



WILD PATAGONIA & CENTRAL CHILE

A Special Departure with Jeri Langham

October 23 - November 15, 2027



Puma, Torres del Paine National Park © Andrew Whittaker

A Puma hunting Guanaco against a backdrop of snow-capped spires, the raucous antics of a King Penguin colony, a pair of Magellanic Woodpeckers in a towering southern beech forest, fine wine in a comfortable lodge: Where else but Chile!

This tour showcases the majestic scenery and abundant wildlife of what is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful countries in the world. From lovely Chiloé Island to wild Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, from Santiago to the famous Lake District, we will seek the special birds, mammals, and vivid landscapes for which Chile is so justly famous.

Stretching some 2,650 miles north to south and averaging only 110 miles across, this is both the longest and the narrowest country in the world. The mighty ice-capped peaks of the Andes dominate the topography, while the Pacific coastline teems with life.

Our visit takes place in the radiant southern spring, when the weather is usually good, colorful wildflowers proliferate, birds are in stunning breeding plumage and singing, and photographic opportunities abound. Among the many special birds we hope to encounter are Chilean Tinamou, Moustached Turca, Dusky-tailed Canastero, and the colorful White-throated Tapaculo.

The temperate forests of Chile's Lake District and Alerce Andino National Park are home to an equally rich avifauna, including the very rare Rufous-tailed Hawk, Chilean Hawk, and the endemic Slender-billed Parakeet. We will also pay an exciting visit to a colony of Humboldt and Magellanic penguins, while a comfortable ferry crossing should yield such special



Magellanic Woodpeckers
© Andrew Whittaker

seabirds as Black-browed Albatross, Southern Giant-Petrel, Magellanic Diving-Petrel, and Red-legged Cormorant.

Tierra del Fuego, South America's Land of Fire, is the home of Imperial Cormorants and colorful Dolphin Gulls. In the wetlands between the wild sea and the giant walls of the Paine Massif, Ashy-headed, Upland, and endangered Ruddy-headed geese breed among hordes of other waterfowl. We'll search for the Magellanic Plover, which we have seen on all of our past visits, and for colorful Rufous-chested and Tawny-throated dotterels. Magdalena Island is home to a thriving colony of Magellanic Penguins, and we will have an opportunity to visit a rookery of King Penguins, too, complete with cute fluffy brown chicks.

We'll travel to Torres del Paine National Park, where Pumas, made bold by the lack of hunting and persecution, stalk their prey amid glistening glaciers, turquoise lakes, and hillsides ablaze with scarlet, orange, and yellow wildflowers. We will also enjoy herds of wild Guanaco, flocks of Lesser Rhea, and majestic Andean Condors.



Cuanaco bushes in Torres del Paine National Park © Andrew Whittaker

Back in central Chile, close views of the mighty Andean Condor in the mountains above Santiago are sure to leave us breathless, and as we pass through the vineyards of the fertile central valley, we may find Spectacled and Torrent ducks and ducklings and enjoy wonderful studies of nesting Burrowing Parakeets. In Altos de Lircay National Reserve, Magellanic Woodpeckers are often common, White-throated Hawks can be seen hunting, and Green-backed Firecrowns abound at our lodge feeders; both the highly sought Chestnut-throated Huet-huet and the striking Rufous-legged Owl occur here as well.

With a different suite of birds and landscapes our objective, we'll travel from the Chilean capital area to the breathtaking Andes and the rich Pacific Coast in pursuit of a host of range-restricted birds. Regional specialties include Humboldt Penguin, Stripe-backed Bittern, Gray-breasted Seedsnipe, and the remarkable Diademed Sandpiper-Plover. Other highlights include a pelagic trip in the Humboldt Current and a visit to the house of Pablo Neruda, perhaps Chile's most famous poet.

October 23–24, Days 1–2: Departure from home; arrival in Santiago, Chile

Participants will depart the USA on October 23 and arrive in Santiago on the morning of October 24 into Arturo Merino Benítez Airport (airport code SCL). Most flights from the United States arrive in Santiago between 6:00–10:00 a.m. Upon arrival, please proceed outside of the baggage claim area, where you will be met by a representative of our ground operator who will provide transportation to our hotel, **Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Convention Center**.

After checking in, you will have the rest of the day to yourself, with time to rest following the international flight. Lunch is on your own. This evening, we will meet in the lobby at 6:00 p.m. for a tour welcome and orientation, followed by dinner together.

The hotel features spacious rooms, a restaurant and bar, and a swimming pool among many other amenities. Additionally, the hotel grounds are certainly worth a walk as a number of locally common birds may be found including Southern Lapwing, Chimango Caracara, White-crested Elaenia, Tufted Tit-tyrant the endemic Chilean Mockingbird, Austral Thrush, Black-chinned Siskin and Long-tailed Meadowlark.

Home to over 6 million people, Santiago is one of South America's most modern and cosmopolitan cities. This vibrant capital stands on a rich inland plain, the Santiago Basin, bounded by mountains on three sides.

Travel notes: We recommend arriving in Santiago a day or earlier to minimize the risk of flight misconnections or other travel delays, or simply to be well-rested for the start of our tour. Most flights to Santiago are overnight flights. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with air ticketing and additional arrangements.

NIGHTS: Aboard aircraft, in transit to Santiago (October 23)

Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Conference Center, Santiago (October 24)

October 25, Day 3: Flight to Puerto Montt; afternoon birding

This morning, we will return to the airport for a flight to Puerto Montt, gateway to southern Chile.

The distance to Puerto Montt is 600 miles, and our flight path takes us along the spine of the Andes, with snow-clad volcanic peaks as far as the eye can see. Puerto Montt itself is dominated by the volcanoes of Osorno and Calbuco, the latter having blown its top as recently as 2015. On landing at El Tepual International Airport, we will find ourselves in the Chilean Lake District, formed by hundreds of rivers flowing down from the mountains through beautiful, forested valleys.

Thanks to its strategic position at the southern end of Chile's Central Valley and as the gateway to the Chiloé Archipelago, the coastal city of Puerto Montt quickly grew into a permanent settlement after its founding in 1853, during the period of German colonization. In the 1990s and 2000s, Puerto Montt was the second largest salmon-producing center in the world. The city's cultural heritage is a rich combination of indigenous Chiloé, Spanish, and German influences.

We will likely arrive in Puerto Montt in the late morning, perfect timing for lunch and an afternoon birding excursion. Our destination of choice will depend on timing and local conditions; regardless, our time in the field will provide a pleasing first look at the birds and habitat of this beautiful region.

One option is the large wetland complex outside the community of Chamiza. Just south of Puerto Montt, this marshland habitat provides good opportunities for observing a variety of wetland species including waterfowl, herons, and other birds. A sample of the many species of birds found here includes Chile Wigeon, Yellow-billed Pintail, Brown-hooded and Kelp gulls, and Black-faced Ibis. Another option is a visit to Parque Katalapi, a private conservation park situated along the Carretera Austral (Southern Highway), about 20 kilometers south of Puerto Montt. This well-preserved area of Valdivian temperate rainforest offers excellent birding for forest species such as Chucao Tapaculo, Black-throated Huet-huet, and Des Murs's Wiretail.

We will return to the hotel in the late afternoon. The views from our hotel of the picture-perfect Osorno Volcano are truly spectacular.

Travel Note: The timing of the day's activities is based on the domestic flight schedule, and we must be flexible in our planning to accommodate changes to the departure time from Santiago.

NIGHT: Hotel Cumbres, Puerto Varas



Picture-perfect Osorno Volcano from our hotel © Andrew Whittaker

October 26, Day 4: Alerce Andino National Park

Today we will drive along the coastal road to Alerce Andino National Park, arriving early for an exciting morning in the park. On the southern shore of Lake Chapo, Alerce Andino is another of Chile's natural wonders, with enormous mountains, deep valleys, blue lakes, and *Nothofagus*

trees dating back 1,500 to 2,000 years, their stunted, twisted shapes reflecting the harsh conditions of southern Chile. The park takes its name from the alerce trees that cover most of its nearly 100,000 acres; though “alerce” is typically translated “larch,” the tree is a member of the cypress family, the only species in the genus *Fitzroya*, and a key component of the local temperate, or Valdivian, forest.

