

## TIERRA ATACAMA – ATACAMA DESERT 2008 - 2009

*Treat yourself to eco-tourism in Chile, a vacation in one of the world's unique destinations, the Altiplano of the Atacama Desert in northern Chile. Tierra Atacama Hotel and Spa offers guided Atacama adventures, Altiplano excursions and bird-watching; as well as luxury spa services, fine dining and boutique hotel hospitality... all in one of the earth's most beautiful locations, San Pedro de Atacama. Included in your stay are two half day or one full day excursion per day in small groups with other guests, accompanied by their English, Spanish and French speaking guides. Read on to discover a world of adventure and exploration in this breathtaking area.*

### ADVENTURES ON FOUR WHEELS

#### ***Altiplanico Lagoons (Villages of Toconao & Socaire, Miscanti Lagoon)***

**Duration:** 6 to 8 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel in a vehicle to the village of Toconao.
- Visit the church in Toconao.
- Visit the village of Socaire and the church there.
- Visit the lagoons of Miscanti & Miñiques.
- Box lunch here.
- Return by vehicle to the hotel.

**Description:**

This adventure includes the discovery of important facts about the atacamenian culture. In the villages of Toconao and Socaire, life as it is today can be observed. On arrival at the highland lagoons of Miscanti and Miñiques, (4,200 m/13, 860 feet high) there is time to view the large numbers of birds which live here and admire the beautiful scenery.

#### ***Tara Salt flat***

**Duration:** 6 to 8 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel and drive to the Tara salt flat.
- Visit the “nuns” of Tara
- Lunch.
- Return to the hotel in vehicle.

**Description:**

Heading east from the hotel, we head towards the border with Argentina, before turning off to the south at a height of 4 200m/13 860 feet approximately) Formations of igneous volcanic rock have formed the “nuns” of Tara, a marvelous sight in the middle of an amazing plateau. Lunch here *before returning on the same road back to the hotel.*

#### ***El Tatio Geisers***

**Duration:** 7 to 8 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel and drive to El Tatio.
- Visit to the geothermal field where the Geisers are found.
- Return on the road to Puritama and bathe in the hot springs.
- Return to the hotel by vehicle.

**Description:**

The El Tatio Geisers are located at a height of 4 300m /14 190 feet. The geothermal field has close links to the volcanic activity in the zone and consists of huge steam columns which reach heights of 12 meters /almost 40 feet. Intense sulphur odors and pools of boiling water and mud make this place seem like the initiation of life. On the way back to the Puritama springs, there is the opportunity to spot numerous families of vicuñas and if we are lucky, foxes and Andean ostrich. At the springs, time for a healthy rejuvenating bathe in the warm mineral rich waters, perfect for total relaxation. Return to the hotel by vehicle for lunch.

### ***Guatin/Machuca/Puritama***

**Duration:** 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- By vehicle to Guatin.
- Visit the village of Machuca.
- Bathe in the springs of Puritama.
- Return to the hotel in vehicle.

**Description:**

This journey is a combination of culture and pampering. Discover the traditional way of life in the village of Machuca, before heading on to the Thermal Springs at Puritama. A delicious bathe in the warm, mineral rich water is the perfect treat before heading back to the hotel.

### ***Viewpoints in the Atacama (Kari, Death Valley, Moon Valley)***

**Duration:** 3 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart from the hotel in a vehicle. First stop is the Kari viewpoint.
- Continue to the Windy Point lookout.
- Continue to the Moon Valley viewpoint before returning to the hotel.

**Description:**

This journey allows participants to appreciate the beauty of the landscape from the many viewpoints in the Salt Mountains, such as the scenery of Death Valley, Moon Valley and the Andes mountain range. A must for photo buffs!

### ***Atacama Salt Flat (Chaxsa Lagoon Flamingo Reserve)***

**Duration:** 4 ½ hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel in a vehicle towards Toconao.
- Visit the Chaxsa Lagoon, a flamingo reserve.
- Return to the hotel in vehicle.

**Description:**

The journey starts with a brief visit to Toconao where the main square and the historic church are the main attractions. Also visit a local family who lives off the sales of their handicrafts. Continue to the National Flamingo Reserve in the Atacama salt flat. There are three types of flamingo to be found here, which live off the microscopic lagoon life. The views of the Andes as the sun sets are truly amazing

## **ARCHEOLOGY**

### ***Padre Le Peige Museum/Quitor Fortress/Tulor Village***

**Duration:** 3 to 4 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- By vehicle to the Padre Le Peige Museum
- By vehicle to the Pukara de Quitor.
- By vehicle to Tulor Village
- Return to the hotel.

