



SPIRIT  
OF THE WEST  
ADVENTURES

# ULTIMATE PATAGONIA EXTENDED – 19 DAYS RESERVATION PACKAGE



## THE BEST OF PATAGONIA

**18 NIGHTS / 19 DAYS MOTHERSHIP & SEA KAYAK EXPEDITION**

We are so glad that you will be joining us for this incredible adventure. Please read through this package of information to help you to prepare for your tour. Please also remember to complete your medical information form as soon as possible and read and understand the liability waiver, which we will ask you to sign upon your arrival in Chile. We hope you are getting excited for your adventure!

Questions? Contact our office anytime.

Toll free 1 800 307 3982, Overseas 1 250 285 2121, [info@kayakingtours.com](mailto:info@kayakingtours.com), [kayakingtours.com](http://kayakingtours.com)

# SAMPLE ITINERARY

This trip is truly a once in a lifetime chance to explore one of the most stunning and remote coastlines of Chilean Patagonia to its full extent. The route will take us all the way from the historic Island of Chiloe to the San Rafael Glacier. Highlights of this trip include soaking in remote hot springs, paddling along the dark black volcanic beaches of Bahía Tic Toc, looking for blue whales in Golfo de Corcovado, enjoying a fresh fire roasted lamb dinner on a secluded sheep estancia (ranch), and paddling among glaciers in the spectacular San Rafael Lagoon.

Please read this customized trip itinerary closely so that you are familiar with how the trip is planned to unfold.

## DEPARTURE DAY - DAY ZERO

Depart your home for Santiago, Chile. Most flights are overnight (apx 11 hours from Toronto) and arrive early morning the following day.

## DAY 1

Welcome to Santiago! Before you see your guides, you will clear customs and immigration. Next, pick up your bags and then out into the arrivals hall, where one or both of your guides will be there waiting for you at wearing their Spirit of the West Adventruers t-shirts (more specific details on meeting at the airport will be sent to you just before your trip starts). If for some reason we can't meet you ourselves there will be someone holding a sign with your name on it. We will then all travel back to our hotel in Providencia (a region of Santiago). In case of any problems, please note the name, address and phone number of our hotel:

### Casa Bellavista Hotel

Antonia López de Bello 0374, Providencia  
Región Metropolitana, Chile  
[www.casabellavistahotel.com](http://www.casabellavistahotel.com)

*We will be staying at Casa Bellavista Hotel the first and second night of the tour (day one and two) and then again on the last night (day 18) which are all included as part of the tour. Any hotels before or after the tour if you are fortunate to have more time to explore would be your own responsibility.*

The afternoon is yours to explore the neighbourhood and city. Depending on how you are feeling after checking into the hotel and freshening up, you may be

interested in a walk through some of the local parks & around the general area. If you prefer, please enjoy a nap or a quiet afternoon at the hotel.

That evening we will all meet at the hotel and head out for a welcome dinner at one of our favorite Chilean establishments. (Please note, expenses on this day, other than the airport pickup, hotel and dinner, are not included in the tour cost). Then it's time for a good night's sleep.

## DAY 2

After a hearty breakfast we will head out of the city to the Casablanca Valley to visit some of the best wineries in Chile. The journey through the Valley begins our encounter with some of the many different types of landscapes that we are about to experience over the rest of our journey. Here we will visit some boutique wineries as well as some of the well-known establishments for tastings and tours of their wine production. Of course there will be time for you to purchase a bottle or two to take home. We will return to the city in time to dine under the stars while enjoying the nightlife of the Chilean streets.

## DAY 3

After a continental breakfast at our hotel we will transfer to the Santiago airport for our flight to Castro on the island of Chiloe. Following the 2.5-hour flight, we will have arrived in Patagonia! Our mini-van will transfer us from the airport to the historic fishing village of Dalcahue where we will meet our mothership, the beautiful *Noctiluca*.

The *Noctiluca* is a 57-foot yacht named after the luminous plankton that abounds in Patagonian waters (what we would call bioluminescence). Once all settled aboard, the captain, will give us a safety briefing and we will enjoy dinner while watching the sun sink behind the islands as we motor out and anchor in a protected cove.



## THE KAYAK ADVENTURE BEGINS

Please note that while this Patagonian coastline is absolutely stunning and ripe for exploring, it can be quite exposed to wind in certain areas, so we have to split our time between paddling and motoring in order to get to some of the best and most suitable places to paddle. Both the paddling portion and the motoring portion of this trip are weather dependent, so the following itinerary is simply a guideline, but will likely need to be flexible to work with nature.

### DAY 4

Departing our anchorage in the morning we will launch our kayaks near the mouth of Quintupeu Fiord. This spectacular steep-sided inlet also harbours an interesting history as the hiding place of the German warship Dresden during part of World War I after being pursued by the British, and prior to her eventual scuttling at the Chilean Island of Juan Fernandez.

### DAY 5

Today we visit Estero Comau and take some time to luxuriate in the hot springs there. The natural springs were discovered in the 1930's and several simple "tubs" were carved out of the soft rock, making for a beautiful place to relax. Time permitting we will endeavour to get out in the kayaks as well.

### DAY 6 & 7

These two days we will spend much of our time cruising toward Bahía Tic Toc, passing by wilderness shorelines of Pumalín National Park and volcanoes such the impressive Volcán Corcovado. We'll fill the time with interpretive talks about the geology of southern Chile and blue whales, whose majestic blows we'll be looking for on the journey. When the option presents itself we'll also get out on shore to stretch our legs, launch the kayaks to go paddling or take a short spin in the zodiac.

### DAY 8

We'll enjoy a full paddling day in Bahía Tic Toc today, checking out extraordinary black sand beaches and

looking for wildlife in the form of dolphins and sea lions. These islands are stunningly pristine and a joy to be among.