In our time in these huge forests, we’ll seek a marvelous array of tapaculos, their wild and often explosive voices echoing through the valleys. The largest and most spectacular species here, in the tapaculo capital of the world, are the enigmatic Chucao Tapaculo and the much more secretive Black-throated Huet-huet; dense bamboo thickets are the habitat of the skulking, mouse-like Ochre-flanked and Magellanic tapaculos. Hopefully, this will be the day that we all fall in love with tapaculos.

The supporting cast includes the rare Chilean Hawk, the rare Rufous-tailed and uncommon White-throated hawks, Austral Parakeet, Des Murs’s Wiretail, Tufted Tit-Tyrant, the local Patagonian Tyrant, and colorful Torrent Ducks.

We will enjoy a picnic lunch in the park, where we may well be visited by the local Patagonian Gray Fox. As we follow the coast road back to Puerto Montt, we may have an opportunity to study the subtle differences distinguishing the Blackish, American, and Magellanic oystercatchers, which are often found side by side here. We may also encounter Black-faced Ibis, Ringed Kingfisher, Southern Lapwing, Baird’s Sandpiper, Peruvian Pelican, or the colorful Austral Negrito.

NIGHT: Hotel Cumbres,
Puerto Varas

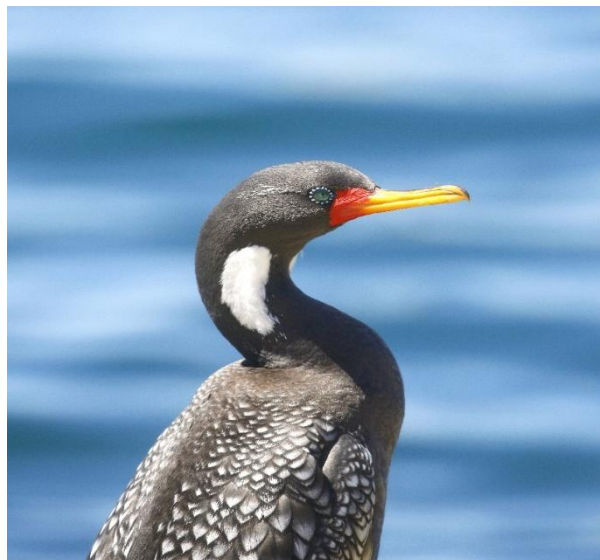


The enigmatic Chucao Tapaculo © Andrew Whittaker

October 27, Day 5: Puniuil Bay and the tidal mudflats of Chiloe Island

After breakfast we will depart from the hotel for a trip to Chiloé Island and Puniuil Bay, where we will spend the better part of the day. From Puerto Varas, the transfer requires an hour's drive to the community of Parguas on the coast, from which we'll board a ferry for a crossing of the Chacao Canal, the narrow body of water that separates the mainland from Chiloé Island. The ferry crossing will be approximately 30 minutes and offers a chance for a bit of birding from the ferry deck. Waterfowl, penguins, shearwaters, and cormorants are possible. The route from the hotel to the ferry terminal also offers possibilities to spot Slender-billed Parakeet.

Upon arrival in Chacao on Chiloé Island, we'll make our way west to Puniuil Bay. Here, we should encounter our first Kelp Geese, feeding on the bay's abundant kelp, before we board a private boat for an hour-long excursion around the rocky islands of the bay. Our main objective will be to observe the highly charismatic Humboldt and Magellanic penguins at their colonies. Nearby rocky cliffs hold breeding cormorants including Magellanic Cormorant and the exquisite Red-legged Cormorant. There is also a good chance of observing Marine Otters fishing.



The stunning Red-legged Cormorant © Andrew Whittaker

Come lunchtime, we will indulge in excellent seafood empanadas in a restaurant overlooking the beach. This afternoon we will bird our way back to Puerto Montt, visiting bird-rich estuaries and

mudflats en route. These rich tidal flats are a vital wintering area for 70% of the world's Hudsonian Godwit population as well as significant numbers of Whimbrel, Baird's Sandpiper, yellowlegs and Red Knot along with lots of waterfowl.

NIGHT: Hotel Cumbres, Puerto Varas

October 28, Day 6: Birding Lahuen Ñadi Natural Monument; flight to Punta Arenas with afternoon birding nearby

Our final day in this amazing region will commence with a final round of birding at Lahuen Ñadi Natural Monument before returning to the airport in time for a mid-afternoon flight to Punta Arenas.

Located just outside Punta Arenas and only about 15 minutes from the airport, Lahuen Ñadi is a small, protected area that preserves a remnant of the ancient Alerce forest and provides an excellent opportunity to observe several species characteristic species of the Valdivian temperate rainforest. During our visit, we'll walk along well-maintained trails through the forest where we will look for species such as Chilean Pigeon, Ochre-flanked and Chucao tapaculos, Black-throated Huet-huet, and Des Murs's Wiretail among others. In addition to birdwatching, the site offers a very nice introduction to the lush forest ecosystem of southern Chile, with giant ferns, moss covered trees, and ancient Alerce trees up to several hundred years old.

At the time of publication of this itinerary, the flight departure time is 3:26 p.m., with an arrival in Punta Arenas at 6:38 p.m. Please note that this schedule may change without prior notice, in which case we will simply adjust our planned activities and timings accordingly.

Punta Arenas is the capital of the country's southernmost region, Magallanes and Antarctica Chilena. Punta Arenas lies at 46° South latitude, where it serves as the gateway to Patagonia. The city's early growth was fueled by waves of immigrants during the gold rush of 1883–1906.

Sheep farming boomed here, too, with the largest company controlling 3,800 square miles of Patagonian Chile and Argentina from its headquarters in Punta Arenas. In 2000, a special

“composite” breed was created here; the large, hardy Goldensheep is characterized by superior fertility, leaner meat, and faster lamb growth. On one of our evenings here, we will visit one of the city’s best restaurants to savor the delicious local specialty: Golden Lamb, Chilean barbecue style.

In recent decades, Punta Arenas has grown considerably with the increase in tourism and commercial shipping. Since 1977, it has been one of only two free ports in Chile. If our arrival time today in Punta Arenas allows, we will bird our way from the airport to our hotel overlooking the Strait of Magellan; abandoned piers nearby are alive with breeding Imperial and Magellanic cormorants and Dolphin Gulls.

NIGHT: Hotel Cabo de Hornos, Punta Arenas

October 29, Day 7: Magdalena Island penguin colony and San Juan River

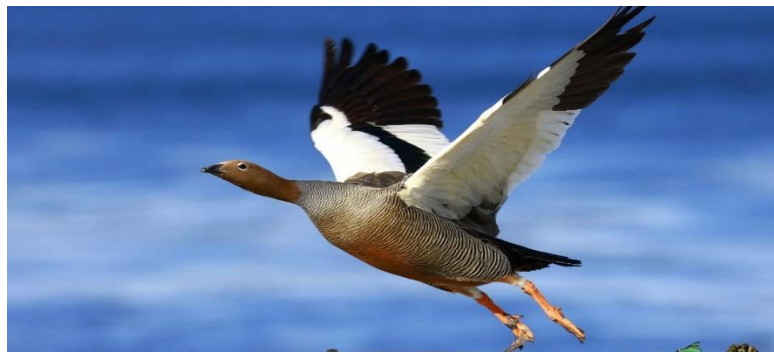
We will start the day with a boat trip to Magdalena Island in the Strait of Magellan, home to a thriving colony of Magellanic Penguins. It is an hour to the main island, where a well-designed and well-marked trail lets us walk through the colony without disturbing it. We will gain close-up insights into penguin life, including the birds’ strategies for coping with the ever-present Chilean Skuas and Kelp Gulls, which prey on eggs and chicks. We will also enjoy the antics of a large colony of South American Terns in full breeding plumage. Common Miners are often seen as well.



Magellanic Penguins © Andrew Whittaker

After an hour's brisk stroll, we will be served a very welcome hot chocolate, then "set sail" for an islet with a noisy colony of South American Sea Lions. The huge male beach master's will be guarding and fighting for control of their harems. Landing is not permitted here, but we can enjoy the abundant wildlife from a safe distance. The same beaches are also home to Dolphin Gull and the odd Snowy Sheathbill. The sheathbill is rarely seen away from the Antarctic, but we have been successful seeing it on three out of four trips on average. Afterward, we will head back to town for a marvelous meal in a family-run restaurant.

