

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



Argentina & Chile's Rugged North: From the Andes
to the Atacama Desert

2025

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

CONTENTS

ARGENTINA & CHILE'S RUGGED NORTH: FROM THE ANDES TO THE ATACAMA DESERT

Your Adventure at a Glance:

Where You're Going, What it Costs,
and What's Included **4**

Your Detailed Day-To-Day Itinerary **6**

Pre-Trip Extension **17**

Post-Trip Extension **20**

ESSENTIAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

Travel Documents & Entry Requirements... **23**

Rigors, Vaccines & General Health **25**

Money Matters: Local Currency &
Tipping Guidelines..... **29**

Air, Optional Tours & Staying in Touch **32**

Packing: What to Bring & Luggage Limits... **36**

Climate & Average Temperatures **42**

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

South American Culture **45**

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs,
Shipping & More **49**

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Argentina **52**

Chile **55**

Uruguay **59**

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading **67**

Suggested Films & Videos **68**

Useful Websites **70**

Useful Apps **71**



New! Argentina & Chile's Rugged North: From the Andes to the Atacama Desert Small Group Adventure

Argentina: Buenos Aires, Cafayate, Cachi, Salta, Purmamarca | **Chile:** San Pedro de Atacama, Santiago

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

16 days starting from \$6,795

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/noa2025pricing

Discover the spectacular landscapes that await in the unexplored corners of Argentina & Chile—fiery canyons, rainbow-hued mountains, fields of towering cacti, and salt flats that stretch as far as the eye can see. From dazzling capital cities to mile-high deserts, Andean peaks to red-rock ravines, this is a true off-the-beaten-path adventure that takes you from coast-to-coast and across the world's longest mountain range. This is South America like you've never seen it before.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 14 nights accommodation
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- All land transportation and 2 internal flights
- 30 meals—14 breakfasts, 7 lunches, and 9 dinners
- 17 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next adventure

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.

Argentina & Chile's Rugged North: From the Andes to the Atacama Desert



ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Fly to Buenos Aires, Argentina
2-3	Buenos Aires
4-5	Cafayate
6	Cachi
7-8	Salta
9-10	Purmamarca
11-13	San Pedro de Atacama, Chile
14-15	Santiago
16	Return to U.S.

WHAT TO EXPECT

①②③④⑤ Moderately Strenuous

Pacing: 7 locations in 14 days

Physical requirements: Travel on mountainous, unpaved roads at high altitudes and walk on rough, steep, slippery trails. Long bus rides of 4-8 hours on several days and 2 internal flights.

Flight Time: Travel time will be 8-19 hours and will most likely have two connections

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/noa

ARGENTINA & CHILE: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

People-to-People Experiences: Get an unfiltered view of local life during memorable interactions with local people. Participate in a candid conversation about the **Controversial Topic** of Argentina's military dictatorship, and the citizens who were permanently "disappeared" during the "Dirty War" of the 1970s and 80s.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Explore Argentina and Chile's off-the-beaten path locations at a quieter time of year, when the weather is mild and the crowds are light, enjoying more authentic interactions with local people—O.A.T. is the only travel company to offer an itinerary of this kind during these months.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Uruguay's Atlantic Coast:
Colonia del Sacramento &
Montevideo

PRE-TRIP: 5 nights from **\$2,295**

Easter Island's Sacred Sites &
Santiago

POST-TRIP: 5 nights from **\$3,395**

ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Buenos Aires** before your Uruguay's Atlantic Coast pre-trip extension or before your main adventure from **\$160** per room, per night

Argentina & Chile's Rugged North: From the Andes to the Atacama Desert

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

5 nights in *Uruguay's Atlantic Coast: Colonia del Sacramento & Montevideo*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Arrive Buenos Aires, Argentina

Day 3 Ferry to Colonia del Sacramento, Uruguay

Day 4 Explore Colonia

Day 5 Overland to Montevideo • Visit a local farm

Day 6 Explore Montevideo

Day 7 Ferry to Buenos Aires • Begin main trip

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart on your overnight flight to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Day 2 Arrive Buenos Aires, Argentina

- Destination: Buenos Aires
- Accommodations: Loi Suites Recoleta or similar

Morning: Welcome to Buenos Aires, where we'll spend the first two nights of our adventure. When you arrive, an O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and arrange for your transfer to your hotel.

Lunch: On your own—your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a café or restaurant.

Afternoon: The afternoon is free for you to settle in and do as you wish. Later, join your Trip Experience Leader and fellow travelers, including those joining us from the *Buenos Aires*

& *Uruguay's Colonial Past* pre-trip extension, for a Welcome Briefing in the hotel. Then, we'll embark on an orientation walk to better acquaint ourselves with our new surroundings.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can point out ideal restaurants during your orientation walk.

Evening: The rest of the evening is free to rest or discover Buenos Aires' nightlife independently.

Day 3 Explore Buenos Aires • **Controversial Topic: The "Disappeared" of Argentina's Dirty War**

- Destination: Buenos Aires
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Loi Suites Recoleta or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll begin the day with an included tour to delve into the rich history of Buenos Aires—an epic tale of birth and rebirth, protests and passions, suffering and triumph set against the placid landscape of the Rio de la Plata.

Our discoveries start with a stop at Plaza de Mayo—a monument-lined square that is home to Argentina's presidential residence, the Casa Rosada. Here, we'll meet a local who can provide a personal perspective about a **Controversial Topic:** the tens of thousands of Argentines who were kidnapped, tortured, or killed between 1976 to 1983 during the country's last dictatorship, in a campaign known as the "Dirty War."

In 1976, the Argentine military overthrew the democratically-elected government in a coup, and put in place a dictatorship led by Lieutenant General Jorge Rafael Videla, Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera, and Brigadier-General Orlando Ramón Agosti. This was part of a series of political coups called Operation Condor, a campaign notoriously sponsored by the United States government to combat the spread of communism.

The newly created dictatorship wasted no time searching for anyone they considered to be a dissenter, from political rivals to average citizens suspected of being aligned with leftist, socialist, or social justice movements. Thus began the "Dirty War," a time of terror when the people of Argentina lived in fear that a loved one—or even themselves—could be taken away at any moment, for any perceived reason.

After our conversation, we'll continue our tour as we stroll the wide boulevards of Avenida 9 de Julio and make our way to the colorful La Boca artists' district, where the Argentinean tango was born. Here, we'll enjoy a short tango lesson that introduces us to the dance whose passion and grace exemplify the spirit of Argentinean

culture. After our lesson, we'll have some time to stroll around La Boca at leisure before returning to our hotel.

Lunch: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can suggest a café or restaurant.

Afternoon: The afternoon is free to explore independently; your Trip Experience Leader can offer their recommendations. Perhaps you'll visit San Telmo, the oldest neighborhood in the city, where living history surrounds you. If you find yourself here on a weekend, you might head to the San Telmo antique and artisan market (open only on Sundays) to browse the boutiques and market stands, and revel in the bohemian vibe of the surrounding neighborhood. Or maybe you'll discover Puerto Madero, the city's modern and upscale waterfront district, replete with trendy bars and restaurants. Whichever direction your interests pull you in, your Trip Experience Leader is available with resources to help you make the most of your free time.

Dinner: Regroup this evening for an included Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: Enjoy the opportunity to tap into the rhythm of Buenos Aires at your leisure.

Day 4 Fly to Salta • Overland to Cafayate

- Destination: Cafayate
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Patios de Cafayate Wine Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll transfer to the airport this morning for our flight to Salta, where after landing, we'll transfer to Cafayate, nestled in the heart of Argentina's wine country.

Located near the southwestern corner of the Salta province, Cafayate is the gateway to the Argentine desert. As we make our way south, the scenery will shift perceptibly—from the fertile farmlands near Salta, through deep-red gorges and brush-covered hills, and finally to the dusty, sunburnt canyons of *Quebrada de las Conchas* (Shell's Gorge) on the outskirts of Cafayate. But the desert here is far from a desolate wasteland: Our route will be peppered with some of the most dramatic views northern Argentina has to offer, including soaring rock formations and jagged purple mountains.

Lunch: Along the route to Cafayate, we'll stop for lunch at a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll get a closer look at this region's rugged natural beauty as we continue our drive to our hotel in Cafayate. We'll check in after we arrive.

Dinner: On your own in Cafayate. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant.

Evening: Free to rest or explore independently.

Day 5 Explore Cafayate • Discover Museo de la Vid & Vino • Winery Visit

- Destination: Cafayate
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Patios de Cafayate Wine Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive into the center of Cafayate where we'll get to know this burgeoning wine capital better on a walking tour. Mendoza, to the south, has long been considered Argentina's best wine-producing region, but in recent years Cafayate has emerged as a new player on the vintner scene. Here, high altitude vineyards at elevations ranging from 5,000 to almost 10,000 feet produce richly aromatic malbecs, tannats,

cabernet sauvignons, and the local specialty, torrontés—a dry and fruity white wine that is just beginning to make a name for itself outside of Argentina. Grapes grown at these high altitudes are exposed to greater sunlight, resulting in thicker skins and more intense wines. (For comparison, Europe's highest vineyards sit about 4,000 feet about sea level.)

And yet, despite all the buzz around the region's wines, Cafayate town remains a reluctant occupant of the limelight, and you are more likely to see *gauchos* on horseback than busloads of eager wine lovers during our time here. We'll take a walking tour of the town while our Trip Experience Leader shares their knowledge of the region and of wine's integral role in daily life here. Along the way, we'll see Cafayate's double-domed cathedral, wander through the elegant main plaza and streets, where typical adobe style meets Spanish colonial architecture. We'll end our tour with a taste of local ice cream.

Then, we'll continue on to the *Museo de la Vid & Vino* (Museum of the Vine & Wine), which houses an array of artifacts that reveal the evolution of wine production in the Calchaquí Valley, of which Cafayate is a part. The museum also features an exhibit about the local terroir—including how the region's altitude impacts the flavor of the wine. While we're here, we'll also sample a few local flavors during a tasting.

Lunch: On your own in Cafayate. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a café or restaurant.

Afternoon: You'll have a few hours to explore Cafayate independently before regrouping for a pre-dinner visit to a local winery, El Esteco. After learning about the wine-making process, we'll have the opportunity to sample a few of the resulting wines.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: The night is free to rest or explore Cafayate on your own.

Day 6 Overland to Cachi

- Destination: Cachi
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: La Merced del Alto or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel and begin our transfer to Cachi, a laidback desert town within view of the stunning Nevado de Cachi mountain range. As we make our way to our next destination, you can watch the landscape change before your eyes, as the verdant countryside and trestled vineyards of Argentina's wine country give way to the red rock landscapes of this rugged region.

Our route is the legendary RN 40, or *Ruta 40*, an unpaved road that is as central in the Argentinean national consciousness as Route 66 is in the American west, inspiring songs, films, and books about the beauty and joys of the open road. At more than 3,100 miles long, the RN 40 stretches from Jujuy province in northwest Argentina to Punta Loyola near the country's southernmost tip—a distance greater than the width of the continental United States. We'll drive a small piece of the road through some of northwest Argentina's most brilliant landscapes, following the Calchaqui River through the dramatic mountain passes, and stopping to examine a few of the small villages that line the route.

Lunch: We'll pause for lunch in the remote village of Molinos.

Afternoon: We continue our drive to Cachi, arriving in the mid-afternoon. Referred to by locals in the region as the "city," tiny Cachi is

the biggest town for miles around and boasts an abundance of fresh mountain air, sunny days, and colonial charm. Alongside a local guide, as well as our experienced Trip Experience Leader, we'll navigate Cachi's cobbled lanes lined with adobe houses and into the tranquil plaza as we learn about the way of life here. Following our walking tour, we'll check in to our hotel. After settling in to your room, you'll have a few hours free before dinner.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: The rest of the night is free to rest or explore independently.

Day 7 Overland to Salta • Explore Los Cardones National Park • Discover Cuesta del Obispo

- Destination: Salta
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Alejandro I Hotel or similar

Activity Note: As we drive the Cuesta del Obispo, we'll reach a maximum elevation of 11,000 feet. We recommend staying hydrated at high altitude.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Check out of your hotel this morning and head out onto the open road as we make our way toward Salta, a city that is the capital of a province with the same name.

We'll break up the journey with a stop at cactus-strewn Los Cardones National Park. This park was created to protect the slow-growing cardon cacti that thrive in the dry climate here (cardon grow less than a few millimeters per year). We'll take a short walk through the park to soak up the stark barrenness of our surroundings and admire the towering cacti, which can reach three times a man's height;

along the way, you may see llama-like *guanacos* pick their way among the spiky plants and condors soaring overhead.

After our tour, our journey continues as we reach the *Cuesta del Obispo* (Bishop's Slope) pass, a winding 12-and-a-half mile cliffside road that makes switchbacks across the mountain. The road is steep, but the views of the Argentinean countryside are simply splendid.

Lunch: We'll stop at a local restaurant for lunch as we make our way to Salta.

Afternoon: Continue on to Salta, passing through the Quebrada del Escoipe gorge on a narrow road hewn from the surrounding rust-red mountains. Once we arrive in Salta, we'll check in to our hotel, and get to know our surroundings during an orientation walk with our Trip Experience Leader.

Dinner: On your own in Salta. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant.

Evening: Free to rest or explore independently.

