



AWASi

OUTINGS

SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA CHILE

OUTINGS

AWASI SUGGESTS A SERIES OF EXCURSIONS SO YOU CAN ENJOY THE MAGIC OF THE ATACAMA GEOGRAPHY, THE SILENCE OF ITS LANDSCAPE AND THE WARMTH OF ITS PEOPLE.

EACH COUPLE CAN PROGRAM THEIR OUTINGS ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN RHYTHM AND PARTICULAR INTERESTS, AND WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN EXPERIENCED GUIDE WILLING TO SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLACE AND HIS OWN EXPERIENCES.

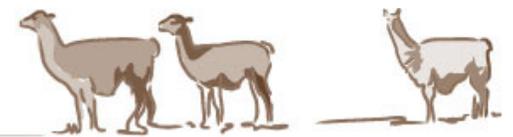
OUR WISH IS THAT EVERY IMAGE, EVERY ROAD, AND EVERY MEMORY WILL BECOME AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE.

KEEP IN MIND THAT THESE PROPOSALS ARE JUST SUGGESTIONS, AS ALL THE OUTINGS MAY BE FITTED TO YOUR TASTES AND PREFERENCES. SOME OF THE EXCURSIONS HAVE BEEN PLANNED FOR THE LAST DAYS OF YOUR STAY AT AWASI SO THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT USED TO THE ALTITUDE MAY GRADUALLY ADAPT TO IT.



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THINGS TO BRING ALONG

SUNSCREEN



SUNGLASSES



HAT



AWASI WATER BOTTLE



BATHING SUIT



SANDALS



COMFORTABLE OUTDOOR CLOTHING



COMFORTABLE SHOES



TREKKING SHOES



BACKPACK



MOUNTAIN CLOTHING



WINDBREAKER, FLEECE OR SWEATER



WINTER CLOTHING



ATACAMA HISTORY (8.000 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 18.6 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 FOOT HIKE: 4.3 MILES APPROX. (JUST QUITOR PUKARA AND MUSEUM)
 DURATION: 3 HOURS APPROX.

THIS EXCURSION IS A FASCINATING TRIP THROUGH TIME. WE LEAVE AWASI AND DRIVE TO THE **QUITOR PUKARA**, AN ATACAMA FORTRESS DATING BACK TO 1.000 AD, LOCATED IN THE AYLLU OF QUITOR, ABOUT 2 MILES FROM SAN PEDRO.

WE ASCEND THE RUINS AND FROM THEIR HEIGHT, WE ENJOY A PRIVILEGED VIEW OF **THE ANDES**, THE SAN PEDRO RIVER AND THE ZONE'S CULTIVATION. THEN WE CONTINUE ON TO THE **TOWN OF TULOR**, LOCATED SOME 6 MILES FROM SAN PEDRO AND ONE OF THE FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT ATACAMENIAN SETTLEMENTS, DATING BACK TO 800 BC. HERE WE WILL VISIT THE EXCAVATION SITE OF THE RUINS AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF ORIGINAL HOMES, CREATED ACCORDING TO THE CRITERION OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS.

FINALLY, YOU HAVE THE OPTION TO VISIT THE **FATHER LEPAIGE ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM**, WHERE ATACAMENIAN HISTORY IS REVEALED IN RICH DETAIL. FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN OUR HISTORY AND IN ATACAMENIAN OR "LICKANANTAI" CULTURE, AS WELL AS UNDERSTAND WHY SAN PEDRO IS CHILE'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL CAPITAL, THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE MUST.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



GUIDED WALK AROUND TOWN (8.000 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 FOOT HIKE: 1.24 MILES
 DURATION: 2 HOURS APPROX.

THIS IS AN IDEAL WALK TO GET TO KNOW SAN PEDRO AND ITS HISTORY, SEEING BEYOND ITS RESTAURANTS AND SHOPS.

WE LEAVE AWASI AND HEAD TO THE OLD DOWNTOWN, WITH A GUIDED TOUR OF THE FATHER LEPAIGE MUSEUM, THE TOWN SQUARE, THE TOWN CHURCH, THE HOUSE OF PEDRO DE VALDIVIA, THE CRAFT MARKET AND THE MAIN STREET.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



TOCONAO AND ATACAMA SALT FLATS (7.500 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 67 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 4 HOURS APPROX.