### DAY 9

Whale watchers take positions! As we cross from Bahía Tic Toc to Melinka at the tip of the Chonos Archipelago – leaving the mainland behind – this will be one of our best opportunities for viewing the small population of blue whales that inhabits this area. Early research is still ongoing, but from its discovery by science only a few years ago it appears that the whales use the Golfo de Corcovado as a feeding and rearing ground, and the population is growing. It's difficult to describe the sensation of the entire boat being dwarfed by the largest animal on earth.

Please note whale watching will be done from the mothership as these whales move quickly and ocean conditions in this area are not suitable for kayaking.

### DAY 10

Heading south again we'll depart our anchorage near Melinka and launch our kayaks near Isla Marta for our first paddle in the Chonos Archipelago.

### DAY 11

From Isla Marta we'll continue to either Isla Kent or the mini-archipelago of Puerto Italia. Paddling amongst the little islands is like watching a gift being unwrapped, and weather permitting we may get to walk along the exposed western beaches of Isla Kent to look for whale bones and other ocean treasures.

### DAY 12

Paddling today in the area around Isla Goñi we'll get a sense of a Patagonian landscape that is more often found even further south: low scrub vegetation with only a few trees near the shoreline, evidence of the harsh climate of the region. Here there are also signs of the original inhabitants of the islands, the Chonos



people, in the form of shell middens (mounds of shell material deposited over many years from harvesting and consuming mussels and clams).

#### **DAY 13 & 14**

One of the main highlights of this tour is the visit to San Rafael Lagoon, which is our next stop after the Isla Goñi. Having lunch near the glacier, surrounded by icebergs, we will carefully navigate our way by kayak through the icebergs to visit the region's various beaches and islets. If time and weather permit, we may undertake a walk to get to a viewpoint overlooking the glacier, looking for prints of both the small native deer called huemul ("waymool") and kodkod, small cats similar to a bobcat or lynx. The sheer size and raw power of this river of ice is one of life's more memorable moments.

#### **DAY 15**

Today we will begin heading north again toward Fiordo Quitalco, paddling in the area of Rios Pescadores or Huemules. These two rivers, flowing down to the sea from the Patagonian interior offer a glimpse again toward the mountains. Keep an eye out for pumice stone, a volcanic floating rock!

#### **DAY 16**

Today we motor to the estancia (ranch) owned by the same family as the mothership. Estancia Quitalco is a private ranch which covers many square kilometers and offers us the chance to spend the afternoon exploring the river by kayak, fly fishing and/or trekking on the property. We will finish off our day with an authentic lamb asado (or BBQ). The taste of fresh lamb and vegetables slow-roasted over an open fire enjoyed under the vast Patagonian sky is second to none. This meal of course will be accompanied by a great selection of Chilean wine and beer and vegetables picked fresh from the on-site garden. Heaven on earth?

#### **DAY 17**

We will get an extra early start this morning in order to reach the sheltered waters of Gato Cove in plenty of time to enjoy kayaking in Cinco Hermanas (Five Sisters) National

Park. The scenery here will not disappoint. After exploring these beautiful islands we will motor to our final anchorage of the trip. Dinner on board will once again leave our taste buds truly satisfied and our bellies full. Really could life get any better?

#### **DAY 18**

Sadly, this will be our last day on our floating home. We will get an early start to ensure we arrive back to Puerto Aisen in time to transfer back to the Balmaceda Airport in time to catch a flight back to Santiago that evening. If you are pressed for time, it may be possible to catch an international flight this evening (check with the office for details). The rest of the group will enjoy one last farewell dinner together in Santiago. Hotel this last night is included in the tour cost.

#### **DAY 19**

This is your last day in Santiago. After breakfast at the hotel you will say goodbye to your guides. You are welcome to explore the city on your own, perhaps heading to a local market for some souvenir shopping before flights that evening. Most international flights leave late in the day. Spirit of the West Adventures will arrange pickups and ensure you get to the airport safely.

#### **ADDITIONAL DAYS**

If you are lucky enough to have more time to explore this incredible part of the world, we are happy to suggest some other areas to explore. Please note any airport transfers and expenses outside the above itinerary and arrival and departure days are at your own expense.

#### **SPECIAL NOTE**

Please know that the above itinerary is meant to give you an idea of all the region has to offer. Weather, wildlife and our fellow kayakers will help to determine the specifics of our daily route.



## MEETING LOCATION

### TOUR START - DAY 1 / SANTIAGO, CHILE

One or both of your guides will meet you at the **international airport in Santiago, Chile**, wearing their Spirit of the West Adventures t-shirts (more specific details on meeting at the airport will be sent to you just before your trip starts). If for some reason we can't meet you ourselves there will be someone holding a sign with YOUR name on it. We will then all travel back to our hotel in Providencia (a region of Santiago). In case of any problems, please note the name, address and phone number of our hotel:

#### **Casa Bellavista Hotel**

Antonia López de Bello 0374, Providencia, Región Metropolitana, Chile  
[www.casabellavistahotel.com](http://www.casabellavistahotel.com)

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED?

### **ALMOST EVERYTHING!**

Airport transfers on scheduled arrival and departure dates as well as for domestic travel as outlined in the itinerary, 3 nights accommodation in Santiago hotel (nights 1,2 and 18), 15 nights accommodation on the mothership, domestic flights from Santiago to Castro and Balmaceda back to Santiago as per itinerary, professional guides, all kayaking equipment (all double kayaks with one single for sharing amongst group), meals in restaurants or prepared by your chef of the mothership (starting with dinner on day 1 through breakfast day 19), wine and beer with meals while on the mothership (3-4 bottles per night for the group), park and land use permits. While in the city and in transit alcohol is at your own expense. If you are planning on bringing any of your own equipment please double-check the packing list to ensure you have the appropriate gear and please let our office know in advance of the tour to avoid us bringing duplicates.

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

Expenses on day 1 and 19, other than the airport pickup, hotel and meals outside of those listed in itinerary, cancellation, interruption and medical insurance or personal items (toiletries, clothing, etc.), gratuities, costs associated with visas, entry fees, passports, vaccinations or any travel/ expenses outside of what is listed in the itinerary.