In the midafternoon, we will drive south toward the San Juan River, a rich wetland system that provides chances for a variety of waterfowl. Our target species here is the highly sought and endangered Ruddy-headed Goose, but we are also likely to enjoy Upland and Ashy-headed geese, Flightless Steamer-Ducks, Crested Duck, Yellow-billed Pintail, Chiloé Wigeon, and a variety of shorebirds including Magellanic Oystercatcher and Magellanic Snipe. Even Short-eared Owls are possible here. Imperial and Magellanic cormorants breed on the old town pier. Please note that we may not go all the way to the reserve if we are fortunate enough to encounter Ruddy-headed Geese en route.



The endangered Ruddy-headed Goose © Andrew Whittaker

NIGHT: Hotel Cabo de Hornos, Punta Arenas

October 30, Day 8: Ferry crossing the strait to Tierra del Fuego and visit to a King Penguin colony

This morning we'll take our picnic lunches and board a ferry to cross the Strait of Magellan to Tierra del Fuego. This short voyage is essentially an awesome two-hour pelagic trip. With the right winds, this famous channel can be a conduit for seabirds moving between the Pacific and Atlantic

oceans. We should see scores of Black-browed Albatross, Southern Giant-Petrel, White-chinned Petrel, ghostly Southern Fulmars, “Fuegian” Wilson’s Storm-Petrel, Magellanic Diving-Petrel, Chilean Skua, and Dolphin Gull. On one crossing, we once were fortunate enough to see Fin and Humpback whales, and even a Southern Rockhopper Penguin on another. More likely is a group of playful Peale’s Dolphin.

Arriving on the enchanted island of Tierra del Fuego, the “Land of Fire,” we’ll pass by brackish lakes ablaze with pink-hued flocks of Chilean Flamingos, the avian emblem of Chile’s Patagonia coast.

A good dirt and asphalt road takes us across the remote landscape to Bahia Inútil and a close encounter with a thriving colony of King Penguins; there are more than 130 birds in this colony, which is still increasing. We will enjoy these marvelous birds’ fascinating behavior from a blind at close range. Fluffy young birds should be in evidence, products of a breeding cycle longer than that of any other bird: it takes 14–16 months to fledge a single chick. Because of the length of the

chick-rearing cycle, adults can rear only two chicks every three years. In the winter, chicks may fast from one to five months.



*Another trip highlight is the spectacular King Penguin colony on Tierra del Fuego
© Andrew Whittaker*

Double-banded Plovers also breed here, and we should keep a sharp eye out for the Patagonian Tuco-Tuco, an odd subterranean rodent.

Late afternoon we will find us in the remote town of Cerro Sombrero. Sandy areas here are home to the local subspecies of Common and Short-billed miners, Buff-winged Cinclodes, Patagonian Yellow-Finch, and maybe our first beautiful Cinnamon-bellied Ground-Tyrant or uncommon, striking Chocolate-vented Tyrant, with its long, kestrel-like wings.



Chocolate-vented Tyrant © Andrew Whittaker

We'll also keep an eye out for the rare pallid subspecies of Peregrine Falcon. Afterward, we'll enjoy a relaxed evening and a home-cooked Chilean dinner.

NIGHT: Hosteria Tunkelen, Cerro Sombrero

October 31, Day 9: Return to Punta Arenas

After an early breakfast, we'll cross the Strait of Magellan, giving us a chance to spot the stunning Commerson's Dolphin. Once back on the mainland, we will head north on a well-maintained road leading through coastal grassland and barren steppe on our way to Punta Arenas for the night.



Commerson's Dolphins © Andrew Whittaker

The stark wilderness of this Patagonian steppe is truly magnificent. Here, on the arid grasslands in the rain shadow of the Andes, we will enjoy our first looks at herds of wild Guanaco, a member of the camel family. This habitat is just as fascinating botanically, and we hope to run across spectacular carpets of flowering Virgin's Slipper.

The barren steppe is also the breeding ground of stunning Tawny-throated Dotterels. We may also be so lucky as to hear the songs of Least Seedsnipes echoing overhead as they perform their aerial displays, or to encounter the uncommon Austral Canastero serenading us from the stunted brush. Other likely species along our route include the handsome Cinnamon-bellied Ground-Tyrant, and we may spend time looking for both Elegant-crested and Patagonian tinamous in areas of taller grass.



Tawny-throated Dotterel © Andrew Whittaker

We also plan a stop at a large marsh, where we hope to encounter flocks of the odd Coscoroba Swan, the prized Rosy-billed Pochard, and, hopefully, Silver Teal. We can hope for close views of Silvery Grebes in their lovely breeding plumage, and a variety of shorebirds including Magellanic Snipe, before arriving in Punta Arenas for the night.

NIGHT: Hotel Cabo de Hornos, Punta Arenas

November 1, Day 10: Birding the higher Patagonian steppe and on to Puerto Natales

As we make our way ever nearer Torres del Paine, the scenery will gradually change from grassland to stunted Andean Patagonian Forest. Rising in elevation onto the remote Patagonian steppe, we'll keep our eyes open for hunting Patagonian Hog-nosed Skunk. The botany here is truly fascinating in this harsh environment and we will certainly enjoy many interesting and colorful flowers. Birdwise, we will concentrate on three wonderful Patagonian specialties: the striking, White-bridled Finch, the summer visitor Chocolate-vented Tyrant, and Rufous-chested Dotterel.

Another target bird in this area is the rare and sought-after Magellanic Plover, the sole member of the family *Pluvianellidae*. Unique in almost every regard, the Magellanic Plover is anatomically more like a dove than a shorebird, with striking pink legs, a blazing red eye, a short peg-like bill, and dove-gray plumage. Similar in appearance to the turnstones, and often seen looking under stones, the Magellanic Plover's most frequent foraging method is to stomp around in shallow water with its strong legs while moving in quick circles and pecking at food items brought to the surface. Like doves, these birds secrete crop milk to feed their young. Molecular data, however, confirm that this is indeed a shorebird, likely most closely related to the sheathbills.

Thereafter we enter the scenically stunning realm of the snow-capped southern Andes and extensive fjordlands. We will overnight in the town of Puerto Natales en route to the spectacular Torres del Paine National Park, sometimes designated "the eighth wonder of the world." Puerto Natales was founded in 1911 as a port for the sheep industry; today, the town's most important

economic activity is tourism, as the gateway to Torres del Paine; cattle and aquaculture are also significant here. Our hotel has a magnificent view over the fjord to snow-capped mountains, with nearby fjords home to many breeding Black-necked Swans.



The sought-after and unusual Magellanic Plover is the only species in its family.
© Andrew Whittaker

NIGHT: Hotel Remota, Puerto Natales

November 2, Day 11: Torres Del Paine National Park

After an early breakfast, we will drive to magnificent Torres Del Paine National Park, where we will be welcomed by snow-covered mountain peaks, incredible turquoise lakes, vast glaciers, and the spectacularly vivid scarlet hues of the fire bush. We'll make our way from view to panoramic view beneath the three granite "towers" of the awesome Cordillera del Paine, each of them rising to an elevation of more than 9,000 feet above sea level. We'll explore the secluded forest and beaches of Gray's Glacier along a delightful trail, with more chances for Magellanic Woodpecker, Patagonian Sierra Finch, Austral Parakeet and maybe our first migrant Dark-faced Ground-Tyrants. Here, weather is highly changeable due to the immense ice cap, and winds can be strong.

Our comfortable and classy lodge, our home for the next three nights, is on an island in picture-perfect Pehoe Lake, with a backdrop of the dramatic Paine Massif towering over the turquoise waters. The massif's 6,500-foot spires and glaciers glimmer in the sun, while Great Grebes, Flying Steamer-Ducks, and the resident pair of Upland Geese welcome us to our island paradise, in the very heart of the park.

Our accommodation is strategically located with quick access to our main private estancia in the heart of “Puma Land.” This afternoon, after a tasty meal at the hotel restaurant, we will continue exploring the park, taking in the awesome views and birds and looking especially for our first Pumas. The sunsets can be truly breathtaking here.

