart of the Andes to the fjords of the Pacific Coast. Protecting a pristine Valdivian temperate rainforest, this is one of Doug Tompkins Conservation Initiatives.



Along our 2 hour drive to Bio Bio basecamp, we pass beautiful Lago Yelcho, multiple hanging glaciers, jagged glaciated peaks, and temperate rainforests. Soon we'll arrive at the Bio Bio Base Camp, where your private tent bungalows sitting upon raised platforms, complete with river views and comfortable beds, will be waiting for you. Our enthusiastic guides will lead you to your sweet new "home away from home" on the river!

After a short hike or a swim, you may want to soak in the riverside hot tub or enjoy a hot shower. Then, we gather in the sunset bar for our first welcome happy hour. We will introduce the entire BBX crew and go over the week's agenda. After happy hour, a hearty dinner will be served. It does tend to cool down quite a bit when the sun sets below the peaks so we dress warmly in the evenings.

### Day Three

Awaken on the banks of the Fu and enjoy your first morning in camp! You will have the option to take an early morning hike that will orient you to the Futaleufu Valley and is quite scenic as well. Those who chose to sleep in will rise with the warmth of the sun and have breakfast around 9 am. A pre-breakfast yoga class is available on our customized yoga platform with river views or in the indoor Yoga Loft if the weather is inclement. Mornings tend to be crisp and dewy so prepare to dress warmly - a fleece is perfect. Today is a river day. We will launch our rafts from base camp after a thorough safety briefing. In a safe 'eddy', a short distance downstream, we'll do a set of practice rescue drills. This allows the crew in each raft to hone their skills and prepare to raft as a team.



We use a cataraft combined with ace safety-kayakers as part of our "safety net." Each raft is captained by a highly trained and intuitive river guide, who guides the boat from a stern-mounted oar frame. Guiding with oars does not detract from the paddling experience. The advantage to the oar frame is greater control in pointing the bow straight through bus size holes and 15-foot high "haystack" wave trains. High siding is also an actively used "paddle" command. This style is consistent with any high volume, strong-current river where rapids graded 4 to 5-plus rage on. *This is the Futaleufú!*

The first section that we raft, from camp down to Puente Futaleufú (the Futaleufú Bridge), is only 10 km, but offers more rapids per 1000 meters than anywhere else on the river. It is the perfect warm-up run and it is non-stop fun! The rapids of note are "El Cojín", the Cushion, and "Mundaca", a local family name.



At take-out, we meet our vehicles for a 20-minute ride back to camp. Those who would prefer a "lower body" workout to complement their paddling are welcome to run back or ride one of our mountain bikes from take-out to camp. When we get to camp, you can choose to go fly-fishing, try out a kayak, practice yoga, nap in a

When we get to camp, you can choose to go fly-fishing, try out a kayak, practice yoga, nap in a

hammock, enjoy the sauna, have a massage, go for a hike, or soak in the hot tub. Taking a hot shower, either indoors or under the big sky, feels very luxurious while camping in the remote wilderness of northern Patagonia! Of course, for the hardy, the river provides a cold bath and refreshing swim.

As the sun sinks behind the mountains, enjoy a game of chess or cards at the sunset bar. Every late afternoon is “Happy Hour” with an open bar stocked with beer, wine, soda, and fresh juice. Then, we gather together in the open-air kitchen/dining area, the “Galpon”, for a candlelight sit-down dinner featuring fresh produce, grown right in our own garden, and fresh-baked breads. After dinner, enjoy the campfire and the stars before retiring to your cozy tent on your private platform. The sound of the river will lull you to sleep and send you off dreaming of the next day of adventure in Chile.



#### Day Four

Officially day two of our rafting extravaganza: Our aim is to settle into a river rhythm that will be utilized in order to successfully raft the next few sections the Fu. Start your day with a soothing yoga class – perfect for all levels and even those who have never tried it! After breakfast, we will launch our rafts from camp and have lunch on the river. After we pass the Puente Futaleufú (yesterday’s take-out), we immediately round the corner to meet a big stomping continuous cascade of waves known as “Mas o Menos”, translated, “More or Less”. This is a good stepping-stone towards our first true blue class V technical rapid, “Casa de Piedra” (House of Rock) which is right around the next corner. We will get out of our rafts to scout this massive boulder choked rapid from the banks. It is formed like a series of water wheels that channel all of their fury into a final churning pit with a dragon’s back highway through it; that is, if you hit it on line. If rafting class 3 and 4 rapids are enough adrenaline

for you, there is an eloquent option to stop at the bridge to circumvent the class V rapids and resume rafting down the river (as detailed below).

