



10-DAY ADVENTURE

## THE O CIRCUIT

Chile

The full 'O' Circuit includes all the sights of the popular 'W' Circuit along with all the wonders of the quieter, northern side of the famous Torres del Paine mountain range. This adventure offers an opportunity to immerse yourself in some powerful, natural surroundings. Step away from the chaos of daily life and return to basics in an unrivalled setting. For those wishing for a trek that requires a bit more demand, the 'O' circuit provides a challenge with longer, more strenuous days than its shorter sibling, but with even more captivating views. With very few hikers on this trail, you will enjoy peace and serenity and explore a unique side of Torres del Paine that many will not see.

## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the awe-inspiring view of the three iconic granite towers
- Fill your bottle with pure, fresh water straight from nature's tap
- Look out at the turquoise glacial crevasses of the Southern Patagonian Ice Field
- Keep your eyes peeled for great, wide-winged Condors soaring high above you



# ITINERARY

## DAY 1

### PUERTO NATALES

Welcome to Patagonia! Your guide will pick you up at the Puerto Natales airport and transfer you to Hotel Big Sur. You will then have free time the rest of the day, take a walk around the small, brightly coloured town with its delightful 'Costanera'. At 6pm, your guide will come to your hotel for a pre-trek briefing to prepare you for embarking on the 'O' Circuit.

Accommodation: **Hotel**

## DAY 2

### ARRIVING AT TORRES DEL PAINE

This morning we will embark on our 'O' circuit trek. Our transfer will take us to the majestic Torres del Paine National Park. When we arrive at Las Torres, we will pass by the Welcome Center before starting our hike along the peaceful Serón Sector. This will take us through the Enchanted Valley, its name hailing from the unique and "enchanted" forms of granite towers standing tall amidst the shrubbery. Some of the towers yield surprising trees, perched on their crests and wedged in between, home to the impressive Condors soaring overhead. From here, we enter an old, native Lenga tree forest. Notice the trees covered by a special kind of lichen, known as "old man's beard" (Barba de Viejo), which only grows in the purest of atmospheres. Amidst the shade of the trees lies our campsite for the night.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**

Max. altitude: **250 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

## DAY 3

### LAKE PAINE TO LAKE DICKSON

This long, yet unforgettable day will take us up and down the foothills of the Paine Massif mountain range with magnificent photo opportunities along the way of towering peaks crowned with fluffy, white clouds. To reach Lake Dickson we will descend down to the shore of Lake Paine, its beautiful, green waters the forefront to a stunning backdrop of the surrounding peaks. A gentle stroll along the flood plains of the meandering riverbed will bring us to a remote campsite at Lake Dickson.

Hiking time: **7 - 8 hours**

Max. altitude: **200 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

## DAY 4

### LAKE DICKSON TO LOS PERROS

Make the most of the shorter trekking day ahead, by waking up early and revelling in the silence on the lakeside as the clouds pass over the snowy, mountain peaks. Once we have indulged in the surrounding scenery, we will continue on our adventure, taking us through another ancient Lenga forest, home to the handsome Magellan woodpecker. On the last stretch of the trail, we take time to marvel at the Los Perros Glacier as it hangs forebodingly above a serene, grey lagoon. Tucked away in the forest overlooking the lagoon lies our campsite.

Hiking time: **5 hours**

Max. altitude: **369 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**



#### DAY 5

### LOS PERROS TO LAKE GREY

Today will be the hardest but most rewarding day of the Circuit. We will leave Los Perros campsite early and zigzag through the forest's humid terrain. The forest then depletes and gives way to a barren, scree-filled landscape. We ascend a steep, winding, rocky section to reach the remote John Gardner Pass. Having arrived here, the views over the Southern Patagonian Ice Field will take your breath away with its irregular peaks and turquoise glacial crevasses. We marvel at it's beauty before descending gradually along a balcony path to reach Lake Grey.

Hiking time: **10 - 12 hours**  
Max. altitude: **1241 m**  
Accommodation: **Camping**  
Meals included:  
**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

#### DAY 6

### LAKE GREY TO PAINE GRANDE

This is the part of the Circuit where the "O" meets the "W". After a few very intense days, today we will enjoy a relaxing walk in the foothills of the mountains, amongst Antarctic beech (ñirre), Dombey's beech (coigüe) and the Chilean firetrees (notro). Allow this short, yet gratifying trek to fill our senses whilst the incredible views of Mount Paine Grande, the highest peak in the region (3,050m) provides the backdrop to the day. Once we arrive at the campsite, kick-back and relax or take a leisurely walk along the peaceful shore of Lake Pehoé and marvel at it's alluring, turquoise waters.