WE LEAVE AWASI HEADING SOUTH ON A PAVED ROAD TOWARDS THE SALT LAKE. AFTER ABOUT 24 MILES, WE REACH THE TOWN OF **TOCONAO**, FAMOUS FOR ITS BUILDINGS MADE OF **LIPARITE VOLCANIC STONE**. THERE, WE CAN VISIT ITS CHURCH AND HISTORIC BELL TOWER, AS WELL AS VISIT THE BOOTHS OF CRAFTSPEOPLE WHO OFFER THEIR GOODS IN THE SQUARE.

THEN, WE CONTINUE ON TO **CHAXA POND**, A NATIONAL RESERVE LOCATED AT THE ATACAMA SALT FLAT. THIS POND IS SURROUNDED BY SALT CRUSTS AND GYPSUM PRODUCED BY THE EVAPORATION OF SALTY GROUND WATER. HERE WE CAN OBSERVE THE **FLAMINGOES** THAT INHABIT THE SALT FLAT, AS WELL AS OTHER NATIVE BIRD SPECIES. THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY A LANDSCAPE OF CAPTIVATING BEAUTY FROM WHICH YOU CAN SEE THE DOMEYKO RANGE, THE SALT RANGE AND THE ANDES RANGE - A PANORAMA THAT BECOMES PARTICULARLY SPLENDID AT DUSK.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MOON VALLEY (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 24,8 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 3 HOURS APPROX.

WE LEAVE AWASI AND HEAD WEST TOWARDS THE SALT RANGE, WHERE WE WILL FIND MOON VALLEY, LOCATED SOME 15 MINUTES AWAY. ITS NAME SPEAKS OF THE LANDSCAPE'S MAGIC WE ARE ABOUT TO VISIT. AS THE TOUR PROGRESSES, WE STOP AT VARIOUS LOOKOUTS AND OBSERVE THE GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS WHICH, ADDED TO THE ACTION OF WIND AND WATER, HAVE CREATED A GEOGRAPHICAL RELIEF REMINISCENT OF THE INHOSPITABLE BEAUTY OF THE LUNAR SURFACE. IN THE MORNING, YOU CAN RELISH THE SILENCE AND SOLITUDE OF THIS MAGNIFICENT LANDSCAPE; IN THE EVENING, ENJOY THE SUNSET AS IT SUBTLY CHANGES COLORS OVER THE MOUNTAINS.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



CEJAR POND (7.500 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 22,3 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 3 HOURS APPROX.

WE LEAVE AWASI BY CAR AND HEAD SOUTH, CROSSING PART OF THE AYLLUS THAT ARE FARTHEST AWAY FROM SAN PEDRO, AND THEN TURN ONTO A DIRT ROAD WITH A MARVELOUS VIEW OF THE THREE SURROUNDING MOUNTAIN RANGES (THE ANDES, THE SALT, AND THE DOMEYKO).

AFTER SOME 11 MILES, WE REACH **CEJAR**, A SET OF THREE PONDS LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SALT FLAT AND IN ONE OF WHICH WE CAN BATHE. GIVEN ITS HIGH SALT CONCENTRATION, YOU CAN NOT ONLY FLOAT ON THE WATER, BUT CANNOT SINK, A PHENOMENON SIMILAR TO THAT FOUND IN THE DEAD SEA (ISRAEL). IN THIS PLACE WE CAN WATCH BIRDS THAT LIVE IN THE SALT FLAT ZONE AND ENJOY A PRIVILEGED VIEW OF THE SURROUNDING MOUNTAIN RANGES WHOSE FORMS AND COLORS REFLECT IN THE DEEP BLUE OF ITS WATERS. THIS OUTING IS ALSO OPTIONAL ON BICYCLE (SEE CEJAR ON BIKE).

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



CATARPE (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 11,8 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 3 HOURS APPROX.

HEADING NORTH FROM AWASI IN JEEP, WE PASS THROUGH THE **QUITOR AYLLU**, FAMOUS FOR ITS PUKARA FORTRESS (SEE ATACAMA CULTURE), AND CROSS THE SAN PEDRO RIVER.

FROM HERE, WE WILL STOP IN DIFFERENT PLACES, SOAK UP LOCAL ATACAMENIAN HISTORY AND ENJOY A NEW VIEW OF THE SALT RANGE. WE RECOMMEND VISITING **THE TUNNEL** THROUGH WHICH THE OLD ROAD TO CALAMA PASSED, WHERE YOU CAN ENJOY A SPLENDID VIEW OF THE ANDES MOUNTAIN RANGE AND THE VALLEY AT YOUR FEET.