After this rapid, we will run the remaining class 3 and 4 rapids as our hearts resume beating at their normal rates. We will drift into a nice long calm section that offers perfect fishing from the rafts as well as a great place to get into some hard shell kayaks. The next three miles we will have a floating happy hour and reach our take out spot just above Lago Yelcho. Upon return to camp, we will continue to celebrate the day, enjoy the amenities of camp and get ready for another fabulous dinner prepared by our jovial crew and talented chef.





## Day Five

Today we become experts at navigating our very own river crafts, known inflatable kayaks, IK's or duckies. We venture up canyon to the Rio Azul, one of the main tributaries to the Futaleufu and is one of the most scenic canyons in Patagonia. Challenge yourself on the class II and III rapids and depending on your comfort level, either walk or take-on the Class IV rapid, 'Cheese Grater'.



There is something deeply satisfying paddling your own boat down river, knowing that your destiny is in your own hands. Of course our highly trained guides will be there to coach you, watch over you and provide safety should you need to be rescued. Fishing, mountain biking or relaxing around camp are always options in the late afternoon.

## Day Six

After yoga and breakfast we take a short drive to the stables where we will find our trusty steeds saddled up and ready for adventurous riding. After a safety briefing, we ride alongside some local expert equestrians and our own river guides who will gladly join the posse up a glorious, pristine side valley where the Rio Azul flows unhindered from its glacial headwaters. We ride about 2 hours to a beautiful beach on the Rio Azul and enjoy an authentic Patagonian Asado picnic lunch. Then you will have the chance to take a 30 minute, round-trip, hike to the 300 ft Cascada waterfall, one of the most beautiful waterfalls you will ever set eyes on. After relaxing and a short siesta, you will have the chance to trot or gallop back to camp. This is a full day and you will be glad to return to camp, enjoy the soothing hot tub, a cold beer or glass of wine as you wait your turn to get a well deserved massage!

## Day Seven

We will have an early breakfast in camp then travel 25 kilometers up the road to the Rio Espolon to launch our rafts for the Inferno Canyon day!



On the Rio Espolon we have a chance to warm up on this low volume river before it joins and helps form the mighty Futaleufu as it gets squeezed into the narrow Inferno canyon. This upper canyon requires aggressive class V paddling and is potentially the most intense section of white water on the river. Many other options exist for those who choose not to participate in Inferno Canyon. You can either join the group below the Inferno Canyon rapids or opt for another activity.



Five distinct rapids form a narrow sinuous river passage creating a wet surge and a “full on” adrenaline rush. The fourth rapid was until recently the smallest of the 5, but due to road building



debris landing in the river, has now become nearly impassable at most water levels and requires a walk around and “lining” the rafts through it. As we come out of “Exit”, the last rapid, we enter into a long calm. The current remains swift and we cruise many miles downstream arriving at the mandatory portage around the fierce “Zeta” rapid. We have lunch on the rocks as the crew “ghost” boats the rafts through this treacherous rapid.

After lunch, our first obstacle is “Throne Room,” a class V+ rapid for kayaks, a ghost boat rapid for rafts. By walking around this rapid, we get a great bird’s eye view of an almost ‘river wide’ hole that could destroy a raft. Back on board our rafts, we are dealt a Royal Flush; a continuous class IV corridor of rapids does not let up until we get to our take-out spot at the Rio Azul footbridge. The rafts are left for the night, tethered on shore. We return to camp in the late afternoon for massage, hot showers, or just resting in one of the two hot tubs. Another sumptuous dinner before heading to sleep.

## Day Eight

Today, we must be mentally and physically well prepared for the river. We call it the “summit day” as we aim to top our already great paddling days with the best day of white water in the world. For a full day, start off with an invigorating yoga class! After a nutritious breakfast, we head up river to the footbridge where we left the rafts yesterday. As our day on the river begins, the blue glacial run-off from the Rio Azul River merges into the Fu from the right. The views of the snow capped mountain peaks and jagged ridges of the mountain “Las Tres Monjas” (translated, “the three Nuns”) are absolutely breathtaking. A six-kilometer stretch of warm-up rapids leads us to the longest and toughest rapid that we will raft, “The Terminator.” We scout and study our line, then we take the plunge and drop in. “Left turn, right turn, dig it in — *hard forward!*” are a few of the commands that might be heard. The next three miles are non-stop rapids. After an aerobic workout, we pump through the enormous haystack wave train known as the “Himalayas”. Just when we need it, a calm returns, we float gently into lunch, served at our base camp.

After lunch, you have the choice to spend your last afternoon lounging at camp, further exploring the area via hiking or biking or returning to the river. We raft the whole section of river from camp to below Casa de Piedra. At take-out, cold beers and sodas are waiting. We make a triumphant return to camp to celebrate our days spent exploring Futaleufú valley and river.



