



# Argentinian Patagonia

4 nights exploring cosmopolitan Buenos Aires and Los Glaciares National Park. Pre-cruise itinerary 9229.



Los Glaciares National Park



Tango Dancers in La Boca

Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999, Los Glaciares National Park is a wonderland of glacial ice, which pushes its way down from the Andean Mountains and through Lake Argentino. In addition to their truly stunning size, the glaciers are unique for their accessibility. Because they loom just off the shores of the lake, the vast tracts of ice can be viewed from incredibly short distances. The glaciers can be seen even more closely during a boat cruise along their colossal walls. In addition to seeing the glaciers from both these perspectives, you will have the chance to strap on crampons and follow an expert guide for a trek on the thick ice.

While the glaciers are reason enough to join this exciting program, other treats, including a visit to a Patagonian ranch and a cruise of the Tigre Delta, make this four-night adventure a must for anyone who wants to experience the great South American outdoors.

## **Wednesday, December 16, 2009: Buenos Aires**

Welcome to Buenos Aires! On arrival, transfer from the airport to your hotel for an early check in and a light lunch. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure before savoring a delicious dinner and being dazzled by a Tango show. Later, retire for the night, looking forward to discovering a slice of Patagonian life tomorrow.

Hotel Accommodations: **Park Hyatt**

Meals: **Lunch, Dinner**

## **Thursday, December 17, 2009: Buenos Aires/El Calafate**

Following breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight to El Calafate. On arrival, travel to your comfortable hotel.

Depending on your arrival time, you may have the chance to visit El Galpon Ranch, where you will be warmly greeted and offered homemade bread, jams and cookies, served with coffee and tea. Refreshed, begin a guided walk along the paths that lead to the lagoon, home to interesting birds and other wildlife. For insights into the way of life on a Patagonian ranch, watch the Kelpie dogs nimbly muster the flock from the pastures to the antique shearing shed. At the ranch, extra hands – and paws – are always appreciated! Witness the expert shearing of sheep before sitting down for dinner, featuring BBQ lamb, fresh salads and homemade desserts.

At the conclusion of your ranch experience, return to your hotel and enjoy your overnight stay.

Hotel Accommodations: **Hotel Posada Los Alamos**

Meals: **Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner**

## **Friday, December 18, 2009: El Calafate/Puerto Banderas/Upsala Glacier**

A buffet breakfast at your hotel fuels you for your full day at the glaciers of Onelli and Upsala. Anticipation mounts as you arrive in Puerto Banderas, located approximately 30 miles from El Calafate. Boarding a motor launch, sail across Lake Argentino to Bahia Onelli, or Onelli Bay. Disembark and enjoy a pleasant walk through the woods to the lagoon,

where you will board another motor launch that will take you to the enormous walls of Upsala Glacier. Should weather conditions prohibit your cruise to Upsala, you will see the impressive Spegazzini Glacier.

About midway during your adventures, a box lunch will be served.

It has been an exciting day of sightseeing. But this is just the beginning, as magnificent Perito Moreno Glacier is on the docket for tomorrow.

Hotel Accommodations: **Hotel Posada Los Alamos**

Meals: **Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner**

### **Saturday, December 19, 2009: El Calafate/Perito Moreno Glacier/Buenos Aires**

A buffet breakfast at the hotel begins today's adventures, which take you to the spectacular Perito Moreno Glacier. Situated off the shores of Lago Argentino, the glacier is one of the few in the world that is still advancing. Another feature that makes the glacier unique is its location on a narrow part of the lake, giving visitors the chance to stand on shore for astounding, up-close views. People have been known to spend hours here, gazing at the glacier's varied hues of white, blue and grey, and listening to the creaks and groans of the ice. Gigantic blocks as tall as a 15-story building regularly break off the glacier face and crash into the turquoise waters below, causing a dramatic crash and enormous waves. It is truly a sight to be seen.

Your own glacier experience begins as you make your way to the Bajo de Las Sombras Bay, where you will board a boat for the crossing to Brazo Rico, which affords you a 20-minute sail in front of the glacier.

Landing on the opposite shore, take the 30-minute walk to reach the glacier itself. Equipped with crampons, you will trek on its icy surface, enjoying a thrilling, intimate look at the glacier's peaks, towers, luminous blue streaks and small lagoons. Your easy glacier walk, headed by expert guides, will give you approximately 90 minutes on the ice.