Day 8 Explore Salta

- Destination: Salta
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Alejandro I Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Set off on a guided tour of Salta, a sprawling metropolis in the heart of the desert. Founded in 1582 by the Spanish Army, Salta today retains much of its original colonial charm, earning it the nickname *Salta la Linda* ("Salta the beautiful"). The city served an important function as a stop on the gold trade route from Lima to the Buenos Aires port during the Spanish Empire. But long before

the Spanish came here, Salta was inhabited by ancient Inca and other Andean indigenous groups, and their traditional way of life is very much alive here—in fact, Salta is one of the few places in Argentina where you can hear people speaking Quechua.

We'll begin our morning's explorations with a visit to the San Miguel Market, a busy indoor marketplace where stalls overflow with the bounty of fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats, and locals from all walks of life come to do their daily shopping. This is a great opportunity to mix and mingle with vendors and fellow shoppers.

Next, we'll enjoy a walking tour of the historic colonial neighborhood. Salta's epicenter is the Plaza 9 de Julio, a tree-lined square bordered by graceful arcades built in the Spanish colonial style. The plaza is a popular place for *Salteños* (as the locals are known) to hang out at any time of day, but it particularly comes alive at night and on Saturdays, when artisanal vendors set up their stalls for a thriving craft market. We'll stroll from the plaza past the rose-colored Cathedral to San Francisco Church, easily recognizable by its ornate red and yellow facade, and venture inside to see its impressive altar.

Our next stop is the Museum of High Altitude Archaeology, whose wonderful collection of Incan and pre-Incan artifacts sheds light on the history and culture of these long-ago civilizations. But perhaps the most famous items in the museum are the 500-year-old bodies of three Incan children. Known as the Children of Llullaillaco, their bodies were found frozen atop nearby Mount Llullaillaco, where the extreme cold and aridity naturally mummified them. Witnessing their bodies, which are in pristine condition, is equal parts eerie and fascinating.

Lunch: On your own. The city claims to be the original home of the *empanada*, so it seems only fitting to visit the El Patio de la Empanada—a large food hall serving up many different styles and flavors of these savory pastries—during your time here.

Afternoon: The remainder of the afternoon is free to discover more of Salta. Your Trip Experience Leader is full of suggestions, so please be sure to check with them if you'd like assistance planning the rest of your day.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: After dinner, you are free to continue enjoying the evening or retire to your room for rest.

Day 9 Overland to Purmamarca • Explore Tilcara archaeological site

- Destination: Purmamarca
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: La Comarca or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of the hotel this morning and begin our journey north toward Purmamarca, navigating burnt-orange valleys and twisting mountain passes as we make our way to our next destination.

Before arriving in town, however, we'll stop in Tilcara, a picturesque town a short distance north of Purmamarca in the *Quebrada de Humahuaca* (Humahuaca Gorge). This gorge traverses the length of the Rio Grande Valley and follows the path of the ancient Inca Trail trade route; this combination of natural beauty and immense cultural significance (evidence of the route's use by prehistoric communities dates back 10,000 years) has earned the Quebrada a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

Our destination isn't the town itself, but what lays outside it: the Pucará de Tilcara archaeological site. Shaped like a squared-off pyramid, the small ruins at Tilcara provide insight into ancient Andean culture. A local guide and our knowledgeable Trip Experience Leader will be on hand to illuminate the history of the site and of the people who lived here more than 10,000 years ago.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll drive south to Purmamarca after lunch, and check in to our hotel.

Dinner: On your own in Purmamarca. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant.

Evening: The night is yours to rest or spend as you please.

Day 10 Explore Purmamarca • Visit Hill of the Seven Colors

- Destination: Purmamarca
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: La Comarca or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we will explore Purmamarca and its environs. This small town is best known for its setting at the base of the *Cerro de los Siete Colores* (Hill of the Seven Colors)—a multi-hued mountain resembling a layer cake. We'll get to see this natural wonder up close, but first we'll explore Purmamarca itself.

Strung with low adobe buildings, Purmamarca may at first seem like a sleepy desert town, but it springs to life each day at the lively craft market held on the main square. Here, browse for high-quality handwoven goods and get to see Argentina's Andean culture—markedly different from the rest of country—in action. Peru and Bolivia are best known for their

strongholds of traditional Andean culture, but this corner of northwest Argentina is home to a small but thriving population of indigenous Andeans as well. We'll also visit the town's historic white-walled church, the Santa Rose de Lima, which dates back to the 17th century.

Next, we'll head outside of town to hike along the *Paseo de los Colorados* trail to reach the *Cerro de los Siete Colores*, pausing at scenic outlooks along the way to admire the view and take photos. The *cerro* gets its famous striated colors from mineral deposits dating back 400 million years. We'll have a chance to admire this natural wonder before walking back to town.

Lunch: On your own in Purmamarca. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for restaurant recommendations.

Afternoon: You'll have the rest of the afternoon free to make your own discoveries. Perhaps you'll wander through the town in search of the *algarrobo histórico*, an ancient and towering tree that has managed to survive the desert's harsh climate for 700 years. Or, maybe you'd prefer to relax at the hotel and go for a swim.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: After dinner, the evening is yours to relax or continue celebrating our journey.

Day 11 Overland to San Pedro de Atacama, Chile

- Destination: San Pedro
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: La Casa de Don Tomas or similar

Activity Note: Today's transfer is approximately 10 hours, including multiple stops along the way, and takes place at an altitude of up to 15,800 feet. Our vehicle will

have an oxygen tank for emergency purposes. We recommend staying hydrated and eating light while at high altitude.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll leave our hotel this morning and begin our journey toward the Chilean border. As we make our way out of Argentina, we'll notice more dramatic landscape changes as we pass the Salinas Grandes salt flat on our way toward the Andes.

Lunch: We'll pause for lunch in the remote Andean mountain village of Cerro Negro. Here, we'll enjoy a community meal with local residents, for a glimpse into the daily challenges of living in such a harsh climate.

Afternoon: After we bid our hosts farewell, we'll cross the border into Chile as winding roads take us through magnificent mountain passes, past the *puna* (grassy highlands), and up into the Andean plateau, where the Andes are at their widest. Second only to Tibet, this is the largest area of high plateau on Earth and supports very little life. Traveling at these elevations affords views of a unique biosphere, but may be challenging to some travelers: As we soak up the scenery, we will climb to a maximum altitude of 15,800 feet—the same height as Mont Blanc, the highest peak in the Alps—for a period of about one hour. In total, we'll spend more than eight hours throughout the day above 10,000 feet.

Our destination for the day is San Pedro de Atacama, an oasis town in Chile's *Norte Grande* region—home to the driest (and highest) desert on Earth. San Pedro may be remote, but its far-flung location doesn't deter those looking to feast their eyes on the magnificent landscapes nearby: Considered the gateway to exploring the Atacama, this small town is a popular stop, and you may find yourself rubbing elbows with travelers from all over

South America and, indeed, the world during our time here. We'll check in to our hotel once we arrive later today.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: You may choose to continue spending time with fellow members of your small group, explore around the hotel, or retire to your room.

Day 12 Explore San Pedro • Visit Salar de Atacama salt flats

- Destination: San Pedro
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: La Casa de Don Tomas or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Begin the day's discoveries with a walking tour of San Pedro, where—with insights from our Trip Experience Leader—we'll begin to learn about local Chilean history and culture. This compact, terra cotta-hued village serves as a base for northern Chile's nearby wonders, but it contains a few fascinating sites of its own. As we walk the dusty streets, we'll observe the adobe architecture typical of desert towns and spot traditional artwork adorning many local homes. We'll then visit the Church of San Pedro de Atacama, perhaps the town's most famous landmark; built of adobe in the Spanish colonial style, this church is said to be the second oldest in Chile.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Enjoy a couple of hours free to continue exploring independently or to relax. Later, our small group will gather again to depart for the Salar de Atacama salt flats. Our journey takes us through desert landscapes of alternating rock and sand until we reach Laguna Chaxa, a flamingo breeding site in Salar de Atacama, Chile's largest salt flat. We'll have

the chance to seek out native wildlife, such as the three flamingo species that inhabit this lake—a bizarre sight in the midst of a desert. The flat spans 1,200 square miles, making it the third-largest in the world.

We'll return to San Pedro after our tour of the flats.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience leader can recommend a restaurant.

Evening: The remainder of the evening is free to spend as you prefer.

Day 13 Optional Tatio Geysers tour • Visit Valley of Death

- Destination: San Pedro
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: La Casa de Don Tomas or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: For those who wish to enjoy a free morning in San Pedro, this is your opportunity to do so. Perhaps you'll stroll the town's main street, which is lined with artisan craft shops selling locally made pottery, alpaca woolen goods, and sculptures and jewelry made from copper (sourced from the region) and gold.

Alternatively, for those fascinated by Earth's natural wonders, rise early for an optional excursion to El Tatio, a bubbling geyser field enclosed by snow-capped volcanoes. Return to San Pedro after your morning tour.

Lunch: Travelers who choose to spend today exploring independently and travelers who choose to join us on our optional tour will both enjoy lunch on your own.

Afternoon: After a few hours of free time, our small group will reconvene this afternoon to drive to the Valley of Death. Don't let the name intimidate you—it likely has its origins in the

valley's Spanish name, *Valle de Marte* (Valley of Mars), which became *Valle de la Muerte* as travelers and explorers traded stories about it. We'll get a sense of how it earned its original name as we admire its red rock formations and tall sandy dunes, which may remind us of our extraterrestrial neighbor's topography.

Dinner: At a local restaurant near the valley.

Evening: We'll return to our hotel after dinner where the rest of the night is yours to do as you wish.

Day 14 Explore the Valley of the Moon • Fly to Santiago

- Destination: Santiago
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Santiago or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel and drive to the airport in Calama, a journey that will take us through stark red landscapes and past snowcapped peaks. Along the way, we'll stop to explore the Valley of the Moon, a lunar setting of rock formations, caves, and gorges carved by eons of wind and floods. Scientists chose this region to test drive a prototype Mars rover in 2013. Led by our knowledgeable Trip Experience Leader, we'll wander its rocky terrain and pause for photos against the stark backdrop of Mother Nature.

After a short exploration of the valley, we'll continue on to the airport for our flight to Santiago.

Lunch: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to help you arrange your meal during your travel day.

Afternoon: After we land in Santiago, we'll transfer to our hotel, where our Trip Experience Leader will lead us on an orientation walk around the neighborhood after we've settled in to our rooms.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: Enjoy a free evening to rest after your journey, or discover Santiago's nightlife on your own.

Day 15 Explore Santiago • Conversation about Pinochet dictatorship

- Destination: Santiago
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: InterContinental Santiago or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Welcome to Santiago! Against a backdrop of Andean peaks, Chile's capital has witnessed a remarkable history, from settlement by conquistadors in 1541 to the Marxist, military, and democratic governments of the 20th century.

We'll begin our discoveries here by delving deeper into modern history as a local speaker joins us for a firsthand account of one of the darker periods of Chile's history: the 17-year dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. During his reign, Pinochet imposed severe censorship laws banning all left-leaning parties, and thousands of individuals were murdered or simply disappeared. A local who lived through the dictatorship will share their story of what life in Chile was like during this troubled time.

Then, we'll explore Chile's capital on a guided tour, featuring local highlights such as La Moneda Palace, the seat of Chile's government, which served as the setting for Pinochet's violent military coup in the 1970s.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: The remainder of the afternoon is yours to discover more of Santiago on your own. Perhaps you'll stroll through the famous Bella Vista neighborhood, known for its funky graffiti-buildings, artsy boutique shops and galleries, and quaint cafés. Or you may like to visit the Museo de Arte Precolombino. Housed in an early 19th-century neoclassical building, the museum is dedicated to the study and display of pre-Columbian artworks and artifacts from Central and South America.

Dinner: Toast to the end of your adventure during an included Farewell Dinner with your fellow travelers.

Evening: Your final night in Santiago is free to spend as you wish.

Day 16 Visit local winery • Return to U.S.

• Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Enjoy one last taste of local flavor this morning when we visit a local winery, where we'll learn more about the varieties that are produced in this region of Chile, and have the opportunity to sample a few wines ourselves.

Lunch: On your own in Santiago. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a café or restaurant.

Afternoon: Transfer to the airport later today for your overnight flight home. Or, begin your *Easter Island's Sacred Sites & Santiago* post-trip extension.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

5 nights in *Easter Island's Sacred Sites & Santiago*

Day 1 Santiago, Chile

Day 2 Fly to Easter Island • Visit Orongo & Rano Kao Volcano

Day 3 Discover *moai* at Ahu Tongariki, Te Pito Kura, and Anakena Beach

Day 4 Ahu Akivi • Sunset at Tahai Beach

Day 5 Fly to Santiago

Day 6 Santiago • Visit local artisan market • Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

Please note: Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.

Tatio Geysers

(Day 13 \$130 per person)

Tatio is the third largest geyser field in the world—and one of the highest, at an elevation of nearly 14,000 feet. Surrounded by volcanic peaks, over 80 gurgling geysers spurt columns of steam into the Andean air. On this optional tour, we'll rise before dawn to catch the geysers in the dramatic morning light, as the first rays of the sun illuminate the steam clouds. This tour includes a boxed breakfast. We'll return to San Pedro around noon.