For the evening's festivities, we will prepare a typical Chilean Asado — lamb roasted over a bed of coals, ensalada, potatoes and farm fresh bread. We toast the river and give thanks for our safe passage. Under a bright starry sky, we will spend our last night together as a group on the banks of the mighty Fu with the guides and crew.

## **Day Nine**

We start early today as we have to travel back down to the coast to catch the puddle jumper flight from Chaiten back to Puerto Montt for connecting flights either home or to your next destination. You will want to leave a comfortable "window" to make it back in time, so book connecting flights from 14:00 hrs onwards. You may also choose to spend another night in Puerto Varas on your own. (See below if you are interested in the Torres Del Paine Extension.)

We hope that when you board the airplane you will look back upon your time in Patagonia and think of the friends you have made and the beauty of the Futaleufú River and Patagonian wilderness. Ciao amigos! Ciao Ciao Chile!!

A note for those who aren't serious rafters: please let your trip leader know that you would like to try any of the following activities during your stay:

- Hiking
- Mountain Biking
- Fly-Fishing
- Paddleboarding
- Massage
- Lounging in a hammock in the Library

## **TORRES DEL PAINE EXTENSION**

For those interested in trekking in Torres Del Paine, you will fly from Puerto Montt to Punta Arenas and spend the night in Punta Arenas. The following day will be Day 1 of your extension into Torres del Paine!

The trails in between the Torres del Paine famous craggy mountains are among the world's classic trekking routes. The 18 hours of sunlight during the summer (Dec-Mar), giving explorers plenty of time for the walking journey. Breath-taking views together with glaciers, rivers, lakes, forests and abundant wildlife provide a constantly changing backdrop to an unforgettable experience.

Below is a sample itinerary. Please contact our office for additional information!

### **5 Days / 4 Nights**

#### **Day 1**

In the morning, you will be picked up from your hotel in Punta Arenas and driven to EcoCamp Patagonia, located in the



world-famous Torres del Paine National Park. This is a long travel day but we will stop in the beautiful, rugged town of Puerto Natales for lunch. The drive takes us across the wind-swept Patagonian steppe which gets more and more dramatic as we get closer to the park. We will stop a few times to stretch our legs and take photos of the magnificent scenery. We are likely to come across herds of guanaco (a wild relative of the llama), and the occasional rhea (looks like an ostrich).

We will arrive at the amazing EcoCamp Patagonia, nestled in the heart of Torres del Paine National Park and with a prime view of the majestic Torres. Sunset is usually around 10:30 pm during the summer months, meaning that there will still be enough daylight for you to admire a stunning view of the “Torres” if the skies are clear. We will gather in the main Dome for a welcome Pisco Sour toast and an overview of the hiking adventure to come. Overnight Ecocamp Patagonia Domes.  
(B +L+D)

#### *More info on our base camp for the next 4 nights*

Our Suite Domes are comfortable 28mt<sup>2</sup>/ 300 ft<sup>2</sup> tented igloo-type double domes built the same way as the ancient native Kaweska's dwellings. Its structure produces minimal environmental impact while providing an efficient thermal and wind resistant unit, with great exposure to nature in the most magnificent Patagonian setting.

Each dome has a private bathroom, comfortable double or twin beds, and it is heated by a modern low-emission wood stove. In addition, every dome has its own composting device to process waste. Electricity is generated with a micro hydro turbine and solar panels.

EcoCamp's Suite domes are located in a Lenga (beech) forest next to the existing standard domes but allowing enough distance so as to create a separate and independent atmosphere with more refinement and comfort. The domes are set up with enough space between them to provide adequate intimacy and introspection.

#### **Day 2 (you will have options for the next three days – not necessarily in the order below)**

Today we'll hike from Paine Grande Lodge along the shores of mountain-lined Lake Pehoe to the northern end of glacial Lake Grey. We'll enjoy a picnic lunch before boarding the boat that sails to the blue face of Glacier Grey. You'll have lots of time to marvel at this calving glacier before the boat ride across Lake Grey with its floating pieces of ice. Your clothes and personal belongings are once again transported separately from the lodge in duffel bags. From Lake Grey's southern end we transfer to the EcoCamp. If the weather conditions do not allow us to navigate Lake Grey, we'll instead hike to Glacier Grey. Then at Pudeto we'll board the catamaran to cross Lake Pehoe. From there, we'll take a short drive back to Cascada EcoCamp where we'll enjoy the night. Overnight at EcoCamp. (B+L+D)

#### **Day 3**

Time for a great breakfast and lots of enthusiasm! Our goal is to complete the most famous trekking trail in Torres del Paine NP. We walk from the campsite towards Hostería Las Torres and connect with the winding uphill path to Ascencio Valley – the valley which supports the eastern face of the Towers' base. Dry mountain spots, beech forests and small rivers are passed along the scenic walk into the valley.