# PACKING LIST

The following is a list of items recommended for your safety and comfort during your tour and includes items suitable for the city portion of the tour as well as kayaking in the wilds of Patagonia. Please note that fashion abounds in major cities, and while quick-dry clothing will work you may feel more comfortable in other clothing. Jeans and nice tops are acceptable for most venues in the city, but if you plan on visiting fancy restaurants a jacket and tie or skirt may be required (Jeans are acceptable at all establishments we visit as part of the tour).

We are fortunate to be basing the sea kayaking portion of our trip from the mothership. This awesome vessel gives us a warm and dry place to come back to each evening, but it is still important to have the proper clothing for kayaking in order to fully enjoy your experience.

**Temperatures:** In Santiago expect warm days and nights - t-shirt weather with temperatures cooling in the evenings. The conditions in Patagonia are constantly changing and we will likely experience a little bit of everything. In a single day we can experience sunshine, cloud, rain, wind and perfect calm. January and February in Patagonia is equivalent to August & September temperatures in the northern hemisphere. You are likely to experience some warmer days in which we are paddling in light long sleeves as well as days where more layers are welcome. In the immediate vicinity of the glaciers it can be quite cold (it is ice after all)! It is best to come prepared for any type of weather. Remember there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad gear!

If you have any concerns or questions about this list, please don't hesitate to contact us.

## WHAT TO BRING: GENERAL

- ❑ Passport & money belt - Ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your return flight. A money belt helps to keep your important documents and money close to your body and takes away the worry of travel.
- ❑ Copies of all your important documents - A simple photocopy of your passport and travel insurance details can save you a lot of hassle if you ever lose them. We also lock our passports in the safe at the hotel and travel around the city carrying only a photocopy.
- ❑ Suitcase or backpack - Ideally something with soft sides which will help to save space on the mothership. Hybrid duffel bags with wheels are our favourite as they are easy to navigate airports with, but compress in size for storage.
- ❑ Wet shoes - A pair that can get wet such as sturdy full strapped sandals, neoprene booties, or rubber boots. To maximize packing space, a comfortable pair of sandals that you can wear both in the city and get wet, combined with neoprene or waterproof socks may work best.
- ❑ Walking shoes - A pair of runners or other comfortable walking shoes for exploring the cities, travel days and on-board the mothership. If you plan on doing much trekking before or after the tour, hiking boots may be in order.
- ❑ Hat - A brimmed rain/sun hat and a wool or fleece hat for evenings or cooler days.
- ❑ Sunglasses & sunscreen - A must for protection from sun and glare off of the water. A safety cord on your glasses is a good idea.
- ❑ Small towel & bathing suit - Quick drying travel towels are handy. Don't forget your bathing suit if you

wish to enjoy the natural hot springs! We will have full sized towels in our hotels and for aboard the mothership.

- ❑ Medication - If you are bringing medication please ensure that: 1) It is in its original container or one that lists the name and expiry date of the medication as well as your name; 2) you have a copy of your original prescription in case they question your drugs at the border; 3) you have the detailed instructions of your dosage and frequency; 4) **it is packed in your carry on baggage** 5) you bring a full extra dosage of your medication in a separate container and leave with your guides, in case you misplace or lose yours.
- ❑ Personal items - Toothbrush, toothpaste, biodegradable and saltwater friendly soap, washcloth, feminine hygiene products, hairbrush, etc.
- ❑ Ear plugs and sleep mask - Great for night flights and if your friends are snoring!
- ❑ Toilet paper - A small roll of toilet paper in a ziploc is often handy for public restrooms in South America. While on tour all toilet paper will be provided.
- ❑ Wet wipes and hand sanitizer – Good for sanitizing or a quick wash on your travels.
- ❑ Ziploc bags - These and a large garbage bag are always handy when traveling.
- ❑ Small flashlight or headlamp - Don't forget spare batteries. Headlamps are preferable as they allow for hands free use and are great for reading and not disturbing your fellow cabin mates.
- ❑ Water bottle - 1 durable water bottle. Spirit of the West Adventures will provide safe drinking water during your journey with us. We do try and use purification drops to treat water when possible to cut down on plastic waste. If you plan on trekking after your tour it would be a good idea to carry some water purification tabs or drops, such as Pristine drops.
- ❑ Camera & film/memory cards - Packed in a waterproof bag or case. We will provide a dry bag for use during kayaking, but it is not padded. Be sure to bring lots of memory cards and spare batteries, you won't want to miss these photo opportunities. You will need a plug adapter for charging. Check your battery charger to ensure it can handle 220 voltage (most chargers are dual voltage).
- ❑ Book and/or journal - Books written in English are often quite expensive in Chile. Most hotels have book exchanges for when you are done. E-readers

can be a great way to have lots of books handy but without the bulk and weight, again make sure your device can handle 220 volt power.

## CLOTHING: PADDLING

Clothing selection should bear in mind that it could become cold and wet at anytime. Layering is the best way to regulate body temperature and maintain warmth. We suggest avoiding cotton (except for those hot days and in the city). Cotton has no insulation value when wet. Clothing made of materials that wick moisture from the body and give a comfortable dry feeling even while wet is the best first layer (polypropylene, nylon, polyester). A synthetic material such as fleece or pile makes the best second layer to provide warmth. Wool is also suitable.

- ❑ Rain jacket & rain pants - These are essential for staying comfortable regardless of the weather. To test your waterproofness jump in the shower and see if you stay dry! Spirit of the West will provide a paddling jacket and pants for use during the kayaking portion of the tour, but please bring your own for any additional travel days you may be planning.
- ❑ Long pants - 1 pair of fleece or warm comfortable pants. 2 lighter pairs made of a quick drying fabric. Often these pants can also double as “city or casual” pants for exploring in the city. Jeans are not recommended for kayaking, but are fine in the city or for wearing on the mothership.
- ❑ Long underwear top & bottoms - Helps to keep you warm in the evenings or as a base layer while kayaking.
- ❑ Long sleeved non-cotton shirt - 4.
- ❑ T-shirts - 3-4 synthetic tops. Synthetic material dries quickly so you can wash in the evening and wear it the next day.