WE CAN ALSO WALK AROUND **QUEBRADA DEL DIABLO** AND APPRECIATE ITS STRANGE GYPSUM AND CLAY FORMATIONS. OVER A HILL IN THE DISTANCE, YOU CAN SEE THE RUINS OF A “**TAMBO INCAICO**,” AN ADMINISTRATION CENTER FROM THE INCAN ERA. WE WILL CONTINUE THROUGH THE CATARPE AYLLU AND COME TO THE SMALL **SAN ISIDRO CHAPEL**, SITUATED ON A SMALL HILL FROM WHERE WE CAN ADMIRE THE VALLEY AT ITS FULLEST.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY; 15 MINUTE HIKE UP AN INCLINED TRAIL TO VISIT THE TAMBO INCAICO.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MATANCILLA - YERBAS BUENAS (9.840 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 111, 8 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 4 HOURS APPROX.

WE SET OUT ON A HIGHWAY TOWARDS CALAMA, TURNING NORTH AFTER 28 MILES. UPON REACHING A PLACE CALLED **YERBAS BUENAS**, WE WALK AROUND AND OBSERVE THE ROCK ENGRAVINGS (**PETROGLYPHS**) CREATED BY THE INHABITANTS OF THE SALT FLAT BASIN NEARLY 3 THOUSAND YEARS AGO. NEXT, WE FOLLOW A ROAD THAT LEADS US TO **MATANCILLA**, A ZONE OF VALLEYS SURROUNDED BY STRIKING, MULTICOLORED HILLS WHERE VIBRANT GREY, GREEN, RED AND ORANGE COLORS COAT THE MOUNTAINSIDE OF THE DOMEYKO RANGE. BY CAR OR ON FOOT, YOU CAN SEE A LANDSCAPE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM THAT SEEN NEAR SAN PEDRO.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



PURITAMA (11.000 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 37, 2 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 3 HOURS APPROX.

THE ROAD TO THE HOT SPRINGS PROVIDES A NEW VIEW OF THE ANDEAN MOUNTAIN RANGE, WITH MARKED COLOR CHANGES IN ITS FORMATIONS AND VEGETATION CHARACTERIZED BY THE APPEARANCE OF THE FIRST HIGH ALTITUDE CACTI AND TALL SHRUBS.

UPON REACHING THE **HOT SPRINGS**, WE HEAD DOWN THE CREEK TO THE POOLS, WHICH ARE SURROUNDED BY NATIVE VEGETATION THAT ALSO ACTS AS A SHELTER FOR DIFFERENT BIRD SPECIES. THERE ARE 7 DIFFERENT POOLS TO CHOOSE FROM, RANGING IN TEMPERATURE FROM 86 DEGREES F TO 92 DEGREES F, WHICH MAKES THEM IDEAL FOR RELAXATION. THE QUALITY OF THE WATERS AND THE NATURAL SETTING INVITE YOU TO ENJOY AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MACHUCA (13.000 FASL)

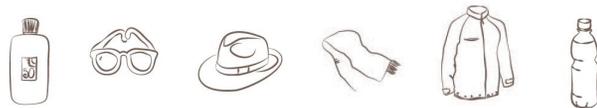
DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 55,9 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 4 HOURS APPROX.

WE LEAVE AWASI HEADING NORTH IN THE DIRECTION OF **MACHUCA**, A SMALL TOWN INHABITED BY ONLY A FEW ATACAMENIAN FAMILIES. THEIR HOUSES ARE MADE OF VOLCANIC ROCK, WHICH THE LOCALS BRING FROM THE SURROUNDING VICINITY, AND THEIR ROOFS OF TALL ALTIPLANO GRASS, FOLLOWING CONSTRUCTION CUSTOMS IN THE ANDEAN ALTIPLANO.

YOU CAN APPRECIATE THE BEAUTIFUL VIEW OF THE LANDSCAPE THAT SURROUNDS THIS TOWN FROM THE HEIGHT OF A LOCAL CHURCH: YELLOW HILLS OF TALL VEGETATION THAT COVERS WETLANDS WHERE LLAMAS GRAZE IN THE COMPANY OF DIFFERENT SPECIES OF WILD BIRDS, AND, IN THE DISTANCE, THE ANDES MOUNTAIN RANGE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT IT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MACHUCA HILL (14.000 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 55,9 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 5 HOURS APPROX.

WE HEAD NORTH ON THE SAME ROAD THAT TAKES US TO THE TOWN OF MACHUCA. AFTER SOME 50 MINUTES, WE TURN TOWARDS MACHUCA HILL, CLIMBING A STEEP ROAD THAT CHANGES YELLOW IN COLOR AS THE TALL HIGHLAND GRASS STARTS TO OVERTAKE THE AREA.

THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW PLACES WHERE YOU CAN SEE **LLARETA**, A TYPE OF BRUSH IDEAL FOR COMBUSTION. WE REACH 14.000 FASL, WHERE THE LANDSCAPE OPENS UP TO GIVE US A 360 DEGREES VIEW OF THE ANDES MOUNTAIN RANGE ON ONE SIDE, THE SALT AND DOMEYKO RANGES ON THE OTHER, THE TOWN OF MACHUCA IN THE NORTH, THE RIVERS THAT FLOW DOWN THE MOUNTAINS, AND THE SALT FLAT BASIN IN THE DISTANCE TO THE SOUTH. HERE, FROM THE PEAK, YOU REALIZE HOW SMALL YOU ARE IN COMPARISON TO THE GRANDEUR OF THE ALTIPLANIC SCENE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



HIGHLAND SALT FLATS (13.800 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 17:30
 VEHICLE RIDE: 205 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: ALL DAY.

WE LEAVE AWASI HEADING SOUTH AND VISIT THE TOWNS OF **TOCONAO AND SOCAIRE** (10.600 FASL). ALONG THE WAY, WE WILL SEE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LANDSCAPES, INCLUDING DRY DESERTS, SMALL OASES, HIGH ALTITUDE VEGETATION AND A MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE IN ALL ITS MAGNITUDE.

INTERTWINED WITH THE SCENERY, WE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE VICUNAS, AMONG OTHER WILD SPECIES. WE WILL BE SURPRISED BY THE IMMENSITY AND INHOSPITABLE BEAUTY OF THE **TUYAJTU AND AGUAS CALIENTES SALT FLATS** - WHERE WE WILL EAT LUNCH - WITH THEIR TURQUOISE COLORED PONDS INHABITED BY WILD DUCKS AND FLAMINGOES.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MISCANTI AND MIÑIQUES (14.100 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 17:00
 VEHICLE RIDE: 124,2 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: ALL DAY.

A SPECTACULAR ENCOUNTER WITH THE HIGHLAND LANDSCAPE. WE LEAVE AWASI TAKING THE ROAD SOUTH AND VISIT THE TOWNS OF **TOCONAO AND SOCAIRE** (10.600 FT). WE CONTINUE ALONG THE ROAD LEADING TO ARGENTINA (PASO SICO) AND THEN HEAD TOWARDS **MISCANTI AND MIÑIQUE PONDS**, WHICH ARE PART OF LOS FLAMENCOS NATIONAL RESERVE (14.100 FT).

THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE PLACE ARE ITS INTENSELY BLUE PONDS AND NATIVE BIRDS SUCH, AS THE COOT AND THE SILVERY GREBE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



TARA SALT FLAT (14.100 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 16:30
 VEHICLE RIDE: 173,9 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: ALL DAY.

WE LEAVE SAN PEDRO ON AN INTERNATIONAL HIGHWAY HEADING TOWARDS BOLIVIA (PASO HITO CAJÓN) AND ARGENTINA (PASO JAMA) TO REACH THE LICANCABUR VOLCANO (19.410 FASL) AND THE JURIQUES VOLCANO (18.830 FASL), TWO IMPRESSIVE MOUNTAINS THAT APPEAR UNREACHABLE WHEN SEEN FROM TOWN.

WE CONTINUE ALONG THE ALTIPLANO, PASSING THE FERTILE LOWLANDS OF QUEPIACO RIVER WHERE WE CAN SEE VICUÑAS, **FLAMINGOES AND WILD DUCKS**. THEN, WE ARRIVE AT THE INCREDIBLE ROCK FORMATIONS OF **PAKANA MONK** (15.100 FASL) - TRUE WONDERS OF NATURE. WE WILL ABANDON THE PAVED ROAD, AND FOLLOW A TRAIL THAT LEADS US TO ENORMOUS ROCK CLIFFS WHICH SURROUND THE TARA SALT FLAT. HERE WE WILL ENJOY OUR LUNCH WITH A SPECTACULAR VIEW OF LAKE TARA AND THE MOUNTAINS THAT SURROUND IT.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



TATIO GEYSER (14.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: BEFORE DAWN
 VEHICLE RIDE: 111,8 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: 6-7 HOURS APPROX.

WE SET OUT NORTH WHILE IT IS STILL DARK OUT AND AS WE ADVANCE WE CAN SEE THE CONTOUR OF THE ANDES RANGE ALONG WITH A SPECTACULAR VIEW OF A STARLIT SKY.

