



RIDE WORLD WIDE

CHILE, PATAGONIA

TORRES DEL PAINE 2023-2024

RIDE INFORMATION

These trips explore the spectacular terrain of Torres del Paine National Park in southern Patagonia. The scenery in this area is undoubtedly some of the wildest and most breath-taking in the world, with huge granite spires, blue glaciers flowing down from the Southern Patagonian Ice Cap, turquoise lakes and forests of southern beech trees. The rides are organised by Osvaldo Mella who was born and bred in Patagonia and has plenty of experience guiding rides in the area. He speaks excellent English having worked in both Canada and Australia. Due to its remoteness, accommodation in the area is fairly limited and access often necessitates long hours in a vehicle on bumpy and often dusty roads. Those participating in the rides need to be prepared for this and for the weather which is notoriously unstable and can change quickly! However, for most, the journey and vagaries of the weather are more than compensated for by the wonderful riding country.



DATES

Set date rides offered between October and March, usually for 6 nights, including 5 days riding, and using different standards of accommodation. Private rides and tailor-made itineraries can also be arranged on request for groups of 2 or more throughout the same season. Please see set departure dates overleaf and contact Ride World Wide to discuss your plans and availability.

HORSES

The horses used are all owned by Osvaldo and his family and are bred locally on estancias in the region. They are cross breeds, usually Chilean horse or Criollo mix, and are of a medium build. With some Percheron blood, most are a little taller than the local horses of northern Chile, ranging from about 14.2hh to 16hh. They are good natured and a sensible, forward going and responsive ride, bred primarily for working with sheep and cattle. All the horses are used to neck reining.

TACK

Saddles are Chilean 'huaso' style which have a high back and front with large comfortable sheepskins built in (although sometimes covered in leather). Bridles are usually rawhide, with either English style snaffle bits or traditional Chilean style, with a long shank. Saddle bags are provided.

RIDING

There is generally between 5 and 6 hours in the saddle each riding day (though one day can be up to 9 hours), covering 30 to 40 kms. Riding is broken up with rest stops and a break for lunch and there is also usually time for walks, photography and to admire the spectacular views. Trips are run for a minimum of 2 or 4 and maximum of 6 or 8 riding guests. Due to the remoteness of the location and stamina required, riders need to be fit, active and healthy.

WEIGHT LIMIT

90kgs / 14st 4lbs - if you are close to this or a little over, please check with us as occasionally heavier, experienced riders can be taken by prior arrangement.



PACE

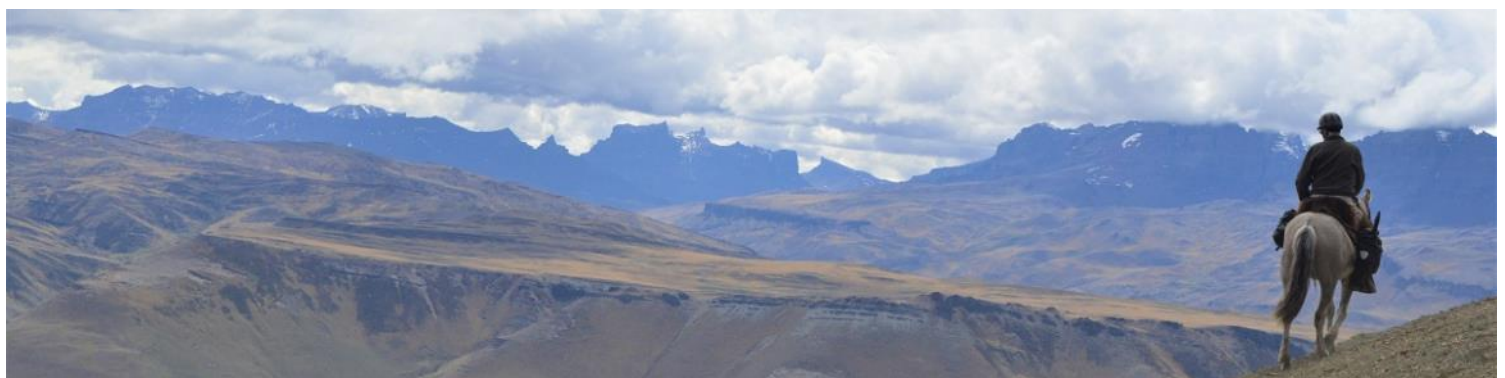
The pace on the rides varies with the terrain but overall it is moderate and well balanced. The going in much of the National Park is grassy and soft and Patagonia's tremendous open spaces allow plenty of opportunities for fast riding - long exhilarating canters on open plains and along the flat bottomed valleys that run amongst the Paine Massif. At other times, the pace is slower as you weave through forests of southern beech, wade across glacial rivers, climb mountain passes to admire views over vast expanses of blue and white ice below and ride along the lake shores.