NIGHT: Hotel Pehoé, Torres Del Paine National Park

November 3–4, Days 12–13: Torres Del Paine National Park and Puma safari

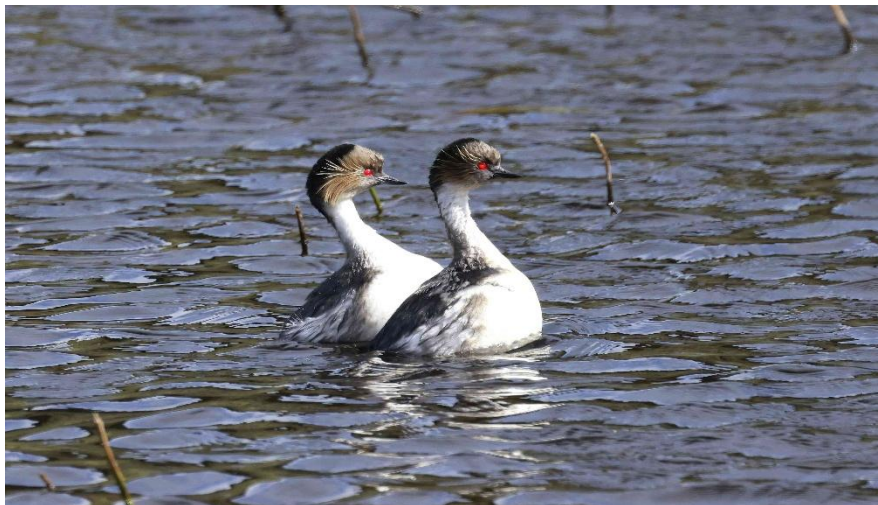
We have two full days to enjoy this incredible location, its special birds, and its wild Pumas. Simply going to a place and expecting to see wild Pumas is a recent phenomenon, inconceivable until a decade ago. This is all possible thanks to an excellent tracking system. We will embark on our 4 x 4 “safari” or take a longer hike to follow the hunting cats; we are normally able to observe their behavior from the comfort of vehicles. We have enjoyed a 100% success rate in the past with Pumas, often finding multiple cats on our tours.



Puma cubs at play © Andrew Whittaker

The Pumas here, of the subspecies *Puma concolor puma*, are enormous, much larger than their Mountain Lion counterparts in North America (*P. c. cougar*). Adult males, larger and bulkier than females, may exceed eight feet from nose to tail, and they weigh an average of about 260 pounds. They are not as rufous in Chile as in North America, more the color of a Guanaco, which, along with European Hares, is their main prey item here. Because they are protected and have never been hunted, the Pumas here have no fear of humans, and we can anticipate seeing them at close range, engaged in a variety of behaviors, including actively hunting, caring for cubs, and with luck, even feeding on a kill. The Puma is an apex predator here, able to run as fast as 43 miles per hour. They can jump as far as 20 feet from a standing position and leap 8 feet into the air—and have been known to jump 40 feet horizontally and almost 16 feet vertically.

Famous for its astonishing scenery, with photo opportunities at every bend in the road, Torres del Paine also hosts special birds. We will venture to the myriad lakes, ponds, and reed-fringed pools of the east side of the park, seeking waterfowl and the recently rediscovered Austral Rail. Other birds of the area include Andean Condor, Cinereous Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Silvery Grebe, Red-gartered Coot, Spectacled and Andean ducks, Magellanic Snipe, and “Austral” Grass Wren.



Silvery Grebes displaying © Andrew Whittaker

We will also keep our eyes open for small flocks of migrating Dark-faced Ground-Tyrants or resident Austral Canasteros. On one morning, we'll travel farther afield, into remote foothills outside the park where we can search for the highly local Band-tailed Earthcreeper (once thought to be an Argentine endemic but recently recorded in Chile), Sharp-billed Canastero, the rare Gray-bellied Shrike-Tyrant, Patagonian Mockingbird, Ochre-naped Ground-Tyrant, and Yellow-bridled Finch. More common residents include Austral Pygmy-Owl, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Crested Caracara, Chilean Flicker, Cinnamon-bellied Ground-Tyrant, Rufous-banded Miner, Scale-throated Earthcreeper, Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, Long-tailed Meadowlark, Gray-hooded Sierra Finch, and Greater Yellow-Finch. We could be lucky enough to spot the rare elk-sized Southern Huemul Deer in the nearby forest. Other mammals we hope to encounter in the park are Humboldt's Hog-nosed Skunk, Culpeo (Andean Fox), and with luck, Patagonian Hairy Armadillo.

NIGHTS: Hotel Pehóé, Torres Del Paine National Park



Guanaco, the Puma's favored prey, at Torres del Paine National Park © Andrew Whittaker

November 5, Day 14: Torres Del Paine National Park and return to Punta Arenas

We'll bird our way out of the park this morning and drive to Puerto Natales for a wonderful lunch and some time to shop. Afterward, we will drive on to Punta Arenas, with time for some late afternoon birding along the coast. We will have great opportunities for close-up photography and great looks at a wide variety of waterbirds, with Chilean Flamingo, White-tufted Grebe, various geese, Red Shoveler, Flying Steamer-Duck, Magellanic Snipe, and Red-gartered Coot among the possibilities. This evening, we'll gather for a final checklist session followed by dinner.

NIGHT: Hotel Cabo de Hornos, Punta Arenas

November 6, Day 15: Return to Santiago

Today we'll fly back to Santiago. Depending on the departure time of our flight, we will have a relaxed few hours of morning birding around Punta Arenas; among the options are a visit to the Reserva Canquen Colorado or a drive south of Punta Arenas. Time permitting, we'll have lunch at a splendid French restaurant in town before catching our flight to Santiago.

On arrival in Santiago, we will transfer back to the Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Convention Center, where a room has been reserved in your name. Upon arrival at the hotel, we will break until dinner, at which time we will discuss plans for the following day.

NIGHT: Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Conference Center

November 7, Day 16: The Andes: Yerba Loca Reserve, Farellones, and Valle Nevado

Today marks the start of the second half of our trip as our focus shifts to central Chile.

We'll get an early start to our adventure this morning, leaving the hotel just after breakfast to avoid the city traffic. It is just a short distance out of town that we begin to climb the scenic foothills of the Andes. Each of our stops along the highway holds the promise of a first encounter with the special birds of the Mediterranean-like woodland and scrub known as *matorral*. A variety of raptors may be seen overhead while an impressive assortment of terrestrial species scamper

around beneath the vegetation. Among those ground-dwellers, we will be looking especially for three endemic tapaculos: Dusky Tapaculo, Moustached Turca, and striking but skulky White-throated Tapaculo. The latter two have amazingly loud, musical songs, while the little Dusky Tapaculo utters a trilling *churr* that gives it its Chilean name, Churrin.

We'll also watch for Chilean Tinamou, the endemic Dusky-tailed Canastero, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Austral Pygmy-Owl, Striped Woodpecker, Chilean Mockingbird, Diuca Finch, and the striking Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, a member of the cotinga family. The cute Fence Degu, an endemic rodent, may also be seen sunning on rock walls.



Long-tailed Meadowlark (male) © Andrew Whittaker

We'll continue to gain elevation into Yerba Loca Reserve. At about 7,200 feet, Yerba Loca is a good place to look for such sought-after species as Striped Woodpecker, Patagonian Tyrant, and Long-tailed Meadowlark. Overhead, we can hope for fine looks at an Andean Condor or a Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle. Among the mammals, we will keep a special eye out for the Culpeo (Andean Fox).

Our final destinations for the afternoon are the mountain town of Farellones and the Valle Nevado, the Valley of Snow. The road to Farellones is marked by some 40 switchbacks before reaching the Valle Nevado, at an elevation of 9,000 feet.

Pullouts at the switchbacks offer excellent birding and breathtaking scenery. Snow-covered Andean peaks surround us while blue-hued mountain streams ripple down the slopes and millions of hillside poppies blaze a vivid orange. We may also find the turquoise flower spikes of

the puya, an impressive bromeliad whose blossoms are a favorite nectar source for Giant Hummingbirds.