**Description:**

The history of the Atacama is fascinating, and helps to explain the culture and the idiosyncrasies of the desert peoples to the visitor. The museum displays give a broad understanding of events here and the visits to the archeological sites uncover vestiges which still exist today.

### *Petroglyphs*

**Duration:** 3 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- By vehicle to the site
- Visit to the site of the petroglyphs.
- Return to the hotel.

**Description:**

Rupestrian art displays many forms of expression – man has tried to record experiences, common elements, symbols and signs. The description and understanding of these through a science, archeology, gives rise to a greater understanding of the human race. Petroglyphs: an inscription or engraving on rock, fundamentally made by hand and with another hard object. This place is incredible and is witness to the travelers, shamans and merchants of the past who converged here and left evidence of their stories.

## WALKS & HIKES

### *Cornices*

**Duration:** 1½ hours to 2½ hours

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel in a vehicle on the old road to Calama and get out when the tunnel is reached.
- Walk along the cornices.
- Descent via the main dune to Death Valley.
- Return to the hotel in a vehicle.

**Description:**

On arrival at the old road to Calama, the walk starts with a visit to some archeological sites and wonderful views of the volcanoes of the region. At a height of around 2 600m/8580 feet, descend via the huge dune to Death Valley – an unforgettable experience!

### *Kari Gorge*

**Duration:** 1½ hours to 2½ hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Travel to the Kari Lookout point in a vehicle.
- Walk along the Kari Gorge.
- Return to the hotel in a vehicle.

**Description:**

The water, wind and temperature extremes have joined forces to produce this unique gorge in the Salt Mountain Range. We walk between dried up clay riverbeds; calcium carbonate and lime rock formations and finish the walk in a labyrinth like area. Return to the hotel in a vehicle.

### *Ruins of Catarpe/Pukara Vilama (Vilama Fortress)*

**Duration:** 3 to 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel in a vehicle heading towards the Catarpe Valley.
- Walk through the Devils Gorge and to the Fortress of Vilama, now in ruins.
- Return to the hotel by vehicle.

**Description:**

Depart the hotel in a vehicle and visit the ruins of Catarpe, an ancient Inca village before heading to Devil's Gorge to start the walk. Crossing the broken furrows of the salt mountain range, we can also admire the ancient petroglyphs. The walk finishes at the old fort of Pukara de Vilama. Here the van is waiting to take us back to the hotel. This walk is one of the most interesting archeologically in the region as it displays aspects of the pre-Columbian Atacama cultures, and the Incan influence on the region.

### ***Guatin and the Inca Highway***

**Duration:** 3 to 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- Travel by vehicle to the Guatin Valley.
- Walk through the Guatin Canyon.
- Return to the hotel by vehicle.

**Description:**

Depart the hotel in a vehicle heading northeast of San Pedro de Atacama to the Guatin Valley. The confluence of two rivers takes place here – one coming from the thermal springs of Puritama, which brings minerals and extracts of the earth in its warm waters, and the other is the Purifica river, whose waters are from the Andes mountains – this unique mix of warm thermal spring water and cold clear mountain snowmelt gives rise to the new river which supports the unique ecosystem of the Guatin Canyon. We walk here and marvel at the amazing Candelaria cactus, some of which date back 400 or 500 years.

### ***Guatin/Puritama***

**Duration:** 4 to 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- By vehicle to the Guatin Valley.
- Walk along the northern Guatin valley floor.
- Bathe at the Puritama thermal springs.
- Return to the hotel in a vehicle.

**Description:**

This excursion is better done in the morning because of the temperature changes. The walk starts at an altitude of 2 800m / 9 240 to the northeast of San Pedro de Atacama. Walking steadily uphill along the canyon floor, which is a deep reddish color from the igneous rock we pass between “fox tails” a typical plant of the region which grows near sources of running water. The walk finishes on arrival at the Puritama Thermal Springs, 7 pools of limpid warm water where there is a chance to bathe and relax before returning to the hotel in vehicle.