After your glacier trek, take the 30-minute walk through the Magellanic forest to a welcoming shelter. Amid this outdoorsy setting you will enjoy a box lunch before continuing your glacier adventures. Re-boarding your boat, return to your original docking location and then head to the Perito Moreno balconies, where you will marvel at a full view of the glacier.

While it is not terribly strenuous, the glacier trek does involve walking on the ice for about an hour and a half. Should you prefer not to participate in the glacier walk, you may choose instead to be escorted directly to the viewing balconies, where you will enjoy a three-course lunch at the restaurant located at the National Park. This option also affords you the opportunity to join a cruise past Perito Moreno's north wall, where you will spot impressive ruptures in the vertical surface. Navigating a safe distance from the glacial wall, the boat will travel along Perito Moreno's entire length. During the course of an hour, you will have the privilege of witnessing the spectacle of centuries-old slabs of ice breaking away from the wall and plunging into the water with a resonating boom.

Your memorable time at the glaciers of South America is drawing to a close. Return to El Calafate and transfer to the airport for your flight to Buenos Aires. Depending on flight schedules, your dinner this evening will be in El Calafate, in Buenos Aires or a boxed meal.

Hotel Accommodations: **Park Hyatt**

Meals: **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

### **Sunday, December 20, 2009: Buenos Aires**

This morning, relax over breakfast and head out for your half-day excursion to the Tigre Delta, a 540-square-mile area boasting islands, inlets, channels, rivers and backwaters that create a sub-tropical getaway for locals and visitors alike. Indeed, the hustle and bustle of the city will seem far away as your private motor launch glides along the delta's waterways. Views of islands, fashionable riverside suburbs, turn-of-the-century stone mansions, English cottages, Italian villas, brightly painted wooden shacks, yacht clubs and a flotilla of watercraft are sure to keep your camera shutter snapping.

Looking forward to your cruise on the high seas, transfer to the pier to embark your Crystal ship.

Meals: **Breakfast**

**\$5,899.00 per person double occupancy ♦**

**\$6,999.00 per person single occupancy ♦**

### **\*\*\*Important Air Information for Cruise-Only Guests:**

This pre-cruise program starts in **Buenos Aires, Argentina**. Cruise-only guests should schedule flights arriving **Ezeiza International Airport (EZE)** on **December 20th/200** at approximately **10:00am**. Please fax your flight information to Crystal Cruises Land Programs Department fax 310 286 2412 at least 30 days prior to departure.

### **Important Visa/Vaccination Information**

Guests holding United States passports will NOT require a visa for Argentina. Citizens of other countries, for whom requirements may vary, should contact their nearest embassy or visa service. Please contact your travel agent or visa service for applications. No vaccination certificate is required to enter Argentina.

## Luggage Restrictions

Luggage for domestic flights is limited to **one piece** per person, not to exceed 33 lbs. Additional luggage will be secured at your hotel.

**Note:** The program of sights visited will be flexible as due to many circumstances, it is not possible to schedule an exact itinerary. To fully appreciate these magnificent sites, substantial walking, sometimes over uneven and step surfaces, is unavoidable. Hotels and dining venues may change; however, alternative properties will be of an equal or better standard. Price includes all accommodations, sightseeing, transportation (including coach-class domestic air), meals as indicated, portage, and tips. **Outbound international airfare, optional excursions, excess baggage charges, personal and incidental expenses (room service, telephone, fax, etc.) and visa charges are not included. A minimum number of guests are required for this program to operate. Please refer to the 2009 Crystal Cruises Atlas for a complete listing of terms and conditions.**

## Want to learn more?

### Suggested Reading

Buenos Aires: A Cultural and Literary Companion by Jason Wilson.