AFTER AN HOUR AND A HALF ON THE ROAD, WE REACH THE **GEOTHERMIC CAMP OF TATIO**: UNDERGROUND SPRINGS THAT GUSH OUT INTERMITTENTLY IN THE FORM OF IMPOSING STEAM AND HOT WATER COLUMNS. AFTER HAVING WALKED AROUND, WE WILL HAVE BREAKFAST WHILE ENJOYING THE SUNRISE, THE LANDSCAPE AND THE PECULIARITY OF ITS FUMARoles.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



ALTO LOA VILLAGES: CASPANA, CHIU CHIU & LASANA (14.100 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 17:30 (IT IS POSSIBLE TO FINISH AT THE AIRPORT)

VEHICLE RIDE: 236,1 MILES (ROUND TRIP)

DURATION: ALL DAY

WE LEAVE AWASI HEADING NORTH, CROSSING THE HIGHLAND RAVINES AND WETLANDS FILLED WITH FLORA AND FAUNA UNIQUE TO THE AREA. AFTER ABOUT AN HOUR, WE REDIRECT TOWARDS **CASPANA**, THE ATACAMENIAN TOWN WHICH HAS MOST STRONGLY MAINTAINED IT'S TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS. THE TOWNSPEOPLE OF CASPANA STILL FARM ON TRADITIONAL TERRACES AND YOU CAN VISIT THE HISTORIC SECTOR OF THE TOWN, WITH INCAN STYLE, DRY-STONE WALL CONSTRUCTION.

NEXT, WE STOP AT THE **CHIU-CHIU VILLAGE** WHERE WE WILL VISIT WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE OLDEST CHURCH IN CHILE, CONSTRUCTED IN THE 16TH CENTURY AND DEDICATED TO SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI. THEN WE WILL HEAD TOWARDS **LASANA**, WHERE 7.5 MILES OF CROPS LEAD US TO AN IMPRESSIVE PUKARA, AN ATACAMENIAN FORTRESS FROM WHICH THE LOCALS DEFENDED THEMSELVES AGAINST POSSIBLE CONQUESTS.

AFTERWARDS, WE WILL RETURN TO THE HIGHWAY AND HEAD TOWARDS SAN PEDRO OR THE AIRPORT IF THE OUTING COINCIDES WITH THE END OF YOUR TRIP TO ATACAMA.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY, BUT REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



RIO GRANDE (10.500 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 16:30

VEHICLE RIDE: 111,8 MILES (ROUND TRIP)

DURATION: ALL DAY

WE TAKE THE HIGHWAY FROM AWASI HEADING TOWARDS CALAMA AND AFTER AROUND 28 MILES, TURN TOWARDS RIO GRANDE.

WE WILL VISIT THE ANCIENT PETROGLYPHS IN **YERBAS BUENAS** AND SEE ASTOUNDING COLORS IN ARCO IRIS VALLEY. AFTER TRAVELLING OVER A STEEP ROAD, WE COME TO THE TOWN OF **SANTIAGO DEL RIO GRANDE**. FROM THERE, WE ENJOY A SPECTACULAR VIEW OF THE VALLEY, ITS FARMING TERRACES AND ANIMAL CORRALS, AND THE GIANT CACTI THAT GROW ON THE CREEK HILLSIDE.

WE HEAD DOWN TO THE TOWN WHERE WE WALK AROUND, VISIT THE CHURCH AND THE FARMING SECTORS, AND STOP TO HAVE LUNCH NEXT TO THE RIVER.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



SAN BARTOLO (8.530 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 16:30
 VEHICLE RIDE: 49,7 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: ALL DAY

WE LEAVE AWASI ON THE HIGHWAY TOWARDS CALAMA AND HEAD EAST AFTER AROUND 15 MINUTES. WE ABANDON THE PAVED ROAD AND CONTINUE ONWARD BY A DIRT ROAD THAT LEADS US ON A TRIP THROUGH TIME: FIRST, WE STOP TO SEE THE **PETROGLYPHS AT COCA ROCK** AND THEN AT THE **SALADO RIVER**. NEXT, WE WALK TO THE **SAN BARTOLO HACIENDA** WHERE THE RIO GRANDE FLOWS, NOURISHING THE SURROUNDING GREENERY, NATIVE TREES AND WIDE VARIETY OF BIRD LIFE.

AMIDST THE STRIKING CLAY MOUNTAINS THAT SURROUND THE AREA, WE WILL FIND OLD ABANDONED ADOBE HOUSES AND RUINS OF WHAT WAS ONCE A FORTIFIED COPPER MINE BEFORE IT FELL INTO DISUSE IN 1935 AFTER A LANDSLIDE.