It's not a difficult walk, but energy should nevertheless be saved for the final challenge: the moraine. This mass of boulders is the last guardian before our face-to-face meeting with the uplifting Torres del Paine. The moraine is sufficiently steep to consider doing it slowly and with an adequate amount of precaution. After a considerable effort, the Towers come into full view, rising majestically before us with the glacial lake visible below. This is one of the most breathtaking sights of the world! The famous Torres del Paine (2, 900 m/ 9, 400 ft) consist of three gigantic granite monoliths, the remains of a great cirque sheared away by the forces of glacial ice. Is there any better place on this planet to have lunch? Of course! But since we are in Patagonia, at the feet of the mighty Torres del Paine, we will enjoy life, the view, and a bite to eat! Once everyone is ready, we backtrack along the same trail through Ascencio Valley, and return to the EcoCamp. Overnight at EcoCamp (B+L+D)



#### **Day 4**

After breakfast, we start our day driving towards Pudeto dock, located by the shores of Pehoe Lake. Once there we board the catamaran that will take us to the northern west sector of the Lake from where we will start the challenging trek to Valle Frances (French Valley), taking a steep trail that goes into the very heart of the Paine Massif. How deep we go depends on our groups' rhythm.

An active walk leads us to the hanging bridge over the French River, located at the foot of the south-east face of the Massif. From this point, we can enjoy our first truly wonderful view and then continue up the trail until reaching the upper prospects of the valley. The entire group of geological formations of the high valley can be admired here: Hoja (Blade), Máscara (Mask), Espada (Sword), Catedral (Cathedral), Aleta de Tiburón (Shark's Fin) and the magnificent Fortaleza! (Fortress). It is time to have a picnic and recover from the walk. Overnight Eco Camp. (B+L+D)

#### **Day 5**

With one last look at Torres del Paine we set off in our transfer to Punta Arenas. (B)

## **PASSPORTS & VISAS**

**Passports:** U.S. citizens are required to have a passport valid 6 months after your travel dates begin. If you hold a passport from another country, it is your responsibility to check with your embassy for details.

**Visas:** Keep in mind that, while it's not likely, visa rules and regulations can change at the last minute. It's always a good idea to check the US and visiting countries' embassy websites before your departure.

**Chile:** Citizens from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay can travel with their national identity card. Citizens of other countries need a valid passport to enter Chile. A visa is NOT required to enter Chile for a stay of 30 – 90 days if you are a citizen of the United States. Check the embassy sight listed above for the most current information.

## **FLIGHTS & AIRPORTS**

You are responsible for booking all flights, international as well as domestic. However, if you need help, please feel free to call or email the Bio Bio office. One travel agent we frequently use is:

G&G Travel and Tours      Gilda Gutierrez | [gildagutierrez@comcast.net](mailto:gildagutierrez@comcast.net) | 866-498-0530 or 786-206-0710

### **FLYING IN**

The trip officially starts in Puerto Montt on Day 1, El Tepual International Airport – airport code: PMC.

### **FLYING OUT**

On the last day, we will fly back to Puerto Montt. Please depart PMC at 2PM or later.

### **LOST LUGGAGE**

If you arrive in Santiago and your luggage is lost, please have your luggage sent to Puerto Varas and the Hotel Cabana del Lago: Luis Wellmann 195, Puerto Varas, Chile - Tel: +56 6522 00100.

### **BAGGAGE WEIGHT LIMITS**

There is a weight limit on the Puerto Montt / Chaitén charter flight of 35 pounds for checked luggage. If you are in Chile for an extended time and have extra bags, you can leave them at the Hotel Cabana del Lago in Puerta Varas.

### **CUSTOMS**

Normally you will not have problems with personal belongings as long as you don't carry the following:

- Fruits, vegetables, seeds, or unprocessed goods of animal origin
- Firearms, ammunitions or explosives
- Illegal drugs

## **PACKING**

### **BAGGAGE SUGGESTIONS**

In order to make your travels and connecting flights easier you might consider bringing only **one duffle bag and one carry-on daypack**.

### **CLOTHES & WEATHER**

Though it will be the height of summer in Chile, we need to be prepared for inclement weather. The "Fu" is located in a region of extreme possibilities. We expect warm sunny days and cool, clear nights. Unfortunately, Mother Nature does not always cooperate and rain, even snow, is not unheard of in the Andes. When packing, think of cold and wet as well as sunny and warm weather and you will be a happy camper. Plan ahead and bring warm clothes and a good rain shell.

The following is a descriptive packing list. Of course there are variations on each of these suggestions, but this should give you a good idea of what you should pack.

