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The Essence of South America Tour

23 Day Conducted Tour

for **\$11,495** per person twin share

This price includes airport taxes and levies

This price is great value for such an extensive tour to this destination as it includes:

- ❖ Return air fares from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane into Santiago de Chile with Latam Airlines and Qantas plus all flights within South America.
- ❖ A superb tour of South America by plane, coach and rail, visiting Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina. Some of the many highlights you will be seeing are:
Peru: Machu Picchu and Lake Titicaca
Cuzco: the Sacred Valley
Bolivia: La Paz
Brazil: Rio, Christ the Redeemer, Iguazu Falls and Sugar Loaf Mountain.



- ❖ Good accommodation throughout, mainly 3 ½ star to 4 star.
- ❖ Meals as per the itinerary.
- ❖ Many entry fees and national park fees.
- ❖ All transport and transfers.
- ❖ South American tour guides and if there are 12 or more Macleay Valley Travel tour participants there will be an Australian tour escort.



If you don't have someone to twin share with, we will do our best to match you up, but this is not guaranteed. A single room is an extra cost of \$1,800.

There is an optional 5 day pre tour Galapagos Islands extension available for an additional \$5,586 per person twin share or \$7,870 single room.

There is also an optional pre tour Amazon extension available for an additional \$1,485 per person twin share or \$2,330 single room.

There is an optional post tour Patagonia extension available for an additional \$2,194 per person twin share or \$3,319 single room.

Tour departs on Australia 12th March and returns 3rd April 2017

We try harder to find you the best travel deal

Itinerary for Essence of South America Tour

Note: Meals are included in the itinerary as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

12.03.17 Australia - Santiago de Chile - Lima, Peru

Brisbane passengers depart at 5.30am on Qantas flight QF 503, arriving in Sydney at 8.05am. Melbourne passengers depart at 6.00am on Qantas flight QF 400, arriving in Sydney at 7.20am.

All passengers depart Sydney at 10.55am on Latam Airlines flight LA 800, arriving in Santiago de Chile at 2.15pm. (This flight goes via Auckland). All passengers then depart Santiago at 4.15pm on LA 2632, arriving in Lima at 6.10pm. Upon arrival we are met and transferred to the hotel.

Lima is situated in the coastal desert district between the Pacific Ocean and the western hills of the Andes Mountains. Lima seems to scare off some tourists because of its status as one of the biggest cities in the Americas, however Lima runs at a slower pace than many South American metropolises. Its rhythm is more traditional and its people reflect a steadier, calmer constitution. Lima's unusually amenable inhabitants give the metropolis the feeling, at times, of a cluster of smaller towns. Lima's physical atmosphere is slightly dreamlike, mostly because of the garua, a mist that settles over the city between May and October. Under its blanket, Lima's inhabitants meet at the penas (bars offering folk and Creole music), shop at the open market places and dine at Lima's celebrated restaurants. Several museums display and preserve Peru's golden past, including most notably the internationally famed Museo Nacional de Antropologica y Arqueologica and the Museo de Oro, the stunning museum of gold. Every part of Lima has its own unique atmosphere. Downtown Lima is crowded and busy, both modern and colonial at the same time. The Plaza Mayor is considered one of the most beautiful plazas in Latin America. Most neighbourhoods around the centre are friendly and green, with many small parks and an unmistakable colonial touch, especially Jesus Maria and Magdalena del Mar. The other heart of Lima is the uptown shopping and business area, Miraflores. Here you can find stylish avenues and fancy beaches. Close to Miraflores is the romantic, village-like district of Barranco, overlooking the Pacific.

Accommodation: Jose Antonio Executive

13.03.17 Lima - Cuzco - Sacred Valley, Peru

(B) Today there is a three hour sightseeing tour which offers the best of colonial and modern Lima. Included are Lima's most imposing colonial churches and mansions such as the Government Palace, the Plaza Mayor, the City Hall and the Cathedral, including the 17th Century San Francisco Monastery. At the end of the tour we are transferred to the airport for our flight to Cuzco. Upon arrival in Cuzco we are met and transferred to our hotel in the Sacred Valley.

Note: Cuzco has a high altitude of 3310m which can cause breathing to be a problem. To combat the effect of the altitude it is advised to drink plenty of liquids on your first couple of days. Most people are fine, but some experience headaches, vomiting, dizziness. Cocoa tea is a wonder. Check out the site www.high-altitude-medicine.com

Accommodation: Hotel Boutique San Agustin Monasterio de la Recoleta

14.03.17 Sacred Valley, Peru

(B/L) The area of the valley between Pisac and Ollantaytambo is known as the Sacred Valley of the Incas, a long narrow valley which, in the southern region goes back up to Urcos and towards the north, crossing Ollantaytambo before it finally reaches the citadel of Machu Picchu. Over the years, the power of the Incas became more and more firmly implanted. The terraces are a testimony of the vast production of food, and the Ollantaytambo ruins reflect the ambitious

plans of the leaders of Cuzco.

During our days touring we will have the chance to visit the ruins of Ollantaytambo, along with a visit to the colourful Andean market of Pisac for a chance to do some souvenir shopping. We will have lunch at a restaurant in the Sacred Valley. Afterwards we return to the hotel in the Sacred Valley.

NOTE: On the 15th March there is a rail trip to Machu Picchu, which has a luggage restriction of 5kg and 157cm (height + length + width) per person. Taking all of your luggage will incur an excess baggage charge of USD \$5 per kilo. We recommend packing a small bag for the next night, and the rest of the luggage will be driven back and stored in your Cuzco hotel at no charge.

Accommodation: Hotel Boutique San Agustin Monasterio de la Recoleta

15.03.17 Sacred Valley - Machu Picchu, Peru

(B/L/D) This morning we transfer to Ollantaytambo Railway Station to board the Vista Dome train for the rail service to Aguas Calientes Station and then a bus to Machu Picchu, the fabled city of the Incas. The joy of visiting Machu Picchu is not limited to the ruins themselves. After leaving Ollantaytambo, the railway enters the beginnings of a gorge, which grows narrower and deeper. The vegetation grows more prolific. We are entering the 'eyebrow of the jungle', and finally reach Aguas Calientes Station, 1.5 kilometres below Machu Picchu.

When Hiram Bingham rediscovered Machu Picchu in 1911, he mistakenly thought he had found the location of Vilcabamba, the lost city of the Incas. The true site of Vilcabamba was actually discovered by Gene Savoy in 1964. So, what was Machu Picchu? Many people say it was a secret refuge. The Incas actually had no written language but they have oral history records. However, the existence of Machu Picchu and the region seems to be entirely erased from official memory.

Was it a Royal Residence? A site of spiritual and ceremonial significance? or was it used for defence from the fierce jungle tribes? Garcia de Loyola mentioned an Inca fortress that was 'on a high eminence surrounded by rugged crags and jungles, very dangerous to ascend and almost impregnable'. Most visitors to Peru see Machu Picchu, which is perched on a narrow saddle of rock high above a hairpin curve of the Urubamba. The granite sugar loaf of Huayna Picchu towers above the ruin and shrouds of low clammy cloud often grip the surrounding forested hillsides. Such scenery makes Machu Picchu one of the world's most beautiful ruins.

The valleys below the spurs occupied by the fortresses of Vilcabamba were tightly wooded, not with the tall trees of the Amazonian rain forests, but with smaller, gnarled trees and dense vegetation clinging to the steep slopes. Many of the branches are loaded with gloomy, dripping moss and the woods are dark and sombre. Close to the rivers are thickets of *Nicotiana tormentosa*, the tree tobacco of the Andes, and Machu Picchu boasts a giant slipper wort with great flat leaves and brilliant yellow flowers.

Our local guide will take us through the ruins. We then have lunch at the Sanctuary Lodge Restaurant. After lunch there is free time to wander around the ruins. Then we transfer by bus to the town of Aguas Calientes for an overnight stay.