Andean Condor (male) © Andrew Whittaker

We'll be looking for a number of very local species here, including Black-winged Ground-Dove, Cordilleran and Sharp-billed canasteros, Scale-throated Earthcreeper, Black-fronted and White-browed ground-tyrants, Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, Greater Yellow-Finch, Yellow-rumped Siskin, and Band-tailed, Mourning, and Plumbeous sierra finches. These high elevations are also home to the White-sided Hillstar, an amazing hummingbird, and we will pay particular attention to the Rufous-banded Miners as we try to pick out their rarer look-alike, the Creamy-rumped Miner. In good weather, we should have exceptional studies of Andean Condors, the largest of the Americas' flighted birds, at their daytime roost and in flight. With luck, we may encounter a Lesser Horned Owl or the comical Coruro, a chunky rodent with big yellow teeth, endemic to Chile.

NIGHT: Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Conference Center

November 8, Day 17: Santiago to Talca

Today we will head south through a rich agricultural landscape, famous for its excellent vineyards. With a climate like that of California and Bordeaux, this part of Chile produces grapes of the highest quality; the cabernet sauvignons, chardonnays, merlots, and sauvignon blancs grown here are especially renowned.

Our way south toward the city of Talca takes us between shimmering volcanic peaks to the east and the coastal mountains to the west. We will stop for lunch about 30 miles southeast of Talca, then pay a visit to Colbún Lake, a reservoir on the Maule River that provides water for agriculture and for hydroelectric power. Colbún's shoreline, open water, and surrounding vegetation are also home to a fine variety of birds. Among the many possibilities are the local Chiloé Wigeon, Spectacled Duck, Black-faced Ibis, Andean Gull, Chilean Pigeon, and, best of all, a superb colony of colorful Burrowing Parakeets, big and bright and noisy as macaws.



Colorful Burrowing Parakeets breed along river banks. © Andrew Whittaker

As we continue to our secluded forested lodge, we will watch the river for Torrent Ducks, often in attendance with the cutest of ducklings; in the southern subspecies found here, adult males are all black beneath. The final stretch of our drive takes us up through forested foothills to the tiny community of Vilches and our lovely family-run lodge. We'll spend two nights in this forested hotel complex, with birds right at our doorstep.

NIGHT: Hotel Picamaderos, Vilches

November 9, Day 18: Altos de Lircay National Reserve

The Altos de Lircay National Reserve, also known as the Vilches Protected Area, is a 37,000-acre preserve created in 1996 to protect the sensitive vegetation, wildlife, and other natural wonders of the precordillera of San Clemente. By any measure, this ancient mountain range is a spectacular place, its magnificent *Nothofagus* Forest dissected by deep gorges. Much of the park is above tree line, with the highest sector reaching over 7,300 feet, offering stunning views of giant snow-capped volcanoes and of the Lircay River as it flows through a channel of lava.

After breakfast today, armed with a picnic lunch, we will strike out on the reserve's well-kept forest trails and dirt roads, looking for wonderful birds among giant coigüe (genus *Nothofagus*) and roble (genus *Lophozonia*) trees, some covered with an odd orange fungus that, in season, is a local delicacy. Majestic orchids brighten the forest understory.

Our first objective will be to track down the endemic Chestnut-throated Huet-huet (pronounced *wet-wet*); we will turn its loud vocalizations to good purpose as we search for this large and remarkably colorful member of the tapaculo family. Another of South America's truly great birds, the spectacular



Green-backed Firecrown (male)
© Andrew Whittaker

Magellanic Woodpecker, is fairly common here. We will also keep our eyes peeled for the rare White-throated Hawk, Striped Woodpecker, Austral Pygmy-Owl, Austral Parakeet, Fire-eyed Diucon, Black-chinned Siskin, and Diuca Finch. Blue-tailed Tree Iguanas and lovely Culpeo Foxes often visit the picnic area.

We will devote the later afternoon to an exploration of the hotel gardens and adjacent woodlands, where we may encounter Chilean Pigeon, Thorn-tailed Rayadito, the nuthatch-like White-throated Treerunner, Magellanic Tapaculo, Tufted Tit-Tyrant, and Patagonian Sierra Finch. Green-backed Firecrowns provide nonstop action at the lodge's hummingbird feeders. After a wonderful dinner, a nighttime excursion may reward us with views of the seldom seen Rufous-legged Owl, a lovely bird often found on the hotel grounds.

NIGHT: Hotel Picamaderos, Vilches

November 10, Day 19: Return to Santiago

Today will largely be dedicated to making the return trip to Santiago. We'll likely have time this morning for a bit of final birding around the hotel. En route to Santiago we may have time to bird at a lake where we might see our first Spectacled Tyrant or the striking Band-tailed Sierra-Finch; waterfowl can also be abundant here.

On returning to Santiago, we will transfer to La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport where a room has been reserved in your name. Upon arrival at the hotel, we will break until dinner, at which time we will discuss plans for the following day.

NIGHT: La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport

November 11, Day 20: El Yeso Valley

We'll leave Santiago after an early breakfast, head south and east through rich farmland and the Maipo River valley. As we start to gain altitude, we'll pass through the valley's picturesque "capital," San José de Maipo. Following the river, we have a good chance of finding the stunning

Torrent Duck, often with ducklings in this season. Once at our destination, El Yeso Valley, we will bird our way up a rough and rocky road.



The endemic Crag Chilia © Andrew Whittaker

Our first stop will be an attempt at the endemic Crag Chilia, a local inhabitant of steep-sided, rocky valleys. Here, too, we will find the first of several tapaculos, the endemic and very loud Moustached Turca. These large, chunky ground-dwellers hop and run quickly over the rocky ground, foraging like towhees as they move along: this is bold behavior for a tapaculo. In damp meadows, we'll seek Yellow-rumped and Thick-billed siskins (the latter rare), Mountain Parakeet, White-sided Hillstar, Giant Hummingbird, and Chilean Flicker. We will keep our eyes open on rocky outcrops for the Southern Mountain Vizcacha, a large half-squirrel-half-wallaby-like rodent.



Gray-breasted Seedsnipe © Andrew Whittaker

The scenery becomes even more spectacular as we climb higher and emerge into a huge glacial valley, a wonderful natural amphitheater. Stunning snow-capped peaks and immense scree slopes line the valley sides. The still waters of turquoise lakes mirror the breathtaking scenery, making for a photographer's dream! It is here that we'll set about the day's main task, finding the enigmatic and often confiding Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, one of the world's most beautiful shorebirds. A few pairs nest here each year along the crystal-clear streams and saline edges of high-elevation bogs. We will carefully and deliberately work our way through the area until we succeed in finding our quarry. The search for the sandpiper-plover will bring the added pleasure of singing Gray-breasted Seedsnipe in their vertical flight displays. We often encounter both Andean and Upland geese here as well.



Reservoir in El Yeso Valley © Andrew Whittaker

Our picnic lunch will be set in scenery glorious even by Chilean standards. Our explorations will turn up a fine variety of other target species, among them Crested Duck, Andean Condor, Mountain Caracara, White-sided Hillstar, Sharp-billed and Cordilleran canasteros, Buff-winged

and Gray-flanked cinclodes, Scale-throated Earthcreeper, Rufous-banded Miner, and possibly its highland counterpart, the Creamy-rumped Miner. In grassy areas, we will learn how to distinguish the Cinereous, Spot-billed, and White-browed ground-tyrants. Wherever a supply of seeds is to be found, we should expect Gray-hooded and Plumbeous sierra finches.

By early to mid-afternoon, we'll retrace our route out of the valley and back to Santiago, with stops to look for any expected species that have evaded us. We'll arrive at the hotel in the late afternoon, with time to freshen up before dinner.

NIGHT: La Quinta by Wyndham Santiago Airport, Santiago

November 12, Day 21: Santiago to the Maipo Estuary; Pablo Neruda House; Concón via Laguna Cartagena

Setting our sights on coastal environments, we'll head from Santiago for points west. Our first destination is the Maipo River Wetland and Estuary, where we will spend most of the morning. In the afternoon we will work our way north to the coastal communities of Viña del Mar and Concón by way of Laguna Cartagena. In between we will take in a bit of history with a stop at the home of Pablo Neruda, Chile's most famous and beloved poet.