AFTERWARDS, WE WILL ENJOY OUR LUNCH UNDER THE SHADE OF A CAROB TREE BEFORE RETURNING TO AWASI.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



TALABRE (11.745 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 16:30
 VEHICLE RIDE: 70,2 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION: ALL DAY

TALABRE IS A FARMING-PASTORAL COMMUNITY WITH A POPULATION NO LARGER THAN 100 INHABITANTS. TWENTY YEARS AGO THE COMMUNITY MOVED FROM ITS ORIGINAL SETTLEMENT TO ITS PRESENT DAY LOCATION.

WE BEGIN WITH A VISIT TO **OLD TALABRE**, WHERE WE WILL TAKE IN ITS RUINS, HISTORIC CEMETERY AND SPLENDID VIEW OF THE ACTIVE LASCAR VOLCANO. AFTERWARDS, WE WILL HEAD DOWN THE RAVINE TO **NEW TALABRE** WHERE WE CAN WALK AROUND FOR AN HOUR AND ADMIRE THE PETROGLYPHS, THE HISTORIC VESTIGES OF THE ATACAMENIANS. WE ENJOY LUNCH AMIDST THE FARM AND FRUIT TREES OF A LOCAL FAMILY.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



PEINE & TILOMONTE (7.545 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 17:00

VEHICLE RIDE: 130,4 MILES

DURATION: ALL DAY

DRIVING SOUTH FROM AWASI, WE PASS THE TOWN OF **TOCONAO** AND AFTER AROUND 45 MILES WE HEAD WEST TOWARDS THE ATACAMA SALT FLATS.

WE ARRIVE IN **PEINE** AFTER ABOUT AN HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINUTES AND VISIT THE CHURCH, THE HISTORIC RUINS OF **PEINE VIEJO** AND A CAVE PAINTING NEARLY 3,000 YEARS OLD. AFTER WE WALK AROUND THE TOWN, WE WILL MOVE ON TO **TILOMONTE**, AN OASIS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT LOCATED 9 MILES FROM PEINE.

THE BEAUTIFUL **LIMESTONE HOUSES** HERE ARE DESERTED AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIND PEOPLE. AFTER STROLLING THROUGH THE OASIS, WE WILL EAT LUNCH IN THE SHADE OF A CAROB TREE CARVED BY THE SPANISH CONQUISTADORS AS THEY TRAVELED THROUGH THE ATACAMA SALT FLAT BASIN IN THE 16TH CENTURY.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



KARI CANYON (8.530 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 15.5 MILES (ROUNTRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 2.17 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES APPROX.

WE SET OUT WEST BY CAR FROM AWASI TOWARDS CALAMA. NEARLY FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, WE ARRIVE AT A SPECTACULAR LOOKOUT POINT FROM WHICH WE CAN ADMIRE THE MAJESTY OF THE SALT RANGE.

OUR HIKE HERE BEGINS ON A NARROW TRAIL WITH A RAVINE ON ONE SIDE, SO IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PEOPLE WITH VERTIGO. WE DESCEND DOWN THE DUNES AND KEEP WALKING INTO THE **KARI CANYON**, AN OLD DRY RIVER BED WHERE WE EXPLORE CAVES, CAVERNS AND VARIOUS SMALL DIPS IN THE ROCKS.

IN EVERY SEASON OF THE YEAR AND EVERY MOMENT OF THE DAY, THE SPECIAL ATTRACTION OF THIS PLACE SURPRISES US. IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO STOP IN SILENCE AND HEAR HOW THE CRYSTALLIZED SALT CONTRACTS AND EXPANDS WITH TEMPERATURE CHANGES.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MOON VALLEY: CRISANTA (8.530 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON (RECOMMENDED IN THE AFTERNOON WITH THE SUNSET).
 VEHICLE RIDE: 22,3 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 3.1 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 2 HOURS 15 MINUTES APPROX.

WE SET OFF WEST FROM AWASI TOWARDS MOON VALLEY, SPECIFICALLY TOWARDS **THE THREE MARIAS**, WHICH ARE NATURAL CRYSTALLIZED SALT SCULPTURES COVERED IN CLAY. HERE WE REACH A CLEARING IN THE SALT RANGE AND START OUR HIKE THROUGH ABANDONED **SALT MINES**.

THE LANDSCAPE OPENS AND CLOSES CONSTANTLY BEFORE US, REVEALING HUGE WALLS OF COMPACT ASH AND OPEN SITES FROM WHICH WE CAN GAZE OUT OVER THE **DOMEYKO RANGE** AS WELL AS SEE DUNES COMPOSED OF SALT ROCKS AND TINY SCULPTURES.