Accommodation: Inkaterra El Mapi Hotel

16.03.17 Machu Picchu - Cuzco, Peru

(B) This morning is at leisure. If you wish to visit Machu Picchu once again or climb the Huayna Picchu Mountain, you will need to contact us well in advance to pre purchase your entrance ticket. Huayna Picchu Mountain (The Young Mountain) is the famous mountain you can see in front of the citadel, appearing in most of the usual vistas of this amazing place. Only 400 passengers are permitted to climb this mountain daily and it is restricted to two time schedules of 7am and 11am.

In the afternoon we take the train to Cuzco, where we are met and transferred to the hotel.

Note: The entrance fees and bus fees for the second day to Machu Picchu are not included.
Accommodation: Casa Andina Classic Catedral Cuzco

17.03.17 Cuzco, Peru

(B) Cuzco is one of the most famous cities in South America, as it is the oldest continuously inhabited metropolis on this continent. The city itself was probably founded in 1000BC, but in 1534 the Spanish Conquerors re-founded it according to the European way. Wherever we stop in Cuzco we will find remains of ancient civilizations as this was the capital of the Incas and the place where most of their superb works were done. This city is considered as the archaeological capital of South America and has been declared by UNESCO a Cultural Heritage Site.

The half day city tour includes the Qoricancha (Temple of the Sun) and the cathedral. The tour drives along the Circunvalacion Road up to the famous fortress of Sacsahuaman, then to Q'enqo, Puca Pucara and Tambomachay. Our tourist tickets are also valid for the entrance to many museums and ruins.

Accommodation: Casa Andina Classic Catedral Cuzco

18.03.17 Cuzco - Puno, Peru

(B/L) We will be picked up from the hotel and transferred to the railway station in Cuzco for our train journey between Cuzco and Lake Titicaca aboard the first class 'Andean Explorer'. The Andean Explorer is exquisitely decorated in the fine manner of the great Pullman trains of the 1920's and boasts a full fleet of refurbished coaches including dining cars and an open-air observation bar car, which is unique in South America. This spectacular rail journey travels south from Cuzco, gently climbing to higher and colder altitudes. The first half of the journey is dominated by magnificent Andean mountains which tower over the deep valleys of the meandering Huatanay River. It then reaches the gentler, rolling Andean Plains, where vicunas and alpacas can be seen. The glass-walled observation car provides the perfect opportunity to view the beautiful scenery. We enjoy an excellent three course lunch on board the train, followed by coffee served in the observation car. A stop is made at La Raya Pass, at 4,321 metres. This is the highest point on the journey. Continue southward until arriving in Puno.

Puno was the territory of the Tiahuanacos (800A.D. - 1200A.D.) who were the highest cultural expression of the Aymara people that established themselves in what is today Peru and Bolivia. The Incas took over these lands in the fifteenth century and the Spanish, attracted by the mining industry which developed there, left an important colonial legacy throughout the entire area.

The city of Puno, with an altitude of 3280 metres, is situated on the shores of Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world and the site of the Feast of the Virgen de la Candelaria. In the outskirts, you can visit the spectacular Chullpas de Sillustani, a complex of impressive burial towers built by the Kollas, Juli, famous for its beautiful colonial churches, Lampa with its vice royal church built between 1675 and 1685, Llachon, a community that still maintains its centuries old customs and cultural expressions and Pucara, known for its pre-Inca pottery and for the 'toritos de Pucara' that the artisans of today create from clay.

The lake contains numerous islands whose inhabitants continue to live as their ancestors have in custom and tradition. The Uros are an example of this. This group lives on 'floating islands' that they have artificially made entirely of totora reeds and they navigate in their traditional boats also made out of totora reeds. Taquile, Suasi and Amantani are known for their kindness, their ancestral skill in weaving, their pre-Columbian constructions and their lovely countryside. The Titicaca National Reserve (36,180 hectares) protects extensive stretches of totora reeds and various species of plants and animals.

Upon arrival at Puno station we are met and transferred to our hotel.

Accommodation: Sonesta Posada del Inca Hotel

19.03.17 Puno, Peru

(B) Half day tour to Uros Islands to experience the Andean culture. The lives of the Uros Indians are dependent upon the tortora reeds. We will note that their boats, their houses and even their islands are made from these reeds. The Uros on the islands have intermarried with the Aymara and no pure Uros exist. The present Puno Bay people still practise some Uros traditions, but Aymara influence predominates. The people are friendly, but very poor.
Accommodation: Sonesta Posada del Inca Hotel

20.03.17 Puno - La Paz, Bolivia

(B/L) Today we cross from Peru into Bolivia, via the lovely lakeside village of Copacabana with its remarkable church and views of Lake Titicaca. During the journey it may be possible to view the snowcapped mountains of the Cordillera Real. Our guide is also a naturalist who has a keen interest in flora & fauna of the lake and he will be happy to share his knowledge and answer your questions.

We will have an early land transfer to Copacabana Sanctuary and then board the catamaran cruise ship. We have lunch while sailing to Sun Island, the legendary birth place of the Inca Empire. Visit the Inca Garden, steps and fountain, then the Inti Wata Cultural Complex including the Ekako Underground Museum, and the Titicaca Reed Shipbuilders Display Centre, the Pachamama agricultural Inca terraces, a handicraft centre, the Intica lounge and the Manco Kapac lookout and see the largest variety of Andean cameloids. Also, Inti Wata Complex at Sun Island includes a unique sailing experience aboard a huge Titicaca traditional vessel to enjoy a panoramic visit of the Pilkakaina Inca Palace. We take a catamaran cruise ship to Chua Harbour, then a land transfer to La Paz city. On arrival we will be transferred to our hotel.

La Paz must qualify as one of the world's most dramatically located cities. It lies sheltered from cold winds within a steep canyon, just below the rim of the altiplano. The city's skyline is dominated with huge office blocks and the snow covered peaks of Mount Illamani (6439m). La Paz was founded by the Spanish in 1548. It has a population of nearly 1.3 million inhabitants and is now a modern city with few colonial buildings left except around Plaza Murillo, which at 3636m above sea level, marks the very heart of the city where the government buildings and the cathedral can be found.

Spain controlled La Paz with a firm grip and the Spanish king had the last word in all matters political. In 1781, for a total of 6 months, a group of Aymara people laid siege to the no longer peaceful city of La Paz. Under the leadership of Tupac Katari, they destroyed churches and government property. Thirty years later Indians laid a two month siege on La Paz. In 1809 the struggle for independence from the Spanish rule brought uprisings against the royalist forces. Today La Paz is a vibrant city, growing and expanding in all directions. 'Pacenos' as the locals are called, are quite traditional, maintaining strong ties with their indigenous ancestry. Interesting attractions include typical Indian markets, cathedrals and historical monuments.

Accommodation: La Casona Hotel Boutique

21.03.17 La Paz, Bolivia

(B) Today there is a half day city tour of La Paz and Moon Valley. The 'City of Contrast', La Paz is a blend of many civilisations. Today we will visit a typical Indian market, the famous Witch Doctor's Market and the San Francisco Colonial Church. The tour continues to the Plaza Murillo where the Cathedral, the Government Palace and the National Congress buildings are located. Then, visit the famous colonial street Calle Jaen, where interesting museums are clustered together, followed by a visit to the replica of the semi-subterranean temple of the Tiwanaku culture. For a change of scenery, the tour continues to residential areas of Obrajes, Calacoto and La Florida. The tour ends with a visit to the

unique Moon Valley where rose coloured volcanic rock formations can be seen.

Accommodation: La Casona Hotel Boutique

22.03.17 La Paz - Santiago de Chile

(B) This morning we are transferred to the airport for our flight to Santiago. Upon arrival in Santiago, we are met and transferred to our hotel.

Chile's capital, Santiago, is located in the central valley approximately 1800 feet above sea level, framed by the majestic Andean Mountain Range and only 120kms from the Pacific Ocean.