- ❑ Shorts - 1 quick dry nylon pair.
- ❑ Warm socks - 5 pairs.
- ❑ Undergarments - As you see fit. A couple pairs of synthetic underwear for paddling can be comfortable on wet days. Cotton underwear is good for evenings.

## CLOTHING IN THE CITY

- ❑ Santiago can be hot in the austral summer (January-February), but long pants or skirts are still more typically worn than shorts.
- ❑ Jeans - 1 or 2 pairs. Comfortable for wearing on the plane and around the city or boat.
- ❑ Business casual outfit - Chileans in the city have a real sense of style. This does NOT need to be a fancy outfit, but a button up shirt, summer skirt, nice sweater and top will help you to feel comfortable in the city.

## OPTIONAL ITEMS

- ❑ Binoculars - We say optional, but they are wonderful to have while on the boat. There will be one or two pairs to share while on the boat.
- ❑ Travel neck pillow – You can purchase small compact pillows at some outdoor stores or in the airport. This may make your overnight flight much more comfortable (however most airlines provide these). When on the mothership and in hotels a regular full size pillow will be provided.
- ❑ Gloves – Wool or fleece gloves can be a cozy addition to a cool day. Biking gloves (fingerless are best for dexterity) work well to protect your hands from blisters. For kayaking on cooler days we do provide Pogies which are easy to use and attach to your paddle and then you slip your hand in and out, allowing you to quickly have bare hands for taking photos etc.
- ❑ Fishing gear – Our mothership will have some basic fishing equipment available for use while on-board. If you are an expert fisher person you may wish to bring your favourite lures etc.
- ❑ Sleeping bag – You will **not** need a sleeping bag during this trip. However if you wish to do some camping/exploring before or after your tour it may come in handy.
- ❑ Beverages – There will be a good selection of drinks available on-board the mothership including beer

and wine with meals (these are included in the cost of your tour). However if you wish to bring additional spirits, you are welcome to. They can be purchased in Santiago prior to departure.

## WHAT IS PROVIDED?

- ❑ Pillow and bedding - At hotels and on board the mothership.
- ❑ Paddling Jacket and pants - This is to help keep you dry when kayaking; a rain coat is still recommended for the rest of your journey.
- ❑ Pogies - to help keep your hands warm when kayaking
- ❑ All other paddling equipment



## SANITATION

The mothership is equipped with toilets but during our paddling excursions your guides will explain the most environmentally appropriate technique for using nature's bathroom. Your guide will carry a bathroom bag complete with toilet paper, hand sanitizer etc and will designate an area and method that works best when nature calls. Our guides will go over these details before the tour and if you have any concerns while on tour please do not be shy to ask your guide.

While on the mothership, please use biodegradable soaps and shampoos.

Spirit of the West Adventures makes every effort to ensure we leave our area as we found it or better.



# INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TIPS

## HOW TO GET TO CHILE

Santiago is serviced by direct flights almost daily from most major centres and by several different airlines.

When flying into Chile you will land in Santiago at Arturo Merino Benitez Airport (SCL) which is located approximately 20 minutes (21 km) from the city center. Spirit of the West Adventures will arrange transport for you from the airport to our hotel if arriving/departing on our scheduled days.

## BEFORE YOU GO

It is important to take a few easy precautions that will help to make your trip as smooth as possible and help you get over any obstacles you may face.

- Ensure your passport is current and will remain valid for 6 months after your return date.
- Purchase travel cancellation, interruption and medical insurance. This will cover you in the event of needing medical help while abroad and will cover any expenses incurred from unexpected changes in travel plans or circumstances out of your control (i.e. missed flights because of weather, lost baggage, theft, family illness). Trip cancellation, interruption and medical coverage is mandatory to participate in Spirit of the West Adventures' Chile tours.
- Make sure your inoculations are current. While there are no required vaccinations for traveling to Chile it is suggested you have the hepatitis A & B and typhoid fever vaccinations. Please also ensure your tetanus/polio/diphtheria shot is current (you need a booster every 10 years).
- Set up a pin code that can work internationally on both your debit and credit cards (4 digits). Take your card into any branch with your current pin and you can reset it to something easy to remember.

- Invest in some good rain gear and warm clothes for Patagonia - it will help make your trip much more enjoyable. Please see our packing list for a complete list of what to bring.
- Send yourself an email with a scanned copy of your passport, immunization record, flight details, and important numbers including travel insurance policy numbers, credit card company contact info in case of loss or theft. This way if you happened to lose your bags you can go to the Internet and have all the information handy. It is also a good idea to leave all of the above with a trusted friend or relative at home who could help you out in a pinch.
- Have fun learning about the country, read some Chilean literature, watch some soccer (football), take Spanish lessons, drink Chilean wines etc. This will all help you to get the most out of your experience.





## CHILE IN DETAILS

Despite the somewhat marred history of the Pinochet years, Chile is also incredibly rich in history and has endless opportunities for exploring cultural elements of the country. The other major drawing card for travelers is the spectacular natural beauty. From the world's driest deserts in the north, to the coastal beach cities, to the wine producing valleys of the interior, to the grazing lands and the rugged beauty of Patagonia, Chile will continually amaze you.

### TIME

Mainland Chile is on GMT -4 (GMT -3 from October to March).

### SEASONS

Summer in Chile is considered to be December, January, February and the beginning of March. Temperatures in Santiago during the summer and fall can be quite warm with highs of apx. 28 degrees Celsius and lows of 15 or so. **HOWEVER**, temperatures in Patagonia can be quite different. Patagonia is much cooler and requires the appropriate clothing, but is well worth it! Remember there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad gear! Please see our packing list for more details.

### LANGUAGE

The official language is Spanish. There is a fair amount of slang used in everyday conversation so don't get frustrated if you don't understand everything no matter how good your Spanish is.