PRE-TRIP

Uruguay's Atlantic Coast: Colonia del Sacramento & Montevideo

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » Roundtrip ferry from Buenos Aires to Uruguay
- » 5 nights accommodation
- » 10 meals—5 breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 4 guided tours and cultural activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Ferry from Buenos Aires across the Rio de la Plata to discover Uruguay, starting with two nights in Colonia del Sacramento, one of Uruguay's oldest cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visit a farm on your way to two final nights in the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo, one of South America's true hidden gems.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Fly overnight to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Day 2 Arrive Buenos Aires, Argentina

- Destination: Buenos Aires
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Loi Suites Recoleta or similar

Morning/Afternoon: Arrive in Buenos Aires, where an O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and assist you with the transfer to your hotel. After you check in, your Trip Experience Leader will take you on a brief orientation walk. Before dinner, join your Trip Experience Leader and fellow travelers for a Welcome Briefing to preview your upcoming discoveries, as well as any changes to your planned itinerary that may be required.

Dinner: Get to know your small group better during an included Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: The rest of the night is free to settle in and unpack, or explore Buenos Aires' nightlife independently.

Day 3 Ferry to Colonia del Sacramento, Uruguay

- Destination: Colonia del Sacramento
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Radisson Colonia or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, we'll take a ferry ride across Rio de la Plata to Colonia del Sacramento, one of Uruguay's oldest cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Lunch: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for dining options during our transfer to Colonia.

Afternoon: We should reach our hotel in Colonia by mid-afternoon and you'll have some time to relax or begin exploring on your own.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own.

Day 4 Explore Colonia

- Destination: Colonia
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Radisson Colonia or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning we'll enjoy a walking tour of Colonia del Sacramento, whose historic quarter, *Barrio Histórico*, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The strategically important town was founded by Portugal in 1680, then taken over by the Spanish. Control shifted between the two maritime powers until the 1820s, when Brazil became a nation and Colonia fell within its borders—but when Uruguay formed after the Argentina-Brazil war, Colonia fell within *its* borders. That's a lot of back and forth, but the result is a charming fusion of Spanish and Portuguese architectural styles, which we'll discover during our stroll along the narrow, cobblestoned streets of Colonia's historic core.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: You can rest this afternoon or continue exploring Colonia on your own.

Dinner: On your own. You can ask your Trip Experience Leader for local dining options.

Evening: On your own.

Day 5 Overland to Montevideo • Visit a local farm

- Destination: Montevideo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel Costanero or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll depart Colonia and travel overland to Montevideo this morning. Along the way, we'll stop to visit a local farm specializing in cheese production, where we'll meet with the owners and learn about daily life in the Uruguayan countryside.

Lunch: Enjoy a barbecue lunch at the farm.

Afternoon: We should arrive at our hotel in Montevideo by mid-afternoon. Our Trip Experience Leader will take us on a short orientation walk around our hotel and then you'll have the rest of the day and evening to rest or begin exploring independently.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant.

Evening: The evening is free to rest, or continue getting to know Montevideo at your own pace.

Day 6 Explore Montevideo

- Destination: Montevideo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Costanero or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning, we'll enjoy a city tour of Uruguay's capital, Montevideo, one of South America's true hidden gems (it was also one of Anthony Bourdain's favorite destinations). Our discoveries will include the faded Belle Époque grandeur of *Ciudad Vieja*, Montevideo's old quarter; and the main square, *Plaza Independencia*.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: Enjoy some free time to make some final discoveries in Montevideo this afternoon.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own.

Day 7 Ferry to Buenos Aires •

Begin main trip

- Destination: Buenos Aires
- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Return to Buenos Aires via ferry, where you'll begin your *Argentina & Chile's Rugged North: From the Andes to the Atacama Desert* adventure.

POST-TRIP

Easter Island's Sacred Sites & Santiago

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » Roundtrip airfare between Santiago and Easter Island
- » 5 nights accommodation
- » 10 meals: 5 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 2 dinners
- » 5 guided tours and cultural activities
- » Services of our local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Explore historic Santiago, then venture to Easter Island to discover its rich Polynesian heritage, dramatic volcanoes, brilliant beaches, and welcoming people. And above all, ponder the mystery of the nearly 900 large stone heads—called moai—that stand silently in clusters scattered across the island's landscape.

Day 1 Santiago, Chile

- Destination: Santiago
- Accommodations: InterContinental Santiago or similar

Afternoon: After your fellow travelers from your *Argentina & Chile's Rugged North: From the Andes to the Atacama Desert* adventure depart for the airport, remain in Santiago, where you'll have the rest of the day at leisure. At the Plaza de Armas, the heart of the city, you can admire the stately Metropolitan Cathedral and Royal Palace, browse the collections of the Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, or simply people-watch as the everyday life of the city flows around you. Wander among the galleries and boutiques of the Bellavista neighborhood, and pay a call on La Chascona, the former home of Noble Prize-winning literary giant Pablo Neruda.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can help you find a restaurant to suit your appetite.

Evening: You are welcome to explore the nightlife of the city. There are several restaurants and clubs within walking distance of the hotel.

Day 2 Fly to Easter Island • Visit Orongo & Rano Kao Volcano

- Destination: Easter Island
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Taha Tai Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to the airport and check in to our flight to Easter Island, named by a Dutchman who discovered the island on Easter Sunday, 1722. Located in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, the island is a special territory of Chile. Today, it is home to around 3,000 Rapa Nuians, descended from the Polynesians. Their ancestors were responsible for the *moai* stone sculptures that grace the landscape. The history of Easter Island is rich and controversial, and

its inhabitants have suffered from internal fighting, slave raids, and destruction of the ecosystem over the years. In modern times, the population has slowly recovered.

Lunch: On your own. You might pick up something at the airport to enjoy during your flight.

Afternoon: Upon arrival, we'll transfer to our hotel and check in. You'll have free time to refresh in your room or take a dip in the pool.

Later, we'll set out for one of the most scenic spots on the island, the former ceremonial village of Orongo. At Rano Kao Volcano, we'll view the freshwater lake that has formed in the crater's depths, as well as Orongo's ceremonial center on the crater's edge. This place was one of the principal sites of the birdman cult, which is immortalized by the stone carvings of birdman images (half-man, half-bird) in rock.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: The rest of the evening is at leisure to relax in your room or enjoy the hotel's amenities.

Day 3 Discover *moai* at Ahu Tongariki, Te Pito Kura, and Anakena Beach

- Destination: Easter Island
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Taha Tai Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Discover the island's famed *moai*—giant monoliths whose origin and meaning have sparked great speculation. Nearly 900 of these statues have been found on the island, and it is estimated that each one took five or six men one year to carve with hand-held tools.

Today we'll do a loop of the island, making several stops along the way. We'll begin by following in the footsteps of an ancient civilization to various *ahus*—sacred sites where several *moai* stand. At Ahu Vaihu, we get a chance to view *moai* in an unrestored state, and then continue to Ahu Tongariki's impressive collection of 15 restored *moai* carved from the quarries of nearby Rano Raraku Volcano.

Lunch: Enjoy a boxed lunch.

Afternoon: We'll head to Pito Kura, which today lies on the ground but—at 32 feet in length—is considered the largest *moai* once erected on an *ahu*. Finally, we'll explore pristine Anakena Beach, where the first Polynesian settlers are believed to have landed and where we'll find six more *moai*. Here, you'll have time at leisure to sample locally prepared dishes from food stands, visit local kiosks showcasing authentic Rapa Nui handcrafts, and admire the palm trees and crystal-clear waters.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: The rest of the evening is free. Perhaps you'll enjoy views of the sea and stars by the pool.

Day 4 Ahu Akivi • Sunset at Tahai Beach

- Destination: Easter Island
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Taha Tai Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Visit the seven *moai* of Ahu Akivi, one of the only inland *ahus* on the island. The astronomical orientation of this complex allowed the Rapa Nui people conform their farming practices to the change of seasons. We'll also view Puna Pau, the extinct volcano where the stone for the topknots you see

on some *moai* was quarried, and Ahu Huri a Urenga, whose solitary *moai* faces the sunrise at the winter solstice.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: The rest of your day is free. Perhaps you'll spend a little reflective time at the Cementerio de Isla de Pascua, gazing out over the quaint headstones to the sea. Stroll the streets of downtown Hanga Roa, the island's capital and only urban center. Or learn more about local history and culture at the Museo Antropológico Sebastián Englert.

Dinner: On your own—you might sample *empanadas* at one of several options near the hotel, or choose from restaurants specializing in seafood, Polynesian, Dominican, and other cuisines.

Evening: Later this evening, we'll watch the sun set at Tahai Beach, illuminating the *moai* in shades of pink and orange.

Day 5 Fly to Santiago

- Destination: Santiago
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: InterContinental Santiago or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll depart for the airport for our flight to Santiago.

Lunch: On your own—you might pick up a snack during your free time in Hanga Roa or at the airport.

Afternoon: Upon arrival, we'll transfer to our downtown hotel and check in.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will happily recommend restaurants. Perhaps you'll seek out Chile's famed seafood,

or explore the many options on Isadora Goyenechea, an area popular with local diners and visitors alike.

Evening: Relax at the hotel or immerse yourself in Santiago's vibrant nightlife.

Day 6 Santiago • Visit local artisan market • Return to U.S.

- Destination: Santiago
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Visit Los Dominicos Artisan Village, a market housed in a former cloisters where local artisans sell their work. As we browse the shops, we'll see terracotta dishes and painted tiles, traditional woven sweaters, and jewelry made with lapis lazuli—a stone found only here in Chile and in Afghanistan. We also may see the artisans themselves, who are often at work in their shops and can show us their artistic process and answer any questions we may have.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: You'll have a dayroom available for your use this afternoon; otherwise you are free to spend a final few hours exploring Santiago on your own. Later, transfer to the airport, where you will catch your flight home.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need 2 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip to Argentina and Uruguay:** You will need 2 additional blank pages, for a total of 5 passport pages.
- **Post-trip to Chile:** No additional pages needed.

No Visas Required

Travelers with a U.S. passport do not need any visas for this adventure, including the optional trip extensions.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Migration Forms

When entering a new country, you might be given a Migration form. Keep it with you until the end of your trip, as the Migrations Authority might require it.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

PACING

- 7 locations in 14 days (9 days in Argentina and 5 days in Chile) with one 1-night stay
- 1 internal flight in Chile and 1 internal flight in Argentina
- Some early mornings
- Airport transfers in Santiago and Buenos Aires can take up to 1.5 hours

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk 3 miles unassisted and participate in 6–8 hours of physical activities each day
- This trip takes you to remote places with no medical facilities nearby
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience

ALTITUDE

- 6 full days at altitudes above 7,000 feet (3 days in Chile and 3 days in Argentina)
- On Day 7, we reach a maximum altitude of 11,000 feet
- On Day 11, ten hours are spent at altitudes above 10,000 feet, reaching a maximum altitude of 15,800 feet. Our 24-passenger van is equipped with an oxygen tank for emergency purposes.
- We strongly recommend that you discuss precautions for altitude sickness with a healthcare professional before you travel on this trip. Proper preparation, including any medication recommended by your healthcare professional, is essential to traveling comfortably at these elevations.

CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures average 70–75° F in the Atacama Desert while nighttime or early morning temperatures are considerably cooler, between 35–50° F in the Andes

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel on mountainous, unpaved roads; walking on rough, steep, slippery trails that do not have handrails
- Travel by 24-passenger coach
- Long bus rides of 4–8 hours on several days, 1 internal flight in Chile of 2.5 hours, and 1 internal flight in Argentina of about 2 hours

FLIGHT INFORMATION

- Travel time will be 8–19 hours and will most likely have two connections

ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- Hotel rooms are smaller than in the U.S. and offer simple amenities
- All accommodations feature private baths

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.

- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- 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
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don’t push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

Tap water is generally safe to drink in Argentina and Chile, but it is processed differently than in the U.S., so it may feel “heavy” and could upset your system. It is not recommend you drink tap water in Uruguay. Fortunately, bottled water is readily available for you to buy and is inexpensive compared to the U.S. When buying bottled water, inspect each bottle before you buy it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. To fight dehydration, carry a bottle in your daypack at all times.

Food

We've carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Fruits and vegetables are safe to eat in Argentina and Chile.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not accepted** in Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay.
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on the majority of this trip**; you will need local currency instead. U.S. dollars may be accepted in larger cities, such as Buenos Aires, but you should always ask about exchange rates before making a purchase.

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Argentina: Argentine Peso (\$)

Chile: Chilean Peso (\$)

Uruguay: Uruguayan Peso (\$U)

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

In Argentina, the best way to exchange currency is to wait until your arrival. Your Trip Experience Leader will guide you to an exchange office where you will get the best exchange rate. We advise you bring large U.S. bills in perfect, almost brand new condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2013) are best.

Please note, the exchange rate is best when exchanging \$100 bills, versus \$50 bills or \$20 bills. If you exchange currency in the U.S. prior to your departure or get money from a local ATM, you will get it at a lower exchange rate compared to a local exchange office.

You may need your passport to exchange cash. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Argentina: ATMs are available in larger cities like Buenos Aires, but will not be available in remote locations.

Chile: ATMs are available in larger cities, such as Santiago, but will not be available in remote locations.