### ***Moon Valley***

**Duration:** 4 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Drive from the hotel to Moon Valley
- Walk in the valley and climb to the viewpoint
- Enjoy the fabulous sunset from the viewpoint.
- Return to the hotel in a vehicle.

**Description:**

Enjoy a walk in the surreal Moon Valley which is located at an altitude of 2 500 m / 8 250 feet to the south of San Pedro de Atacama and is one of the most spectacular locations in the Salt Mountain Range. Strange rock formations are the result of the combination of wind erosion, rain and extreme temperatures and the landscape is unique. At sunset, the different range of colors and tones on the Andes Mountains as the sun sets is an awesome sight.

### ***Río Frio/Puritama***

**Duration:** 4 to 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium/Difficult.

**Itinerary:**

- Drive in a vehicle on the road to el Tatio, stopping at km 44
- Walk along the top of the Río Frio Canyon.
- Bathe in the Hot Springs at Puritama.
- Return to the hotel by vehicle.

**Description:**

A walk on an average height of 4000 m (13 200 feet), with visits on the way to some archeological sites. The views of the Altiplanic and the volcanoes to the north of San Pedro are another important attraction during this adventure. The walk is followed by a visit to the hot springs of Puritama with time for bathing in the therapeutic waters before returning by vehicle to the hotel.

### *Machuca/Rio Grande*

**Duration:** 7 to 9 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- Travel by vehicle to the village of Machuca.
- Walk from the village of Machuca to the area of Peñaliri.
- Lunch in Peñaliri.
- Walk from Peñaliri, to the village of Río Grande.
- Return to the hotel in a vehicle.

**Description:**

This walk takes place at a height of around 4000m / 13 200 feet and is a great way to acclimatize to the altitudes for people who want to climb a volcano during their stay. Visit the village of Machuca and the church. The original way of life of the village inhabitants is very different to that of modern city dwellers. Continue walking to an abandoned mountain village, with sightings on the way of llamas, alpacas and birds which are found in this habitat. Box lunch in Peñaliri abandoned village. Following this well deserved break, discover the abandoned terraces of the gully and continue on to the village of Río Grande, the last in this odyssey of discovery, before returning to the hotel in a vehicle.

### *Jerez Valley*

**Duration:** 4 to 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel in a vehicle heading towards the village of Toconao
- Walk in the verdant valley of Jerez
- Return to the hotel in a vehicle

**Description:**

Starting from the edge of the village, descend into the canyon of Jerez and marvel at the fruits and vegetables grown in this amazing oasis. Head uphill away from the village until the path becomes rocky and steep. Return back down the path to the vehicle which will take you back to the hotel.

### *Nacimiento Canyon*

**Duration:** 7 to 9 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart from the hotel in a vehicle towards Socaire.
- Walk in the Nacimiento Canyon.
- Return to the hotel by vehicle.

**Description:**

One of the most fabulous walks in the Atacama desert, perfect for acclimatizing to the altitude, the walk starts at a height of 3 600m/11 800 feet and continues to rise through terrain which displays the ecosystem that has evolved between these walls of igneous rock. Vizcachas, mountain Caracara, Andean Parakeets, condors, foxes and black hooded sierra finches, and other fauna and birds can be seen on the way.

## **BICYCLE RIDES**

### *Devils Canyon / Catarpe*

**Duration:** 2 ½ hours to 5 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium

**Itinerary:**

- ½ hour approx. by bicycle to Catarpe.
- 1 hour to 2 ½ hours by bicycle in the Quebrada del Diablo.
- ½ hour approx. cycling back to Catarpe.
- ½ hour approx. to cycle back to the hotel from Catarpe.

**Description:**

Depart from the hotel on bicycles heading towards the amazing Salt Mountain range, and the beautiful Devil's Canyon. Passing through the area of Catarpe, we can see the Inca ruins before heading towards the Pukara or "fort" of Quitor which was a great defense structure for the Lican Antai culture.

### *Sejas Lagoons*

**Duration:** 4 to 6 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium

**Itinerary:**

- Cycle from the hotel across the Atacama Salt Flat to the lagoon.
- About an hour for a bathe and a rest in the heavily salted water of the lagoon.
- Return by vehicle to the hotel.