RIDING EXPERIENCE

The rides are best suited to reasonably competent riders who are secure in the saddle, fit and comfortable on a horse in open country at all paces. They are aimed at those with a reasonable amount of riding experience, although there is a good selection of well mannered, steady but forward going horses to suit riders of different abilities. It is important to be fit as riding hours are fairly long and the open space is ideal for long canters - every participant (particularly those with limited riding experience) should put in plenty of practice to get saddle fit before travel.

TERRAIN

The terrain in the area changes during every ride, varying from vast rolling grassy plains, to steep wooded valleys. High snow-clad mountains and huge glaciers sweep down through the beech forest and spill out into numerous blue-grey lakes and always, as a dramatic back drop, is the great Paine Massif which you will see from many different angles.



WILDLIFE

There are over one hundred bird species in the Paine area including the giant Condor, flamingos, ibis, black necked swans, rheas and austral parrots. Twenty five different species of mammal include guanaco (the wild version of the Llama) which you may see in large numbers, fox and, with the Paine Reserve **the** place in South America you are most likely to catch a glimpse of puma (although even here you have to be very lucky!), there is plenty for the wildlife enthusiast.

ACCOMMODATION



Accommodation varies with the different itineraries. The Baguales to Rio Serrano Ride uses the highest standard available in locations that make the most of the area's dramatic scenery. The first 2 nights of the 6 night itinerary are spent at Baguales Glamping in amazing domes with large glass panels to enjoy the view. Each dome has twin or double beds, en-suite bathrooms and a woodburning stove. The next 2 nights are at comfortable family run estancias (farms) in or adjacent to the National Park. These are working estancias that offer family-style guest rooms or estancias that have been fully converted for guests. Rooms are quite simple but comfortable, generally twin bedded with private bathroom, although occasionally bathrooms may be shared. The last 2 nights are spent at Hotel Rio Serrano, in the center of the National Park. On the Torres Adventure you stay at the simple and remote Estancia La Cumbre for 2 night, with bunk bed accommodation. One night is spent in a private at Estancia Las Chinas (shared rooms); one night will be camping at Laguna Azul (2 man simple dome tents are used - you will need your own sleeping bag). The final 2 nights are at a refugio in Rio Serrano village (again shared rooms / shared bathrooms). Hotels and estancias are used by other Park visitors and accommodation (especially in the center of the Park) is often fairly busy, particularly in peak holiday times when there can be quite a lot of walkers and other visitors coming and going.



MEALS

Food on the ride is wholesome, generous and surprisingly varied bearing in mind the remoteness of the area and that all supplies have to be transported into the Park especially. Days start with an ample breakfast at your hotel or estancia - there might be a choice of cereal, toast or bread, ham and / or cheese and sometimes a cooked breakfast on offer. Lunches are either carried in saddle bags to eat 'picnic style' en-route, or you may stop at a farmhouse where a dish will be cooked for you. Dinner varies with the accommodation - and menus on the Torres Adventure will be more simple. When staying at private estancias, your main dish might be a delicious 'asado' barbecue of local lamb or beef, fresh fish with a vegetarian option available; on other nights there may be a buffet style dinner with a few different dishes or a 'menu' - typically a choice of a soup or salad starter, a main course of fish, beef or chicken with a variety of salads and vegetables and a pudding / fruit. Beer and soft drinks are included with lunch and wine is included with dinner (limited amounts on Torres Adventure). Extra drinks can be purchased at the hotels / estancias. Food overall is good and varied and your guides will do their best to cater for any particular dietary requests as long as prior notice is given but you should be aware that because of the area's remoteness, much depends on availability of supplies, which have to be brought in from the nearest town. Menus vary depending on what is on offer at the time locally - fresh fruit and vegetables can be hard to get / supplies limited.