Uruguay: ATMs are widely available in larger cities like Montevideo and Colonia del Sacramento, but may be more difficult to find in small towns.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Argentina: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Buenos Aires for major purchases and in shops associated with the tourist trade (souvenirs, museum gift shops, etc.), but may not be accepted by smaller shops or restaurants. Some businesses add a surcharge of 5–10% to use a credit card; look for the word “recargo”. Some restaurants will accept credit cards—but not all—and you cannot leave a tip on a credit card. Visa is commonly accepted, but MasterCard and American Express are not. In November 2022, the government of Argentina added a new financial exchange rate (known as “Dólar MEP” or “Mercado Electronico de Pagos”) for all travelers paying with credit cards issued outside of Argentina. This new exchange rate is higher than the official dollar, but is more convenient for travelers. It is essentially a tax on credit card use for travelers. **We recommend that you check with your Trip Experience Leader as to what would be the best way for you to pay during your trip.**

Chile: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in large cities for major purchases and in shops associated with the tourist trade (souvenirs, museum gift shops, etc.), but may not be accepted by smaller shops or restaurants. Some businesses add a surcharge of 2–4% to use a credit card. Credit cards are generally not accepted in more remote locations.

Uruguay: Credit cards are accepted at most hotels, restaurants, and shops. Some smaller Mom-and-Pop type establishments may not accept credit cards, so it's always a good idea to have some cash.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** \$1 per night
- **Waiters:** Your Trip Experience Leader will tip waiters for included meals. When dining on your own, waiters in Argentina and Chile expect a 10% cash tip. In Brazil, a 10% service charge is added to the bill, so there's no need to leave an additional amount unless service is especially good.
- **Taxis:** Tipping is not customary, but many locals will round up the fare and let the driver keep the change. For long-distance drives, or for a long period of hire, a tip may be given according to the service received.
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

Please note: Tips are quoted in U.S. dollars for budgeting purposes; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars (this is usually preferred). Please do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45–30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)

- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as “OPT Boston”.
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you’re on the trip. But if you’d like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan’s data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Internet

Internet access on this adventure will be mostly limited to computers in the hotel lobby or business center; many hotels in Chile and Argentina do not offer Wi-Fi in the rooms, and the ones that do charge for the service.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Argentina: +54

Uruguay: +598

Chile: +56

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	The weight limit for this adventure is currently 50 lbs for checked bags and 17 lbs for a carry-on. <i>Flights on Aerolineas Argentinas are subject to possible changes, see below.</i>
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	Duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase. Please do not bring a hard-sided (clamshell) suitcase.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Same as the main trip.	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
<p>Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p> <p>Aerolineas Argentinas: The published weight limit on Aerolineas Argentinas is 33lbs for checked bags, but we have arranged a higher allowance of 50lbs on your behalf as an exception. While we do not expect any changes to this exception, it is at the discretion of the airline, meaning it could change in future. Therefore if you have any flights on Aerolineas Argentinas we recommend you double-check your Final Documents booklet about two weeks before your departure to confirm that this exception is still in effect.</p>	

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.

- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the *FAQ* section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** One duffel bag or suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Dress in layers:** You can add or remove layers according to weather shifts, especially for traveling to the tip of South America. Suggestions include turtlenecks, long-sleeve shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, a warm jacket, long underwear, etc.
- **Warm clothing:** We suggest a warm sweater, a windproof jacket, gloves, and a hat for your time in Argentina and Chile. The mountainous areas are cool year-round, and it has been known to snow at the higher elevations even in summer.
- **Walking shoes:** You'll be on your feet and walking a lot, so choose your footwear carefully. You can find especially supportive shoes designed for walking. Light hiking boots might be useful on some days.
- **Hiking sticks/Trekking poles:** Many past travelers have recommended bringing a folding hiking stick (sometimes called a trekking pole) sold in most camping stores. An alternative is a folding ski pole.
- **Rain gear:** As mist and unpredictable rain occurs year-round, you'll want to pack good, light rain gear.

Style Hints

Dress on our trip is functional and casual.

Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Year-Round Clothing Checklist

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best.
- ☐ Walking shorts: Shorts may be more useful for travelers on the Easter Island extension
- ☐ Shoes and socks: Comfortable walking/ running shoes or low-cut hiking shoes, with arch support. Light hiking boots might be useful on some days, but are not required. You’ll want at least a couple pairs of heavier socks for active days or hiking.
- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- ☐ Light wool or fleece sweater: Even in the summer this can be useful as motorcoach air conditioning can be chilly. It will also drop to freezing temperatures during the Optional Tatio Geysers Tour.
- ☐ Polartec fleece jacket. Even in summer, it can be cool, especially in the mountains.
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Optional: Swimsuit

Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

For September–April departures:

- ☐ Gear for cold weather: The seasons are reversed south of the equator. (Our spring and summer is their fall and winter.) In some places on the itinerary, the nighttime low dips to the 30s, so winter gear like a sweater, warm coat, hat, gloves, scarf, etc is a must.

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Hotels provide shampoo and soap but usually not washcloths.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses; sunglasses
- ☐ Sunscreen: SPF 30 or stronger
- ☐ Insect repellent with DEET (we recommend 30–35% strength). Some previous travelers have mentioned that this is more useful on the extensions than on the main trip.
- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp: Consider a small but powerful LED version or a version with an alternative power source (wind-up, solar powered).
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues
- ☐ Moist towelettes (baby wipes) and/or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser
- ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapters
- ☐ Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger. We recommend bringing ziploc bags to protect your camera.

Medicines & First Aid Gear

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, or antibiotic cream.
- ☐ An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- ☐ Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes

Home-Hosted Visits

Many of our adventures feature a visit with a local family, often as part of the *A Day in the Life* experience. It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts' generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim communities because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all O.A.T. adventures include a Home-Hosted Visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity in Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay is 220 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

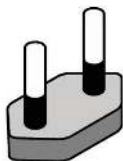
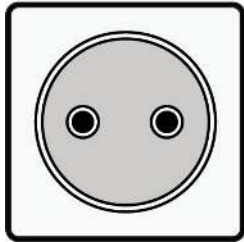
Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Argentina: I

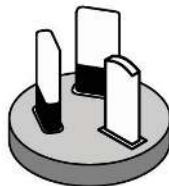
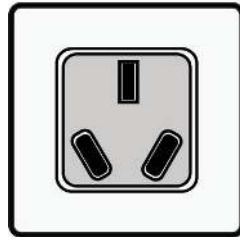
Chile: C and/or L

Uruguay: C, F, I, and L

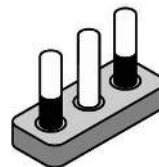
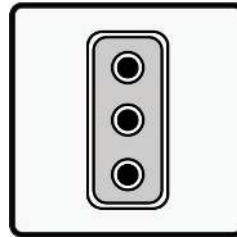
Type C



Type I



Type L



Availability

Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available on this adventure as it is in the U.S.

CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Buenos Aires, Argentina: While the official high temperatures in summer (December through February) are usually in the 80s, with the humidity it often feels much hotter. It is common to think it is actually in the 90s, so be prepared. During the winter (June through September), Buenos Aires is cold and rainy, with the average temperature in the 30s but with a lot of humidity. The changeable spring and mild fall of Buenos Aires are similar to those seasons in New York City, but the proximity of the South Atlantic makes winter temperatures milder than New York's comparable months and the possibility of snow almost nonexistent. The almost-constant breezes during all seasons except summer refresh this city's air and renew its skies.

Atacama Desert, Chile: The Atacama Desert is one of the driest places in the world, with less than 1 inch of rain a year. As a desert near the Andes Mountains, the Atacama's climate can experience temperatures from warm to cold. Most of the year, highs are in the 70's, but in the winter low temperatures can drop to below zero. But no matter when you travel, the nighttime temperatures are always drastically different than the daytime highs—expect a 30 to 40 degree difference. (So if the daytime is a comfortable 75 degrees, the nighttime low will be a cool 55-45 degrees or even lower.)

Uruguay: Uruguay enjoys a temperate sub-tropical climate without many differences between regions. Summers bring warmer weather with average temperatures in the mid- to high-70s, but possibly reaching the mid-90s during a heat wave, while the winter months may be cooler with averages in the high-40s to low-60s. Uruguay does not experience snowfall, but does enjoy four seasons throughout the year.

Easter Island, Chile: The cool Humboldt current keeps this sub-tropical climate cooler than most of its kind. The annual average temperature is 70°. February is hottest; July and August coolest, with winds adding a chill. Some amount of rain falls 140 days a year, though much of it falls at night. The heaviest months for rain are March-June. August-December are the driest months.

Santiago, Chile: Santiago has such delightful year-round temperatures that its climate is often compared to that of southern California. During your travel season, daytime highs are typically in the 70s and low 90s. Nights are significantly cooler.

NOTE: If you are taking one of our optional stopovers before or after your OAT adventure, please be aware the climate and temperatures might be different from what you experienced during your tour. To prepare for weather differences and pack appropriate clothing, we recommend the following world weather sites:

- www.intellicast.com
- www.weather.com
- www.wunderground.com

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA			SALTA, ARGENTINA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	87 to 69	86 to 47	4.2	81 to 62	93 to 60	6.9
FEB	84 to 67	89 to 52	4.0	80 to 60	94 to 62	5.9
MAR	80 to 63	90 to 54	4.0	77 to 59	95 to 65	4.3
APR	73 to 57	91 to 59	3.3	73 to 59	94 to 62	1.2
MAY	66 to 51	89 to 60	3.1	69 to 45	93 to 55	0.3
JUN	60 to 46	89 to 62	2.1	66 to 39	90 to 48	0.1
JUL	59 to 45	89 to 62	2.3	68 to 38	86 to 43	0.1
AUG	63 to 48	88 to 57	2.3	73 to 41	83 to 39	0.2
SEP	66 to 50	87 to 53	2.4	74 to 44	80 to 39	0.3
OCT	73 to 55	88 to 56	4.0	80 to 53	81 to 40	1.0
NOV	78 to 61	86 to 53	3.6	82 to 58	87 to 48	2.4
DEC	83 to 65	86 to 48	3.3	82 to 59	91 to 53	5.0

MONTH	ATACAMA DESERT, CHILE			MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	ilb	ilb	ilb	83 to 62	68	2.9
FEB	ilb	ilb	ilb	82 to 61	69	2.6
MAR	ilb	ilb	ilb	78 to 59	73	3.9
APR	ilb	ilb	ilb	71 to 53	75	3.9
MAY	ilb	ilb	ilb	64 to 48	78	3.3
JUN	ilb	ilb	ilb	59 to 43	82	3.2
JUL	ilb	ilb	ilb	58 to 43	80	2.9
AUG	ilb	ilb	ilb	59 to 43	77	3.1
SEP	ilb	ilb	ilb	63 to 46	74	3.0
OCT	ilb	ilb	ilb	68 to 49	71	2.6
NOV	ilb	ilb	ilb	74 to 54	71	2.9
DEC	ilb	ilb	ilb	79 to 59	67	3.1

MONTH	EASTER ISLAND, CHILE			SANTIAGO, CHILE		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	78 to 70	87 to 70	3.6	85 to 54	84 to 37	--
FEB	79 to 71	88 to 71	3.4	84 to 53	86 to 38	0.1
MAR	78 to 70	88 to 71	3.4	80 to 49	89 to 40	0.2
APR	76 to 68	86 to 73	4.6	72 to 45	91 to 48	0.5
MAY	73 to 66	84 to 74	5.0	64 to 41	94 to 62	2.3
JUN	70 to 64	84 to 73	4.0	58 to 38	94 to 68	3.1
JUL	69 to 62	84 to 73	3.7	57 to 37	95 to 68	3.0
AUG	68 to 62	84 to 73	3.4	61 to 39	95 to 64	2.1
SEP	70 to 62	85 to 72	3.3	65 to 42	93 to 59	1.1
OCT	71 to 62	86 to 70	2.9	71 to 45	92 to 50	0.5
NOV	73 to 65	87 to 70	3.2	77 to 48	89 to 44	0.2
DEC	76 to 67	87 to 70	3.6	82 to 51	86 to 39	0.2

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

South American Culture

History has seen to it that there are many cultural similarities shared by most modern-day South American nations, including the two visited on this adventure: Chile and Argentina. While South America was once home to a wide range of indigenous populations with distinct languages, customs, and cultural traditions, the continent was conquered almost at the very same time by two neighboring European empires—Spain and Portugal. Spain colonized Argentina for 200 years and Chile for close to 300 years.

Spanish and Portuguese colonization began in South America in the early 1500s. And within a century, about 90% of South America's indigenous populations had been eliminated at the hands of colonialists. Many ancient cultures have survived, however, resulting in a fusion of cultures that reflect both European colonizers and indigenous traditions in each South American country. As a result, most modern-day Argentinians are descendants of Spanish colonizers with minimal indigenous influences; most modern-day Chileans are descendants of Spanish colonizers and indigenous Mapuche Indians.

Language is always a strong part of national identity. Spanish is spoken in Argentina. And in Chile, almost everyone also speaks Spanish, or *castellano* as they would say—yet there are remote regions of the country where indigenous Mapuche speak their own languages and practice their own religion.

But while all South American countries do share many cultural influences stemming from European colonization, each is passionate about variances that are uniquely their own—like Brazil's samba and West African-influenced cuisine, Argentina's tango, or Chile's national dance called the *cueca*. And in Argentina, for example, *gauchos* remain a proud symbol of Argentinian culture. These iconic cowboys of mixed European and indigenous descent began roaming the Pampas grasslands of Argentina on horseback beginning in the 18th century.

Like in much of South America, these countries are predominantly Roman Catholic, but the spiritual beliefs of indigenous cultures influence many religious celebrations and activities. Whether it's indigenous roots, regional cuisine, music, art, or iconic dances, each South American country is justifiably proud and passionate about their own unique history and culture.