### ELECTRICITY

The electrical current is 220 volts and 50Mhz. The pin shape is either two or 3 round plugs. You will need an adaptor plug for any North American appliances. Universal adaptor plugs can be purchased at any travel shop or in the airport, but check to ensure your device can handle the voltage (most electronics are dual voltage, but appliances like hair driers are not).

### TIPPING

10% is fairly standard in restaurants, tourist facilities and for most services. Tipping taxi drivers is not expected, but rounding up is a nice gesture. If you wish to tip your guides and the boat crew this can be done at your own discretion.

### LOCAL CUSTOMS

There are wide ranges of customs depending on which region you are in, but some general nationwide practices include:

- Offering a cigarette to travelling companions before lighting up
- Holding doors for women
- Bargaining is **NOT** practiced, the price is the price
- There is a strong emphasis on family and spending time with family
- Business culture is quite formal
- Clothing in the city is generally fancy (bring a nice outfit - not jeans for eating out in some of the higher end restaurants etc).
- Being polite and smiling can go a long way

### INTERNET & PHONE

Internet cafes can be readily found in most towns. Wireless internet is also very popular with most hotels, cafes and restaurants offering the service. Most internet cafes also have headsets for using on-line VOIP programs such as Skype. The country code for Chile is +56. To make calls to outside the country from Chile you need to dial 00 then the applicable country code and then the number. Phone centers where you can pay by the call are almost as common as internet cafes. The mobile (cellular) coverage is also quite good when in the cities **but there will not be cell coverage when on the mothership.**

## CURRENCY & MONEY

The Chilean Peso (CLP) is the national currency and is represented using the \$ symbol. The Peso is then broken down into 100 centavos (cents). To determine approximate current exchange rates check out [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

For everyday transactions in the markets etc, local currency is preferable but you can often also use US dollars in major centers and for larger purchases such as hotels. If you use US dollars or a foreign credit card for accommodation payment you avoid paying the 19% IVA tax.

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) are located on almost every street corner in the major cities and very few smaller towns are without at least one machine. If you have a bank card from a major network such as Cirrus and a 4 digit pin code it should work in these machines. You will likely get a better rate here than through a casa de cambio (exchange house).

Visa, MasterCard and to a lesser extent American Express and Diner's Club credit cards are accepted at most hotels, larger restaurants and shops. These cards also come in handy for cash advances from ATMs in case you have any problems with your debit/bank card.

Traveler's cheques are fairly outdated now. You can use them in major centers, but are often charged a premium on top of your purchase to use them. You often also lose out in the currency conversion process. While nice to have, most credit card companies will also advance you cash if something was to happen to your wallet.

## SAFETY

Chile is a relatively safe and enjoyable place to travel. The feeling here is much different from other countries in South America. However, the usual petty crime of any city in the world can be found in the major centers, but if using common sense and keeping your wits about you, you are unlikely to have any problems.

Being discreet about your wealth will go a long way in keeping you out of trouble – minimize your risks by not wearing flashy jewellery, carrying a wallet full of cash or having a giant camera dangling around your neck at night. A money wallet for carrying your passport and valuables in close to your body helps give you a sense of comfort when transiting in busy places (and makes it virtually impossible for pickpockets to take your important documents). Carrying only the money you will need for the day in your wallet or pocket helps make you a less desirable target for theft. Travelling with a buddy after dark is never a bad idea, but most major streets are fine to walk after dark. When in doubt take

a cab; most restaurants etc. can call you a cab or they are readily found on most streets. Avoid big protests or large gatherings in the streets so you don't get caught up in any tense situations.

The national police force, the Carabineros, are incredibly helpful and professional. You will see them wearing green uniforms and are readily found especially in cities. To reach the Carabineros from any phone, mobile or payphone dial 133. Never try to bribe the police in Chile (perhaps unlike other places in South America). For emergency medical assistance i.e. ambulances dial 131.

## SPECIAL NOTES FOR WOMEN

Women should take the usual precautions including not walking alone after dark etc. There is a small level of male 'bravado', and if walking alone you may encounter a bit of unwanted attention - the odd sideways glance or whistle, but are most likely to be left alone. A trick I have used over the years to ensure a minimal amount of unwanted attention is to wear a simple band style ring on the ring finger of my left hand (giving the impression of being married).

Keep a careful eye on your drinks to avoid being drugged if out at a bar.

It's a good idea to bring with you a supply of your preferred brand of feminine hygiene supplies. There are lots of pads in grocery stores, but it is more difficult to find tampons.

Birth control pills and the morning after pill can sometimes be difficult to access in this mostly Catholic country.

## HEALTH

Ensure you have adequate travel medical insurance. No one ever plans to get sick, but it sometimes happens and having good coverage including the option of returning to your home country for continued treatment is comforting to say the least. Credit cards often offer some coverage, but often have low limits or only partial coverage for a limited number of days. Health care in urban centers is quite good, but is expensive, so come well covered.

While there are no required vaccinations for travelling to Chile it is suggested you have the hepatitis A & B and typhoid fever vaccinations.

Please also ensure your tetanus/polio/diphtheria shot is current (you need a booster every 10 years).

Having a routine medical and dental check-up before travelling can also help to eliminate any unforeseen pain or problems that could take away from your trip.



It is a good idea to carry a copy of your prescriptions and any necessary medications in their original containers. Also bring extra of any essential medications in case of delays in travelling or losing bags etc. **Please carry all medication in your carry-on bag to avoid issues if your luggage is delayed or lost.**

Knowing your eyeglass prescription and carrying a back-up pair of glasses will also be helpful in case something happens to your glasses. The sights here are so beautiful you won't want to be visually impaired for even a minute.

There are well-stocked pharmacies in most towns, but sometimes it is difficult to find the equivalent medication because of language barriers etc. We once tried to find Lactaid pills (supplements for lactose intolerance) in dozens of pharmacies to no avail - this is something that just does not exist in Chile. The moral of the story is to come prepared.