### **SPORT GEAR**

- One pair of river shorts:** River shorts are quick drying, durable and multi-purpose
- Wetsuits:** We do supply these, but if you have and prefer your own, feel free to bring it along
- Paddle Jacket:** We will supply you with one, but if you prefer your own, please bring it
- Two Polypropylene long sleeve shirts** or some type of synthetic sweater or underwear to wear underneath the paddle jacket. The paddle jacket alone will not work well without something underneath
- Polypro long underwear:** A must! These will keep you warm when they get wet, and they dry quickly.
- River footwear:** Check out the line of toe-protected river footwear. Tevas, Alps, Chacos, Keens, or tennis sneakers with wool socks work well to keep your feet warm. Wetsuit booties with good soles are preferred!
- Hat, visor or large brimmed sombrero with a string.**
- Sunglasses with securing straps (we recommend "Chums" straps).**
- Camel-Back/Platypus Hydration System:** Easy hydration for mtn biking and horse-back riding
- Jeans:** For horse-back riding
- Bogs (thermal rain boots):** Worth their weight in gold if it rains. We have rubber boots in camp for our guest to use when it rains (bring nice warm thermal socks or wool socks if you plan on using them).
- Loose fitting yoga clothes**
- Padded bike shorts:** Nice for mtn biking and horse-back riding.
- Avid fly-fisherpeople** – your own rod and flies

- Hiking Boots or Walking Shoes:** There are great running trails around the camp, so bring the sneaks if you're a runner
- Hiking Shorts with pockets and a belt**
- Bathing Suit**

## **CAMP GEAR**

- Rain Gear:** Please be prepared with rain gear, such as a Gortex jacket or even one of those inexpensive yellow rain ponchos you wore as a kid
- Wool or fleece sweater**
- Down jacket:** Lightweight and a great insulator. Provides endless joy if it should be cold out, and when the sun goes down around 10 pm, the temperatures can plummet
- Wool or fleece hat:** You can also buy locally made wool goods at our camp
- Wool socks:** Two pairs, so you'll always have a dry pair to put on — a luxury!
- Two or more tee shirts**
- One pair of lightweight nylon or cotton baggy pants:** Only a suggestion, but they are comfortable to wear around camp after a day of rafting
- One nice pair of pants or summer dress:** For city life upon arrival or departure and wine tasting
- Camera:** A waterproof camera is nice to have to take pictures from the raft. We will bring along waterproof cases and bags to keep cameras dry
- Lotion and sunscreen:** Not much Ozone left in the southern hemisphere so be prepared!
- Toiletry kit:** Shampoo, soap, toothbrush, lotion, bug repellent, medications, etc.
- Flashlight and/or headlamp** with extra batteries
- Daypack or fanny-pack**
- Water Bottle,** with optional carabiner to strap to raft
- Small Pack Towel:** another luxury to have at the river take-out, we will supply a large bath towel for you
- Books:** There is plenty of time for rest and relaxation, so bring along a book and/or journal
- A favorite poem** to share around the campfire is also welcome
- Songs, mirth and merriment, small musical instruments, etc.**

\*Remember when packing your carry-on bag to bring any medications needed as well as any toothpaste or lotions in a plastic zip loc bag for security. You may want to bring a toothbrush on your overnight flight as well as a change of clothing.

## **TRAVEL CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT RESOURCES**

[REI](http://bit.ly/1oSaVdR) - <http://bit.ly/1oSaVdR>

[Patagonia](http://bit.ly/1kVJNJJ) - <http://bit.ly/1kVJNJJ>

Mountain Hardware – [www.mountainhardware.com](http://www.mountainhardware.com)

TravelSmith – [www.travelsmith.com](http://www.travelsmith.com)

[Sierra Trading Post](http://bit.ly/1tmxiHG) - <http://bit.ly/1tmxiHG>

## **FAQ's**

*Is there internet access at camp?*

No. We do not have internet access at camp. However, emergency messages will get through to us if someone needs to find you. We love our guests to have an “un-plugged” experience in Patagonia!

*Do the tent cabins have electricity?*

We prefer the glow of the headlamp and moonlight to light up the night in your tent bungalow. There is not electricity in the tent cabins, however, we have a few areas around camp where you can charge your cameras,



phones, and other devices.

*How does polypro long underwear compare to Nike dri-fit polyester?*

It has all the properties and more than the now somewhat outdated and generic Poly pro. What you are looking for is something that will retain its thermal qualities even when wet. With that said, it should not be a sponge for water, like thick fleece is. So, it should be thin and stretchy and keep you warm when wet (smart wool is also a good option).