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

Argentinian Cuisine

How to sum up Argentine cooking in just a few words? Probably: Meats, Italian-style pasta, and coffee.

Beef, or *bife* (beef-eh), is the staple of Argentina and the golden El Dorado of her economy. Somewhere around 51 million Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle graze in the pampas and, thanks to the gauchos, provide locals with abundant, tasty fare. Restaurant menus everywhere in the country feature some type of beef selection, and lamb is popular too. For lighter fare—or for vegetarians—look for the many pasta dishes on offer, a legacy of decades of immigration from Italy. And at the end of your meal enjoy a strong cup of European-style coffee served as an espresso, latte, or cappuccino. Some dishes to look for are:

- **Asado:** Argentine-style BBQ, usually beef or lamb grilled over the coals or roasted on an open fire.

- **Parrillada:** A mixed grill platter that includes a bit of everything—*chorizo* (sausage), *costillas* (ribs), and either *carne* (beef) or *pollo* (chicken). This may also include cuts that are less familiar to Americans, such as *chinchulines* (small intestines), *mojellas* (sweetbreads), or *morcilla* (blood sausage).
- **Steak** (*bife*): Various cuts are available, but be warned that if you don't specify how you want it cooked, it will likely come medium to well done. Surprisingly, it can be hard to get rare or medium rare; it is just not common to order it that way here.
- **Chimichurri:** A spicy sauce with an olive oil base, good on everything, especially *empanadas*.
- **Empanadas:** Fried or baked pastries stuffed with meat and vegetables. Often served as a bar snack or appetizer, but order a few different kinds and you'll have a meal.
- **Chozipan:** *Chorizo* (sausage) served in a bun.
- **Dulce de leche:** A milk caramel topping that Argentines eat with all sorts of desserts and is used as the filling in *alfajores* cookies. There are so many different kinds, that you may see shops selling nothing but this sweet treat.
- **Mate:** A type of caffeinated herbal tea, often drunk socially from a gourd-shaped cup with a special straw.
- **Wines:** Argentina is known for its red wines, which pair well with all the beef, steak, and lamb on the menu. Torrontes in particular is a renowned local grape.

And finally, one note of precaution: Argentines thoroughly salt almost everything, particularly meats and even salads sometimes. If you dine out, you may want to request unsalted food. When you order, simply tell the waiter *no use* (oo-say) *sal, por favor*.

Chilean Cuisine

Chile is a cosmopolitan country, and this is strongly reflected in its food and drink. Santiago, for instance, is filled with French, Chinese, Italian, and Spanish restaurants. But the best way to dine is to sample from the great quantity of foods and beverages that are typically Chilean. Some common ingredients include *merken* (a smoked chili pepper), corn, and—courtesy of the country's long coastline—Pacific Coast seafood such as king crab, conger eel, razor clams, and *locos* (a type of sea snail).

- **Empanadas:** At the head of the list comes the *empanada*, a stuffed pastry shaped like a small turnover filled with meat and vegetables. In other countries the meat is usually beef, but in Chile you'll find many variations, including seafood and chicken.
- **Humitas:** Steamed corn cakes wrapped in corn husks—rather like the Mexican tamales, but less seasoned.
- **Cazuela de ave:** A kind of “souped-up soup.” It contains rice, corn, green beans, chicken, carrots, pumpkin, salt, and a number of herbs.

- **Curanto** is not so much a dish as a complete dinner, similar to a clambake, low country boil, or luau. When made the traditional way, a mixture of sausage, pork or chicken, seafood, corn, potatoes, and other vegetables are cooked over coals in a covered pit. In cities, it is made in casserole pots and served in some restaurants.
- **Centolla** (southern king crab): While you won't see this on the menu everywhere, you may find it in southern towns like Punta Arenas. Other types of seafood to look for include *machas a la parmesana* (parmesan clams) and *paila marina* (seafood soup).
- **Chacareros**: Sandwiches with steak or chicken, topped with cheese, tomatoes, green beans, and sauce.
- **Sopaipillas**: Fried pumpkin fritters that are often eaten as a street snack. These can be sweet or savory.
- **Drinks**: Chile's world-famous grapes are the foundation of its three most popular drinks. First, of course, is wine itself. Grapes are also used to make *chicha*, a brownish beverage somewhat reminiscent of apple cider with added punch. The last, and most powerful, is *aguardiente*, which translates literally into "fire water," although it is more commonly called "pisco" and is used to make delicious pisco sour cocktails.

Lastly, one warning: The coffee in Chilean restaurants and in most homes is usually instant. So if you prefer brewed or specialty coffees, look for a cafe instead.

Uruguayan Cuisine

Uruguayan cuisine is heavily influenced by European styles (such as Italian, Spanish, and German), but relies more heavily on beef due to its large agriculture industry. While in Uruguay look for these traditional dishes:

- **Chivito**: The national sandwich of Uruguay, filled with thinly sliced grilled beef, ham, bacon, lettuce, tomato, melted mozzarella and a fried egg.
- **Asado**: Traditional Uruguayan barbecue, which is typically prepared over an open fire and consists of various cuts of beef and other meats such as lamb and goat.
- **Empanadas**: Savory pastries filled with meats and cheeses, including the *Empanada Gallega*, which is filled with fish, onions, and peppers.
- **Polenta**: A popular dish served with various sauces.
- **Pastel de carne**: A meat pie with ground beef, peppers, eggs, and mashed potatoes.
- **Chajá**: A dessert of sponge cake with whipped cream and meringue.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Argentina

Argentina is world-famous for its leather goods and you'll find them readily available in Buenos Aires. Popular buys include belts, jackets, boots, shoes, skirts, pants, briefcases, and purses. These come in a rainbow of pastels and vivid colors, and a variety of textures from rough suedes to soft leathers. Other items worth considering include wool sweaters, clothing made of the Argentine equivalent of cashmere, ponchos, wine, mate cups, and antique silver gaucho accessories. Top-quality jewelry is also sold, with the best buys being items made with Inca Rose or rhodochrosite. Argentina is one of the few places in the world where this is found and it is used in everything from jewelry to carved figures.

Bargaining: Argentina does not have a bargaining culture; prices in shops are fixed. The only place you may be able to bargain is in the open-air markets. If you try to bargain at a market, keep in mind that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

Chile

Among Chilean goods, the excellent textiles are worth perusing. For "typical" items, colorful hand-woven ponchos are a good buy, as well as vicuna rugs, and—although perhaps a little heavy for air travel—there is excellent artisan copper work. Chilean stones have achieved much popularity abroad, and there are many "rock shops" in the city and suburbs selling quality work in lapis lazuli, Chilean jade, amethyst, agate, onyx, and others. Salmon, canned and smoked, is also a good buy.

Bargaining: In Chile, shops generally have fixed prices. In places other than shops (like markets), you may be able to bargain. The only rule is that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

Uruguay

In Uruguay, look for an abundance of well-made and inexpensive leather products. You'll find belts, wallets, bags, and shoes in many markets. Other popular items in woolen products, seashells, and high-quality wood items, such as cutting boards or sculptures. Don't forget to look for dulce de leche or *alfajores*, a small cake (typically the size of a cookie) that is filled with dulce de leche and covered in chocolate, coconut, or powdered sugar.

Bargaining: Uruguay does not have a bargaining culture; prices in shops are fixed. The only place you may be able to bargain is in the open-air markets. If you try to bargain at a market, keep in mind that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

Agricultural Statement for Chile

Like some parts of the U.S. such as California and Hawaii, Chile severely restricts the entry of agricultural products to protect against the accidental transport of pests. Chile's requirements are very strictly enforced and incur large fines for violation. If you are arriving in Chile by air, we advise you to discard any fruit, nuts, vegetables, seeds, dairy products including cheese, flowers (including dried flowers), or unprocessed meats before landing.

If you are arriving by air, the flight attendants will distribute an Agricultural Products form that you must complete. On this form you'll be asked to declare whether or not you are bringing any fruits, nuts, or other organic products into Chile. If you are carrying any items of this nature, you must declare them on this form. Fines of up to \$200 could result if customs officers find even a simple pack of peanuts or an apple.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Argentina

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 1,073,518 square miles
- **Capital:** Buenos Aires
- **Languages:** Spanish is the official language. English is widely spoken in major cities and tourist centers.
- **Location:** Argentina is bordered by Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile
- **Geography:** Located in the South and West Hemisphere, Argentina features a diverse landscape ranging from the ice fields of Patagonia to the fertile pampas to the Andes Mountains.
- **Government Type:** Republic
- **Population:** 46,044,703 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 92%, Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 4%.
- **Time Zone:** Argentina time (ART) is 3 hours behind Coordinated Universal Time. Generally Argentina is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Time in the U.S. So usually, when it is 6am in Washington D.C. it is 7am in Buenos Aires. But Argentina doesn't use daylight saving time like the U.S. does, so from November to March there is a 2 hour difference—6am in D.C. is 8am in Buenos Aires.

National Holidays: Argentina

In addition to the holidays listed below, Argentina celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Carnival, Holy Friday, and Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

03/24 Memorial Day

04/02 Day of the Veterans

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

05/25 National Day/May 1810 Revolution

06/20 Flag Day

07/09 Independence Day

3rd Monday in August General San Martin Day

2nd Monday in October Colombus Day

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

Argentina: A Brief History

Little is known about societies that occupied prehistoric Argentina, though fossil records indicate a presence in the region of today's Patagonia as early as 11,000 B.C. The Spanish arrived in Argentina early in the 16th century and would rule the country for the next 300 years. Spain's grip on Argentina began to loosen during events that began in 1806, when the British overpowered Spanish military forces in Buenos Aires and attacked the Malvinas Islands (later known as the Falkland Islands). When word arrived in Argentina that Napoleon had conquered cities in Spain and overthrown the Spanish king, the people of Argentina were inspired to rule themselves, which brought about independence in 1816.

With the help of an influx of immigrants late in the 19th century, Argentina's economy began gathering strength. Its continued growth in the initial decades of the 20th century was often at the expense of the working class. Juan Perón, who was elected president in 1946, recognized the plight of workers and sought to empower them by increasing union membership and expanding social and educational programs. When Argentina's economy declined in the early 1950s, he became increasingly authoritarian. After the death of his first lady in 1952, the charismatic Eva "Evita" Perón whom the workers loved, Juan began losing support and was eventually overthrown in a violent coup in 1955. Forced into exile by the military, Juan Perón fled to Paraguay and then settled in Spain in 1960.

Continuing to wield influence from afar, Perón returned to power in 1973 in a special election, with his new wife Isabel, an Argentinian dancer he married in 1961, becoming his vice president. But Juan's return was short-lived when he died in 1974, which resulted in Isabel becoming Argentina's new president—someone who was resented by millions of Argentinians still devoted to Evita. With the country now entering a downward spiral due to the Arab oil embargo and other factors, Isabel was deposed in a military coup in 1976. The right-wing military junta that took power ruled Argentina brutally for the next several years, killing some 20,000–30,000 revolutionaries or sympathizers. The country's downward spiral continued, and after Argentina lost the Falklands War (in Spanish, the *Guerra de las Malvinas*) to the British in 1982, the military's credibility was finished, leading to the next free elections.

While the decades that followed military rule have seen Argentina's fortunes rise and fall dramatically, the country's hard-won democracy has endured.

Events that Shaped the 20th Century:

Argentina's Dirty War Against Socialism

When Vice President Isabel Peron succeeded her husband, Juan Peron, as the Argentinian President following his death in 1974, she inherited a country in turmoil. As the less-liked third wife of the well-loved Juan Peron, the former dancer faced many challenges she was not prepared for, including skyrocketing inflation, party in-fighting, and terrorism.

Isabel managed to hold her office for almost two years, however, establishing authoritarian laws that slowly stole away the rights of the Argentinian people and purging leftist-minded politicians from positions of power. Her main advisor, Lopez Rega, was known for his fascist ideals and his right-wing paramilitary force, the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance (Triple A), which claimed responsibility for over 300 murders by the end of 1974.

Isabel was removed from her position in a military coup on March 24, 1976, and Argentina spend the next seven years under a civic-military dictatorship, led by Jorge Rafael Videla, Emilio Eduardo Massera, Roberto Eduardo Viola, and Leopoldo Galtieri, who graduated from the controversial U.S. Army School of the Americas where they were taught anti-communist counterinsurgency training, including the use of torture. Those years were known as the National Reorganization Process, or the "Dirty War".

Under the Videla regime, the Triple A were given carte blanche to hunt down and kill political dissidents in death squads, specifically targeting anyone associated with socialism and leftist activism. This list included high school and university students, writers, journalists, trade unionists, artists, and militants, who were believed to be associated with guerilla leftist groups, such as the Montoneros.

Over the course of seven years, a Dirty War was waged between the National Reorganization Process and the leftist guerilla groups, with thousands of civilians caught in-between. In the Night of the Pencils, on September 16, 1976, 10 high school students were kidnapped by agents of the Videla regime and tortured for information about the Montoneros. Most of the missing students taken were likely executed, with only four surviving to testify against their torturers.

As leftist guerrilla groups continued to assassinate politicians and commit acts of terror, the Videla regime became more determined to stamp out the threat, with "enforced disappearances" (almost 30,000 people, including young students, were secretly taken, tortured for information, and killed) and "death flights" (where dissidents, many of them people who were secretly taken, were drugged then loaded onto an aircraft and thrown to their deaths while in flight over the Atlantic). In response to the 30,000 missing, the Mothers of the Plaza, a group of mothers who had lost children and grandchildren to the Dirty War, began a decades-long campaign to call attention to the plight of the desaparecidos ("disappeared persons") and bring the murderers of their children to justice.