About an hour and forty-five minutes west of Santiago exists one of Chile's most important bird refuges, the Maipo River Wetland and Estuary. This area, where the Maipo River flows into the Pacific Ocean, is of such great conservation importance that it has been made part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). In an area of 345 acres are a sand bar, estuary, grasslands, marshes, shrublands, dunes, and beach—a vital nesting area for gulls, terns, and skimmers, and a sanctuary for wintering shorebirds from North America.

We will spend a couple of hours at this site, where the reed-margined lakeshore provides cover for the dazzling Many-colored Rush Tyrant. We will make a special effort to see the recently described Ticking Doradito, which should be newly arrived and in song. The Dusky Tapaculo, a Chilean endemic, is here, too, and the drab Wren-like Rushbird's unbirdlike metallic clicking will be a constant background noise. We also hope to see Collared Plover, the unique desert-nesting

Gray Gull, hordes of Black Skimmers freshly arrived from the Amazon, the rare Snowy-crowned Tern, Correndera Pipit, and boreal migrants such as Hudsonian Godwit, Whimbrel, Red Knot, Sanderling, and Baird’s Sandpiper.



Many-colored Rush-Tyrant © Andrew Whittaker

The well-kept trails of Laguna Cartagena Reserve offer close-up views of an abundance of waterfowl, and the photographic opportunities here are excellent. The many secluded pools are ideal for viewing species typical of reedbeds and of open water alike. We have chances here for Red Shoveler, Chiloé Wigeon, White-cheeked and Yellow-billed pintails, Silvery and White-tufted grebes, the elegant “White-backed” Black-necked Stilt, Chilean Swallow, Diuca Finch, and Yellow-winged Blackbird.

In complement to our birding endeavors, our day will include a stop at one of the homes of Pablo Neruda, a man often referred to as the national poet of Chile. A writer from the age of 13, Neruda established himself early on as a person of prodigious talent, writing poems covering many themes. His verses about birds and nature represent some of his most endearing works, but a number of Neruda’s most important—and searing—pieces were rooted in his political views.

Neruda's success and popularity with the pen ultimately led him into the world of politics where he worked as a diplomat in more than one administration. Neruda was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1971. The great Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez declared Neruda "the greatest poet of the twentieth century, in any language." Neruda's involvement with the Communist government in Chile, and his subsequent association with the socialism of Salvador Allende made him *persona non grata* in the years of the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in the early 1970s. The cause of Neruda's death in 1973 has long been a source of controversy. Neruda had three houses, all of which now operate as museums. One of these is on the coast, and which we will visit.

During his career, Pablo Neruda wrote several poems about his favorite Chilean foods, so we will have lunch at Pablo Neruda's restaurant, where we will enjoy Neruda's favorite, delicious dishes.



Chiloé Wigeon © Andrew Whittaker

Our next stop will be at a small marsh where we have a good chance to see the retiring Stripe-backed Bittern, a bird we've had great success with on previous tours. Another species found here includes the wonderful Plumbeous Rail.

We'll work our way north along the coast, with lunch at a picturesque restaurant; famous for its excellent seafood, the restaurant is also a great spot to see the endemic Seaside Cinclodes.

We'll reach the coastal resort communities of Viña del Mar and Concón in midafternoon. The first settlers of this area were the native "changos," fishermen who dominated the region as high as the valley of Peuco before the arrival of the Spanish. Today, this is a tourist destination par

excellence, attracting visitors from all around the world and well known for its lovely gardens, beaches, and high-rise buildings; wealthy Santiago residents commute here for weekends.

Our hotel for the next two nights overlooks coastal rocks and the sea, where we can enjoy the resident Red-legged Cormorants and Inca Terns, perhaps the most beautiful members of their respective families. Outside, we often have luck in finding Gray Gull and Marine Otter. The hotel layout is such that sunsets may be viewed from the outdoor deck.

NIGHT: Radisson Blu Accua, Concón

November 13, Day 22: Half-day Pelagic Trip; Cachagua and Return to Concón

Today we will enjoy an action-packed (and optional) half day offshore in the Humboldt Current, which surges north from Antarctica. Taking us into the most nutrient-rich waters in the world, with an abundance of ocean life, this is truly the crème de la crème of pelagic trips.

After an early breakfast, we'll embark on our private boat (with a bathroom) for five or six hours of nonstop excitement. Spring, when the seas are typically very calm, is the perfect time to go offshore. No place on earth offers more productive seabirding than the Humboldt Current, where any trip can turn up a wonderful cross-section of sub-Antarctic seabirds and warm-water petrels. On a "good" day, the number of birds out here reaches the thousands!



The Salvin's Albatross is always the most common of the albatross. © Andrew Whittaker

Our objectives will include Pacific specialties and southern-tier pelagic birds. Among the many possibilities are a marvelous variety of albatrosses, including the lovely Salvin's (the most common), Black-browed, the immense Northern Royal (whose 12-foot wingspan has to be seen to be believed), the less common Buller's, or even the rare Chatham Albatross.

Other species seen in these waters include Northern Giant-Petrel, Pink-footed and Sooty shearwaters, Wilson's and the rare Elliot's storm-petrels, the sought-after Peruvian Diving-Petrel, and Westland, White-chinned, Juan Fernandez, and Masatierra petrels (the last two rare). Chumming from the back of the boat should attract a tremendous flock following us, affording great views and superb photographic opportunities. Closer to shore, we can expect Inca Tern, Peruvian Booby, and the gorgeous Red-legged Cormorant. Marine mammals can also be good here, and with a little luck, we might see Dusky and Common Dolphins or South American Fur Seals; even Humpback and Sperm whales are occasionally found here.

We'll be back at the dock in time for a tasty seafood lunch in a nearby restaurant. Afterward, we'll drive the short distance to a mixed colony of Humboldt Penguins and Peruvian Pelicans. There is also a good chance of seeing the playful Marine Otter. We will return to our hotel to rest up and enjoy a good dinner.

NIGHT: Radisson Blu Accua, Concón

November 14, Day 23: La Campana National Park and Batuco Lagoon Nature Reserve; return to Santiago; departure for home

On our final day together, we will experience a classic day of birding in foothill and coastal habitats. Our destinations are La Campana National Park and Batuco Lagoon Nature Reserve.

La Campana National Park is a protected natural area in central Chile located in the Valparaiso Region northwest of Santiago. The park covers 31 square miles and was established in 1967 to protect the region's unique botanical ecosystems.

The location of the park, in Chile's Mediterranean zone, in tandem with its unique plant compositions makes this area a fantastic place for birding, a place that hosts many of Chile's specialty birds. Here, we may find Mustached Turca, Chilean Tinamou, Chilean Pigeon, Striped woodpecker, Chilean Flicker, Austral Pymy-Owl, and Giant Hummingbird among many others.

Batuco Wetlands is the largest inland wetland in central Chile and one of the country's most species-rich hotspots. The main lagoon has an excellent boardwalk where we can search for many waterfowl species, including specialties like Black-headed Duck and Rosy-billed Pochard. In the extensive reedbeds we can find Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, Wrenlike Rushbird, and Yellow-winged Blackbird.

We expect to arrive back in Santiago and **La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport** in the mid-to late afternoon, where day rooms have been reserved. In the evening, we'll gather for a final field checklist session and a farewell dinner before transferring to the airport. International flights to the USA generally depart late at night (or just after midnight), arriving in the United States the following morning.

DAY ROOM: La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport

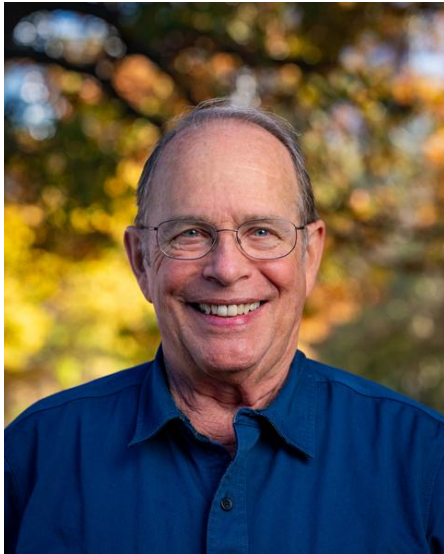
November 15, Day 24: Arrival home

Flights that departed Santiago the previous evening will arrive in the USA this morning.