*Are there dryers or places to hang things to dry? Will wool dry overnight or do we need enough to give it the extra day? How many changes of clothes do we bring for the river?*

We do not have electric dryers. If the weather is inclement, we have a drying room heated by a wood burning stove that is dedicated to drying your wets suits, what you wear under your wet suit and paddle jacket ( your expedition style synthetics or the like; Nike dry fit, poly pro, smart-wool). If the sun is out, hanging paddling gear out on a line is the best way to dry it for the next day paddling fun!

*Do we need to bring our own towels, soap and shampoo?*

We provide towels and hand soap at all the bathrooms. You will need to bring your own shampoo, conditioner and body wash soap.

## **JET LAG PRECAUTIONS**

When you cross several time zones to reach your destination, you often lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then must suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue – often compounded by insomnia and restlessness – irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag but you can minimize it. Here's how:

- Start your trip well rested. Try to begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave.
- Switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Try to sleep on overnight flights.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before and during your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

## **TRAVEL PRACTICALITIES**

### **TRIP INSURANCE**

Bio Bio Expeditions recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, contact Travelex Insurance Services at 800-228-9792 and reference location number 05-8655. Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. Travel Insurance is underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276. 55Y

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Although there are no immunizations required to travel to Chile, in addition to your routine vaccinations, the CDC also recommends the **typhoid** and **Hepatitis A** vaccines. We advise that you consult your physician regarding recommended immunizations and other health precautions. Bio Bio Expeditions does not take responsibility for which medications or

inoculations you and your physician deem necessary for your safe participation on the expedition. For further information, call the CDC's International Traveler's Hotline:

Phone: 1-888-232-4636

Online: [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/)

## **WATER**

You will find some of the purest water on earth flowing freely in the Patagonia Andes. The water at camp is treated at all faucets. In the cities we recommend that you drink bottled water which can be ordered at all restaurants. Ask for "agua mineral, sin gas" (non-carbonated) or "con gas" (carbonated). Diet sodas are usually referred to as "light".

## **FOOD**

You will discover some of the best produce and cuisine found anywhere on the planet! And if you are a meat eater, you will be in heaven! The Chilean seafood un-paralleled for its exotic variety of fish, shellfish and crustaceans. The wines are amazing, as are the fresh juices commonly served. Gelato ice cream is found everywhere and is well worth at least one visit to a "heladeria"! At the Bio Bio Adventure Camp we have a professional chef and full kitchen staff that can cater to any special dietary needs.

## **DIGESTIVE WORRIES**

Traveling to Chile is not like traveling in Central America or even other parts of South America where water borne diseases are more common. You will feel that that the Chileans are very mindful of cleanliness and hygiene. Despite the many precautions we all take to stay healthy, occasionally one may experience diarrhea. The major problem associated with diarrhea is fluid loss leading to severe dehydration, so it is important to maintain plentiful fluid intake. Avoid milk and caffeine, as it will only further dehydrate you. The best drinks are weak tea, mineral water, and caffeine-free soft drinks. Ideally it is best to let diarrhea run its course, however you may want to bring over-the-counter diarrhea medication to minimize your potential discomfort.

## **PRESCRIPTIONS**

If you currently take prescription medications, be sure to have a plentiful supply and also the doctor's written prescription in case you need a refill. It is best to carry medications in your carry-on bag in case of lost luggage. Also, if you wear prescription glasses or contacts, we advise that you bring along a spare set.

## **VOLTAGE**

Electric voltage is 220 volts, 50 cycles (220v, 50Hz). The use of appliances or electric devices designed for 110 volts need the use of a transformer. Most travel appliances, like laptops, have an auto-volt (110v – 240v) transformer built in that will adapt to Chilean electricity. We do have access to electricity if you need to charge batteries for cameras, video cameras, and laptops. At many airports universal adaptor kits are available and handy if you plan to recharge cameras and other devices.

## **SAFETY**

Although the Chileans are a warm, friendly, fun-loving people, thievery is a common problem in the bigger cities. Always keep your wits about you and be aware of your surroundings. When you're with other people, watch out for each other. Large crowds are prime locations for pick-pocketing to occur. Keep your money and important documents in a money belt or hidden pouch around your waist, neck or under your shirt. When purchasing items, do not pull out lots of money. We advise that you leave all valuable jewelry, including watches, at home. Thieves often work in pairs or groups - one

tries to distract you (e.g.: by squirting food or paint on your clothing) and in the ensuing confusion, another one takes off with your belongings.

## MONEY MATTERS

We recommend using a combination of your credit card, getting local currency using an ATM machine and having US dollars in several denominations for tips. You can change U.S. dollars into Chilean Pesos in the town of Futaleufu during banking hours of 9-2pm. Some stores accept small amounts of dollar bills if you are making a purchase.

### ATMs

Plus, Cirrus and other networks connecting ATMs are available in Chile. If your credit card has been programmed with a PIN, it's likely you can use it at ATMs to withdraw money as a cash advance. **Always ask your bank before you leave home about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad, the limit each day, and also let them know where you are going so they do not put a hold on your card.** You may be charged a fee for each transaction.