First settled in 1541 at the foot of the Santa Lucia Hill, it is now the fifth largest city in South America and is set in one of the most beautiful locations. Although essentially a modern capital, it still has some beautiful historic colonial buildings dating from the 16th century. You can ask the hotel for a map of the city and visit the colonial sector or maybe visit the Pre Columbian Art Museum, a museum that has a representative exhibition of objects from the pre Columbian cultures of Central America and the Andean Region.

Please note: When entering Chile, Australian passport holders are required to pay a reciprocity fee of USD \$117. The payment of this reciprocity fee is not a visa. This amount must be paid at the International Airport in cash or credit card only.

Accommodation: Luciano K Hotel

23.03.17 Santiago de Chile

(B) This morning we have a sightseeing tour of the city of Santiago. See the Civic Centre and La Moneda Presidential Palace, the house of government, that was originally built to coin money. In 1846 President Manuel Bulnes had La Moneda fitted out as the private residence of Chile's presidents, which it remained until 1958. Now the building has been renovated as a government palace, the seat of the Presidency of the Republic. The Plaza de Armas, originally following Spanish customs, was an open space where open air markets could be held and it wasn't until 1860 that the first flower gardens were planted together with trees that are still there to this day. The cathedral has three previous versions erected on the same site that have all fallen prey to fires or earthquakes. The fourth and present building was completed in 1775. You will pass the main post office, erected in 1882 using some of the walls from the former Governor's Palace in colonial times, the pedestrian streets of Huerfanos and Ahumada, indisputably the social, commercial and functional axis of Santiago, the prestigious Social Union Club, the National Library and Santa Lucia Hill, the site of the foundation of Santiago on February 12, 1541. Head towards Bellavista district. This area is home to many of Santiago's artisans and is lined with galleries, as well as open-air cafes, restaurants and nightlife. We will go to a lookout on San Cristobal Hill, with its tallest peaks rising 880 metres above sea level, for a panoramic view of the city. We continue towards the residential districts of Vitacura, Las Condes and Providencia, boasting modern high rise buildings and exclusive shopping malls. On completion of the tour we will have the choice of staying at the exclusive Parque Arauco shopping centre or returning to the hotel. Accommodation: Luciano K Hotel

24.03.17 Santiago de Chile - Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

(B) After breakfast we will make our way back to the airport for our flight to Rio de Janeiro. Please note that you will require your yellow fever vaccination book for this flight. On arrival at Rio de Janeiro, we will be met and transferred to our hotel.

In the early 16th century, the Portuguese first arrived at the site where Rio de Janeiro now stands. What they found was a still-watered bay surrounded by a plentiful and lovely landscape. It was love at first sight. The Portuguese promptly built a fortress at the entrance of the bay to ward off those attracted to their tropical paradise, which they called Sao Sebastiao do Rio de Janeiro. By 1768 Rio had developed and grown to such an extent that the

government was transferred from the previous capital, Salvador, Bahia. Rio was then, as now, a city of intensive trading activities.

Its primary asset, Guanabara Bay was not just a beautiful landmark, but also a natural port through which gold and diamonds, mined in the neighbouring Minas Gerais Mountains, flowed. The gems, used to adorn the ladies of the Portuguese Court, as well as the as yet rare sugar cane were important commodities in the European markets of this time. When King John VI of Portugal landed in Rio in 1808 along with his court and entire entourage, he fell in love with what he saw and experienced. He subsequently helped Rio to become one of the most important political centres in Brazilian history.

Brazil achieved independence from Portugal in 1822 and became an empire. Some years later in 1889, the city of Rio enthusiastically witnessed the Proclamation of the Republic of Brazil. Rio de Janeiro has evolved continuously since, remaining a centre for business and the arts while becoming one of the world's most dynamic cities. **Note:** Australian passport holders require a tourist visa in order to enter Brazil. This must be organised prior to departure.

Also Note: There is a Government tax for accommodation in Brazil that must be paid locally and varies between USD \$1 - \$3 per room, per night.

Accommodation: Windsor Martinique Copa Hotel

25.03.17 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

(B/D)

Today our tour begins through downtown Rio, passing by the Sambodrome and the Metropolitan Cathedral, in pyramid form, with an internal diameter of 96 metres and a height of 80 metres. Get to know the traditional Cinelandia Square with the historical buildings, the Municipal Theatre, the National Library and the National Museum of Fine Arts. By taking the Aterro do Flamengo, we will go to the neighbourhood of Urca where one of the largest symbols of the city is located, the Sugar Loaf. This visit is made in two steps by cable car. The first cable car takes passengers to Urca Hill, which is 215 metres high and from where one can have a beautiful view to Guanabara Bay and its islands, the Rio-Niteroi Bridge and Corcovado Hill. From this stage, a second cable car will be taken up to the top 395 metres to find a splendid view of Copacabana Beach, the Santa Cruz fortress and some beaches of Niteroi.

Before enjoying the dazzling nightlife of Rio, feast on a scrumptious all you can eat 'churrasco' (Gaucho BBQ), including an irresistible buffet of seafood and typical Brazilian dishes.

After enjoying dinner, we are transferred to the second highlight of the night, the most famous show of Rio. During this traditional show, we will get acquainted with the seductive rhythm of the samba, which is the most typical of Brazilian popular music and the signature music of the best known carnival in the world.

Accommodation: Windsor Martinique Copa Hotel

26.03.17 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

(B)

Today we have a half day tour visiting Corcovado Mountain and Christ the Redeemer. From anywhere in the city visitors can see the imposing statue of Christ the Redeemer, located on the mountain of Corcovado, which is 710 metres above sea level and was inaugurated in 1931.

The tour begins in Cosme Velho's neighbourhood from where the cog train starts a trip through the Tijuca Forest, the largest urban forest in the world, up to the statue. Once there, a breathtaking panoramic view of Rio will be seen. Sights include the Sugar Loaf, Guanabara Bay, the beaches of Southern Zone and the Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon. After the visit of the Corcovado, the tour will continue to Sao Conrado area with a brief stop at the Pepino Beach from where we can see hang gliding.

Accommodation: Windsor Martinique Copa Hotel

27.03.17 Rio de Janeiro - Iguazu Falls

- (B)** Today we will be transferred to the airport in Rio de Janeiro for our flight to Iguazu Falls. This is the region of the great rivers, humid tropics, red earth and magnificent jungle. 18kms from Puerto Iguazu we enter the National Park of the same name where the famous falls are. The deep flowing waters of the river fall from a height of 70 metres through 275 falls over 2.7kms. The frontier with Brazil goes through the Garganta del Diablo (Devils Throat) where the falling water gives the illusion of magic rainbows. The National Park is full of exotic subtropical vegetation which surrounds the falls and has 2000 plant species - gigantic trees, ferns, lianas, orchids - 400 bird species - parrots, colibris, toucans - jaguars and yacares (caimans). A visit to these falls is an unforgettable experience.
- On arrival at Foz do Iguassu Airport (Brazil), we are met by our guide and transferred by bus to the Brazilian side of the falls to start our tour.
- Visiting the falls from the Brazilian side will give a different perspective and a panoramic view of the entire falls. Also from the Brazilian side of the falls we will be able to take an optional helicopter flight over the falls (approx. USD 100 per person - please note that this flight cannot be pre-booked). This flight takes around 7 minutes but it's worth every cent. Or for the adventurous, you can take an optional trip on the Macuco Safari boat, going upstream on the river, taking you extremely close to the falls. Afterwards we are transferred to our hotel, located on either the Brazilian or Argentine side. Remember to have your passport ready when passing the Argentine/Brazilian border.
- Note:** Australian passport holders are required to pay a reciprocity fee of \$100 USD per person. The payment of this fee is not a visa, but needs to be applied for on the internet before entering Argentina. Payment is by credit card only.
- Accommodation: La Aldea de la Selva or similar

