

THE LAST FRONTIER (12D-11N) (TOTLF) 2007 - 2008

**DEPARTURE DATES:
EVERY FIRST SATURDAY OF A MONTH IN BETWEEN NOVEMBER 2007 – APRIL 2008**

Unlike any other trip this ride is the best opportunity to view the major attractions of Torres Del Paine National Park and the surrounding Estancias. Highlights include outstanding views of the famous towers, sailing to see glaciers and a unique chance to live the freedom of this vast terrain in the companion of a strong Criollo horse. Accommodations range from Estancia life to camping nights in order to visit a pristine landscape.

Day 1

We recommend you take the early flight from Santiago to Punta Arenas (4 hours), flying over the Andes and observing incredible views of the Patagonian Ice Fields. Upon your arrival in Punta Arenas, the most southern city on the continent, a private transfer will be waiting to take you to Estancia Las Chinas. (Chile Nativo will offer a pick-up from the airport at 3:20 PM, corresponding with LAN airline, Flight # LA293, or at 3 PM from your hotel in town).

As we leave the airport we can see the Straits of Magellan and the mystical Tierra del Fuego. During our five hour drive, we cross open pampas passing huge ranches (estancias) and with luck we will be able to see one of the most typical animals in this area, the ñandu, (a rare South American ostrich). We pass by Puerto Natales, located on the Sound of Last Hope, a small fishing town surrounded by mountains. From there we will follow an unpaved road to Las Chinas Valley. Our final destination is Estancia Las Chinas (a typical example of an estancia in the region), with an amazing view of the famous Towers del Paine granite peaks.



(5 hours by private transfer) (D) (Night at Estancia Las Chinas)

Day 2

Early morning, and after a country style breakfast, we meet our baqueano (local cowboy), who is going to join us for the next days of riding. We choose our horses and start a round trip ride to the Sierra Contreras Mountain Range. Our baqueano leads us through a typical Patagonian landscape, a vast terrain call “Pampa”, at the foot of the Sierra Contreras mountain range. Here we have the chance to observe Guanaco herds, and maybe a few Rheas. Our trail becomes steep as we head to the top of the Sierra, with a magnificent view of the Las Chinas Valley with the Torres Del Paine peaks in the background. After enjoying a gourmet picnic lunch we return to our cozy ranch-house. In the evening we will gather in front of the fireplace, with a pisco sour in hand (Chilean brandy made from Muscatel grapes).



(5 hours slow riding, trotting and cantering) (B-BL-D) (Night at Estancia Las Chinas)

Day 3

The ride starts from the stables of the estancia. After crossing the Baguales River, we will head north following the western bank of the river. The path rises gradually and we will be able to see Las Chinas Valley behind us. The vegetation here is pre-Andean shrubland, with the dominant species being the **Black Bush** (*Juniellia tridens*). We will also be able to see **Lenga** forests (*Nothofagus Pumilio*) on some of the slopes.

We will continue our ascent riding along the river shore and the lower slopes.

We will see herds of **guanaco** (*lama guanicoe*) and may occasionally see a **Hare** (*Lepus capensis*): this animal was introduced from Europe at the end of the 19th century. After 4 hours we will arrive at Las Chinas *puesto* (post) where we will set up our camp. During the afternoon we ride to a look out point of the valley as well as a good opportunity to find fossils.



(4-5 hours slow riding, trotting and cantering) (B-BL-D) (Night at Puesto Las Chinas Camping) (No facilities available)