ESSENTIAL TOUR INFORMATION

TOUR SIZE: This tour is limited to 10 tour participants.

TOUR LEADERS: This tour will be led by **Jeri Langham** and **Fernando Diaz**.



Jeri M. Langham has a Ph.D. in plant ecology from Washington State University, and after 38 years as a professor of biological sciences at California State University in Sacramento, retired in May 2008. He received the first Outstanding Teacher Award from the newly formed College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in 1997; the Outstanding Faculty Award from the Science Educational Equity and Minority Organization of Science Students organizations in 2005; and his University's third annual Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service in 2006.

Jeri has ardently birded all over North America, as well as Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Kenya, South Africa, Borneo, Thailand, Cuba, and Australia. Born and raised in Venezuela, he speaks fluent Spanish. Known for his enthusiasm and boundless energy, Jeri thoroughly enjoys searching for birds and sharing them with others. His passion for teaching and his natural teaching abilities soon become apparent as his tour participants enjoy learning more about the biological world around them. Jeri is a former member of the California Bird Records Committee. He is a Founding Director and the Fundraising Director for the Neotropical Grassland Conservancy.



Fernando Díaz, or “Feña,” showed a special interest in birds that lived around his neighborhood during his childhood. He grew up birding in the fields and wetlands of Lampa, a few kilometers from Santiago de Chile, where he developed his bird observation abilities at an early age. Feña has strong skills for recognizing birds by song. His first serious approach to bird study was as a volunteer participant in waterfowl censuses and bird banding. This was the catalyst that led him to leave his landscaper position in

order to pursue his true passions, birds and nature. Feña has traveled extensively throughout most of the habitats of Chile and several countries in South America birding and studying birds. He also spent five months banding birds in the U.S. and Canada. He enjoys spending time birding in the field, especially in the high Andes of Chile, where he co-leads a study on the charismatic Diademed Sandpiper-Plover. Feña is also one of the eBird-Chile reviewers, and he is involved in several other bird projects with the Chilean NGO Red de Observadores de Aves de Chile (the Chilean Birders Network). Feña leads bird and wildlife photography trips in Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Brazil. During his travels he enjoys showing and teaching tour participants about birds, as well as all other aspects of nature.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOUR FEE: \$ ____ per person based on double occupancy. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 through dinner on Day 23, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, boat excursions as described, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour are included (three internal flights in economy class: Santiago–Puerto Montt, Puerto Montt–Punta Arenas, and Punta Arenas–Santiago). The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below. If the minimum

group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

Domestic Airfare At the time of itinerary publication, the approximate cost of the air tickets is \$850. VENT reserves the right to assess a surcharge should costs increase significantly.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of \$_____ will be added to your tour fee.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The initial deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. A second deposit of **30% of the remaining tour fee** is due 180 days prior to departure (April 26, 2026). We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (June 25, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: Tour prices are based on the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If rates change drastically, it may be necessary to impose a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges have been passed on to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL SURCHARGES: Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:** A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:** No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:** Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

CANCELLATION BY VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A ***“Force Majeure”*** event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as

evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

About Medjet’s MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company’s primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical

transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same

fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: We request that you limit your luggage to one medium or large bag and one carry-on bag, if possible. Soft-sided luggage with wheels is recommended.

This tour includes three internal flights. The airlines are typically strict about luggage limits, and impose a more restrictive weight limit on domestic flights than on international flights. For checked luggage, the limit is currently one bag at 23 kilograms (50 lbs.) per person; for carry-on luggage, the weight is limited to 5 kilograms (about 11 lbs.) per person. The overweight charge for checked luggage amounts to a little more than a dollar per kilogram. In truth, weight allowances are not always strictly enforced; however, we recommend that travelers adhere to the stated limits. **Please do not bring large carry-on bags.** At present, smaller roll-ons up to about 18" in height are permitted, while anything over that size will probably have to be checked. In general, packing lighter is better. Extra baggage can be securely stored in Santiago while we are in the far south of the country. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag.

Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS: A passport is required for entry into Chile and must be valid for the duration of your stay. Please check the expiration date on your passport. You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps. A tourist card is issued at the international port-of-entry.

If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of the tour departure date. Allow four to six weeks to obtain a passport. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an

expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, many post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html> for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.**

VISAs: Visas are not required for U.S. and Canadian citizens for entry into Chile for a stay of up to three months. Note that the "reciprocity" fee that formerly applied to all U.S. and Canadian citizens entering Chile has been eliminated. Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. citizens may vary; please check with the consulate or embassy of Chile.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING: This program is a very casual birding and natural history trip. We suggest you bring primarily field-type clothing and be prepared to dress in layers, as it will certainly be cold at times in Patagonia, especially early in the morning. Casual attire will be appropriate for all occasions. The following items are recommended:

- **Pants:** A couple of pairs of pants are essential. Many people prefer lightweight pants made of cotton or other material, but denim, though not as comfortable, is certainly acceptable. Lined thermal pants are great against the cool winds sometimes encountered in Patagonia or on our ferry crossings.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of lightweight durable and dull colored materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular.

- **T-shirts (long- and short-sleeved):** Simple cotton shirts for wearing under warmer outerwear.
- **Jackets:** A warm, water- and wind-proof jacket is essential for the Andes, especially the south, and for Patagonia.
- **Rain Pants:** Can do double duty as both rain protection and an extra layer in lieu of long underwear on cold or windy days.
- **Warm, waterproof gloves and mittens:** Strongly recommended. Although Chile warms up quickly in the spring, cold weather is very much a possibility, particularly in Patagonia with wind chill.
- **Warm Socks:** Thin cotton or polypropylene socks are a good choice, in combination with a few pairs of wool socks. It is important to have clean, dry socks when in the field.
- **Hats, scarves, and gaiters:** A hat for protection from the sun is essential, while a warm pull-down hat and scarf or neck gaiter will come in handy in windy conditions.
- **Outerwear:** A warm jacket is strongly recommended. A polar fleece is recommended when a jacket may not be necessary. It is important to come to Chile well-prepared with insulation against cold temperatures.

FOOTWEAR: For footwear, we recommend a good trail-walking shoe or light hiking boot (waterproof or Gore-Tex) when in the field. Athletic shoes are acceptable but will not keep your feet dry and can become soiled in muddy conditions. A good walking shoe (such as an athletic shoe) may be preferred for down times or when traveling between destinations. Rubber boots are not necessary.

EQUIPMENT: Having the right equipment makes the travel experience more enjoyable. Below is a list of items that will ensure you are well prepared:

- **Daypack:** Good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment during all land excursions
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Travel alarm clock**
- **Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection**
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions:** Sunscreen of at least SPF 30 is strongly recommended.

- **Personal toiletries**
- **Water bottle:** Please bring your favorite water bottle as it helps to reduce waste.
- **Cameras, lenses, memory cards, and extra batteries**
- **Collapsible walking stick:** A highly recommended item for those who have trouble walking.
- **Folding stool:** Recommended for those who have trouble standing for more than 10 or 15 minutes at a time. The typical folding stool is small, lightweight and portable, consisting of three aluminum legs connected by a central bolt, with a sturdy but pliable material seat.
- **Tissue packs**

Binoculars: We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

Spotting Scopes: Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS

CLIMATE & WEATHER: This tour will operate during the austral spring, when the weather can vary markedly. The expansive south-north breadth of the tour means we are certain to encounter a diversity of conditions. We're more likely to experience cooler conditions in Patagonia and warmer, sunnier conditions farther north, such as around Santiago. Moreover, temperatures and conditions will vary according to elevation. The coastal regions will be more moderate in temperature while the mountains will be cooler, especially in the early morning and at night, when temperatures can drop significantly. Around Santiago, temperatures may

range from the 60s to low 80s (°F); from the 50s to low 70s in the Andes; and in Patagonia, from the upper 30s to upper 60s.

Please note that conditions in Chile in the October/November period can run the spectrum from sunny and warm to overcast, windy, and cold. If spring arrives late, participants should be prepared for cold temperatures, heavy overcast, strong wind, and possible rain, particularly in the Andes and in Patagonia. Snow is also possible (which did occur on our 2023 tour).