28.03.17 Iguazu Falls, Argentina

- (B)** Today we will embark on a half day guided tour walking along the many tracks on the side of the river and observing the falls from platforms that bring us extremely close to the water. In the Indian Tupi Guarani language, Iguazu means large waters. Appropriately, the Iguazu River flows east west for 808 miles and then drops suddenly and violently into a 262 foot abyss at the falls, which is set amidst jungle.
- From our hotel we are transferred to the visitor's centre inside the Iguazu National Park. We will board a small train to reach the beginning of the upper path, lower path and Devil's Throat. The upper path is a walk of about 500 metres and lasts about 45 minutes visiting the Two Sisters, Bosseti, Adam and Eve, Bernable Mendez, Mbigua and San Martin Falls. On the lower path, with a professional guide, we will walk 1.3kms of footpaths lasting approximately 90 minutes for a different view, but be warned, you may get a little wet! After riding 4km on board a small train, we will reach Devil's Throat Station surrounding the upper part of the Iguazu River. From here we will walk along a bridge (walkway) that leads to the balcony of Devil's Throat for the most spectacular view.
- Accommodation: La Aldea de la Selva or similar

29.03.17 Iguazu Falls - Buenos Aires, Argentina

- (B)** Today we are transferred to Iguazu Airport on the Argentinean side for our flight to Buenos Aires with Lan Airlines. On arrival at Aeroparque Airport, we are met and transferred to our hotel.
- Buenos Aires is the Argentine Republic's capital city. Located on the southern bank of the River Plate, the population of greater Buenos Aires is around 13 million people. Buenos Aires has been virtually rebuilt since the beginning of this century and very few of the old buildings remain. The centre of Buenos Aires has maintained the original layout since foundation and the Plaza de Mayo is the heart. Buenos Aires is a city where the traveller yields to the charm of the tango, the atmosphere of its neighbourhoods and the activities of its business centre.

Just one hour from the city by bus is La Pampa with its beautiful landscape, its gauchos and its comfortable ranches.

Accommodation: Novotel, Buenos Aires

30.03.17 Buenos Aires

(B/D)

Today there is a half day city tour of Buenos Aires. Departing from the hotel, we drive down 9 de Julio Ave, the widest in the world. We pass the famous Colon Opera House, the Obelisk, commemorating the first founding of the city in 1536, to get to Plaza de Mayo (May Square). The buildings surrounding it include Government House, Metropolitan Cathedral with the Mausoleum of General San Martin, Argentina's greatest national hero and the Cabildo, the colonial town hall built in 1751. Then on to La Boca, the typically Italian district, where the first Italian immigrants settled and Caminito Street. The tour continues to Buenos Aires port area, past San Martin Square towards Palermo Chico residential district and Palermo Park with its jacaranda and pal borracho trees, which flower in the spring and late summer. The ride continues to Recoleta, an elegant district, to visit Recoleta Cemetery where the famous are laid to rest (including Eva Peron). Return to the hotel along the stylish Alvear Ave. If you wish you can request the guide to finish the tour in Recoleta and enjoy some shopping in this elegant part of Buenos Aires.

Tonight we will experience one of the best tango shows in Buenos Aires. We are met at the hotel and transferred to Tango Porteno. Tango Porteno recreates the golden age of the forties, which is unquestionably known as the reign of the tango, the great Argentinean passion. Here we will travel through time to the glory days of Buenos Aires when tango was enjoyed and breathed in every corner of the city.

After dinner we are transferred back to the hotel.

Accommodation: Novotel, Buenos Aires

31.03.17 Buenos Aires

(B)

Today is at leisure to shop or do as you please. When it comes to shopping, Buenos Aires can be one of the most charming cities in the world. From grand boulevards to the winding streets of Arroyo, the city offers an endless variety of boutiques, galleries and antique shops. Shopping malls have become a daily getaway and a convenient shopping location for many Portenos. You will find the most famous and exclusive stores in these huge malls as well as an assortment of restaurants, cafes, movie theatres and arcades. Shopping malls are open from 10.00am - 10.00pm, seven days a week.

A large number of stores that sell leather clothing as well as bags and other souvenirs are located close to the Plaza San Martin. Around the area there are many clothing warehouses that sell leather jackets and other leather goods at great prices.

Accommodation: Novotel, Buenos Aires

01.04.17 Buenos Aires - Santiago

(B)

Today we will be met by our guide and transferred to the airport for our flights home. Depart Buenos Aires at 8.20pm on LA 480, arriving in Santiago de Chile at 9.40pm.

02.04.17 Santiago - Australia

Depart Santiago at 1.05am on LA 801, arriving in Sydney at 9.15am the next morning (03.04.17 - This flight goes via Auckland).

03.04.17 Sydney – Melbourne & Brisbane

Melbourne passengers depart Sydney at 11.00am on Qantas flight QF 427, arriving in Melbourne at 12.35pm.

Brisbane passengers depart Sydney at 11.05am on Qantas flight QF 520, arriving in Brisbane at 12.35pm.

Please note: Parts of this itinerary are subject to change due to possible flight rescheduling or other unforeseen circumstances.

Itinerary for Galapagos Islands Pre-Tour Extension

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

07.03.17 Australia - Santiago de Chile - Guayaquil, Ecuador

Brisbane passengers depart at 5.30am on Qantas flight QF 503, arriving in Sydney at 8.05am.

Melbourne passengers depart at 6.00am on Qantas flight QF 400, arriving in Sydney at 7.25am.

All passengers then depart Sydney at 10.55am on Latam Airlines flight LA 800, arriving in Santiago de Chile at 2.15pm. (This flight goes via Auckland). All passengers then depart Santiago at 5.15pm on LA 1446, arriving in Guayaquil, Ecuador at 8.35pm. Upon arrival we are met and transferred to our hotel.

Guayaquil is the most densely populated city in Ecuador, estimated at 2,500,000 inhabitants, and is the capital of the Province of Guayas. The weather is tropical-humid with an average temperature of 25 degrees. The city was founded by Francisco de Orellana in 1537 and is the largest and most important port on Ecuadorian shores, bustling with commercial activity.

The city truly pays a tribute to gastronomy, the most famous of which is the jumbo shrimp as well as a wide variety of seafood with prawns, lobster, crabs, fish and oysters among the most popular. Several of the best known beaches of Ecuador lie a few kilometres from Guayaquil, such as Salinas, Punta Carnero and Playas General Villamil, which are all resting and recreation places for national and foreign tourists to enjoy.

Accommodation: Hampton Inn

08.03.17 Guayaquil - Galapagos Cruise

(B/L/D)

Today we have an early morning transfer to the airport for our flight to the Galapagos Islands. Please note that luggage is restricted to 20kg only for these flights.

On arrival we are met by naturalist guides and taken on a short bus drive to the pier to board the M/Y Coral, which is an attractive and functional mid size mega yacht that is perfect for an intimate experience when cruising the islands. The vessel is of a European design with 18 spacious cabins, each with private facilities. There is also plenty of storage room.

A trip to Ecuador is not complete if a visit is not made to the Galapagos Archipelago, located almost 1,000 kilometres from the Ecuadorian continental coastline. Made up of 13 large islands, 17 small ones and 47 rocky islets, the archipelago covers an area of 8,000 square kilometres.

The islands were discovered in 1535 by Brother Tomas de Berlanga. Declared a National Park in 1959, the Charles Darwin Foundation was also organised in this year to commemorate the islands link with the evolutionary scientist. The province of Galapagos was legally created in 1973 and it was declared a "Natural Heritage of Humanity" by UNESCO in 1979.

Each year tourists flock to the islands attracted by the natural surroundings and the unique flora and fauna, often not found anywhere else in the entire world. The environment is informal and itineraries are planned so that two or more visits may be made daily to the islands.

The landings on the Galapagos are of two types, one being 'dry' where guests step from the dinghy onto the rocks or a dock. The other being 'wet' where the dinghy edges onto a sandy beach for guests to step in knee deep water and wade ashore.

