

Southern Patagonian Ice Field Expedition

The Southern Patagonian Ice Field represents the third biggest mass of ice in the world after the Antarctica and Greenland sheets .

In this expedition we will traverse part of the ice field from Marconi pass to Paso del Viento exploring one of the unique landscapes of the world, Circo de Los Altares.

Scenic views of the west face of Fitz Roy and Cerro Torre combined with the massive extension of ice and the tough Patagonian weather conditions makes this a great experience.



Recommended month: October to January

Duration : 7 days

Pax: 2 to 6

Difficulty: moderate

Included: 1 IFMG mountain guide, 1 Guide assistant, expedition meals, tent, GPS, communication: VHF and satellite, technical gear (helmet, harness, crampons, carabiners , ice axes), Transfer to Rio electrico.

Not included : personal gear

IMPORTANT:

Participants do need previous experience in camping and multi-day treks and need to be able to carry between 20 and 25 kilograms pack. All group members carry their own gear as well as shared gear as tents, cooking equipment, etc.

The proposed itinerary can be changed due to weather conditions or other forced situations that put in risk the group security. The guides have the authority to change the itinerary programmed according to their criteria. You can be sure the changes have two main objectives: to maximize security and succeed with the program. And they are based on our guides' knowledge and experience.

Program:

One the previous day of departing we will have a meeting to explain the program detail and to make gear checking.

Day 1: Rio electrico/ Playita Camp.

We will take a private transfer to the bridge over Eléctrico River, 15 Km northwest of El Chaltén, and the start point of our trek towards the base of Marconi Glacier.

After 2 hours walk on a well-marked path through a forest we will arrive to Piedra del Fraile campsite. From there we will follow the southern shore of Lake Eléctrico, crossing moraines and the Pollone river.

Walking distance: 12 Km (5 hours).
Elevation gain: 50 mts.

Day 2: Playita Camp/Marconi pass .

This is one of the hardest days of the expedition. After a 20 minutes walk from La Playita we will cross the Marconi river with a zip line allowing us to head up towards laguna de los 14 valley.

We will have to make some scrambling with ropes before we reach the glacier on the upper section. From there we will have to walk on ice and snow for at least 2 more hours to et to the Marconi pass where we will set up our second camp.

Walking distance: 10 Km (8-10 hours).
Elevation gain: 1100 mts.

Day 3: Marconi pass/ Circo de los Altares.

We will start traversing south on the ice field. The terrain is mostly flat but we need to be rope up due to we will be the hole day on glacier cover with snow.

After a long day hiking on the ice, we'll reach the famous "Circo De Los Altares", at the foot of the mythic Cerro Torre's West face. Here, we will set up our camp on the ice.

Walking distance: 12 Km. (6/7hs. Hours)
Elevation gain: 50 mts. - 100 mts. descent

Day 4: Circo de los Altares/ Esquies Camp.

This is the last day on the ice field. We will have still to walk 3 more hours on ice to get to the Viedma side moraine.

After this the terrain turns difficult due to the unstable rocks until we reach the more marked path that

will lead us to Laguna Esquies camp.

Walking distance: 12 Km. (6-7 hours)

Elevation gain: 250 mts descent and 250 mts ascent at the end of the day.

Day 5: *Esquies Camp/ Paso del Viento/ Toro Camp.*

We have a 2 hours climb on a marked trail to Paso del Viento. From the pass we will have outstanding views of the Toro valley, Cerro Minitorre and Cerro Grande. A 900 meters descent on a varied terrain (scree, ice and grass) will lead us to Rio Tunel. We will cross it using a zip line. From there we walk the last hour to Toro campsite.

Walking distance: 12 Km. (6-7 hours)

Elevation gain: 400 mts ascent and 900 mts descent.

Day 6: *Toro Camp/ El Chaltén.*

Last day is an easy hike back to el Chalten on a well-marked trail.

Walking distance: 14 Km. (5 hours)

Elevation gain: 500 mts ascent and 500 mts descent.

Day 7: *Weather day.*

Can be used as an extra day in case of bad weather or resting day in case of needed.