WE HIKE OVER SALT LAYERS, SAND DUNES AND CLAY UNTIL WE REACH THE END OF OUR HIKE: AN IMPRESSIVE **DUNE** IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SALT RANGE, THE REDDISH PURPLE COLORS OF THE **ANDES** AND A MAJESTIC SUNSET OVER THE **DOMEYKO RANGE**.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



GUATIN - GATCHI (10.170 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 37,3 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 2.5 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 2 HOURS APPROX.

DIVERSITY IS THE WORD THAT BEST DESCRIBES THIS HIKE. LEAVING AWASI BY CAR, WE TAKE THE ROAD NORTH TO SAN PEDRO AND REACH A VALLEY CALLED GUATIN, WHICH MEANS “**VALLEY OF THE CACTI**”. WE START THE HIKE INSIDE A CREEK, ALONG A BANK OF THE VILAMA RIVER. A PROFUSION OF CACTI, DIFFERENT GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS, SMALL WATERFALLS, BROOKS, ROCKS ... ALL THIS GIVES THE PLACE A SPECIAL ATTRACTION.

AFTER HIKING FOR AN HOUR, WE ABANDON THE RIVER BED AND WALK UNTIL WE REACH THE **ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE OF GATCHI**: AN OLD PASTORAL RANCH THAT HOLDS HISTORIC CORRALS RESTORED BY THE ATACAMENIANS WHO STILL USE THEM TODAY.

WE CONTINUE WALKING ON A SMALL TRAIL WITH A MARVELOUS VIEW OF THE ANDES, SALT AND DOMEYKO RANGES UNTIL WE REACH THE CAR.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



BARRANCAS (8.858 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 16,1 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 3,1 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 2 HOURS 30 MINUTES APPROX.

THIS HIKE GOES OVER THE HIGHEST SECTOR OF THE SALT RANGE. LEAVING SAN PEDRO BY CAR, WE CROSS THE AYLLU OF QUITOR WHERE WE FIND THE PUKARA WITH THE SAME NAME (SEE ATACAMENIAN HISTORY).

WE THEN TAKE A DETOUR TO THE SALT RANGE OVER AN OLD ROAD TOWARDS CALAMA THAT LEADS US TO A TUNNEL WHICH CROSSES THE RANGE. WE START OUR HIKE HERE, FIRST CROSSING THIS TUNNEL AND THEN CLIMBING THE RANGE.

ONCE WE REACH THE TOP, THE **SPLENDID VIEW OF THE CATARPE OASIS**, THE IRREGULAR FORMATIONS OF THE RANGE AND THE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE ANDES AND DOMEYKO RANGES, MAKE OUR EFFORT WORTHWHILE. WE FOLLOW A TRAIL OVER FLAT TERRAIN IN THE DIRECTION OF SAN PEDRO AND DESCEND A HUGE DUNE THAT LEADS US TO DEATH VALLEY – THE PERFECT CULMINATION OF THIS HIKE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



QUEBRADA DEL DIABLO - VILAMA (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 14.3 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 2.5 MILES
 DURATION OF THE HIKE: 2 HOURS APPROX

AFTER A 25 MINUTE CAR RIDE FROM AWASI, WE ARRIVE AT THE FERTILE CATARPE VALLEY WHERE WE FIND **QUEBRADA DEL DIABLO**: A WINDING CANYON IN THE SALT RANGE CREATED BY NATURAL WATER AND WIND EROSION.

WE BEGIN OUR ADVENTURE HERE, CROSSING TUNNELS AND APPRECIATING THE CONTRASTS IN LIGHT, UNTIL WE REACH A PLAIN WHICH OFFERS US AN EXTRAORDINARY VIEW OF THE LANDSCAPE. WE CONTINUE MOVING FORWARD AMIDST THE SCARCE VEGETATION AND AMAZING COLORS UNTIL WE REACH A HISTORIC RANCH WITH PETROGLYPHS, WHICH REVEALS THE HISTORY OF OUR ANCESTORS.

ONCE WE HAVE FINISHED THIS TRIP THROUGH TIME, WE WILL COMMENCE OUR RETURN TO THE HOTEL.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



GUATIN - PURITAMA (11.482 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING
 VEHICLE RIDE: 37,3 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 3,4 MILES
 DURATION OF THE HIKE: 2 HOURS Y 30 MINUTES APPROX.