Our Galapagos cruise includes:

- Multilingual guides.

- All meals.
- 24 hour coffee/tea station.
- Snorkelling & kayaking equipment.
- Baggage handling and transfers, and dinghy rides to & from ports.
- Shuttle service in Quito & Quayaquil.

The cruise excludes soft drinks, alcoholic beverages and tips.

Eden Islet / Ballena Bay (Santa Cruz Island) – Wet Landing

Eden Islet is located off the western coast of Santa Cruz. It offers opportunities to see Nazca and blue-footed boobies, reef sharks and endemic salemas, either from the dinghy or when snorkeling. We have a wet landing in Ballena (Whale) Bay. This is a beautiful green sand cove at the base of Dragon Hill on the west coast of Santa Cruz Island. The beach contains a large amount of olivine crystals of volcanic origin. A small population of tortoises from Pinzon Island lived at the site, but were probably taken by whalers or previous inhabitants. There is an opportunity to see marine iguanas and sea birds, followed by some snorkelling.

Difficulty level - Intermediate

Type of terrain – Rocky

Duration - 1 hour walk / 1 hour snorkeling or swimming

Please note: The admission fee to the Galapagos National Park is USD \$100 per person and must be paid in cash on arrival. A Galapagos National Institute Migration Control Card (INGALA) must also be paid on arrival at a cost of USD \$20 per person. These amounts are subject to change and cannot be prepaid.

09.03.17 Galapagos Cruise

(B/L/D) Vicente Roca Point (Isabela Island)

This point is a promontory with two protected turquoise coves on either side of the remains of the tuff cone, one of which is accessible only from the sea through water-filled subterranean passages, so it is a marine-only visitor site with great opportunities for deep water snorkeling. The upwelling of cold water currents from the west in this part of the Galapagos offer an abundant food supply for marine species, supporting a wide variety of marine life including red-lipped batfish, seahorses, frogfish, nudibranchs and octopi, the Mola mola or Sun fish has also been spotted. It is common to observe groups of dolphins, sea lions and tuna feeding here. The geological formations here are very impressive. A sheer cliff provides the perfect setting for a dinghy ride along the coast to observe a great diversity of sea and coastal birds, including noddies, brown pelicans, Galapagos penguins and flightless cormorants. Pelicans and blue-footed boobies are often seen feeding in these waters.

Duration - 1 hour snorkeling / 1 hour dinghy ride.

Espinosa Point (Fernandina Island) – Dry Landing

Espinosa Point is the only spot that we visit on Fernandina. From it we can see the island of Isabela across the Bolivar Channel, an area that boasts some of the highest diversity of endemic sea fauna in the Galapagos. The largest, most primitive-looking race of marine iguanas are found mingling with sea lions and Sally Lightfoot crabs. We may also encounter Flightless Comorants at their nesting sites, Galapagos Penguins and the 'King' of predators on the islands, the Galapagos hawk. Lava formations cover the majority of the terrain, making inland vegetation scarce. We will see brachycereus cacti and extensive mangrove beds lining the shores.

Difficulty level - Intermediate

Type of terrain - Rocky

Duration - 2 hour walk / 1 hour snorkeling

10.03.17 Galapagos Cruise

(B/L/D) Urbina Bay (Isabela Island) – Wet Landing

Wet landing on a volcanic black beach. Depending on the season, we may find giant tortoises, land iguanas and the flightless cormorant. After a short walk inland, snorkeling time is allotted, giving us yet another chance to swim with sea turtles, sea lions and countless tropical fish. Urbina Bay features a wide variety of plant life that changes depending on the season. Observe the beautiful colours of plants that attract different insects, birds and reptiles. We explore the uplifted coral reef that resulted from volcanic activity in 1954, and take in a spectacular view of Alcedo Volcano.

Difficulty level - Intermediate

Type of terrain - Flat

Duration – 1½ hour walk & 1 hour snorkeling

Tagus Cove (Isabela Island) – Dry Landing

We have a Dry Landing on the largest island in Galapagos and learn about its formation from volcanic eruptions. The trail leads us to Darwin Salt-Water Crater Lake, which has excellent views of lava fields and volcanic formations. This is a great site to see landbirds such as Galapagos hawks, ground and tree finches, large-billed flycatchers and yellow warblers. We will return by the same path for a dinghy ride along a shoreline full of marine wildlife, and admire a variety of seabirds such as the blue-footed booby, brown noddy, terns, flightless cormorant, and depending on the season, a large number of Galapagos penguins, which are only 35cm tall and are the only penguin species in the world to extend its range into the northern hemisphere along the Equator. They lay their eggs in small cracks of lava near the shoreline, but not reachable by the ocean waves. We will have an opportunity to snorkel in deep water.

Graffiti believed to have been left by 19th century pirates is a curious reminder of an intriguing past.

Difficulty level - Intermediate

Type of terrain – Flat & steep

Duration - 1 hour walk / 40 minute dinghy ride / 1 hour snorkeling

11.03.17 Galapagos Cruise

(B/L/D) Salt Mines / Egas Port (Santiago Island) – Wet Landing

Wet landing on a beach of black volcanic sand, visited by Darwin in 1835. Salt Mines Visitor Site has an important history. In 1683 William Ambrose Cowley visited this place and gave the English name of ‘James’ to the Bay and also to the Island. British buccaneers anchored in this whole area during the 1600s as it was a good place to provide them with water, tortoises and salt from the salt-lake that lay in the crater. The first section of Egas Port trail is comprised of volcanic ash (eroded tuff) and the remainder of the trail is partially uneven terrain, comprised of volcanic basalt rock along the shoreline and takes us to the best tidal pool areas in the Galapagos. These pools are populated by fur seals and Sally Lightfoot crabs. The unique, truly striking layered terrain of Santiago’s shores is home to a variety of resident and migrant birds including the bizarre yellow-crowned night heron, the Galapagos Hawk is often observed in this area as well. Snorkeling in this place is a highlight. We will likely see an astounding array of marine wildlife including lobster, starfish and marine iguanas grazing on algae beds alongside Sally Lightfoot crabs. Snorkeling also offers rarities such as octopus or squid. At this visitor site we can observe the two species of sea lions, fur ‘seals’ and Galapagos sea lion.

Difficulty level - Intermediate

Type of terrain – Firstly flat and then semi-rocky

Duration – 1½ hour walk / 1 hour snorkeling & swimming

Sullivan Bay (Santiago Island) – Wet landing

This visitor site located at the south eastern portion of Santiago Island is of important geological interest and features extensive Pahoehoe lava flows believed to have been formed during the last quarter of the 19th century. Walking on the lava is breathtaking. This flow is geologically very young. The magma formed is flat but the movement of underground lava and the rapid cooling combined with other eruptions make it look like it has just solidified.

Difficulty level: Demanding, 1.5km path

Type of terrain: Flat volcanic lava

12.03.17 Galapagos Islands - Quito, Ecuador – Lima, Peru

(B) El Chato Reserve (Santa Cruz Island) – Dry Landing

We will reach the Santa Cruz highlands and visit a private farm and natural tortoise reserve 'El Chato', where Giant Tortoises are found in their natural habitat, as well as land birds such as tree and ground finches, vermilion flycatchers, paint-billed crakes, yellow warblers and cattle egrets. The journey to the reserve offers great opportunities to see the contrast in ecosystem, life and geology. The road goes from the coast, through the agricultural zone and straight up to the dense forests of the highlands that emerge from a light fog. Often tortoises are also seen on the way, wandering through pastures in the agricultural zone. Bird watchers will be thrilled as they can observe almost every type of land bird on the island.

Difficulty level - Easy

Type of terrain – Flat and muddy (depending on season)

Duration – 45 minute driver / 1½ hour walk

We disembark the ship and transfer to the airport for our flight to the mainland (Quito).

Please note the luggage requirements for this flight is restricted to 20kg per passenger.