### CREDIT CARDS

Most of the bigger restaurants and shops accept credit cards. If you have American Express, Visa, Master Card and Diners Club, you're probably equipped for any establishment that takes cards. If you only have one credit card, VISA is the most widely accepted. A shopkeeper may require you to pay the credit card fee for purchases, so for the most ease, we recommend you use cash whenever possible.

### PERSONAL CHECKS

Personal checks are not accepted in shops or at your hotels, however it's a good idea to bring a few for possible emergencies!

## TIPPING

This is a rough guideline to try and help you work out how much you should tip. Tipping is, of course, entirely voluntary and how much you give depends on how you feel about the service received. Hotel staff porters usually receive \$1 per bag as do taxi drivers. In restaurants, 10% is the norm. You should plan to give 10% of your land cost to the trip leader to distribute amongst all the Bio Bio Staff.

### SPENDING MONEY

Recommended cash to bring is \$350 in various denominations. You will need to have money available for the following:

- 1) Spending money for gifts and souvenirs (\$15 - \$50/item) and massages (\$60/hour) at our camps. Lunch on your arrival and departure days and drinks when in cities.
- 2) Tipping money: Your river guide and support staff will accept gratuity for providing good service! Tipping is up to the individual client, but a typical ballpark figure is 10-15% of your trip cost. (\$350-\$500) The trip leader will collect this and distribute amongst all staff.



# COUNTRY INFORMATION

## **LANGUAGE**

The official language in both Chile is Spanish. The Spanish spoken in South America is similar to the Castilian Spanish of Madrid, albeit with drastically different pronunciation and many vocabulary changes. The good news is that in most places, like restaurants and hotels you might find someone who speaks English - and, of course, all our representatives and most guides speak both English and Spanish. If you do speak some Spanish you will have fun speaking with the locals!

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Chile's long and narrow territory, located on the western side of the southern tip of South America, stretches for 4200 km from north to south between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. Chile has an area of 756,096 km on the South American continent and 1,250,000 km in Antarctica. Easter Island, Juan Fernandez Island (of Robinson Crusoe fame), and numerous other islands are also part of the National territory. The current population is just over 15 million, with more than a third concentrated around the capital Santiago. Chile has a highly varied geography as well as numerous climates. In the far north, between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific coast, lies the Atacama Desert, the most arid desert in the world. This area is characterized by its mineral wealth, fishing, and industry, all of which have given rise to its main cities and ports. Its cities and warm-water beaches, the high valleys and towns of the Andes, and old nitrate offices lend this region its greatest tourist attractions. From the city of La Serena south, the countryside begins to get greener due to the sporadic rains that fall over the small transversal valleys that run from east to west between mountain ranges that reach from the Andes to the Pacific Ocean. The beautiful city of La Serena, with its beaches, resorts and other sites of interest, attracts thousands of tourists every year, and has become an important tourist center. The central valley is born slightly north of Santiago, Chile's capital, and extends south between the Andes Mountains and the Coastal Mountain Range for approximately 1,000 km to the city of Puerto Montt. Most of the country's population and economic activity is concentrated in this long valley. Tourism is of great importance throughout the central valley, and is centered around its beautiful beaches, lakes and volcanoes, rivers with outstanding fishing, and lovely cities where visitors receive a warm welcome and excellent service. Chile's geography changes markedly to the south of Puerto Montt, where the continent breaks up into countless islands, channels, rivers, and glaciers, all amidst exuberant native vegetation that reaches to the very ocean shore, offering ideal surroundings for adventure tourism or for simply enjoying an intimate contact with nature. This is the area where we find the Futaleufú!

Finally at the southernmost tip of continental Chile, and reaching across all of Tierra del Fuego, lies the Patagonian Pampa. The city of Punta Arenas, with its old mansions and unique attractiveness, is the natural point of departure for places of particular interest and beauty such as Torres del Paine, Fuerte Bulnes, and the Antarctic continent. The first European to arrive in Chile was Diego de Almagro in 1536. He is called the "discoverer of Chile." At that time, the territory was occupied by native tribes who put up a strong opposition to Almagro. However, Almagro realized that Chile had no gold or riches like those found in Peru or Mexico, so he ended his adventure. Later, General Pedro de Valdivia sent 150 men and advanced to the south and founded various cities, like La Serena, Santiago (1541), Nueva Imperial, Valdivia, and other minor ones. Pedro Valdivia ran into strong resistance from the Mapuche Indians (whose homeland is in the Bio Bio River region), who never submitted to the Spanish crown until 400 years later. This permanent war occasionally caused enormous losses to the Spanish crown and the Chilean Realm and made it the most expensive of the conquered territories. Only since the end of the past century has there been a tenuous peace between the Mapuche Indians to the point of their being involved in the political, economic, and social life of the country.