The actions of the regime were supported by the United States government at the time, with the Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, congratulating the regime for their efforts against terrorism and expressing his approval of their methods. Under the Ford administration, and with Kissinger's support, the United States government provided \$80 million in security assistance and military aid to the regime. This support continued into the Carter administration until September 1978, when the aid was stopped under section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act, prohibiting security assistance, including arms sales, to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights

The regime fell apart under heavy public disapproval, with the military defeat in the Falkland Islands in 1982, when Argentina failed to seize the land from the United Kingdom, taking away the last of the military's credibility. When free elections were allowed once more, Argentina elected Raúl Alfonsín, who, within days of taking office, initiated cases against the leaders of the civic-military dictatorship, as well as the leftist guerilla groups. While he allowed the lower ranks of the military to claim "command responsibility" as they were just following orders, most of the military leaders were tried and sentenced for crimes against humanity and genocide.

The military leaders of the National Reorganization Process were later pardoned by Alfonsín's successor, President Carlos Menem, in 1990.

Chile

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 291,933 square miles
- **Capital:** Santiago
- **Languages:** Spanish
- **Location:** Chile is bordered by Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina
- **Geography:** One third of Chile is covered by the Andes. Five distinct geographical regions make up the country: the Northern Desert, the Central Valley, the Lake District, Patagonia in the south, and remote Easter Island 2,400 miles offshore in the Pacific.
- **Government Type:** Republic
- **Population:** 18,430,408 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 66.7%, Evangelical or Protestant 16.4%, Jehovah's Witness 1%, other 3.4% none 11.5%, unspecified 1.1%
- **Time Zone:** From roughly mid-September to mid-April, though it can vary year to year, Chile is on Chile Summer Time (CLST), two hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time (EST). When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 8am in Santiago. The rest of the year, Chile is on Chile Standard Time (CLT), 1 hour ahead of EST, and the exact same time as Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Chile's seasons are opposite to those in the U.S., so just as we are starting daylight saving time, Chile is finishing it.

National Holidays: Chile

In addition to the holidays listed below, Chile celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Reformation Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/02 New Year's Continued

04/07 Holy Thursday

04/08 Holy Friday

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

05/21 Navy Day

6/29 Saint Peter and Saint Paul Day

07/16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel

08/15 Assumption of Mary

09/18 National Day

09/19 Army Day

2nd Monday in October Columbus Day

10/27 National Day of the Evangelical
& Protestant Churches

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/08 Immaculate Conception Day

12/25 Christmas Day

Chile: A Brief History

Evidence reveals that humans began populating Chile's fertile valleys between the Andes and the Pacific a little more than 10,000 years ago. But since it was surrounded on three sides by almost impenetrable barriers, these rich valleys remained relatively unknown to the outside world until the middle of the fifteenth century, when the Incas began their conquest of the continent. The Incas managed to conquer northern Chile but were prevented from advancing further by the indigenous Mapuche. But less than a century later Spanish *conquistadores* arrived from Peru in search of gold, and the conquest of Chile began. For the next four hundred years, much of Chile was under Spanish control—except for the Mapuche region in the south. Then, following seven years of warfare, Chile gained its independence from Spain in 1817. But the Mapuche-controlled south resisted the new Chilean government and remained autonomous until the middle of the century.

While Chile's independence initiated a system of representative democracy, its 20th-century political history has been marked by turmoil. Facing economic depression and mounting inflation, a Marxist government came to power under Salvador Allende in 1970—which led to a right-wing government seizing power three years later under General Augusto Pinochet (in a U.S.-backed coup where Allende was killed). Pinochet ruled for the next 17 years, a brutal dictatorship marked by terror, corruption, and human rights abuses. In 1990, having failed in his bid to gain popular ratification for his rule, Pinochet handed over the presidency to the rightfully elected Patricio Aylwin Azocar. Chile's political climate has since remained stable, although there is still considerable tension between the military and the government concerning the human rights violations of the Pinochet era.

In 2006, Michelle Bachelet Jeria was elected President, becoming the first woman to hold Chile's highest office. Her policies helped Chile become the first South American member of the OECD (Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development). Despite record high approval ratings President Bachelet stepped down at the end of her term in March 2010, however, as Chile's constitution forbids the immediate re-election of a president. She was succeeded in office by Sebastian Pinera, whose first order of business was recovering from a large earthquake that occurred off the coast on February 27, 2010. Just as Chile was getting back on its feet, a mining accident in August of 2010 brought international attention back to the normally quiet country. A cave-in at the San Jose mine in the Atacama Desert left 33 miners trapped underground for a record 69 days. It is estimated that nearly one billion people worldwide tuned in for the daring and successful rescue operation, which was televised live around the globe. In 2014, Michelle Bachelet was reelected, followed by the reelection of Sebastian Pinera in 2018 to 2022. In 2022, Gabriel Boric was elected, becoming the youngest President in Chile's history.

Events That Shaped the 20th Century:

The 1973 Chilean Coup...or the other 9/11

As with most countries in South America, Chile was colonized by Spain during the 16th century, becoming part of the Spanish Empire. By the early 1800s, Chile had gained its independence and after many years of fluctuating stability and changing political systems, Chile finally settled on becoming a presidential republic in 1925. However, the modern political era really began in Chile by the 1930s, when political freedoms were extended and democracy was firmly backed by the constitution. By 1947, Chile saw a substantial amount of economic growth while elsewhere, the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union had started. Though the Cold War centered around an intense rivalry between the two current world powers, that did not stop the conflict from reaching Chile and other countries in South America.

Following the Cuban revolution in 1959, Fidel Castro managed to lead a successful revolt against the U.S.-backed military dictatorship of President Fulgencio Batista. As a result, Castro became the next prime minister of Cuba, further challenging the hegemony of the United States. As Castro's popularity grew throughout South America, U.S. leaders began to worry. Since Cuba was ideologically opposed to the U.S., American intelligence agencies kept a close eye on any potential revolutions occurring elsewhere, while the Soviet Union sought to expand their influence and looked for potential allies across the Atlantic. During Chile's 1970 presidential elections, primary candidate Salvador Allende, a member of the Socialist Party, won the popular vote against independent candidate Jorge Alessandri and Radomiro Tomic from the Christian Democratic Party. Given Allende's leftist beliefs and admiration for Castro, the U.S. government, in an attempt to prevent the further spread of socialism in the Western Hemisphere, was determined to undermine Allende's presidential campaign. Covert operations by the C.I.A and other organizations included propaganda and funding the campaigns of Allende's opposition.

But the \$8 million spent by the C.I.A apparently wasn't enough — and Allende emerged victorious. The elections were especially important to the U.S. due to their interests in several industries, including Chile's profitable copper mines, which were all owned by American companies. As the new president of Chile, Salvador Allende began to implement his socialist ideals. Some of his main

reforms included government health care, redistribution of farmland, and the nationalization of Chile's copper industry, which at the time was owned and controlled by the U.S. government. Citizens who lived in the rural areas of Chile welcomed Allende's reforms since they were aimed at improving their standards of living. At first many of Allende's policies, especially ones geared towards the nationalization of certain sectors, were very popular and received praise from most citizens. By 1972 however, the economy began suffering due to rapidly increasing inflation.

The main source of the destabilization of the Chile's economy was the result of America's foreign policy under the Nixon administration. The U.S. worked to destabilize Allende's government by using its economic clout, which included organizing protests accompanied by media propaganda and the freezing of international loans to Chile. The tactics proved successful, as inflation continued to rise in Chile, many stores went out of business, worker strikes increased, and Allende's popularity began to wane.

By 1973, the Chilean economy was in shambles. President Allende still had the support of workers and peasants though members of the middle class joined together to oppose him. During this time, open discussions of an impending military coup led by conspirators were put in motion and heavily supported by the C.I.A. The economic turmoil in Chile came to a head, on September 11th 1973, when the military junta led by general Augusto Pinochet launched an attack on the Chilean government. Allende, along with his presidential guards, quickly retreated to La Moneda, the presidential palace. Though tanks and troops began to surround La Moneda, Allende refused to surrender. In his final moments, he was able to broadcast a farewell speech on Radio Magallanes, a Communist Party radio station, relaying one final message to the citizens of Chile:

"Workers of my country, I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when treason seeks to prevail. Go forward knowing that, sooner rather than later, the great avenues will open again where free men will walk to build a better society."

Around noon, fighter jets flew over La Moneda and fired rockets through the doors and windows of the palace. Though the palace was engulfed in flames, it is believed that Allende somehow managed to escape to a wing of the building where he ultimately ended up taking his own life. Following the aftermath of the coup, General Augusto Pinochet became the dictator of Chile, ruling over an increasingly repressive and authoritarian regime. After the military takeover, supporters of Allende were tracked down and either imprisoned or killed.

The U.S. recognized the government of Pinochet, providing it with military support. In a pattern that would repeat itself in democratic America, it was better to support military dictators like Pinochet than to support a democratically elected left-wing socialist like Allende. Pinochet would continue to rule over Chile for the next 17 years until he was succeeded by Patricio Aylwin in 1990. At the time, Chile had adopted economic policies of liberalization and privatization, which helped the Chilean economy outperform the economies of other countries in Latin America. This in turn, helped pave the way for democracy to return to Chile.

Uruguay

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 68,037 square miles
- **Capital:** Montevideo
- **Languages:** Spanish the official language of Uruguay
- **Location:** Uruguay is bordered by Argentina and Brazil
- **Geography:** Uruguay features plains to the east, south, and west, along with sandy beaches along the coastline. Rolling hills and mountains can be found in northern Uruguay along the Brazilian border and central Uruguay features a large artificial lake.
- **Government Type:** Presidential Republic
- **Population:** 3,426,260 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 47.1%, non-Catholic Christians 11.1%, non-denominational 23.2%, Jewish 0.3%, atheist or agnostic 17.2%, other 1.1%
- **Time Zone:** Uruguay time (UYT) is 3 hours behind Coordinated Universal Time. Generally Uruguay is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Time in the U.S. So usually, when it is 6am in Washington D.C. it is 7am in Uruguay.

National Holidays: Uruguay

In addition to the holidays listed below, Uruguay celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Carnival and Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/03 The Three Wise Men Day

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

06/19 Jose Artigas' Birthday Memorial

07/18 Constitution Day

08/25 Independence Day

12/25 Christmas Day

Uruguay: A Brief History

Prior to European colonization, Uruguay was home to many small nomadic peoples such as the Charrua, Chana, Arachan and Guaraní tribes who survived by hunting and fishing.

In the early 1500s, present-day Uruguay, known as the Banda Oriental, became a buffer between the competing Portuguese and Spanish colonizers in South America. In 1516, Juan Díaz de Solís became the first European explorer to land here, but he was killed by natives. More explorers came to Uruguay in the 1520s, however settlements were very limited due to the lack of gold and silver in the region.

The Spanish Jesuits created the first permanent settlement in 1624 at Villa Soriano on the Rio Negro. In 1680, the Portuguese established Colonia del Sacramento across the coast from Buenos Aires. Due to the competition between the Spanish and the Portuguese, the Spanish tried to limit Portuguese colonization extending past the borders of Brazil. The Spanish settled Montevideo in 1726 and sought to capture Colonia del Sacramento. In 1750, Spain and Portugal signed the Treaty of Madrid which gave control to Spain, though a local government was established and land was given to the settlers.

By the end of the 18th century, the land was divided amongst cattle ranchers and used to raise cattle. The population had grown significantly with approximately 30,000 people living in Montevideo and the surrounding areas, of which approximately 30% were African slaves.

During the early 19th century, there were ongoing battles for colonial rule between the British, Spanish, and Portuguese, including British invasions into Buenos Aires. The first invasion in 1806 was successful but the city was quickly liberated by the Spanish and the second attempt was unsuccessful.

In 1810, following the abdication of the Spanish throne to Napoleon, the May Revolution took place which resulted in the end of the Spanish Viceroyalty and the creation of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, though the people remained divided between those who sought independence and those who remained loyal to the Spanish crown.

In 1811, Jose Gervasio Artigas Arnal, sometimes called “the father of Uruguayan nationhood,” called for a war against Spanish rule and, with the help of Buenos Aires, defeated the Spaniards on May 18, 1811 at the Battle of Las Piedras. They began the Siege of Montevideo, at which point the Spanish viceroy sought help from the Portuguese by asking them to invade the Banda Oriental from Brazil. Buenos Aires feared they would lose the territory to the Portuguese and made peace with the Spanish. When the Portuguese withdrew, Montevideo was left under the control of the Royalists, which Artigas and his followers saw as a betrayal by Buenos Aires.

Artigas successfully led the second Siege of Montevideo in 1813 and took part in the formation of the League of the Free People, a group of several provinces which sought freedom from Buenos Aires dominance. Artigas was named the Protector of the League of the Free People and proceeded to conduct land reforms which divided the land between small farmers.

Fearful that these revolutionary ideas would spread to Brazil, the Portuguese invaded the Banda Oriental in 1816 and occupied Montevideo on January 20, 1817. Artigas and his troops were defeated in 1820 at the Battle of Tacuarembó and the Banda Oriental was incorporated into Brazil as the Cisplatina province.