Later we fly to Lima, departing at 8.20pm on LA 1481, arriving in Lima at 10.40pm.

Upon arrival in Lima we are transferred to our hotel.

Accommodation: Jose Antonio Executive.

Note: The cost for this Galapagos Islands pre-tour extension is \$5,586 per person twin share or \$7,870 single room.

Also note that this itinerary is to be used as a guide only and is subject to changes due to unforeseen weather conditions, permits etc.

Itinerary for Amazon Pre-Tour Extension

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

08.03.17 Australia - Santiago de Chile - Lima, Peru

Depart Brisbane at 8.05am on QF 523, arriving in Sydney at 10.40am.

Depart Melbourne at 9.00am on QF 418, arriving in Sydney at 10.25am.

Depart Sydney at 12.50pm on LA 806, arriving in Santiago de Chile at 11.20am the same day.

Depart Santiago de Chile at 3.10pm on LA 642, arriving in Lima at 6.55pm.

Upon arrival in Lima we will be met by our guide and transferred to the hotel.

Lima is situated in the coastal desert district between the Pacific Ocean and the western hills of the Andes mountains. Lima seems to scare off some tourists because of its status as one of the biggest cities in the Americas. Lima runs at a slower pace however than many South American metropolises. Its rhythm is more traditional and its people reflect a steadier, calmer constitution. Lima's unusually amenable inhabitants give the metropolis the feeling at times of a cluster of smaller towns.

Every part of Lima has its own unique atmosphere. Downtown Lima is crowded and busy, both modern and colonial at the same time. The Plaza Mayor is considered one of the most beautiful plazas in Latin America. Most neighbourhoods around the centre are friendly and green, with many small parks and an unmistakable colonial touch, especially Jesus Maria and Magdalena del Mar.

The other heart of Lima is the uptown shopping and business area, Miraflores. Here you can find stylish avenues and fancy beaches. Close to Miraflores is the romantic village like district of Barranco, overlooking the Pacific.

Accommodation: Jose Antonio Executive

09.03.17 Lima

(B)

This morning we have a half day city sightseeing tour of colonial and modern Lima.

Included are Lima's most imposing colonial churches and mansions such as the Government Palace, the Plaza Mayor, the City Hall and the Cathedral, including the 17th century San Francisco Monastery. The tour ends with a visit to the modern suburb of San Isidro where we will visit the pre-Inca Pyramid of Huaca Huallamarca and on-site museum before continuing to Miraflores, overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Accommodation: Jose Antonio Executive

10.03.17 Lima - Puerto Maldonado - Refugio Amazonas, Peru

(B/L/D)

This morning we will be met by our guide from the hotel foyer and transferred to Lima Airport for our flight to Puerto Maldonado.

Depart Lima at 9.00am on LA 2075, arriving in Puerto Maldonado at 12.10pm. Upon arrival in Puerto Maldonado Airport we drop off our excess luggage at the local office for safekeeping. We then transfer to the Tambopata River Port, entering the native community of Infierno. We then have a 2½ hour boat ride past Infierno and the Tambopata National Reserve's Checkpoint and into the buffer zone of this 1.3 million hectare conservation unit. The boats used for transport are 20 foot long, roofed canoes with outboard motors. What to bring:

- Good binoculars
- Camera gear
- Tight - weave, light coloured long cotton pants
- Long sleeved tight-weave, light coloured cotton shirts

- Ankle high hiking boots and sneakers
- Flashlight with batteries
- Sunblock & sunglasses
- Broad brimmed hat
- Rain suit or poncho
- Insect repellent
- Small denomination bills
- Small daypack

Luggage is hand carried at various stages of the trip for long distances. We strongly recommend you limit your weight to 15 kg.

A remote settlement even for Peru, Puerto Maldonado is a frontier colonist town with strong links to the Cusco region and a great fervour for bubbly jungle chicha music. With an economy based on gold panning and Brazil nut gathering from the rivers and forests of Madre de Dios, it has grown enormously over the last twenty years. From a small, laid-back outpost of civilisation to a busy market town, it has become the thriving, safe capital.

Refugio Amazonas is our 24 bedroom lodge opened in 2005 and built in a 200 hectare private reserve on the buffer zone of Tambopata National Reserve. The area provides excellent wildlife observation opportunities and a chance to immerse yourself in the local culture while staying in comfortable accommodation.

Upon arrival our lodge manager will welcome us and brief us with important navigation and security tips.

After dinner this evening we head out to the rivers edge and scan the shores in search of the red gleams of reflection from caiman eyes.

Note: There is a Tambopata National Reserve Fee applicable in the amount of US \$13 per person.

Accommodation: Refugio Amazonas Lodge

11.03.17 (B/L/D)

Refugio Amazonas

A 2 hour hike takes us to Sachavacayoc Lake. We will then paddle around the lake in a catamaran, searching for the resident family of five giant river otters, which are seen by 30% of people who visit the lake. We also have the chance to see other lakeside wildlife such as caiman, hoatzin and horned screamers. We hike out at dawn, when otters are typically active, and then hike back to the lodge.

For those who do not wish to take the long hike, you may prefer to visit Condorado Lake, which is a 30 minute hike from the lodge.

After an included lunch we visit a farm and ethnobotanical garden. Five minutes downriver from the lodge lies a farm owned and managed by charismatic Don Manuel, from the neighbouring community of Condorado. He grows a variety of popular and unknown Amazon crops. Just about every plant and tree we see has a purpose. He has also identified and cultivated many of the medicinal plants used in the region in a little backyard garden.

Later we have an opportunity to hike a few minutes from the lodge to visit a beautiful old growth patch of Brazil nut forest that has been harvested for decades, if not centuries, and where the precarious remains of a camp that was used 2 months of the year by Brazil nut gatherers can be seen. We will explain the entire process from collection and transportation to drying.

After dinner we have a night walk, when most of the mammals are active but rarely seen. We will likely see frogs with shapes and sounds as bizarre as their natural history.

Accommodation: Refugio Amazonas Lodge

12.03.17 Refugio Amazonas

(B/L/D)

At dawn we have a 15 minute boat ride and 60 minute walk from Refugio Amazonas to the parrot clay lick, where we will see dozens of parrots and parakeets descend on most clear mornings to ingest the clay on a river bank. Species such as dusky headed and cobalt winged parakeets descend at this clay lick.

Following this we visit a mammal clay lick, which is a twenty minute walk from Refugio Amazonas. Wild rain forest pigs show up in herds of 5 – 20 to eat clay in the late morning. The chances of spotting them are approximately 15%, but well worth the short hike. We may also see other wildlife including deer, guans and parakeets.

After lunch we have a 30 minute walk from Refugio Amazonas to visit the 25 metre scaffolding canopy tower. The tower has been built upon high ground to increase your view of the continuous primary forest extending out towards Tambopata National Reserve. A bannistered staircase running through the middle provides safe access to the platforms above. From here views of bird species can be seen, including toucans, macaws and raptors.

This evening following dinner we have a Tambopata National Reserve lecture. These nightly lectures are prepared by the staff of Refugio Amazonas and cover topics such as conversation threats, and projects in the Tambopata National Reserve.

Accommodation: Posada Amazonas Jungle Lodge

13.03.17 Refugio Amazonas - Puerto Maldonado - Cuzco - Sacred Valley, Peru

(B)

After breakfast we will be transferred by boat and road from the lodge to Puerto Maldonado. We collect our remaining luggage before heading to the airport in time for our flight.

Depart Puerto Maldonado at 12.55pm on LA 2076, arriving in Cuzco at 1.50pm. Upon arrival we are met and transferred to our hotel in the Sacred Valley.

Cuzco or Qosqo, was the capital of the Inca empire, one of the greatest planned societies the world has ever known, from the 11th to the early 16th century. Standing at 3310 metres above sea level, Cuzco has around 280,000 inhabitants, mostly descendants of the Quechua tribes. The city is remarkable for its many colonial churches, monasteries, convents and for its extensive Inca ruins. The heavy Incan influence can be seen on almost every street in the city centre with many remains of Inca walls, arches and doorways.