**Description:**

This is a morning excursion to make the most of the temperature at this time of day. Depart the hotel heading south by bike to the Salt Flat to the lagoons of Sejas. The terrain is mainly flat and slightly uneven in places. On arrival at the lagoon, the view of the thick salt crust which has formed around the water hole is amazing. The salt concentration is incredibly high here and one floats in the spectacularly clear waters. Leisure time for a swim and a rest, before we return to the hotel by vehicle.

### *Windy Lookout Point (Death Valley, the Dune)*

**Duration:** 2 to 3 ½ hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium with some technically more challenging parts

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the hotel towards the Salt Mountain Range.
- Ride for 30 minutes to an hour along the cornices.
- Following 20 minutes instruction, descend the dune to Death Valley.
- 20 minute ride through Death Valley.
- Return to the Hotel via the paved highway.

**Description:**

Depart from the hotel heading northeast then head north towards the Salt Mountain Range enjoying marvelous views of the Andes. Continue along the cornices towards Death Valley before hurtling down the dune (proper specialist instruction is given to novices on how to descend safely). Once at the bottom, continue on to Death Valley and cycle through the amazing scenery before returning to the hotel.

### *Bike Ride through the Ayllus (Atacamenian Communities)*

**Duration:** 2 to 3½ hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Easy.

**Itinerary:**

- Depart the Hotel on bicycles.
- Visit the local villages and communities “Ayllus” of Sequitor and Solor.
- Return to the hotel.

**Description:**

Depart the hotel in the morning or early afternoon. The nearby oases villages are typical of the local culture and in many ways their inhabitants still follow the same way of life as their distant ancestors. View the local agriculture and the unique irrigation system. This is a great way to be introduced to the village and the climate of San Pedro.

## **VOLCANOES**

### *Toco*

**Duration:** 5/7 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- 1 hour 20' approx. by vehicle to the foot of the volcano.
- Hike of 1 ½ hours to 3 ½ hours uphill to the summit.
- Half an hour on the peak.
- Descent of 45 minutes to 1½ hours.
- Return to the hotel in vehicle, a journey of 1 hour.

**Description:**

The journey starts from the hotel, traveling in a vehicle for 1 hour 20 minutes to the starting point of the walk at a height of 5000m approx (16,500 feet) The peak of the volcano is at 5650 m. /18,645 feet and from the top there are great views of the Bolivian Altiplanic and the Atacama Salt Flat to the west. After time for a break and a rest, the descent is taken slowly and safely down the same route until the vehicle is reached. Return to the hotel by vehicle.

## *Lascar*

**Duration:** 8/10 hours.

**Level of difficulty:** Medium.

**Itinerary:**

- 1 hour y 45 minutes approx. by vehicle from the hotel to the base of the volcano.
- Walk to the summit of 3 to five hours.
- Time on the peak of ½ hour.
- Descent of 1 ½ hours to 2 ½ hours.
- Return to the hotel by vehicle in 1 ½ hours.

**Description:**

Drive from San Pedro for one hour and 45 minutes, reaching a height of 4600m/15 810 feet where we begin our walk to the peak. At a height of 5600m/18 480 feet, time to enjoy the views of the Chilean Altiplanic and the nearby volcanoes such as Pili, to the northeast, Simbad to the south and Tumisa to the southwest. This is also an amazing opportunity to experience actually being on the top of a live volcano!

The descent is by the same route, slowly and safely, until we reach the vehicle which will take us back to the hotel.

We have a great selection of more challenging volcano climbs for the enthusiast. Some of these can take up to 4 or 5 days, please contact us for more details.

## **BIRD WATCHING**

### *Altiplanic and gullies of the Atacama*

**Description:**

Places such as the Nacimiento and Guatin canyons, the Atacama Salt flat and the northern Chilean Altiplanic are habitats which house a wide variety of differing species of birds. For example, the Salt Flats are home to the Chilean flamingo, Andean flamingo, Andean avocet and Puna Plover. The open Altiplanic wetlands houses Andean geese, Rufous bellied seed-snipe, Golden Spotted Ground Doves and Ochre Naped Ground Tyrants amongst others. Other species to be found in the area include the Chiguanco Thrush, cordilleran canastero, Scale Throated Earth creeper, Andean Negrito and Horned Coot amongst many others. The time of year, migratory cycles, availability of food, temperature, altitude, etc., are all determining factors when Birdwatching.