Water is generally safe in the cities, but it is never a bad idea to treat tap water before drinking or to purchase bottled water. We like to take Pristine drops (or similar) with us. They are a quick and easy way to treat water and it cuts down on the waste of buying plastic bottles all the time (recycling facilities are almost non-existent).

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## WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT AMAZING CHILE

Learning about the country and cultures that you will be travelling to is a sure way of enriching your experience. Below we have listed some books, wine, news sources and other online resources that will help you get acquainted with Chile and Patagonia. This list is only a brief introduction, but is a great starting point. If you find something of interest in your trip preparation, please let us know and we will add it to our list.

### BOOKS & AUTHORS

There are lots of great Chilean authors, stunning picture books and detailed guide books which will help you to understand a little more about Chile before you arrive. Possible suggestions include:

- The Lonely Planet Guide to Chile and Easter Island – There are many guidebooks out there, but Lonely Planet continues to be my favourite in terms of ease of use and scope of information.
- The Lonely Planet Phrasebook for Latin American Spanish – A super pocket size phrasebook and dictionary. The phrases are really handy!
- Culture Smart Series: Chile – A primer on Chilean customs and culture. Really handy for folks involved in business in this part of the world.
- Books by Isabel Allende – Has written many different genres; try Daughter of Fortune (features the Valparaiso area); Of Love and Shadows, set during



the time of Pinochet; or *Ines of my Soul*, historical fiction about some of the early conquests in Chile.

- Works by Pablo Neruda – Poet, diplomat and politician. Won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. His home in Santiago is open to the public as a museum.
- *In Patagonia* by Bruce Chatwin – One of the classic early works of travel writing in Patagonia.
- *What is Secret: Short Stories by Chilean Women* – As the title suggests, this is a collection of stories that spans the years.
- *Chile: A Traveler's Literary Companion* by Katherine Silver. This is a collection of short stories from Chilean authors about Chile, organized by geographical region.
- *Full Circle: A South American Journey* by Luis Sepulveda is a travelogue through Chile and Patagonia by a Chilean author, full of insights and revelations.
- *Cold Oceans* – Jon Turk has written about many of his adventures by boat and kayak; included are a couple of chapters on his experiences kayaking towards Cape Horn.

Please note that Spirit of the West will also be bringing a small library of books with us, including field guides for local flora and fauna and travel guides.

## WINES

Why not try tasting a little bit of Chile before you go to warm up your taste buds? The sky is the limit here. There are so many great wines being produced in Chile you have some real work ahead of yourself to determine which wines are your favourites. Below are some of the most commonly available wines in Canada. Try any of them with a recipe cooked up from *Tasting Chile: A Celebration of Authentic Chilean Foods and Wines* by Daniel Joelson. Below are some vintages commonly found in export markets:

- Santa Carolina – A large producer, try bottles labelled Reserva as this is better quality wine. They use grapes from vineyards all over Chile.

- Cono Sur – Has both organic and traditional wines
- Casillero Del Diablo – Makes a classic Chilean Carmentere
- Frontera – Often has decent red blends ie. Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot
- Gato Negro – Commonly available
- Santa Rita – Another large producer, many varieties
- <http://www.winesofchile.org/the-wines/>  
This website is fantastic for learning all about what Chile has to offer from its various wine regions Remember that the wine will only get better as we taste our way through Chile.



## INTERNET & RADIO

Why not listen to what some of the Santiaguinos are listening to? Try [www.santiagoradio.cl](http://www.santiagoradio.cl), an English-language radio station in Chile.

## NEWS

- [www.santiagotimes.cl](http://www.santiagotimes.cl)  
Check out the on-line version of this English language newspaper, to find out what is happening in Santiago and around the country.



## OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

- **<http://www.earth.google.com>**  
Google Earth can provide hours of fun, exploring the coast line and getting an idea of topography etc. There are also pictures posted by folks who have been to these areas.
- **[www.travel.gc.ca](http://www.travel.gc.ca)**  
This is the Canadian government travel advisory page. Learn about any areas of concern, recommended vaccinations etc (please note that Spirit of the West Adventures watches the information posted here carefully, and there are currently no travel advisories for Chile).
- **[www.sernatur.cl](http://www.sernatur.cl)**  
The official website of Sernatur, the Chilean department of tourism, offers a good introduction to the many travel opportunities in the country, complete with photos. (Click on the English link.)
- **<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chile>**  
A fairly comprehensive overview of history, politics and vital statistics. See also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patagonia>
- **[www.lonelyplanet.com/chile](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/chile)**  
The traveller Mecca's online presence – see also their chat forum, the Thorn Tree:  
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/thorntree/index.jspa>
- **[www.conaf.cl](http://www.conaf.cl)**  
The government organization responsible for Chile's protected areas and national parks (in Spanish).
- **<http://www.ballenazul.org>**  
Website of the Centro de Ballenas Azul, the research organization studying blue whales in the Gulf of Corcovado. Click on the link for the English version, or for more detailed info click on "Publications" in the Spanish version (articles in English).





## THE FINE PRINT

Please review the details below which should provide you with a realistic picture of what to expect on our Chile tours and answer some questions you may have about travelling in Chile with Spirit of the West. Please don't hesitate to call us with any other questions you may have.