Bernardo O'Higgins was proclaimed "Supreme Director" in 1817 after many bloody battles against the loyal forces of the Spanish crown. Chilean independence was signed on February 12, 1818. Chile went through a politically turbulent time in the 1970's when General Augusto Pinochet waged a bloody coup on September 11, 1973. The elected Socialist president, Salvador Allende, was killed and Pinochet ruled as dictator for almost 20 years. He gave up power in 1991 although he is still a prominent, and controversial, figure in the country. Chile has become one of the most solid, stable economies of South America. The tourist infrastructure offers great possibilities to travel and know Chile in every region.

## RECOMMENDED READING

- *Lonely Planet Guide to Chile and Easter Island*
  - *The Cloud Forest — A Chronicle to the South American Wilderness* by Peter Matthiessen
  - Any book of poetry by Pablo Neruda, such as *20 poems of Love and One song of Despair*; or Gabriela Mistral
  - Any book by Isabel Allende, especially *House of Spirits* and *Ines of My Soul*
  - *In Patagonia* by Bruce Chatwin
  - *The Old Patagonian Express* by Paul Theroux
  - *Travels in a Thin Country* by Sarah Wheeler
  - \* Also, worth watching the film “180 Degrees South” which showcases the northern Patagonia region
- Or you can also browse to: <http://www.reading.longitudebooks.com/BI142>

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / WEBSITES

While we do our best answering all of your questions, there are certain details like ATM locations or weather forecasts that we may not have right at our fingertips. Below we have compiled a list of websites that will help you find answers with all of those questions.

### Money

- [www.xe.net/ucc/](http://www.xe.net/ucc/) — This is a universal currency converter site.
- [www.oanda.com/](http://www.oanda.com/) — Exchange rates and currency forecasts.
- [www.visa.com/atmlocator/index.jsp](http://www.visa.com/atmlocator/index.jsp) - A list of ATM machines, worldwide.

### Clothing/Gear

- [www.patagonia.com](http://www.patagonia.com) — Expedition clothing.
- [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com) — Expedition gear and clothing.
- [www.mountainhardwear.com](http://www.mountainhardwear.com) — Tents, sleeping bags, and expedition clothing.
- [www.exofficio.com](http://www.exofficio.com) — Lightweight travel clothes.
- [www.eaglecreek.com](http://www.eaglecreek.com) — Excellent travel gear and packing tips.
- [www.cameraworld.com](http://www.cameraworld.com) — The best prices and camera and video gear.
- [www.nrsweb.com](http://www.nrsweb.com) — Anything you could ever want for the river.
- [www.llbean.com](http://www.llbean.com) — Outdoor gear and clothing.

### Health

- [www.cdc.gov/travel/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.html) — Center for Disease Control

### Passport and Embassy Information

- [www.migraciones.gov.ar](http://www.migraciones.gov.ar) — reciprocity fee information and payment.
- [travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html) — How to get a passport, embassy listings.
- [www.zvs.com](http://www.zvs.com) — Zierer Visa service for expedited passports and visas.

### Weather

- [www.accuweather.com](http://www.accuweather.com) — Find out the weather anywhere in the world.

### Travel Warnings

- [travel.state.gov/travel/travel\\_1744.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html) — State department warnings for overseas travelers.

### Conservation

- [www.futaleufuriverkeeper.org](http://www.futaleufuriverkeeper.org) — Help save the Futaleufú.
- [www.edf.org](http://www.edf.org) — Environmental Defense Fund.
- [www.tnc.org](http://www.tnc.org) — The Nature Conservancy.

*'Boundaries don't protect rivers, people do.'* — Brad Arrowsmith

## MAPS OF CHILE



## PRE -DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

Please keep this sheet handy and check off each item when completed

- Passport, money, credit cards and valuable documents. Keep these close to your body in a well-concealed place.
- Make photocopies of plane tickets, credit cards, traveler's check receipts and passport. Leave a set at home as well as in your duffel bag.
- Make sure you carry on the essentials that you cannot live without. Don't check them!
- Medications and prescriptions (keep in your carry-on luggage).
- Eyeglasses and contacts (keep in your carry-on luggage).
- Reading material for the flight, and relaxing in Chile.
- Reconfirm flights 72 hours in advance.
- Make sure you have a ride to the airport.
- Leave Bio Bio Expeditions contact phone numbers with a responsible person.
- Fill out and send in your \* Travelex travel insurance \*!
- Find someone nice to water your plants, feed your dog, and pet your cat.
- Do not forget to tell work you will be gone a few days!