Hiking time: **4 hours**  
Max. altitude: **388 m**  
Accommodation: **Camping**  
Meals included:  
**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

#### DAY 7

### PAINE GRANDE TO FRENCH VALLEY

The day begins with a wonderful hike into the Francés Valley. Along the way we divulge in the peace and quiet of nature, surrounded by majestic mountain peaks and wild vegetation. Savour in the serenity of the forests and the glacial streams, where we can fill our bottles with pure, fresh water, whilst marvelling at the majestic Los Cuernos Mountains looming overhead. The grand finale for today, finds us at a lookout with incredible views over the Francés Glacier and the lesser known peaks of the Paine Massif Mountain Range.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**  
Max. altitude: **762 m**  
Accommodation: **Camping**  
Meals included:  
**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

#### DAY 8

### FRENCH SECTOR TO CENTRAL SECTOR

We will begin today by following the weaving path of the Arriero River, which offers great places to relax and refill our bottles with fresh running water. Prepare to be drawn into the beauty of the enormous summits that loom over the turquoise lake below and capture the incredible scenery on your lens ready to be flaunted to others back home. Lake Nordenskjöld is surrounded by amazing geographical contrasts and is home to many birds, so keep a keen eye out for Condors overhead. We will then continue along the base of the magnificent Mount Almirante Nieto and its hanging glaciers before setting up camp amidst the shrubbery at the valley mouth.

Hiking time: **5 hours**  
Max. altitude: **200 m**  
Accommodation: **Camping**  
Meals included:  
**Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner**

#### DAY 9

### BASE TORRES TO PUERTO NATALES

We start the day with a slowly ascending hike through the Patagonian pampas that begins to steepen as we enter the Ascencio Valley, hence the name. This gradually rises to reach the Los Vientos Mountain Pass - with its spectacular, panoramic views of the surrounding landscape and lakes. We will continue hiking, past the Chileno Mountain Hostel and through a native, Lenga forest before approaching the final stretch of our adventure. The path becomes more adventurous as it weaves over rocky terrain, lined with enormous boulders. Awaiting us at the end is the awe-inspiring view of the three iconic, granite towers standing tall over the glacial lagoon. What a way to end the trek!

From here, we make a steady descent back down the valley where a transfer will take us to our hotel in Puerto Natales.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**

Max. altitude: **870 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

#### DAY 10

### PUERTO NATALES

Today we have a final breakfast and say goodbye to the group and guide before separating for our onward travels.

Meals included: **Breakfast**

# TRIP INFORMATION

## DIFFICULTY

This adventure is **moderate difficulty**. You will be trekking for up to 8 days, occasionally on steep and rocky terrain. You will be averaging 15km walking per day carrying a rucksack, the maximum distance covered on a single day being 20km. There may be as much as 1250m of vertical ascent and descent in a day. You should be fit and healthy with recent experience of walking in a mountainous environment for several days in a row. On steep and possibly loose ground, care should be taken to avoid slips and trips, you may find walking poles useful. The weather in Patagonia is notoriously changeable and you should be prepared to walk in strong winds and heavy rain. If you have any questions about your suitability for this trip please feel free to get in touch.

## FOOD & DRINK

Whilst camping in Torres del Paine National Park, your meals will be prepared at the campsites using **fresh and locally sourced ingredients**. You will eat in the dining room at the refuges where you will be camping for your breakfast and evening meals. Picnic lunches will also be prepared for you.

Whilst staying in the hotel in Puerto Natales, you can choose to eat at the hotel or go out and find a **local restaurant**.

Chilean cuisine consists mainly of meat. You will find grilled meats available everywhere including tripe, intestines and even udders. Meat aside, the cuisine is a mix of **Spanish, native American and Italian influences** so vegetarians can always fall back on dishes like gnocchi, pasta and pizza. In the large towns and cities, you will find all dietary requirements are catered for. You may also have the opportunity to sample "Mate", a Paraguayan tea made from a variety of holly and typical drank from a "bombilla".

If you have **special dietary requirements** please inform us when booking your adventure. We can cater for vegetarian and gluten free diets and you are welcome to bring along your own gluten free produce.

Whilst trekking, boiled water is available every morning for you to fill your bottles or bladder. We recommend you also bring a water filter or purification system to allow you to refill at refuges or springs. All drinks, including water, are your own responsibility through out the trip. We don't recommend the use of plastic bottles which will need to be carried out and recycled.