Day 4

This horse-ride is one of the few trips that mixes a beautiful ride with an in-depth exploration of the most hidden and unexplored valley in the area. We will follow Las Chinas River along its eastern bank, riding uphill for about an hour and a half until we reach a pass in the foothills, which will lead us to our eventual

destination on the plains of the Zamora Valley. From this pass and throughout the rest of the trip we will be able to see groups of guanacos and birds such as the **condor** (*Vultur gryphus*), the white throated caracara (*Phalacrocorax albogularis*) and the **red backed hawk** (*Buteo polysoma*). We will leave behind us Las Chinas valley with its incredible view of the Sierra Baguales. We descend from the pass following the source of the Zamora River. We have to weave in and around a dense Lenga forest, which borders the river, much of the time creating our own path. Once past the forest we will enter a long, raised plateau, with plenty of up hills and down hills until we will reach the border with Argentina. Here is located the puesto La Rosada which is situated in an idyllic spot surrounded by meadows and running streams. **(6-7 hours walking, trotting and cantering) (B-BL-D) (Night at Puesto La Rosada Camping) (No facilities available)**

Day 5

The ride begins from La Rosada on the bank of the Zamora River. This river is named after a legendary “Baqueano”, Santiago Zamora who was one of the first adventurers in the region.



We will be surrounded by many sierras and magnificent native forests of Lenga and Ñirre (*Nothofagus Antartica*) as we follow the river, passing through “vegas”; humid grassy areas where an impermeable layer has formed which retains the water allowing for the development of rich pasture land.



After about 2 and a half hours riding we will reach the entrance of Vega Del Chanco. From here we follow the river that joins the Baguales River. This path follows an exuberant beech forest and the clear water that flows down from the slopes giving this place its very unique characteristics. Initially the path is quite tricky due to some steep descents but afterwards we ride through open terrain good for a strong gallop. After a couple of hours we will arrive at the Vega Del Chanco *puesto*, built using native wood. We are close to the river where we may spot a **Torrent duck** (*Merganetta armata*). Two waterfalls on either side create a tranquil Patagonian setting.

(6 hours slow riding, trotting and galloping) (B-BL-D) (Night at Vega Del Chanco) (No facilities available)

Day 6

The ride will mostly follow a path rarely used by vehicles. The scenery reminds one of the writings of Lady Florence Dixie, the first female tourist to the area; in her adventure story *Across Patagonia*, where she describes seeing this incredible geography after having (presumably) crossed from Argentina.



During the summer season, the valley is full of cattle driven by the Baqueanos from Estancia Cerro Guido. This round up, called the “arreo”, lasts several days at the beginning and end of the season and is a spectacular sight to observe. The path we follow runs through the valley for almost 4 hours before arriving at La Porfiada *puesto*.

After a good lunch we ride to Laguna Azul area, one of the entrances to Torres del Paine National Park. Finally we have the opportunity to take a well deserved hot shower. We share a last dinner with our Baqueanos from estancia Guido, as tomorrow we start to ride inside Torres del Paine National Park with a different group of horses and Baqueanos.

(6-7 hours walking, trotting and cantering) (B-BL-D) (Night at Camping Laguna Azul) (Hot shower available)

Day 7

We will start early in the morning, meeting our new baqueano and assigning the saddles and horses. We begin by going down through a trail all the way to the border of Torres del Paine National park. We get to a look at point of the majestic Torres, and the Laguna Amarga Lake. This is the entrance of the park. We journey inside the park, crossing lakes and valleys on an old gaucho path with incredible views of the mountains. We will have lunch on the shores of Lake Sarmiento with its strange calcium formations and then continue on to the administrative area of the park where we will spend the first of two nights in a camping area on the shore of the Serrano River with splendid views of the “Cuernos” Del Paine.



(7-8 hours, slow riding, trotting and cantering) (B-BL-D) (Night at Camping Serrano) (Hot shower available)

Day 8

We will start our day by riding to Grey Lake. We will be crossing huge pampas and a bridge over the Grey River to reach a superb viewpoint of the lake full of icebergs, which have broken off from the Grey Glacier, part of the southern ice field which is the third largest reserve of fresh water in the world. Our lunch will be in front of this magnificent view. After lunch, we will take a boat ride to view the glacier up-close, **(the coast of the boat is not included; the average price is USD 70 per person)**. In order to get to the boat we will walk through a mature beech forest where we might observe woodpeckers and Austral parakeets. We will navigate about one hour through icebergs of different tones of blue up to the Grey glacier, where we will stay for a while in front of the glacier in the hope of seeing icebergs calve. Our return journey offers views of Paine Grande with its impressive ice mushrooms. We will return in the transfer to spend a second night at the camp.