In 1825, the Thirty-Three Orientals, a militant revolutionary group led by Juan Antonio Lavalleja, landed in Cisplatina with the support of Buenos Aires and reached Montevideo on May 20. By June, a new provisional government was formed and on August 25, the newly elected assembly declared secession of the Cisplatina province from Brazil. Brazil declared the Cisplatine War which ended on August 27, 1828 with the Treaty of Montevideo. The treaty stipulated that Brazil

and Argentina would recognize Uruguay as an independent buffer state, though not guaranteed. During the Paraguayan War, Uruguayan independence was secured and the Constitution of 1830 was approved.

Soon after achieving independence, political scene in Uruguay became split between two parties, both led by the former Thirty-Three, the conservative Blancos (“Whites”) and the liberal Colorados (“Reds”). The Colorados were led by the first President Fructuoso Rivera and represented the business interests of Montevideo; the Blancos were headed by the second President Manuel Oribe, who looked after the agricultural interests of the countryside and promoted protectionism.

Parties became associated with warring political factions in neighboring Argentina. The Colorados favored the exiled Argentinian liberal Unitarios, many of whom had taken refuge in Montevideo, while the Blanco president Manuel Oribe was a close friend of the Argentine strongman Juan Manuel de Rosas.

Oribe took Rosas’s side when the French navy blockaded Buenos Aires in 1838. This led the Colorados and the exiled Unitarios to seek French backing against Oribe and on June 15, 1838 an army led by the Colorado leader Rivera overthrew Oribe who fled to Argentina. The Argentinian Unitarios then formed a government-in-exile in Montevideo and, with secret French encouragement, Rivera declared war on Rosas in 1839. The conflict would last thirteen years and become known as the Guerra Grande (the Great War).

In 1840, an army of exiled Unitarios attempted to invade northern Argentina from Uruguay but had little success. In 1842 Argentinian army overran Uruguay on Oribe’s behalf. They seized most of the country but failed to take the capital. The Great Siege of Montevideo, which began in February 1843, lasted nine years. The besieged Uruguayans called on resident foreigners for help and a French and an Italian legions were formed. The latter was led by the exiled Giuseppe Garibaldi, who was working as a mathematics teacher in Montevideo when the war broke out. Garibaldi was also made head of the Uruguayan navy.

The Argentinian blockade of Montevideo was ineffective as Rosas generally tried not to interfere with international shipping on the River Plate, but in 1845, when access to Paraguay was blocked, Britain and France allied against Rosas, seized his fleet and began a blockade of Buenos Aires, while Brazil joined in war against Argentina. Rosas reached peace deals with Great Britain and France in 1849 and 1850 respectively. The French agreed to withdraw their legion if Rosas evacuated Argentinian troops from Uruguay. Oribe still maintained a loose siege of the capital. In 1851, the Argentinian provincial strongman Justo José de Urquiza turned against Rosas and signed a pact with the exiled Unitarios, the Uruguayan Colorados and Brazil against him. Urquiza crossed into Uruguay, defeated Oribe and lifted the siege of Montevideo. He then overthrew Rosas at the Battle of Caseros on February 3, 1852. With Rosas’s defeat and exile, the Guerra Grande finally came to an end. Slavery was officially abolished in 1852.

A ruling triumvirate consisting of Rivera, Lavalleja and Venancio Flores was established, but Lavalleja died in 1853, Rivera in 1854 and Flores was overthrown in 1855.

The government of Montevideo rewarded Brazil's financial and military support by signing five treaties in 1851 that provided for perpetual alliance between the two countries. Montevideo confirmed Brazil's right to intervene in Uruguay's internal affairs. Uruguay also renounced its territorial claims north of the Río Cuareim, thereby reducing its area to about 176,000 square kilometers, and recognized Brazil's exclusive right of navigation in the Laguna Merin and the Río Yaguaron, the natural border between the countries.

In accordance with the 1851 treaties, Brazil intervened militarily in Uruguay as often as it deemed necessary. In 1865, the Treaty of the Triple Alliance was signed by the emperor of Brazil, the president of Argentina, and the Colorado general Venancio Flores, the Uruguayan head of government whom they both had helped to gain power. The Triple Alliance was created to wage a war against the Paraguayan leader Francisco Solano López. The resulting Paraguayan War ended with the invasion of Paraguay and its defeat by the armies of the three countries. Montevideo, which was used as a supply station by the Brazilian navy, experienced a period of prosperity and relative calm during the war.

The Uruguayan War was fought between governing Blancos and alliance of Empire of Brazil, Colorados who were supported by Argentina. In 1863 the Colorado leader Venancio Flores launched the Liberating Crusade aimed at toppling President Bernardo Berro and his Colorado–Blanco coalition (Fusionist) government. Flores was aided by Argentina's President Bartolomé Mitre. The Fusionist coalition collapsed as Colorados joined Flores' ranks.

The Uruguayan civil developed into a crisis of international scope that destabilized the entire region. Even before the Colorado rebellion, the Blancos had sought an alliance with Paraguayan dictator Francisco Solano López. Berro's now purely Blanco government also received support from Argentine Federalists, who opposed Mitre and his Unitarians. The situation deteriorated as the Empire of Brazil was drawn into the conflict. Brazil decided to intervene to reestablish the security of its southern frontiers and its influence regional affairs. In a combined offensive against Blanco strongholds, the Brazilian–Colorado troops advanced through Uruguayan territory, eventually surrounding Montevideo. Faced with certain defeat, the Blanco government capitulated on February 20, 1865.

The short-lived war would have been regarded as an outstanding success for Brazilian and Argentine interests, had Paraguayan intervention in support of the Blancos (with attacks upon Brazilian and Argentine provinces) not led to the long and costly Paraguayan War. In February 1868 former Presidents Bernardo Berro and Venancio Flores were assassinated.

José Batlle y Ordóñez, President from 1903 to 1907 and again from 1911 to 1915, set the pattern for Uruguay's modern political development and dominated the political scene until his death in 1929. Batlle was opposed to the co-participation agreement, because he considered division of departments among the parties to be undemocratic. Blancos feared loss of their power if proportional election system was introduced and started their last revolt in 1904, which ended with Colorado victory at the Battle of Masoller.

After the victory over Blancos, Batlle introduced widespread political, social, and economic reforms such as a welfare program, government participation in many facets of the economy and a new constitution. Batlle introduced universal male suffrage, nationalized foreign owned

companies and created a modern social welfare system. Under Batlle electorate was increased from 46 000 to 188 000. Income tax for lower incomes was abolished in 1905, secondary schools established in every city (1906), right of divorce given to women (1907), telephone network nationalized (1915) Unemployment benefits were introduced (1914), eight-hour working day introduced (1915), Uruguay proclaimed a secular republic (1917).

To prevent Presidential dictatorships, in 1913 Batlle proposed to introduce a collective Presidency (colegiado), based on the Swiss Federal Council model. His idea was defeated in a referendum of 1916, but he managed to get support from Blancos and the Second Constitution was approved in referendum of November 25, 1917. Under the new Constitution a split executive was created – President continued to control ministries of Foreign affairs, Interior and Defense. And the new nine-man National Council of Administration, which consisted of six Colorados and three Blancos, controlled ministries of Education, Finances, Economy and Health.

Batlle's split executive model lasted until 1933, when during the economic crisis of the Great Depression, President Gabriel Terra assumed dictatorial powers.

The new welfare state was hit hard by the Great Depression, which also caused a growing political crisis. Terra blamed the ineffective collective leadership model and after securing agreement from the Blanco leader Luis Alberto de Herrera in March 1933 suspended the Congress, abolished the collective executive, established a dictatorial regime and introduced a new Constitution in 1934. The former President Brum committed suicide in protest against the coup. In 1938 Terra was succeeded by his close political follower and brother-in-law General Alfredo Baldomir. During this time state retained large control over nation's economy and commerce, while pursuing free-market policies. After the new Constitution of 1942 was introduced, political freedoms were restored.

On January 25, 1942 Uruguay broke diplomatic relations with Nazi Germany, as 21 American nations did the same (except for Argentina), but did not participate in any actual fighting. In 1945 it formally joined the Declaration by United Nations.

In 1946 a Batlle loyalist, Tomás Berreta was elected to Presidency, and after his sudden death, Batlle's nephew Luis Batlle Berres became the President. To cover the British debt for the beef deliveries during WWII, in 1949 British owned railroads and water companies were nationalized. Batlle's followers within the Colorado Party gained sufficient strength to push for a constitutional referendum that adapted the new Constitution of 1952 which returned to the collective executive model – the National Council of Government was created. This was the high point of Batllismo. The end of the large global military conflicts by mid-1950s caused troubles for the country. Because of a decrease in demand in the world market for agricultural products, Uruguay began having economic problems, which included inflation, mass unemployment, and a steep drop in the standard of living for Uruguayan workers. This led to student militancy and labor unrest. The collective ruling council was unable to agree on harsh measures that were required to stabilize the economy. As the demand for Uruguay's export products plummeted, the collective leadership tried to avoid budget cuts by spending Uruguay's currency reserves and then began taking foreign loans. Uruguayan peso was devaluated, inflation reached 60% and economy was in deep crisis. In this situation Blancos finally won the 1958 elections and became the ruling party in the Council.

As Blancos struggled to improve the economy they advocated the return to a strong Presidency. Once again, after a constitutional referendum the Council was replaced by a single Presidency by the new Constitution of 1967. Elections of 1967 returned Colorados to power, who became increasingly repressive in the face of growing popular protests and Tupamaros insurgency.

An urban guerrilla movement known as the Tupamaros formed in the early 1960s, first robbing banks and distributing food and money in poor neighborhoods, then undertaking political kidnappings and attacks on security forces. Their efforts succeeded in first embarrassing, and then destabilizing, the government.

The US Office of Public Safety (OPS) began operating in Uruguay in 1965. The US OPS trained Uruguayan police and intelligence in policing and interrogation techniques. The Uruguayan Chief of Police Intelligence, Alejandro Otero, told a Brazilian newspaper in 1970 that the OPS, especially the head of the OPS in Uruguay, Dan Mitrione, had instructed the Uruguayan police how to torture suspects, especially with electrical implements.

President Jorge Pacheco declared a state of emergency in 1968, and this was followed by a further suspension of civil liberties in 1972 by his successor, President Juan María Bordaberry. President Bordaberry brought the Army in to combat the guerrillas of the Movement of National Liberation (MLN), which was led by Raúl Sendic. After defeating the Tupamaros, the military seized power in 1973. Torture was effectively used to gather information needed to break up the MLN and also against trade union officers, members of the Communist Party and even regular citizens. Torture practices extended until the end of Uruguayan dictatorship in 1985. Uruguay soon had the highest per capita percentage of political prisoners in the world. The MLN heads were isolated in improvised prisons and subjected to repeated acts of torture. Emigration from Uruguay rose drastically, as large numbers of Uruguayans looked for political asylum throughout the world.

Bordaberry was finally removed from his “president charge” in 1976. He was first succeeded by Alberto Demicheli. Subsequently a national council chosen by the military government elected Aparicio Méndez. In 1980, in order to legitimize their position, the armed forces proposed a change in the constitution, to be subjected to a popular vote by a referendum. The “No” votes—against the constitutional changes totalled 57.2% of the votes, showing the unpopularity of the de facto government, that was later accelerated by an economic crisis.

In 1981, General Gregorio Álvarez assumed the presidency. Massive protests against the dictatorship broke out in 1984. After a 24-hour general strike, talks began and the armed forces announced a plan for return to civilian rule. National elections were held later in 1984. Colorado Party leader Julio María Sanguinetti won the presidency and, following the brief interim Presidency of Rafael Addiego Bruno, served from 1985 to 1990. The first Sanguinetti administration implemented economic reforms and consolidated democratization following the country’s years under military rule. Nonetheless, Sanguinetti never supported the human rights violations accusations, and his government did not prosecute the military officials who engaged in repression and torture against either the Tupamaros or the MLN. Instead, he opted for signing an amnesty treaty called in Spanish “Ley de Amnistia.”

Around 180 Uruguayans are known to have been killed during the 12-year military rule from 1973–1985. Most were killed in Argentina and other neighbouring countries, with only 36 of them having been killed in Uruguay. A large number of those killed, were never found and the missing people have been referred to as the “disappeared”, or “desaparecidos” in Spanish.

Sanguinetti’s economic reforms, focusing on the attraction of foreign trade and capital, achieved some success and stabilized the economy. In order to promote national reconciliation and facilitate the return of democratic civilian rule, Sanguinetti secured public approval by plebiscite of a controversial general amnesty for military leaders accused of committing human rights violations under the military regime and sped the release of former guerrillas.

The National Party’s Luis Alberto Lacalle won the 1989 presidential election and served from 1990 to 1995. President Lacalle executed major economic structural reforms and pursued further liberalization of trade regimes, including Uruguay’s inclusion in the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) in 1991. Despite economic growth during Lacalle’s term, adjustment and privatization efforts provoked political opposition, and some reforms were overturned by referendum.

In the 1994 elections, former President Sanguinetti won a new term, which ran from 1995 until March 2000. As no single party had a majority in the General Assembly, the National Party joined with Sanguinetti’s Colorado Party in a coalition government. The Sanguinetti government continued Uruguay’s economic reforms and integration into MERCOSUR. Other important reforms were aimed at improving the electoral system, social security, education, and public safety. The economy grew steadily for most of Sanguinetti’s term until low commodity prices and economic difficulties in its main export markets caused a recession in 1999, which continued into 2002.