In the heart of the city is the Plaza de Armas, surrounded by colonial arcades and four churches. The cathedral from the early 17th century was built on the site of the Palace of the Viracocha. The cathedral is a fine example of colonial baroque art. Another church, the La Compania de Jesus was built on the site of the Palace of the Serpents (Amaru-cancha) and the interior is rich in murals, paintings and carved altars.

This evening meet your fellow travellers.

Accommodation: Hotel Boutique San Agustin Monasterio de la Recoleta

Note:

The cost for this Amazon pre-tour extension is \$1,485 per person twin share or \$2,330 single room.

Itinerary for Patagonia Post-Tour Extension

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

01.04.17 Buenos Aires – El Calafate

This morning we have a very early transfer from the hotel to the airport for our flight to El Calafate. Depart Buenos Aires at 4.15am on Latam Airlines flight LA 4434, arriving in El Calafate at 7.40am. Upon arrival in El Calafate we will be met and transferred to the hotel.

El Calafate is the centre of the tourist network in the deep south of mainland Argentinian Patagonia. It is one of the country's most visited tourist destinations. These offshoot attractions cluster around the tremendous bloated tuber of Lago Argentino, the greatest of all exclusively Argentinian lakes and the third biggest in all South America. Lago Argentino has a surface area of 1600 square kilometres and is so deep that its temperature remains an almost constant at 8°C year round. When the weather is brighter, the lake soaks up the light of the Patagonian sky to reflect a glorious hue of polarized blue. Most of the lake is surrounded by harsh, rolling steppe, but the scenery becomes more interesting around its western tendrils. Transitional scrub and southern beech woodland press up to its shores and the snow-capped mountains that fringe the Southern Patagonian Icecap rear up behind.

Accommodation: Sierra Nevada Hotel

02.04.17 El Calafate

(B)

Today we have a full day tour to Perito Moreno Glacier and Navigation Safari including National Park entrance fee. We depart from El Calafate bordering the southern arm of the Argentine Lake to get to Los Glaciares National Park. It is an 80km long bus ride, which means there will be lots of photo opportunities as the bus makes several stops. All the way a guide from Los Glaciares National Park will be with us, giving us all the information about the surroundings, the history and mysticism of this unique glacier. Perito Moreno Glacier is about 30,000 years old. Its surface is 192 square kilometres and the front wall is 5km long, with some of its peaks 80 metres in height. The deep blue base is almost as dark as the water that surrounds it. The deep silence is suddenly interrupted by the tremendous noise of huge pieces of ice that crack from the glacier and fall into the lake to float on the Canal de los Tempanos (Icebergs Channel). The continuous advance of the glacier eventually separates this channel from the rest of the Lake. As the channel is its only communication with the rest of the lakes in the area, the lake grows to reach over 30 metres above its normal level and floods the surrounding areas. Such pressure opens a tunnel in the ice wall forming an arch that eventually collapses in the world famous 'breaking of the glacier'. This spectacle used to take place every 4 years but due to the planet heating it hasn't happened in the last 10 years. In order to get a closer look at this majestic glacier, your boat departs from port Bajo de las Sombras, inside the National Park and sails along Brazo Chico on Argentino Lake toward the northern wall of the Perito Moreno Glacier. For almost an hour we will sail along the 70m wall getting an amazing view of the falling ice and a superb perspective of the entire glacier. Late in the afternoon we will return to the hotel in El Calafate.

Accommodation: Sierra Nevada Hotel

03.04.17 El Calafate – Puerto Natales

(B)

Today we will be met by our driver at the hotel foyer and transferred to El Calafate bus

terminal for our trip to Puerto Natales. The Chilean city of Puerto Natales, capital of the Puerto Natales district is located 362km from El Calafate, the last city in Argentina. Founded in 1911, Puerto Natales has a population of around 19,000 inhabitants. It is the capital city of the province of Ultima Esperanza and it is situated on the headland of a mild slope. It is the main access to beautiful landscapes such as the worldwide famous Torres del Paine National Park, 'Cueva del Milodon' Natural Monument and Los Glaciares National Park in Argentina. In winter, the main glaciers located in 'Canal de las Montanas' (Mountains Channel). Puerto Natales, whose name derives from the Latin term 'natalis' meaning 'birth' is located near the sea inlet called Senoret Channel, between Almirante Montt Gulf in the south and the Ultima Esperanza ('Last Hope') Fjord in the north. The latter was named by its discoverer, Juan de Ladrillero, who in 1557, was desperately trying to find the western exit of the Strait of Magellan. It was colonized by Chileans coming from the magical island of Chiloé who contributed with their labour to the development of cattle raising. This activity was initiated mostly by German and English colonists, who with great persistence, turned Patagonia into one of the main stockbreeding production and exporting areas in the world until the end of the seventies. The city has many cafes, restaurants and a casino, the southernmost in the world. It also has small and picturesque stores, a historical museum and many more tempting activities.
Accommodation: Hotel IF Patagonia

04.04.17 Puerto Natales – Torres del Paine National Park – Puerto Natales

(B/L)

Today we have a full day visit to Torres del Paine National Park and Milodon Cave. At Torres del Paine National Park we admire the wonderful flora and fauna and the beauty of the lakes against the imposing backdrop of the Andes Mountains. The tour includes a visit to the famous Milodon Cave with a boxed lunch and entrance fees for Milodon Cave and Paine National Park. Without a doubt, Paine Towers is one of the most spectacular mountain areas on earth. In the centre of the park is a granite massif from which rise the Torres (Towers) and the Cuernos (Horns) of Paine, oddly shaped peaks of over 2,600 metres. There are 15 peaks in the park above 2,000 metres, the highest of which is Cerro Paine Grande. The valleys are filled with beautiful lakes and the enormous Campo de Hielo Sur Icecap gives the park four main glaciers; Grey, Dickson, Zapata and Tyndall. Two other glaciers descend from the west side of the central massif. There is an abundance of wildlife in the park due to a micro-climate especially favourable to plants and wildlife. There are 105 species of birds including 18 species of waterfowl and 11 birds of prey. Particularly noteworthy are condors (which are quite common), black-necked swans, rheas, kelp geese, ibis, flamingos and austral parrots. There are also 25 species of mammals including guanacos, hares, foxes, huemules (a species of deer), pumas and skunk.

Accommodation: Hotel IF Patagonia

05.04.17 Puerto Natales – Punta Arenas - Santiago

(B)

We will be met by our driver and transferred to the bus terminal for a scheduled bus transfer to Punta Arenas (approximate travel time is 3 hours). Upon arrival in Punta Arenas Bus Terminal we will be met and transferred to the hotel.

Accommodation: Plaza Hotel

06.04.17 Punta Arenas – Santiago

(B)

Today we are met in our hotel foyer and transferred to the airport.

Depart Punta Arenas at 10.45am on flight LA 280, arriving in Santiago de Chile at 3.15pm.