- This is an awesome experience, but, as all travel in remote areas, it requires flexibility and the ability to smile at the unexpected and maintain a positive attitude.
- Approximately 50% of the time is spent in the kayaks and 50% of the time cruising through the stunning islands to get to safe and scenic paddling locations.
- Wine and beer is provided with meals while on the mothership (3-4 bottles per night), however while in the city and in transit alcohol is at your own expense.
- The 57' mothership is a fantastic way to explore Patagonia. The salon, covered deck, and wheelhouse are comfortable spaces for relaxing. The staterooms are comfortable, but small, as you would expect on a boat. There are two heads (or bathrooms) that are shared between 8 people.
- The guest cabins consist of two double rooms and one room with 4 single bunks. The double rooms have a double bunk with a single bunk over the foot of the bed. The double rooms will be used for only 2 people unless otherwise arranged. The room with 4 bunks will be shared by four people.
- The shared cabin in the boat may be mixed gender depending on who is joining the tour.
- Accommodation is provided starting on day one of the tour. The tour ends on day 19 after breakfast. We will ensure you are all set for your airport transfer for your return flight.
- If you are arriving outside of day one or departing later than the day after the tour ends, the airport shuttle will be at your own expense. These shuttles are easily arranged with the hotel or upon arrival into Santiago.
- Meals are hearty and healthy (with appropriate amounts of food we should probably only eat while on vacation... desserts, sweets, treats etc). During the tour, Spirit of the West will place orders at restaurants on your behalf. If you would like to add anything to the meal orders you are welcome to, but this would be at your own expense.
- Breakfasts while at the hotel in Santiago consist of coffee, tea, fresh juice, fresh bread, butter, jam cheese, fresh fruits and cereals.
- We are lucky to have found a great source for kayaking gear in this remote part of the world. We will be using high quality fiberglass kayaks, all doubles with the exception of one-two single kayaks, which guests can rotate through. We have limited space for storing the kayaks on the boat and more single kayaks are not an option.
- Spirit of the West will bring Kokatat Gore-tex paddling jacket and pants for you to use during the kayaking portion of the tour. We recommend also bringing a rain jacket for the remainder of your time in Chile.
- Spirit of the West will also provide a 5-litre and a 10-litre dry bag for you to use while kayaking. The smaller bag is handy for storing your camera and screen, while the larger bag will be used to pack a set of spare clothes for emergencies.
- The hotel in which we stay in Santiago is clean, friendly and in a great location. We choose to stay in this small, intimate size hotel instead of larger well-known hotels to add to a more authentic experience.



# TOUR TERMS & CONDITIONS

## HOW TO RESERVE YOUR TRIP

Reserving your adventure with Spirit of the West Adventures is simple. Just call 1-800-307-3982 to speak with one of our friendly and helpful office crew, e-mail your request to [info@kayakingtours.com](mailto:info@kayakingtours.com) or reserve your trip on the web through our [online reservation request system](#).

If you're not sure if a particular trip is right for you or you're looking for more information, let us know and we would be happy to answer your questions or put you in touch with a past guest who has experienced the trip before. To reserve space on our tours we ask for a deposit as well as a completed reservation form. We require a deposit of 25% on all tours.

Payment can be made by cheque, money order, Visa, MasterCard, or Interac e-Transfer; any processing charges or fees are your responsibility.

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

A deposit to reserve your space on a tour is due at time of booking. The balance of your trip cost is due 90 days prior to departure. For your convenience, with your authorization, we automatically charge your credit card when the balance is due unless otherwise arranged.

## PRICING

All tours which take place in Canada are priced and charged in Canadian dollars; tours to Chile, the Bahamas and Greenland are priced and charged in US dollars. Any foreign currency pricing is only approximate. It is your credit card company or bank who determines your exchange rate on the day your transaction takes place. Pricing is subject to change.

For all Canadian tours there is an additional 5% Goods and Services Tax (GST). Tours that take place outside of Canada are not taxed. Non-tour add-ons (equipment rentals, merchandise) must be charged both 5% GST and 7% PST. All tours are also subject to a non-taxed voluntary \$20 per person sustainability fee which is donated to research and conservation organizations that work in the areas where we operate.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Please understand that our trip dates and capacities are limited, and when we accept your reservation we may be turning others away from booking that trip. If you find it necessary to cancel your tour, please let us know as soon as possible. No refunds are given once tours have departed. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd is not responsible for any additional costs that may arise in the event of a trip alteration or delay caused by circumstances beyond our control. To avoid confusion we require written notice of cancellation, by email or mail. The following fees will apply to cancellations and are calculated as of the date we receive your written cancellation notice, which can be sent by email, or standard mail.

**Canadian Tours:** If you must cancel your tour, your refund is as follows:  
**Earlier than 90 days before trip:** Full amount is refunded less a \$150 administration fee.  
**89-30 days before trip:** 50% of total tour price is refunded.\*  
**Later than 30 days before trip:** No refund will be given.\*

**International Tours:** If you must cancel your tour, your refund is as follows:  
**Earlier than 90 days before trip:** deposit is refunded less a \$250 administration fee and the guest is responsible for any costs incurred for cancelling any additional tours or travel arrangements. If we have had to turn customers away, the entire deposit is retained.

**90-60 days before trip:** 50% of total tour price is refunded.\*  
**Less than 60 days before trip:** No refund will be given.\*

*\*If we can find someone to fill your space, you may be eligible for a partial refund.*

**We strongly recommend** that all guests **purchase travel insurance, including interruption, cancellation and medical coverage** to cover costs associated with your travel in case of unforeseen circumstances (travel insurance is mandatory for all Chile and Bahamas tours). Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for ensuring the appropriate level or amount of coverage is purchased. Please contact your travel insurance provider to ensure you have appropriate coverage for your entire trip. If you use a credit card for payment for your tour expenses, you may have trip interruption insurance as part of your card benefits. This coverage, however, is often a limited dollar amount and does not usually include cancellation or medical coverage. Please check with your specific card provider to ensure you are adequately insured. Personal equipment, baggage and valuables (cameras, electronics, jewellery, etc.) are carried entirely at the owner's risk. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for lost, damaged or delayed property.

Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. reserves the right to cancel any trip prior to departure for any reason whatsoever, including insufficient bookings, safety threats including natural disasters, political instability, terrorism or logistical problems that may impede trip operations.

If we have to cancel a tour due to insufficient bookings, you may choose between an alternate trip or a full refund. We will inform participants of cancellations due to insufficient bookings no later than 60 days prior to the tour. If the alternate trip chosen is of a lower value than the originally booked then you are entitled to a refund of the difference. If the alternate tour chosen is of a higher value then you will pay the difference in price.