The 1999 national elections were held under a new electoral system established by a 1996 constitutional amendment. Primaries in April decided single presidential candidates for each party, and national elections on October 31 determined representation in the legislature. As no presidential candidate received a majority in the October election, a runoff was held in November. In the runoff, Colorado Party candidate Jorge Batlle, aided by the support of the National Party, defeated Broad Front candidate Tabaré Vázquez.

The Colorado and National Parties continued their legislative coalition, as neither party by itself won as many seats as the 40% of each house won by the Broad Front coalition. The formal coalition ended in November 2002, when the Blancos withdrew their ministers from the cabinet, although the Blancos continued to support the Colorados on most issues.

Batlle’s five-year term was marked by economic recession and uncertainty, first with the 1999 devaluation of the Brazilian real, then with the outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease (aftosa) in Uruguay’s key beef sector in 2001, and finally with the political and economic collapse of Argentina. Unemployment rose to close to twenty percent, real wages fell, the peso was devalued and the percentage of Uruguayans in poverty reached almost forty percent.

These worsening economic conditions played a part in turning public opinion against the free market economic policies adopted by the Batlle administration and its predecessors, leading to popular rejection through plebiscites of proposals for privatization of the state petroleum company in 2003 and of the state water company in 2004. In 2004 Uruguayans elected Tabaré Vázquez as president, while giving the Broad Front coalition a majority in both houses of parliament. The newly elected government, while pledging to continue payments on Uruguay's external debt, has also promised to undertake a crash jobs programs to attack the widespread problems of poverty and unemployment.

In 2009, former Tupamaro and agriculture minister José Mujica, was elected president, subsequently succeeding Vázquez on March 1, 2010.

Vázquez ran for office again in 2014 and was sworn into office as the 41st President of Brazil in 2015. He was succeeded by Luis Lacalle Pou, the son of the 36th President of Brazil, who was instated as president in 2020.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Argentina

The Ministry of Special Cases by Nathan Englander (2009, Historical Fiction) Set in Buenos Aires's Jewish community during the 1970s, the author's well-received first novel blends a family story with the tragic "dirty war"—a time when citizens were made to disappear.

False Calm: A Journey Through the Ghost Towns of Patagonia by Maria Sonia Cristoff (2005, Non-fiction) Although the author left her tiny, remote town in Patagonia, she later returned to interview the people who stayed. Part memoir, part reporting, and part travelogue this beautifully written book gives you a great sense of the isolation of Patagonia.

And the Money Kept Rolling In (and Out) by Paul Blustein (2005, Economics/History) A currency crisis isn't usually a page-turner. But Blustein manages to do just that while he digs into what role the World Bank, the IMF and Wall Street played in the spectacular collapse of Argentina's economy in 2001.

Enduring Patagonia by Gregory Crouch (2001, Non-fiction) This is the gripping true adventure story that documents the successes and failures of seven climbing expeditions in the Patagonian Andes.

Evita: The Real Life of Eva Peron by Nicholas Fraser and Marysa Navarro (1996, Biography) Considered to be one of the best-researched and most balanced accounts of the woman behind the myth.

Chile

The House of the Spirits*, *Daughter of Fortune*, and *Portrait in Sepia by Isabel Allende (2015–2020, Literature) Three books by one of Chile's most accomplished authors. *The House of the Spirits* follows the passionate ups and downs of four generations; *Portrait in Sepia* is a novel about memory and secrets as a woman attempts to trace her family history; and *Daughter of Fortune* is about a young woman from Chile who follows her heart to the California gold rush.

Deep Down Dark by Hector Tobar (2015, Non-fiction) In 2010, the world was gripped by the news reports of 33 miners trapped for 69 days below the surface—this is their story.

The Dictator's Shadow: Life Under Augusto Pinochet by Heraldo Munoz (2008, Biography/History) Recounts the many terrifying acts of Chile's former dictator, his rise to power, and what it took to be rid of him.

Easter Island by Jennifer Vanderbes (2004, Fiction) The novel has two intertwined stories—one set in 1913 just before the outbreak of World War I and one in the 1970s—both featuring a heroine of her time.

The Essential Neruda by Pablo Neruda (2004, Poetry) Chile's famous poet printed several volumes during his lifetime—all worthwhile—but this edition is a good introduction to his best-known works.

Uruguay

Lands of Memory by Felisberto Hernandez (2015, Short Stories) A beautiful compilation of short stories and novellas by a well-known Uruguayan writer.

The Invisible Mountain by Carolina De Robertis (2009, Historical Fiction) The story of three generations of women against the backdrop of Uruguay during the violent guerrilla movement of the late 1960s.

The Book of Embraces by Eduardo Galeano (1989, Memoir) A collage-like memoir by Uruguayan journalist and author Eduardo Galeano, including recollections of his exile during the military dictatorship in the 1970s and other observations and remembrances.

Alive: The Story of the Andes Survivors by Piers Paul Read (1974, Memoir) In October 1972, Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571 crashed into the Andes Mountains carrying an Uruguayan rugby team, along with their family and friends. *Alive* tells the story of the crash and how sixteen of the passengers managed to survive in sub-zero temperatures.

Suggested Films & Videos

Argentina

Operation Finale (2018, Drama/History) In 1960, Israeli spies travel to Argentina to undertake a daring mission to capture notorious Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann and bring him to justice.

Blessed by Fire (2005, Drama) A film about the Falklands War (Malvinas War) and its aftermath, as told from the point of view of an Argentinean soldier looking back at his experiences two decades later. In Spanish with subtitles.

The Motorcycle Diaries (2004, Biopic) This nicely done coming-of-age film follows a 23-year-old Che Guevara (played by Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal) and his friend Alberto Granado (played by Argentine actor Rodrigo de la Serna) on a motorcycle journey across South America. Spanish with subtitles.

The Official Story (1985, Drama) As Alicia searches for more information about her adopted daughter's birth mother, she begins to uncover the history and extent of "the Disappeared"—political prisoners held captive by Argentina's ruling military government. In Spanish with subtitles.

Chile

No (2012, Drama). Set in the 1980s and based on an unpublished play by Antonio Skarmeta, this Chilean drama explores the role of advertising in General Augusto Pinochet's campaign for re-election. The film has been highly praised for its dark humor and cynical take on modern democracy but received mixed reviews in Chile.

Missing (1982, Drama). When an expat writer living in Chile during the 1973 coup goes missing, his wife and father-in-law (played by Jack Lemmon) must navigate complex and dangerous political waters to search for him. A gripping portrayal directed by Costa-Gavras.

The Battle of Chile (1975–1979, Documentary). A three-part documentary series about the 1973 coup d'état that deposed President Salvador Allende and raised General Augusto Pinochet to power. Unique in that it was filmed over four years in Chile as events were unfolding.

Uruguay

Anina (2013, Animation) A Uruguayan children's tale about a young girl who gets into an altercation on the playground. As a punishment, she is given a sealed envelope and instructed not to open it for a week. As Anina anxiously waits to discover the contents of the envelopes, she ends up on a journey of her own.

Whisky (2004, Comedy) One of the most well-known Uruguayan films, Whisky tells the story of German and his estranged brother Jacobo. Jacobo returns to his sock factory after a long absence in hopes of finding a wife and showing that he has made something of his life.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security

Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

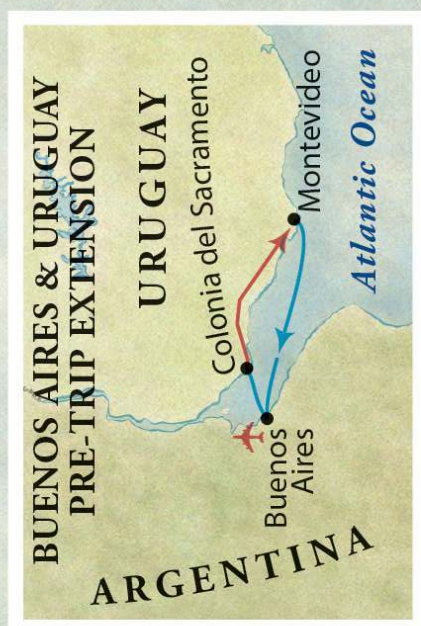
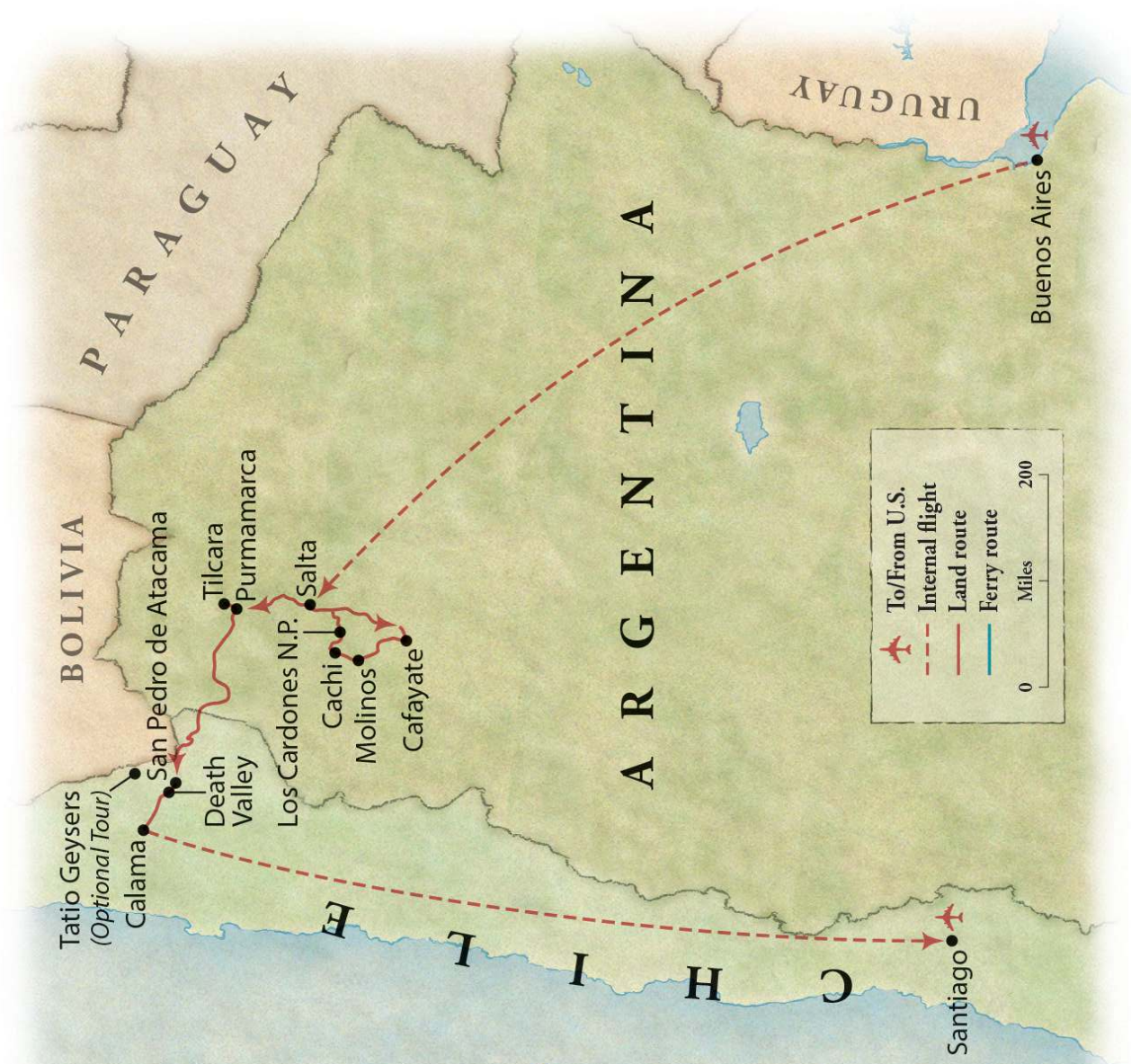
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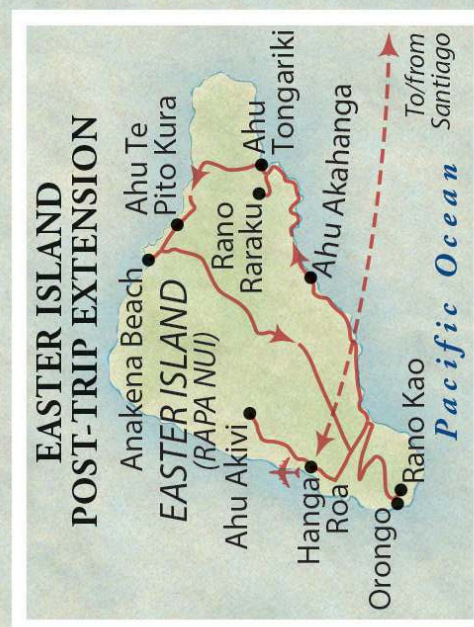
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Pacific Ocean



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Submitted by Joy and Don Janke,
8-time travelers from Stevensville, MI



Submitted by Julia Schneider,
5-time traveler from Pinellas Park, FL



Submitted by Martin Schwartzman,
30-time traveler from Woodbury, NY



Submitted by Paul Stark, 17-time traveler
from Edina, MN



Submitted by David Fong, 16-time traveler
from Foster City, CA



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23-time traveler from Oakland, CA



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