WEATHER

The weather in Patagonia is notoriously variable and although it is often milder in the Park than in the surrounding regions, you need to be prepared for weather extremes and temperatures which can change rapidly, sometimes freezing at night, rising to about 20-25°C on a still, cloudless day, then dropping suddenly again. As well as this, the wind can be extremely strong, it is possible to experience all four seasons in a day and rain, generally in squally showers, is possible at any time. Come prepared!

WHAT TO BRING

We will send you a suggested equipment list when you book.

ITINERARIES

Below is an example of the 6 night Baguales to Rio Serrano itinerary. The ride starts in the mountains to the north of Torres del Paine, close to the border with Argentina, and heads south, crossing estancia and National Park lands to the centre of the park at Rio Serrano. The Torres Adventure follows a similar riding route but uses different accommodation - please enquire for the day by day itinerary. Please note that it is only an example and the route and day by day itinerary may be varied by your guide if weather, other local conditions or participants' riding experience requires.

Example itinerary - Baguales Mountains to Rio Serrano

Day 1 - At about 12 noon you will be collected and driven approximately 2 hours to Estancia Cerro Guido. Here you can take part in the ongoing estancia chores, which may be sheep shearing, dipping, penning, and generally experiencing the daily lives of the gauchos and country people. Then continue driving to your accommodation, Baguales Glamping, a place surrounded by rolling hills and towering mountains located to the north of Torres del Paine, right next to the border with Argentina. A Calafate sour, (typical Patagonian drink) will be waiting for you on arrival. Dinner at the puesto, then spend the night at the exclusive Baguales Glamping in domes with private bathrooms. (L,D)



Day 2 - A full day ride in Sierra Baguales, about 6 hours, exploring this untamed, breath taking landscape. Lunch in an old "puesto", a small homestead in which shepherds / gauchos would live, often in isolation for months. Dinner and night in Baguales Glamping (about 6 hours riding). (B,L,D)

Day 3 - Breakfast and a long ride ahead to Estancia Las Chinas, with a pack lunch en-route. There are several climbs and descents as you traverse the mountains, but also some broad valleys with good chances to move on. Once you reach Las Chinas you will leave the horses and transfer about 25 minutes to Estancia Cerro Guido. The night is spent in this lovely authentic working estancia, which neighbours Torres del Paine National Park. There are spectacular views from the dining room and you may see the gauchos rounding up sheep and herding horses (around 5 hours riding). (B,L,D)



ITINERARY cont.

Day 4 - Breakfast and transfer back to re-join the horses. A full day ride to the waterfall “Salto Las Chinas”, with lunch cooked for you by a local family at their homestead. From the waterfall continue, crossing the Rio Las Chinas and riding to Laguna Azul. Here you reach Cabanas Laguna Azul where the night is spent. With luck a typical “Asado de cordero” (lamb barbecue) cooked by the gauchos, will be waiting for you! (Around 4 hours riding). (B,L,D)

Day 5 - The ride today takes you from Laguna Azul to Rio Serrano village. A long ride right through the centre of the park, passing along the edge of Lago Sarmiento, and enjoying wild landscapes, dramatic views of the Paine massif, and lakes of different shades of blue and grey. This is one of the most beautiful parks in all of Patagonia! Stop at a viewpoint for a picnic lunch and in the afternoon continue towards Rio Serrano (there is an option to go by vehicle as it is a long day!) The horses stay in a paddock a little out of the village and you will be driven the last part to your hotel. Dinner and the night at Pampa Lodge in Rio Serrano (around 8-9 hours riding). (B,L,D)



Day 6 - Breakfast and re-join the horses. Today’s ride take you across the pampas heading towards Grey Lake and Grey Glacier, with wonderful views ahead dominated by the jagged, granite peaks of the Paine massif. Depending on timing, you may stop for lunch when you reach the shores of Lago Grey. Here you say goodbye to the horses and continue on foot for about 45 minutes to take the boat to the face of the glacier. The Glacier itself is 17 km from Grey beach and the cruise takes about 3 hours in all. Grey Glacier is a wonder of nature - 28 km in length with a total surface area of 270 square km, its frozen walls of crystalline ice tower almost 35 metres high. Quite regularly parts of it tumble into the lake beneath in spectacular fashion - a great excitement if you are cruising close by! On return to the beach you hike back to meet the vehicle for transfer back to Pampa Lodge for dinner (around 4 hours riding). (B,L,D)