CONDITIONS: While birding will receive heavy emphasis, this program encompasses other aspects of natural history including scenery, mammal viewing, star-gazing, and doses of botany (the flowering plants can be incredible). The scope of the tour and the planned range of activities necessitate to travel by multiple means, including bus, coaster and/or Sprinter; airplane, of which there are three internal flights; and auto ferry.

Accommodations range from good to excellent. In all situations, we strive for “best available.” The Hosteria Pehoe in Tierra del Fuego National Park is heated by a log fire if it is cold. Please note that while this lodge sits in a premier location for scenery and logistical planning, the rooms are only of average to good quality. The food is good to excellent throughout.

In central Chile, all activities take place within a few hours of Santiago. Accommodation and meals are good to excellent, and walking will be on mostly flat and even terrain. Reaching the Yeso Valley consists of round-trip travel from Santiago to the mountains and return. It is a long day, with 5.5–6 hours of travel time in the bus (2.5–3 hours each way). We will leave the hotel early (by 6:30 a.m.) and return in the late afternoon. Upon arrival in the valley, we will spend several hours birding the various microhabitats there in search of a variety of specialty and widespread birds, principally the Diademed Sandpiper-Plover. The elevation of the Yeso Valley is 2,980 m (~ 9,780feet). Our pelagic trip of five to six hours is on a larger boat, appropriate for the open ocean, with a bathroom. Water and snacks will always be available.

We try to minimize the amount of time we spend in vehicles, but there will indeed be one or two days with long drives (with some birding stops) in Patagonia.

Walking conditions are generally easy, as our activities in most of the areas we visit are along flat roads and trails. There are some gradual climbs in both Altos de Lircay and Torres del Paine national parks. No activities will take place above 3,300 feet elevation, and we have never had any problems with altitude sickness.

Puma Excursions: Our excursions to view wild Pumas entail driving to various points along roads either in the park or on an adjacent private property, then potentially walking from one to three miles across open and rolling grassy terrain interspersed with short, stunted bushes. These excursions are not overly difficult, and we will make frequent stops to scan the surrounding terrain, especially if the Pumas are hunting. This activity also involves stopping to sit or stand quietly as we observe the animals engaging in undisturbed behavior such as sleeping, playing with cubs, or attending a kill. **Please note: Leaving the road for Puma observations will certainly require physical hiking and is therefore optional.**

We emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands that exceed their capabilities. All walking will be done at a slow pace, except for the Puma hiking. Meals will also be good to excellent, and we will be able to enjoy high quality Chilean seafood on more than one occasion, as well as lamb barbeque and French cuisine in Punta Arenas on the main tour. **Those who are not fit for light to moderate physical activity, including those with physical disabilities that affect mobility and balance or other conditions associated with poor health, are advised not to join the trip.**

Special Note: This tour is intended as a natural history extravaganza, with virtually no time included for exploring the country's historical and cultural attractions. Participants with an interest in enjoying more of Santiago or visiting other parts of the country should come early or stay after the tour ends. Santiago is a European-flavored blend of colonial and modern architecture, reflected in its many churches, museums, theaters, and parks. Some of the city's famous landmarks you can visit on your own are the beautiful horse track Club Hipico, the Pre-Columbian Art Museum, and the summit of San Cristobal Hill, where an enormous statue of the Virgin Mary overlooks the city.

FOOD & WATER: Food is generally safe to consume at all locations we visit. Consuming tap water should be avoided. Bottled water will always be available. Your tour leaders will advise you of food and water safety considerations at all locations.

CURRENCY & SPENDING: Your trip to Chile includes all necessary expenses. You will want to bring enough cash to cover personal expenses not included in the program, such as gifts, laundry, special gratuities, meals on your own, and personal items. It is best to carry small denominations of cash as many places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills. While U.S. dollars may be accepted in more populous areas, it is always convenient to have a supply of local currency for such items. It is best to acquire local currency before leaving home, or at the airport or a bank upon arrival in Santiago. Most places accept credit cards, especially Visa and MasterCard.

Should you extend your vacation in Chile beyond what is offered in the program, you'll want to obtain local currency. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting "XE—The World's Favorite Currency Site" at <http://www.xe.com/>.

ELECTRICITY: The electrical current in Chile is 220V (110-120V in the U.S.). Most electrical outlets are of the European standard socket "Type C or Type L." These outlets are ungrounded, with openings for two round pins. A less common outlet features openings for three flat blades, with two of the blades angled. Both types are in use in most of the hotels we will stay in. A few hotels may provide plug-in adapters that can accommodate standard American-type plug-ins with two flat pins of similar size (but not with one flat blade larger than the other). Many appliances now are dual-designed to operate on European electrical voltages, but you definitely should bring adapters and an all-purpose transformer if there is any doubt whether your appliances are suitable for higher voltage.

INTERNET ACCESS: Internet and Wi-Fi service is available at all of the hotels.

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the language primarily spoken in Chile.

TIME: Chile is on Chilean Standard Time (CLT) and is 2 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry service is available at all hotels we stay at more than one night, and will be available at extra charge.

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

As of this writing, no major shots or inoculations are required for entry into Chile.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance for avoiding COVID-19.

TYPHOID: VENT recommends vaccination against Typhoid, a bacterial disease endemic to Chile, caused by *Salmonella typhi*. It is transmitted through consumption of contaminated food and water, typically when someone who is infected uses the bathroom and does not wash their hands. Symptoms may include high fever, weakness, stomach pain, headache, diarrhea or constipation, cough, and loss of appetite.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun's ultraviolet rays are more dangerous in Chile than many other places in the world, due to the long daylight hours in a far southerly destination. The sun's ultraviolet rays are damaging to the eyes and skin with prolonged exposure. Anytime you are outdoors, you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors, and be sure to bring an ample supply of high-SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultraviolet-blocking, polarized sunglasses.

BITING INSECTS: Biting insects are not a serious problem in most places we visit on this tour, and there are no chiggers at all; however, we may encounter some mosquitoes in wetlands around Santiago or in some of the forests in the south. To protect yourself, we recommend wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants and applying insect repellent when necessary. Lotions are preferable to sprays, as they are less obtrusive to others and tend to come in smaller, more easily packed bottles. Cutter and OFF! are leading brands.

INSECT REPELLENTS: There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

[Insect repellents for the skin](#) are commonly available in three forms:

DEET: (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.

Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.

Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

Insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

Permanone® (Permethrin): is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel health).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

Birds: Either of the following field guides are highly recommended for this tour.

Jaramillo, Alvaro. ***Birds of Chile***. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

This excellent guide has long been the standard for bird identification in Chile. It is arguably the best all-around field guide to the birds of this country, featuring excellent plates, text, and interesting taxonomic notes. It is also lightweight and easily portable.

Cifuentes, Gonzalo E. Gonzáles and Daniel E. Martínez Piña. ***Field Guide to the Birds of Chile***. Helm Field Guides. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021.

An excellent newer guide showing new additions to the country's avifauna. Plates are excellent, especially non-passerines. Text good, too, and updated showing all vagrants recently recorded. It's lightweight and easily portable.

BIRDING RESOURCES AND GENERAL NATURE:

Chester, Sharon. *A Wildlife Guide to Chile*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. Excellent read and a perfect all-around natural history guide. Full of information and good illustrations; coverage ranges from plants, animals, fish, cetaceans, and butterflies to the country's various habitats, zones, and weather types.

HISTORY AND CULTURE:

Bridges, E. Lucas. *Uttermost Part of the Earth: The First History of Tierra del Fuego and the Fuegian Indians*. London: Overlook/Rookery Publishing, 2007. (Earlier editions from other publishers are also available).

Excellent background on Tierra del Fuego; essential reading for those on the main tour.

Shipton, Eric Earle. *Tierra del Fuego: The Fatal Lodestone*. Readers Union, 1974.

Long out-of-print but recently republished, this classic work recounts the history of the discovery of sailing routes in the region of Tierra del Fuego and of the settlement of the region. Part historical narrative and part autobiography, Shipton chronicles some of the most remarkable adventures imaginable. Essential reading for those on the main tour.

TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any

reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on , 2026 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

View the complete [Terms and Conditions](#) on our website.

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