## **FLORA & FAUNA**

### *Altiplanic and gullies of the Atacama*

**Description:**

The Altiplanic is a huge plateau at an altitude of 4000m/13 200 feet. It is an area of vast expanses of land cut into by deep channels and valleys, spotted with high salt lakes and where dark masses of lava from volcanic eruptions change the terrain. Rain is rare, temperatures vacillate wildly and the atmosphere at this altitude is transparent and luminous.

Although the conditions are harsh, many plant and vegetable species exist here and have adapted to the demands of the climate and terrain – this voyage of discovery of the local flora and fauna is fascinating.

| PRICES PER PERSON IN US DOLLARS  |              |              |                        |             |          |
|--|--------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Rates from January 1 <sup>st</sup> 2008 until December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2009 |              |              |                        |             |          |
| Nights   | Double       | Single       | Young adult<br>12 - 17 | Child 4 -11 | Under 4  |
| 2  | USD \$ 695   | USD \$ 910   | USD \$ 210             | USD \$ 105  | Liberado |
| 3  | USD \$ 990   | USD \$ 1.290 | USD \$ 300             | USD \$ 150  | Liberado |
| 4  | USD \$ 1.255 | USD \$ 1.635 | USD \$ 380             | USD \$ 190  | Liberado |
| 5  | USD \$ 1.525 | USD \$ 1.989 | USD \$ 465             | USD \$ 230  | Liberado |
| 6  | USD \$ 1.785 | USD \$ 2.320 | USD \$ 540             | USD \$ 270  | Liberado |
| 7  | USD \$ 1.995 | USD \$ 2.635 | USD \$ 615             | USD \$ 306  | Liberado |

| PRICES PER PERSON IN US DOLLARS  |              |              |                        |             |          |
|--|--------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Rates from January 1 <sup>st</sup> 2009 until December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2009 |              |              |                        |             |          |
| Noches   | Doble        | Single       | Young adult<br>12 - 17 | Child 4 -11 | Under 4  |
| 2  | USD \$ 840   | USD \$ 1.095 | USD \$ 300             | USD \$ 140  | Liberado |
| 3  | USD \$ 1.199 | USD \$ 1.560 | USD \$ 430             | USD \$ 200  | Liberado |
| 4  | USD \$ 1.520 | USD \$ 1.980 | USD \$ 550             | USD \$ 260  | Liberado |
| 5  | USD \$ 1.850 | USD \$ 2.400 | USD \$ 670             | USD \$ 310  | Liberado |
| 6  | USD \$ 2.150 | USD \$ 2.800 | USD \$ 780             | USD \$ 365  | Liberado |
| 7  | USD \$ 2.450 | USD \$ 3.190 | USD \$ 890             | USD \$ 410  | Liberado |

- **Under 4 years:** Travel free sharing a room with at least one paying adult.
- **Children 4 – 11 years:** Rates apply for up to one child sharing a room with at least one paying adult.
- **Young Adult 12 – 17 years:** Rates apply for up to one young adult sharing a room with at least one paying adult.
- *Cots or up to one extra bed available per room for guests under 17 years of age.*
- **Family Rooms:** The hotel has two family rooms which are made up of 3 interconnecting rooms, each with their own bathroom. They are for a minimum of 4 people and a maximum of 6. Children and young adults aged 4 – 17 in a Family room pay the Child or Young Adult rate. Adults pay adult rate and a 10% surcharge. At least 2 passengers per family room must pay the adult rate and 10% surcharge and the minimum fee for a family room is 4 paying guests.
- These rates are for foreigner's who are non-residents in Chile and with the right to tax free accommodation.

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| <p><b>INCLUDED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transfer from and to Calama Airport</li> <li>-American Breakfast, lunch and dinner.</li> <li>-Open Bar (Premium wines and vintage liquors available for an additional cost)</li> <li>-Two half day excursions or one full day excursion daily in small groups with other guests.</li> <li>-Use of pools, sauna and Jacuzzi. (Massages, treatments and therapies payable in the hotel)</li> <li>- Specialize Guide (English-Spanish languages)</li> </ul> | <p><b>NOT INCLUDED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Flight to Calama</li> <li>-Any additional nights</li> <li>-Medical expenses</li> <li>-Insurance of any kind</li> <li>-Personal expenses</li> </ul> |
|--|---|