Day 7 - Breakfast and transfer back to Puerto Natales/Airport to arrive late morning. Own arrangements for onward travel. (B)



DATES & RATES 2023-2024

Please note that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are quoted in USD. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the USD / sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay. (Rates valid to April 2024) Please enquire for autumn dates.

Baguales Mountains to Rio Serrano (6 nights)

29th November to 5th December 2023

22nd to 28th January 2024

17th to 23rd March 2024

9th to 15th January 2024

5th to 11th March 2024

Prices depend on eventual group size

USD 6990 per person, (6 riders)

USD 7190 (5 riders); USD 7490 (4 riders); USD 7900 (3 riders); USD 8690 (2 riders);

Single room Rates assume twin shared accommodation and if you are travelling alone a single supplement USD 1200 is payable. If you are travelling alone, and are happy to share with another rider (same sex) we can try and find a sharer and if we do the supplement will not be payable.

Rates INCLUDE - All riding, guiding and equipment, 6 nights twin accommodation, all meals (including beer with lunch & wine with dinner) from dinner Day 1 to breakfast Day 7, Park fees, the services of an English speaking guide and baqueanos, saddle bags, transfers by vehicle with the group at set times from / to Puerto Natales airport on first and last day.

Torres Adventure Ride (6 nights)

13th to 19th November 2023

5th to 11th February 2024

USD 5695 per person, (based on 4 to 8 riders)

Single rooms not possible

Rates INCLUDE - All riding, guiding and equipment, 6 nights shared refugio & camping accommodation, all meals (including 1 beer or soft drink with lunch & limited wine with dinner) from dinner Day 1 to breakfast Day 7, Park fees, the services of an English speaking guide/ gaucho, saddle bags, transfers by vehicle with the group at set times from / to Puerto Natales airport on first and last day.

Rates EXCLUDE - International flights to Chile / travel to Puerto Natales, airport transfers outside set times, your bar bill for extra drinks, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), any visa fees, personal extras at hotels / estancias (eg shopping, phone calls, laundry etc) and any tips / gratuities you may wish to leave.



FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION

The meeting point for these rides is the beautifully situated town of Puerto Natales, a fishing port on Last Hope Sound. To get to Puerto Natales, you will need to fly to Santiago, the capital of Chile, and then take an internal flight south, either direct to Puerto Natales (there are flight on most days during the season), or to Punta Arenas at the southern tip of Chilean Patagonia and transfer by bus from there (approx 4 hours).

Either way, in most cases you will need to spend the night before the star day of the ride in Puerto Natales - there are many different hotels and we can help with suggestions / bookings.

After the ride your are driven back to Puerto Natales to arrive late morning and it is possible to connect with flights from Puerto Natales to Santiago that day.

FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION cont.

From the UK, British Airways, Iberia and Latam all fly from London via Sao Paolo or Madrid to Santiago (Chile's capital). From Santiago there are usually 2 or 3 flights each day to Puerto Natales, and 4 flights each day to Punta Arenas. It is often necessary to spend a night in Santiago either on the way out or back due to flight connection times.

For International flights to Punta Arena / Puerto Natales from London budget around £1200 to £1500 Economy return, depending on the airline and season. Please call us for more flight information.

GENERAL VISA AND HEALTH INFORMATION

(NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking.)

Visas British, US and most European passport holders do not need to arrange a visa in advance to visit Chile for stays of less than three months BUT you should always check up to date requirements.

Health No jabs are required as a condition of entry to Chile from the UK and Europe but the TravelHealthPro website (NaTHNaC) recommends most travellers are vaccinated against Tetanus. If you are not you should visit your GP or a travel clinic about 4 weeks before departure. If you plan a long trip or to visit other rural areas before or after the ride you should take further advice as other inoculations may be recommended.

(DRAFT 10/01/2024)