## ACCOMMODATION

Whilst in Puerto Natales we will stay in a **comfortable 3-star hotel**. Rooms will be double or twin with en-suite bathroom. We ensure that the hotel we use is well located to allow you to get out and explore the area.

In Torres del Paine National Park we will be camping. A 2-man tent is provided per two people along with a foam mattress. Tents will already be set up with mattresses inside...some of them are even raised on special platforms! There will be shared bathrooms with flushing toilets and hot water at all sites except Camping Los Perros (cold water only). Sleeping bags are available to rent for \$30, to be paid to your Tour Leader upon arrival.

Your meals will be prepared at the campsite and you will eat in the refuge 'restaurant' each morning and evening. All crockery and cutlery is provided. Packed lunches will be provided from the refuge kitchens each morning for you to take with you in your backpack.

**Wifi** is available at the refuges but must be bought on a pre-paid card. This can be purchased at the refuges or mini-markets at the campsites.

## LUGGAGE

**Bag Weight: 15kg.**

In Torres Del Paine National Park there is no vehicle access and, as we won't be using porters for this trip, you will be carrying all of your own personal equipment (from Day 2 to Day 9). For this, you will need a **backpack of roughly 40-50 litres** to carry with you each day. We recommend that this is no more than **14kg** to ensure it is comfortable for you to wear throughout your trek. This can be used as your hand luggage on international and domestic flights. If you wish to bring another bag for items before and after the trek this can be left in secure storage at the hotel for the trekking period. We request that you do not bring a rigid suitcase as they are more difficult to transport.

**Note:** your backpack for trekking will be for your personal equipment and sleeping bag only and will not include tent or mattress as these will be provided at the sites.

**Personal Porters:** If you feel you need additional support in carrying your bag, personal porters are available to hire for \$100 per day. A personal porter will be shared between up to three people and this cost will be split between you. Please inform us upon booking if you require a personal porter on your trek.

Please also be aware that on domestic flights in Argentina and Chile there is a maximum weight of **15kg** on all checked luggage. If your main bag weighs more than 15kg you may be asked to pay excess luggage fees which will be your own responsibility.

## HOW DO I GET THERE?

You will need a flight that arrives at Teniente Julio Gallardo Airport (PNT) in Puerto Natales on or before day 1 of your itinerary. If you are arriving on day 1 and not before you should ensure your flight arrives in the morning before midday. To reach Puerto Natales most will people will need to connect through Arturo Merino Benitez International Airport - Santiago (SCL).

To reach Santiago from the UK, British Airways have direct flights departing from Heathrow at 21:55 and arriving at 07:30 the next day (local time). The flight time is 14hrs. Air France offer flights from Manchester with a 2hrs 50min stop in Paris. British Airways have flights from Edinburgh with a stop of 1hrs 4min in Heathrow. Indirect flights have a total travel time of roughly 19 hours to reach Santiago.

For travellers from the USA, LATAM have a direct flight from New York to Santiago departing at 19.30 and arriving the next morning at 05:55 (local time). The flight time is 10hrs 25min. LATAM also offer direct flights from Miami with similar times. Indirect flights are available from Los Angeles, Dallas and San Francisco with LATAM, Delta and Jet Blue.

If you are changing airlines or re-checking your luggage at an airport on route, please ensure you leave a minimum of 3 hours between flights. This will account for any delays on arrival, travel time across airports (this can take longer than you think) and time taken to re-check baggage.

## BUDGET & CHANGE

In Chile the currency is the **Chilean Peso** (CLP). In Argentina the currency is the **Argentine Peso** (ARS). For the latest exchange rates please visit [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

We do not recommend the use of traveller's cheques as they are often impractical. Bank cards are widely used for most things but it is best to use Visa as Mastercard is not commonly accepted. Your guide will show you the best places to change currency at the best rate.

In Puerto Natales, an average meal for 2 will be around \$50 and a 5km taxi ride around \$8. Taxis are plentiful and most drivers should have a meter, however if they don't, always remember to settle on a price before leaving. If you prefer to do it a bit cheaper then take to the streets, pretty much everywhere in Puerto Natales is less than a 20 minute walk from the town centre.

Expected budget for meals out on your trip (per person): \$50

Our recommended guidance for spending budget per person in Patagonia would be between **\$100-150** on top of your tips. This will give you ample souvenir spending money.

## TIPS

Tipping is common but not mandatory and should be based on the level of service you feel you have received.

The amounts below will give you an indication of how much to tip. Please note that these amounts are for the entire group, therefore you should divide them by the total number of people in your party. You will be provided with a *Tip Recommendation* three weeks prior to departure with recommended tips based on the number of people in your group.

