

Patagonia Yoga Retreat with Krista Shirley

Additional Information

What To Bring

- Hiking boots
- Breathable & warm clothing
- Water & wind proof jacket
- Thermal clothes
- Water Bottle
- Flashlight
- Pocket knife
- Pair of flip flops/havaianas
- Personal medication (very important)
- Earmuffs (optional)
- Walking shoes (optional)
- Walking poles (optional), if bad knees, highly recommended

Visas

As of 2018, Chile & Argentina do not require a tourist visa or reciprocity fee to any travelers from Europe, United States, Australia, New Zealand, or Canada.

However, it is your own responsibility to visit the relevant consular website of the countries you'll be visiting for more detailed and up-to-date visa information. If a tourist visa is needed, we highly recommend you obtain your visa in advance.

Valuables

It's highly recommended to avoid bringing unnecessary valuables (i.e. expensive jewelry). All hotels offer a safe box, either in each room or at the front desk where you can store your valuables and original passport. When walking around, just take a copy of your passport.

Tipping

Tipping in South America is not mandatory but it is expected. However, your showing gratitude can make a big difference to employed people. To make tipping easier, bring small bills in the local currency.

Below is a list of suggested tips for the staff involved on your Patagonia trip.

- In restaurants, 10% of your total bill
- Local guides — Full day tour: USD \$40-50; Half day tour: USD \$20-30
- Local drivers — Full day tour: USD \$20-30; Half day tour: USD \$10-20; Transfer only: USD \$5

Food Budget

For days where meals are not included, we suggest you bring roughly USD \$40-50/day.

Water

Avoid drinking running tap water.

In order to protect the environment, it's best to bring a stainless steel water bottle to be refilled. Some hotels may have water pitchers at breakfast; if this is the case, you can refill your bottle from those pitchers. To avoid the accumulation of plastic, we suggest that you buy a big bottle of water to refill your personal water bottle. If you go on a hiking excursion, along the trails you'll find fresh water streams from where you can refill your water bottle.

Money

Some establishments/stores/restaurants do not accept credit cards. It's best to bring cash in U.S. dollars with you. By bringing cash, you will also avoid paying local Bank ATM fees which can charge upwards to USD \$9-10 for each withdrawal. U.S. dollars can be changed into local currency on your arrival day.

Where can I exchange money?

Buenos Aires has higher exchange rate for foreign currency. Along Florida Street in downtown, there are plenty official money exchange houses. Original passports are required to exchange foreign currency into local currency. You can identify them by their sign "CAMBIO/EXCHANGE".

In EL Calafate, there are no official money exchange places. However, there are some restaurants or small businesses that exchange cash, such as Casimiro Biguá Restaurant located on Av. del Libertador Gral. San Martín 963.

For Torres del Paine, there is no need to change dollars into the local currency (Chilean pesos), as credit cards and cash in American dollars are accepted.

Safety

All cities that you will be traveling through on this tour are very safe. If you do find time to explore on your own, below are some key precautions to take:

1. Argentinean Patagonia: Request a taxi service through the hotel staff. EASY TAXI and UBER are still fighting a long battle with the Argentinean authorities to operate in the country. However, Uber is available in major cities.

Chilean Patagonia: Uber operates freely in the following cities: Iquique, La Serena - Coquimbo, Valparaíso, Metropolitana (Santiago), Concepción, Temuco, Puerto Montt, Arica, Calama, Antofagasta, Copiapó, Ovalle, Rancagua, Talca, Valdivia, Osorno and Punta Arenas.

2. Wear your backpack/bag to the front when walking through bigger crowds.
3. Do not carry your wallet in the back pocket of your trousers.
4. Avoid wearing fancy jewelry.
5. Leave original documents, credit cards in the hotel safe box, taking the bare minimum of cash with you.
6. A neck/waist money belt can be very handy to keep cash hidden.
7. In restaurant/cafes, do not hang your bag/backpack on the arm of the chairs or leave it sitting on the floor.

8. Always take note of the serial numbers of your larger bills (ie: 100, 200, 500 and 1000 Argentinean Pesos; 5000, 10.000 and 20.000 Chilean Pesos) before paying taxi drivers and small shops. There have been a few cases where travelers were told their bills were fake. By taking note of the serial numbers before use, you stand a better chance of getting your money back.

9. At night, always walk on well-lit streets.

10. Withdraw cash only during the day and from ATMs located inside banks or guarded ATMs.

11. Cover the ATM's keyboard with one hand when typing your pin number.

12. Do not get into a car by someone's invitation, even if it's a police car.

Transportation

Buenos Aires radio-taxi system works with taximeters and is represented by black and yellow vehicles. We recommend ordering a taxi through the hotel staff.

However, you can always hail one from the street or use the Uber app.

In El Calafate, taxis are called Remises, and they are located at specific stations around the city. To take a ride, walk to a specific station or give them a call. These Remises also work with taximeters. Avoid paying with large bills. If smaller notes are not available, pay careful attention to the number that stretches across the top right corner of every bill before handing it over to the driver. Some Buenos Aires taxi drivers tend to swap your note for a fake one. Nevertheless, if you have taken note of the bill's number, you'll have a better chance of getting your money back. Large notes come in 100, 200, 500 and 1000 pesos denominations.