If a tour has to be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control, i.e. political instability, natural disasters, labour strikes etc., there will be no refund from Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. Please contact your travel insurance provider for details on how to start a claim. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is not responsible for expenses incurred by trip participants in preparing for a cancelled trip (for example non-refundable advance purchase plane tickets, visa fees, inoculations, equipment etc. or for any additional arrangements for other travel plans associated with this tour.) Spirit of the West will make every reasonable effort to contact you as soon as it appears that a trip may be cancelled.

## TRIP PREPARATION

Once you've made your choice and sent in your deposit, we'll send you a detailed document that includes everything that you will need to pre

pare for your tour including an itinerary, packing list, transportation options, directions, meeting times and frequently asked questions. For international tour destinations, we include information about issues such as passports, visas, immunizations and currency exchange. All you need to bring is your passport, a sense of adventure, your clothing and personal items. Let us know if you're planning a birthday or anniversary trip. We'll pack a surprise!

#### **DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

We need to know as soon as possible about any dietary requirements we should consider when planning your trip menu. If you have food allergies or restrictions, we will do our best to accommodate your needs. However, people with severe food allergies may need to supply some or all of their own food as we can't entirely mitigate the risk of cross-contamination. Additionally, some specific needs can only be met if we charge you a supplemental menu fee to cover our increased costs.

Please note we are not a peanut- or nut-free facility. On Chile and Bahamas tours the availability of ingredients or restaurant kitchens outside of our control may limit the type of dietary accommodation we are able to offer.

**Note:** Pending a detailed discussion about a guest's specific dietary requirements, Spirit of the West Adventures may determine that a person with severe allergies is not suitable for our adventures due to the constraints of preparing food for groups of people in a wilderness setting.

#### **MEDICAL AND RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/ LIABILITY RELEASE FORMS**

Each participant is required to fully fill out the [medical form and liability release form](#). Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. must receive the medical information form at least 30 days prior to tour departure.

Please read and understand the liability waiver upon registration. You will be asked to sign the waiver in person on your arrival and before tour departure.

#### **GUEST RESPONSIBILITY**

Although no previous kayaking experience is required on our tours, as with any adventure there is always an element of risk. While our trips are not considered to be overly strenuous or physically demanding, we do require a moderate level of fitness and good general physical condition. If you have any physical limitations or concerns, please let us know. As we are not qualified to evaluate your level of fitness we ask that you (possibly along with your doctor) determine whether or not you are able to join one of our adventures. If you have any special medical conditions, we encourage you to check with your doctor before you reserve your trip. Please also note that all of our tours take place in remote areas and evacuations can take a great deal of time and can be expensive. Persons with various disabilities are welcome on Spirit of the West tours, pending a discussion of any special needs and requirements.

You must also acknowledge that travel with Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. requires a degree of flexibility and understanding that the trip's route, itinerary, accommodation and modes of transport are subject to change without prior notice due to local circumstances. While traveling with Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. you agree to accept the authority of the leader at all times. You need to be aware that group travel may involve compromise to accommodate the diverse desires and abilities of group members. We just ask that you welcome your adventure with an open mind and be able to laugh and have fun when encountering the unexpected. Spirit of the West is dedicated to providing safe, environmentally sensitive, well-organized, fun-filled adventures.

## **SPIRIT OF THE WEST ADVENTURES**

Box 569, Heriot Bay, British Columbia, V0P 1H0, Canada  
Toll free 1 800 307 3982, Overseas 1 250 285 2121  
info@kayakingtours.com, [kayakingtours.com](http://kayakingtours.com)

#### **PASSPORTS AND VISAS**

You must carry a valid passport and/or necessary documentation and have obtained the appropriate visas when travelling with Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. Please ensure your passport is valid for 6 months beyond the duration of your trip. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of the correct visas for your travels. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. does not accept responsibility if you are refused entry to a country because you lack the correct documentation or the authorities deem you unsuitable for entry.

#### **ACCOMMODATIONS ON TOUR**

Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. will do our best to make you comfortable and feel at home on your tour.

Canadian Tours: Keep in mind that our sea kayaking tours are a true wilderness experience that can involve camping in established and non-established sites with minimal facilities and rustic surroundings. This is all part of what we call an adventure! Tenting and lodging is generally based on double occupancy, however if you are traveling solo we do our best to provide you with your own tent or a suitable tent partner.

International Tours: Hotel portions of tours are based on double occupancy. If you prefer a single room there is an additional \$100 night single supplement charge. Availability of single rooms may be limited. Single accommodation on the mothership in Chile is not possible. All tenting is also based on double occupancy, however if you are travelling solo we do our best to provide you with your own tent or a suitable tent partner.

#### **TIPPING**

Gratuities are always appreciated. If you feel the guides and crew have done an exceptional job, tipping is a great way to show your appreciation. We also appreciate other expressions of thanks including cards, letters etc.

#### **STORAGE OF PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Due to the nature of our services, it is necessary to collect and store a certain amount of personal and financial information. By providing us with address, personal and financial information, you consent to the storage of this information for a period of time deemed appropriate by Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. Personal information includes, but is not limited to, your first name, last name, phone number, email address and billing address. Financial information includes, but is not limited to, your card account number, card expiration date and cardholder name. Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. is PCI compliant and is committed to ensuring the safety of your information.

#### **PRIVACY POLICY**

Spirit of the West Adventures occasionally sends out an e-newsletter and occasionally area- or activity-specific news that we think you'll want to hear about. We will **never** sell or share your email address with any third-party company (unless it is for the purpose of coordinating trip logistics, for example booking airline tickets). You can unsubscribe at any time by emailing or clicking on the links in newsletters. See our [privacy policy](#) for more details.

#### **PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE**

Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. reserves the right to take photographic or film records of any of its tours. Trip members should be aware that Spirit of the West Adventures Ltd. may use these photos or film for promotional and or commercial purposes without remuneration to the trip participants.