Guide: \$20 US Dollars per day

Driver: \$5 – \$10 US Dollars per day

As an example: a guide may receive \$20 per day x 8 days = \$160. Divided by 10 people in the group = \$16 per person.



# FORMALITIES & HEALTH

## PASSPORT

As soon as possible after booking your tour, please provide Kandoo Adventures with your passport details (first name, last name, date of birth, passport number, issue date, expiry date) along with a photocopy of the photo page.

Your passport must be valid for 6 months after your departure date.

## VISA

United States and UK passport holders do not require a visa to enter Chile. On arrival you will be granted a maximum 90 day stay in the country. On arrival in Chile the immigration authorities will issue you with a 'Tarjeta de Turismo - Tourist Card'.

This information may be subject to change, without notice, by the local authorities. It is your responsibility to check the latest travel requirements and information before departure.

## VACCINATIONS

The World Health Organisation recommend the following vaccinations for travel to Chile:

Diphtheria  
Hepatitis A  
Hepatitis B  
Tetanus  
Rabies (for those at high risk)

They also recommend primary course and boosters such as MMR and Flu are up to date.  
It is your responsibility to check the latest health information before travelling.

## INSURANCE

Before you can join any Kandoo Adventures trek, you will need to insure yourself against accident, injury, and illness.

Your insurance must cover the cost of helicopter evacuation and repatriation if necessary. Make sure your insurer knows of your travel plans, and verify that your policy fully covers your trekking and any other activities you will participate in. Specifically, for our adventures in Patagonia, you need to be covered for trekking up to 2000m. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf. You will also need to bring details of your insurance cover to the pre-trek briefing.

We find lots of our customers use the global supplier of travel insurance, World Nomads. Make sure to choose the correct policy for the altitude you are trekking to. Be sure to read the small print carefully for any policy you are considering - different policies provide different levels of cover, so make sure you understand what is and isn't included in your policy.

## HEALTH

### Malaria

There is no risk of malaria in any of the regions of Chile. However, if you intend to go travelling before or after your tour, please check the specific health risks for the areas you will be visiting.

### Dehydration

You will be exerting yourself over numerous days whilst out trekking. This may be something that your body isn't used to and as a result, you will have to drink much more water than you normally would. You should drink at least 3 litres of fluids every day while trekking. Even when you do not feel thirsty you have to drink this amount as a minimum, preferably more. Stay on the look-out for signs of dehydration in yourself and your fellow trekkers. The most common symptoms include thirst, dry lips, nose or mouth, headache and feeling fatigued or lethargic.

### Medication

Your guide carries a first aid kit at all times. However, we recommend bringing any medicine you feel you may need. This could include: -

- Painkillers
- Anti-diarrhoea tablets
- High factor sunscreen for lips and skin
- Moisturising cream (for sunburn)
- Elastic bandage, regular bandages and Blister bandages
- Sanitary products
- Water purifying tablets or filters
- Mosquito repellent

# EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

## EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY KANDOO ADVENTURES

Whilst trekking and camping we will provide the following:

- 2 man tent per 2 people
- Foam sleeping mattress per person
- Cutlery, crockery, tables and chairs

## CLOTHING TO BRING

- Warm hat and gloves
- Buff / gaiter
- Sunglasses
- T-shirts (short and long sleeve)
- Thermal long sleeve shirt
- Thermal leggings in case of cold nights
- 2 sweaters - 1 light/1 warm
- Soft shell or fleece jacket
- Insulated jacket
- Waterproof and windproof hard shell jacket
- Waterproof and windproof hard shell trousers
- Breathable fast drying underwear
- Comfortable long trousers (fast drying)
- Shorts for trekking in warm weather if desired
- Comfy trainers/shoes for evenings
- Wool and cotton socks
- Hiking boots (with ankle support and a slightly ridged sole)

## EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Warm sleeping bag (rating of 0 degrees C)
- 2 water bottles (minimum 1 litre or a water bladder)
- Walking poles (recommended)
- Head torch with spare batteries and bulb
- 1 duffel bag - for personal items prior to or after trek (flexible and water resistant)
- 1 daypack - 40-50 litres to carry with you each day
- Water purification system (charcoal filter, chlorine tablets or similar)
- Quick drying towel
- Dry bags - for packing your kit into if your bag is not waterproof
- Toiletries
- A container for any toxic rubbish (batteries, sanitary products etc.)

## **GEAR RENTAL**

Sleeping bags are available to rent for \$30, to be paid to your Tour Leader upon arrival.

# HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

## **1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY**

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

## **2 CONTACT US**

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

## **3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT**

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.

