



CHEESEMAN'S ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Chile

Panoramic Patagonia

February 12 to 24, 2022



Puma
© Claudio Vidal

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Patagonia, stretching over southern Chile and Argentina, is a sparsely populated, arid region with superb wildlife viewing opportunities. This breathtaking area encompasses the Andes Mountains and presents an image that is unmistakably South American. You'll begin your adventure taking in the beautiful vistas of Torres del Paine and then explore the most southerly Chilean islands. Visit a colony of king penguins, view soaring Andean condors, and search for guanaco herds roaming the plains of Torres del Paine. Spend two days tracking female pumas that are busy feeding their cubs. Soak up majestic scenery while appreciating the diversity of animals Patagonia has to offer.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Track female pumas while they search for food and care for their young.
- Explore a king penguin colony in beautiful Tierra del Fuego.
- Experience the astounding wingspan of an Andean condor as it soars above you.

LEADER: Claudio Vidal.

DAYS: 13 days total, including estimated travel time.

GROUP SIZE: 8.

COST: \$7,800 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Porvenir to Punta Arenas), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 4.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Feb 12	Travel to Punta Arenas, Chile.		
Feb 13	Arrive in Punta Arenas and enjoy a welcome dinner together.	Hotel Cabo de Hornos, Punta Arenas	D
Feb 14	Drive to Torres del Paine and enjoy an afternoon excursion in park.		B, L, D
Feb 15	Take in the views of the spectacular Paine towers and great wildlife in eastern Torres del Paine National Park.	Estancia Cerro Guido, Torres del Paine	B, L, D
Feb 16–17	Puma tracking on a private ranch located at the eastern border of Torres del Paine National Park.		
Feb 18	Birding and photography en route to Puerto Natales.	Hotel Remota, Puerto Natales	B, L, D
Feb 19	Explore Cerro Benitez in search of Andean condors.		
Feb 20	Drive to Punta Arenas and visit Olga Teresa Ranch for Andean condor roosting sites.	Hotel Cabo de Hornos, Punta Arenas	B, L, D
Feb 21	Take a Ferry to Tierra del Fuego Island to visit a king penguin colony.	Hostería Yendegaia, Porvenir	B, L, D
Feb 22	Spend the day exploring Tierra del Fuego.		
Feb 23	Morning in Tierra del Fuego then fly to Punta Arenas and fly home.		B
Feb 24	Arrive home.		

LEADER



Claudio Vidal

Claudio is a native Chilean, a leading ornithologist, and co-author of more than 20 books on wildlife. An avid bird watcher from the age of 12, he now leads tours throughout the region, sharing his expertise about seabirds and marine mammals of the Humboldt Current, Patagonia, and Antarctica. Additionally, his passion for botany has led him to document wildflowers of the desert and Mediterranean regions of the world. He is easygoing, passionate about his work, and eager to share his knowledge with you.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Feb 12 ~ Travel to Punta Arenas, Chile

Feb 13 ~ Arrive in Punta Arenas

Arrive in Punta Arenas, Chile. Our local agent will transfer you from the airport to the hotel. If you would like to arrive earlier, we can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra nights.

Feb 14 ~ Drive to Torres del Paine National Park

Head North in the morning to Torres del Paine National Park, with stops along the way for wildlife viewing. Enjoy an afternoon excursion through the park before your full day exploring the eastern and western sections.

Feb 15 ~ Torres del Paine National Park

On the east side of Torres del Paine National Park, which is the leeward side, the weather is usually quite sunny and clear. You'll walk beside the impressive Towers of Paine granitic formations with wild guanacos roaming in the foreground.

At the eastern corner of Sarmiento Lake, you will reach a location that commands the most incredible views of the pinnacle peaks of Las Torres, the towers, from which the park takes its name. As you move around the park, you'll encounter herds of guanaco, lesser rhea, and the impressive Andean condor soaring above. On the eastern side, enjoy the views of one of the impressive waterfalls of Paine River and, if it is clear, the fabulous granite columns of the Paine Massif from Laguna Amarga.

Feb 16–17 ~ Puma tracking

You will have an experienced tracker on private land adjacent to Torres del Paine National Park to track female pumas. During this time of year female pumas are continually hunting to provide food for their almost fully-grown cubs. They are active during the day, at night, and during the twilight hours. Seeing a female puma and her cubs against the magnificent mountain backdrop and glorious skies is one of the most impressive wildlife spectacles.

Feb 18 ~ Scenic drive to Puerto Natales

You'll have a scenic drive that allows time for plenty of photography stops from Torres del Paine to Puerto Natales.

Feb 19 ~ Cerro Benitez in search of Andean condors

Andean condors are abundant in the Cerro Benitez region, as they have communal roosting sites on the surrounding cliffs. Seeing them soar right above you is quite a remarkable experience as they are the world's largest member of the vulture family with a 10-ft wingspan.