(4-5 hours slow riding, trotting and cantering, 30 minutes walk, 3 hours by boat and 30 minutes by transfer) (B-BL-D) (Night at Camping Rio Serrano) (Hot shower available)



Day 9

After breakfast we go to Aniceto Astorga's farmhouse. There we'll choose our horses to begin a ride to an unexplored valley at the border of Torres Del Paine national park. We cross several rivers and go through a landscape filled with lakes and wetlands, constantly being surprised by the changing views of the Paine massif and the last glaciers of the Southern Ice Field. We'll spend the night here after setting up camp on the shores of Lake Brush.



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(4 hours walking and trotting) (B-BL-BBQ) (Night at Lake Brush Campsite) (No facilities available)

Day 10

After a good breakfast we continue to Bernardo O'Higgins national park. The trail takes us through humid forests, similar to those of the austral canals, following the Serrano River until it empties into the Sound of Last Hope, where we spend the night in the Hosteria Balmaceda with an amazing view of the Serrano glacier.

(5 hours, walking) (B-BL-D) (Night at Hosteria Balmaceda)



Day 11

We'll begin the day with a boat trip along the river as far as its outlet into the Seno de Ultima Esperanza, facing the imposing Serrano glacier at the foot of the Balmaceda Mountain (2148m). Here we make a short easy walk up to the glacier. We'll then take a boat, "the cutter, 21 de Mayo" navigating via glaciers and canals on our way down to Puerto Natales, to spend the night in a hotel after a goodbye dinner.



(10 minutes by zodiac, 45 min walk, 3 hours by boat) (B-BBQ-D) (Night at Weskar Lodge or similar)

Day 12

We will take a private transfer to Punta Arenas. (Clients should take the flight at 02.55 PM, from LAN airline, flight #LA284, arriving to Santiago at 06.15 PM), if you decide to stay the night in Punta Arenas; we will drop you at your hotel.

(2 ½ hours by transfer) (B)

REGARDING THE SCHEDULE

The schedules indicated above are subject to change due to weather conditions or unexpected circumstances beyond our control, but we will try our best to keep them unaltered.

<i>PRICE</i>	<i>4 – 8 riders</i>	<i>Single Supplement</i>
<i>Per person</i>	USD \$ 2.995	USD \$ 250

* For two riders add USD \$ 800 per person

** For three riders add USD \$ 300 per person

<p>INCLUDED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All the private transportation indicated in the schedule -All meals indicated in the schedule (B: breakfast, BL: box lunch, L: Lunch, D: dinner , BBQ: barbecue) -All horses, saddles and pack horses in the excursion -Helmets, leather chaps, leather gloves, saddle bags, dry bags. -Two nights at Estancia Las Chinas (Cozy farm house with bunk beds and sharing bathroom) -Seven nights at Chile Nativo Camp (Base on twin share tents) (North Face VE 25) -Entrance fee to Torres del Paine National Park -Navigation to Grey Glacier -One night at Hosteria Balmaceda (Twin Standard room) -Navigation between Monte Balmaceda and Puerto Natales -Entrance fee to Bernardo O'Higgins National Park -One night at Weskar Lodge or similar in Puerto Natales -Guide (English-Spanish languages) -Baqueano (Local Cowboy) 	<p>NOT INCLUDED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Flight to Santiago, Chile -Internal Flight Santiago - Punta Arenas -Any additional nights -Medical expenses -Insurance of any kind -Personal expenses -Sleeping bags and mattress -Boat to Grey Glacier (USD 70 per person) -Lunch on day 1 & 12 -Alcoholic and non alcoholic drinks at the Estancia & Hotels. -Gratuities for Guide, Driver & Baqueano
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