Culture and Customs of Argentina by David William Foster, Melissa Fitch Lockhard, & Darrell B. Lockhart

Amalia by Jose Marmol, Dorris Sommer (Editor), Helen Lane (Translator)

### Video/DVD

Evita (1996) Buena Vista Studio

Discoveries Argentina, Nature's Spectacle (2002) Bennett-Watt Media

Son of the Bride (2001) Columbia Tristar Hom

Nine Queens (2001) Columbia Tristar Hom

### Internet Resource

Secretary of Tourism – Argentina at <http://www.sectur.gov.ar/eng/menu.htm>

## Program Details



Park Hyatt Hotel

### Park Hyatt Hotel

Av. Alvear 1661

C1014AAD Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: [54.11] 5171 1234

Fax: [54.11] 5171 1235



Park Hyatt Hotel



Posada Los Alamos

### Posada Los Alamos

Ing. Hector Mario Guatti 1135

29405CBC El Calafate, Argentina

Phone: 54-[2902]-491144

### Hotel Accommodations

Every effort is made to obtain accommodations at the best available hotel properties existing at a destination. Room category upgrades are not available for purchase with this program.

Room Category:

Park Hyatt

Park Deluxe

Posada Los Alamos

Standard

### Accessibility

Wheelchair-accessible rooms may be available at the hotel properties and must be requested in advance to ensure availability. To fully appreciate the magnificent sights on this program, substantial walking, sometimes over uneven and steep surfaces, is unavoidable. **This program is not recommended for guests with walking difficulties.** Many of the program sights are not wheelchair accessible.

## Flight Information

Date	From/To	Tourist/Coach
20-DEC-2009	AEP/FTE	AEP – Jorge Newberry Domestic Airport
22-DEC-2009	FTE/AEP	FTE – El Calafate Airport

## Packing Information

It is recommended that clothes for layering are packed as there tends to be extreme temperature fluctuations in El Calafate area.

Clothing:	The temperature during daytime is around 10-15°C (50-60°F) in El Calafate in December. So please dress warm and comfortable. While in Buenos Aires, temperatures during the day will be around 70 °F (21°C). Jacket or waterproof windbreaker, hat, and gloves Comfortable, loose-fitting trousers and shirts, sweaters Casual clothing for evening
Footwear:	Comfortable, sturdy tennis or walking/hiking shoes
Other Items	Sun hat, sunglasses and sunscreen – Binoculars and camera

## Weather

Seasons in South America are exactly opposite of those in North America. Although it is normally dry during December, rain can fall at any time of the year.

<b>Buenos Aires, Argentina</b>				
<b>Climate: Subtropical</b>				
<b>Average Temperatures</b>				
MONTH	CELSIUS		FAHRENHEIT	
	Low	High	Low	High
December	15.0	28.0	59.0	83.0

  

<b>El Calafate, Argentina</b>				
<b>Climate: Patagonian Dry</b>				
<b>Average Temperatures</b>				
MONTH	CELSIUS		FAHRENHEIT	
	Low	High	Low	High
December	7.2	18.3	45.0	65.0

## Money Matters

Currency	Argentine Peso (ARS) Bills of 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 pesos, and coins of 1 peso and 1, 5, 10, 25, and 50 cents. U.S. dollars are also widely accepted.
Exchange	Foreign currency exchange is available at hotels, airport and <i>Casa de Cambio</i> offices.
Credit Cards	American Express, Visa, and MasterCard are widely accepted in most retail establishments. Storeowners may charge a premium for purchases made with a credit card.
V.A.T.	VAT reimbursement may be obtained at the airport for any purchases over \$70 (per invoice) in made in shops operating with the "Global Refund" system.
Tipping	Tips for hotels, restaurant, and airport porters are included. Gratuities for tour guide and driver are discretionary.

## Communication

Telephone	International direct-dial phones are available in each hotel room. Pay phones work with cards purchased from kiosks, or with legal tender coins. Calling from Argentina, dial 0 before the area code for domestic calls and dial 00, the country code and city code for international call.
Mobile Network	GSM phones will work in Argentina or rental phones are readily available. Cellular service can be limited in remote areas.
Postal Service	<i>Correo Argentino</i> is the postal service of Argentina with offices throughout the country. Branches keep normal business hours during the week and limited hours on the Saturdays. Mailing is reliable but can be quite slow – allow 3 weeks or more for post to arrive in the U.S.

## Electricity

Current	The electrical current in Argentina is 220 volts.
Adapters	Outlets usually take Continental-type plugs, with two round prongs or three flat, angled prongs.
Transformers	Required to convert 220 volts to 110 volts, unless your appliances are dual voltage.