07.04.17 Santiago de Chile – Sydney

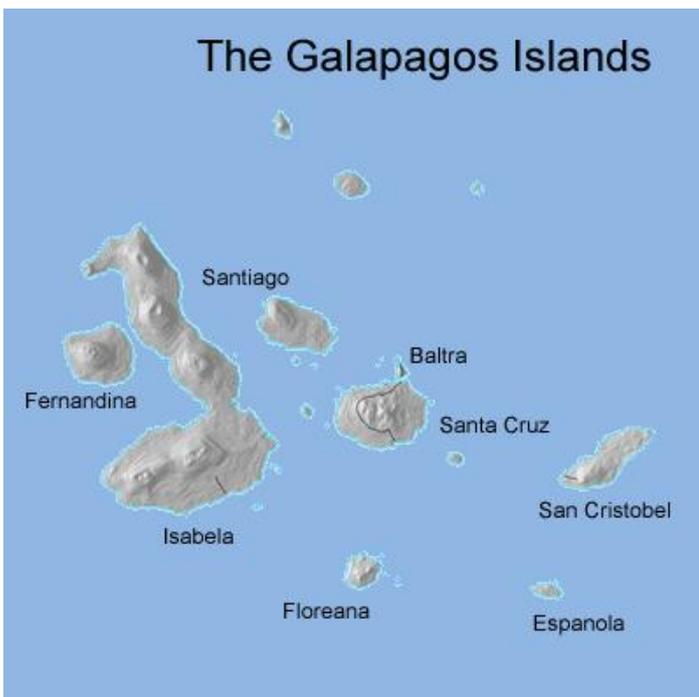
Depart Santiago de Chile at 1.05am on flight LA 801, arriving in Sydney at 9.15am the following day (this flight goes via Auckland).

08.04.17 Sydney – Melbourne & Brisbane

Melbourne passengers depart Sydney at 12.00 midday on flight QF 431, arriving in Melbourne at 1.35pm.

Brisbane passengers depart Sydney at 12.05pm on flight QF 524, arriving in Brisbane at 1.35pm.

Note: The cost for this Patagonia post-tour extension is \$2,194 per person twin share or \$3,319 single room.



Conditions for Macleay Valley Travel's Essence of South America Tour

Deposits and Payments - A non-refundable deposit of \$600 per person is payable within 7 days of booking. If you are doing the pre-tour Galapagos Islands extension, there is an additional deposit of \$750 per person. These deposits are not refundable should you later cancel. The balance is payable in full 13 weeks prior to departure.

Refunds and Cancellations - Cancellations after final payment will result in a refund limited to whatever we can recoup from the airline.

Insurance - Adequate travel insurance is essential. We can arrange this for you if desired. Macleay Valley Travel offers Suresave Travel Insurance. Please note that we can only process your travel insurance when we have received full payment for the insurance and the signed Suresave Travel Insurance application form, located on the last page of the Suresave Travel Insurance information booklet. Until this time the travel insurance cannot be processed and will not be valid. Macleay Valley Travel will bear no responsibility for any consequences that may occur as a result of an incomplete insurance application.

Yellow Fever - You will need to have a Yellow Fever injection before departure and you will need to take the yellow card with you when travelling.

Passports - All travellers require a current passport with at least 6 months left on it at the end of the tour. Non-Australian passport holders require a re-entry visa for Australia. A Brazilian visa is required at a cost of \$216 plus \$30 processing fee. The Brazilian Consulate requires a minimum of 30 working days to process a visa application, not including postage time. To obtain your Brazilian visa the Consulate requires a copy of a current bank statement covering at least one month from a savings or everyday account which has a minimum of \$2,500. A Chilean visa reciprocity visa fee applies for Australian passport holders and must be paid for locally on arrival into Chile, at a cost of \$117 USD cash. An Argentinean visa reciprocity fee is also required and needs to be completed online prior to entering Argentina at a cost of \$100 USD. Payment for this can only be made by credit card. Please note that these prices are not included in the tour price and conditions for these visas & fees imposed by the respective governments of each country are subject to change.

Basic Tour Price and Taxes - Air taxes and fuel levies are included in the basic tour price if the tour is paid in full on or before the due date on the final invoice. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to charge for any increase in air taxes and fuel levies if the tour is not paid in full by the due date.

Not Included in the Cost - All items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, drinks, excess baggage, tips, meals, (except those specified in the itinerary), travel insurance etc. Similarly, credit card payments can only be accepted if 2% is added to the price to help defray the heavy merchant fees charged to us by the credit card companies. There is a 3% surcharge for Diners Club.

The following departure taxes are payable direct at Buenos Aires \$18 USD, La Paz \$28 USD, Rio de Janeiro \$5 USD, Argentina approx \$8.50 USD. **** Please note that these taxes are subject to change****

Tipping - In South America tips often represent a substantial part of a workers earnings as wages are generally low. We suggest USD \$6 per person, per day for the tour guides and USD \$3 per person, per day for the drivers.

Galapagos Islands Extension - If you are doing the pre-tour Galapagos extension, there is an admission fee to the Galapagos National Park of USD \$100 per person and must be paid in cash on arrival. A Galapagos National Institute Migration Control Card (INGALA) must be paid on arrival at a cost of USD \$10 per person. These amounts are subject to change and cannot be prepaid.

Breakaway Fee - All fully inclusive prices are based on group travel and any deviation from the set itinerary will incur a breakaway fee.

Booking through other Agents - As we keep the cost of our tours as low as possible, there is insufficient margin for us to be able to pay commission to other travel agents, so some bookings can only be accepted if the client pays the other agent's commission.

Accreditation - Macleay Valley Travel is a fully accredited travel agency under the AFTA (Australian Federation of Travel Agents) ATAS - AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme. As such, you are assured of a consumer focused and quality assured business, ensuring professional conduct and ethical business practices. We are happy for any prospective traveller with us to check us out with your local Consumer Affairs (Fair Trading) department.

Twin Share Bookings - If you do not have a travel partner, but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try and assign you with another traveller but this is not guaranteed. We assign passengers by their gender, on a first come, first served basis and do not assign twin share passengers according to their age, profession, interests etc. There are risks with sharing a room with a person you do not know, and Macleay Valley Travel accepts no responsibility if you are incompatible with your assigned room mate. Additionally, if you are assigned a travelling companion to share with and they cancel off the tour prior to making the final payment, then you will either be required to pay the single room supplement or we will try our best to assign you with another twin share passenger, if one is available.

Limitation of Liability - As Macleay Valley Travel acts only as agent for the Airlines, Hotels, Coach Companies etc., providing accommodation, transportation and other services, Macleay Valley Travel shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property including baggage arising out of or connection with any transportation, accommodation or other services, or resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of Government or other authorities, de jure or de facto wars, whether declared or not, hostilities, civil disturbances, strikes, riots, thefts, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations caused by changes in schedules or itinerary, or over bookings or defaults or for any causes beyond Macleay Valley Travel's control or any loss or damage resulting from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents and neither Macleay Valley Travel, and its servants or employees shall be or become liable or responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the tour member as a result of the foregoing causes. Additionally you must meet the entry requirements for each country you visit. Macleay Valley Travel will not be liable if you are denied entry to a country for any reason, including a past criminal history. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to decline bookings made for any group tour. Any tour booking confirmation is conditional, contingent on our view of the ability of a person to be able to participate in a tour without the likelihood of conflict between members of a tour whether perceived or actual.

Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to modify the itinerary or the accommodation if circumstances make this necessary, provided that the amended itinerary is of equal value or greater value than that of the original program.

MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL - BOOKING FORM

PLEASE PRINT DETAILS CLEARLY IN BLOCK LETTERS AND ALSO

A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PASSPORT MUST BE SENT WITH BOOKING FORM

Name of Tour : _____ Departure Date: _____

Passenger 1 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Passenger 2 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Postal Address: _____

_____ **PostCode** _____ **Email** _____

Telephone / Fax Number: _____ **Mobile** _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Nationality: _____

Passport Nationality _____

(Passport must have 6 months validity from the time of tour completion)

Single room / Twin beds / Double bed: (Room type is subject to availability)

Circle which airport you wish to depart from: SYDNEY / MELBOURNE / BRISBANE

Do you have any existing medical conditions?: _____

Special Dietary Requests: _____

Optional Extensions: _____

Would you like receive details of our travel insurance?: YES / NO (Please Circle)

In case of emergency, please notify :

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please return this sheet with your non-refundable deposit of \$600 per person.

DECLARATION. I have read and understand fully the booking conditions and I accept them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of passport is required to verify spelling of name; If this is not provided and the information we have for the airline is incorrect and ticket is issued, then the airline will charge a reissue fee.