With a landscape of rolling hills, moorland, and lakes you will have the chance to see unique species of birds like the very localized ruddy-headed goose, the handsome chocolate-vented tyrant, long-tailed meadowlark, and Patagonian yellow-finch. The scrubby roadside vegetation provides concealment for a few species of skulking passerines, such as austral canastero. This area is prime to see rails, seedsnipes, and other lovely waders, such as rufous-chested plover and tawny-throated dotterel.

Feb 20 ~ Olga Teresa Ranch for condor roosts

Olga Teresa Ranch boasts the largest concentration of Andean condor roosts. The steep cliff sides host as

many as 100 birds with excellent access for viewing and photography. Olga Teresa Ranch is a protected space for these beautiful birds, as well as an important research site.

Feb 21 ~ King penguins on Tierra del Fuego Island

Take a ferry across the Straits of Magellan to Useless Bay, Tierra del Fuego Island to visit a colony of approximately 100 king penguins, located at a small river mouth near the Straits of Magellan. This private nature reserve attracts the penguins with the bounty of food in the surrounding sea and aims to preserve the small numbers that breed and call it home year-round.

The vegetation is mainly wind-swept dwarfed bush and tussock grass, and you may spot common seabirds, especially southern giant-petrel plus kelp and dolphin gulls. Look for landbirds along the shore, such as dark-bellied and gray-flanked cinclodes. Other common species you may see include upland geese plus chimango and southern caracaras.

Feb 22 ~ Tierra del Fuego Island

Tierra del Fuego Island is dominated by several of the most unique Patagonian habitats, especially *Nothofagus* or southern beech forest and Patagonian steppe. Aquatic habitats, including lakes, ponds, rivers, and rocky seashore add to the excitingly distinct subantarctic scene.

The avifauna of the southern-most region of Chile also has a distinct subantarctic influence. Typical birds found on the shore and on open water at this latitude include black-faced ibis, flightless steamer-duck, crested duck, ashy-headed and kelp geese, Magellanic oystercatcher, and Chilean skua. Other attractions in the area include torrent duck, austral parakeet, white-throated caracara, and Magellanic tapaculo.

You'll have the chance to experience the typical Tierra del Fuego steppe along the shoreline of small lakes. Perhaps you'll find the rare Magellanic plover, a strange southern wader that looks almost dove-like, as it picks away at the muddy edges. These birds frequently 'paddle' with their feet to disturb the animal life in the mud, a habit that often draws attention to them! Other birds that thrive in this windy terrain are least seedsnipe, short-billed miner, and correndera pipit.

Feb 23 ~ Fly from Porvenir to Punta Arenas

Spend the morning on Tierra del Fuego Island then take an afternoon flight from Porvenir to Punta Arenas to connect with your flight home.

Feb 24 ~ Arrive home

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$7,800
Single Supplement	\$1,555

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Porvenir to Punta Arenas), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$500
Second	March 1, 2021	\$1,000
Final	September 15, 2021	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another trip if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- One-way flight from Porvenir to Punta Arenas.
- Accommodations for the nights of February 13 through February 22.
- Meals from dinner on February 13 through breakfast on February 23.
- Transfers from Punta Arenas Airport to Hotel Cabo de Hornos, regardless of arrival day, and to the Porvenir Airport on February 23.
- Puma tracker on February 16 and February 17.
- Ferry fare to Tierra del Fuego on February 21.
- Bottled water.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Airfare is approximately \$1,500 to \$2,500 between the US and Punta Arenas, Chile, depending on origin.
- Passport and visa fees.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we will add a gratuity of \$225 per participant (\$25 per participant per day for February 14 to February 22 with our local guides) to your final payment.
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance and trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

SIGN-UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

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Website: www.cheesemans.com

WhatsApp: (408) 741-5330 | Skype: CheesemansEcologySafaris

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

The extremes of climate match each change of scenery. Because February is approaching late summer in Chile, it's a good time to visit. You'll mainly be in the chillier southern region so dress in layers, including a waterproof outer layer to guard against windy or cold conditions. Torres del Paine is notorious for its unpredictable weather conditions, but average temperatures range from lows in the mid-40s°F (7°C) to highs in the lower-50s°F (11°C).

Fitness Level

Most walks are short distances and around less than three hours at a slow pace, allowing for observation and photography. Most walking is on relatively level ground, but occasionally you may take short, steep walks to look for animals.

Flights

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Punta Arenas, Chile (PUQ) by 7:00pm on February 13 in time for dinner. Depart from Punta Arenas, Chile (PUQ) after 3:00pm on February 23.

Flights we book for you: The one-way flight from Porvenir to Punta Arenas is included in the trip cost.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on

your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project (www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/).