THIS TREK FOLLOWS THE PURITAMA RIVER. LEAVING AWASI HEADED NORTH, WE PASS GUATIN VALLEY AND TAKE A ROAD TOWARDS MACHUCA. WE STOP AT THE SHORES OF **PURITAMA RIVER** AND COMMENCE OUR HIKE TOWARDS MACHUCA, WHICH IS SURROUNDED BY CACTI AND PAMPA GRASS.

WE BEGIN BY CLIMBING A SLOPE WHICH, GIVEN ITS HEIGHT (11,00 FASL), WILL APPEAR MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN IT IS. ONCE WE REACH THE TOP, WE WILL FOLLOW A TRAIL THAT LEADS US TO THE RIVER, CROSSING OLD RANCHES, FARMING TERRACES AND A GREAT VARIETY OF FLORA AND FAUNA.

AT THE END OF OUR HIKE, WE REACH THE **PURITAMA HOT SPRINGS** (SEE PURITAMA HOT SPRINGS), AN IDEAL SPOT TO REST AND RELAX AFTER THIS MARVELOUS ADVENTURE AND ENJOY AN AWASI-STYLE APPETIZER.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



SALADO RIVER – CUCHABRACHE (8.400 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON.
 VEHICLE RIDE: 31 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 2,2 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 2 HOURS APPROX.

LEAVING AWASI HEADED WEST IN THE DIRECTION OF CALAMA, WE DEVIATE NORTH TO STOP AND OBSERVE THE **PETROGLYPHS AT COCA ROCK**.

AFTER TRAVELING A FEW MORE MILES BY CAR, WE REACH THE STARTING POINT OF OUR HIKE. WE WALK AROUND **SALADO RIVER**, PROTECTED ON BOTH SIDES BY GRANDIOSE VOLCANIC ROCK WALLS WHICH FORMED IDEAL STRUCTURES FOR ROCK ART CARVINGS DURING THE TIME OF ANCIENT PASTORS. ABANDONING THE RIVER, WE HIKE UP A SMALL HILL AND KEEP WALKING UNTIL WE REACH THE PLACE OF OUR DESCENT: A VOLCANIC ROCK FALL WITH A SMALL TRAIL FROM WHICH WE CAN APPRECIATE THE LAST PETROGLYPHS OF OUR HIKE.

WE MEET THE RIVER ONCE AGAIN AT THE END OF OUR HIKE WHERE THE JEEP WILL BE WAITING TO TAKE US BACK TO AWASI.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



TAMBILLO – ZAPAR (7.875 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 31 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 2,2 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 2 HOURS 15 MINUTES APPROX.

AFTER HEADING SOUTH FROM AWASI FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES BY CAR, WE REROUTE EAST AND ENTER THE SECTOR OF **TABILLO**, AN OLD ATACAMENIAN SETTLEMENT. IN THIS AREA, COVERED WITH **TAMARUGOS**, WE COMMENCE OUR HIKE.

AT FIRST WE WALK OVER SANDY TERRAIN UNTIL WE REACH THE **ZAPAR RAVINE**. THEN WE DESCEND AND KEEP MOVING UNTIL WE MEET THE PUKARA WITH THE SAME NAME. ALONG OUR WAY, WE CROSS THE RAVINE INTERMITTENTLY, GIVING US THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPRECIATE AN ANCIENT IRRIGATION CANAL THAT PROVIDES WATER TO THE OASIS. WE WILL WALK THROUGH PASTORAL AREAS OF GREAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE, AS THE FORTRESS OF **ZAPAR** CONSTITUTED AN IMPORTANT ENCLAVE IN PRE-COLUMBIAN TIMES.

ONCE WE HAVE REACHED THE PUKARA, WE WILL ENJOY ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING VIEWS OF THE ATACAMA SALT FLAT AND WAIT FOR THE SUNSET WITH AN AWASI STYLE APPETIZER. THERE IS ALSO THE OPTION TO REACH THE PUKARA DIRECTLY BY CAR AND WAIT FOR THE SUN TO SET.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



YERBAS BUENAS – MATANCILLA (9.840 FASL)

DEPARTURE: 9:30 / RETURN: 16:00
 VEHICLE RIDE: 93,2 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 2.8 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 2 HOURS Y 30 MINUTES APPROX.

AFTER LEAVING AWASI IN THE DIRECTION OF CALAMA, WE TURN NORTHWARDS TOWARDS A TOWN CALLED YERBAS BUENAS WHERE WE BEGIN OUR HIKE. FIRST, WE VISIT AN IMPRESSIVE VOLCANIC ROCK FORMATION AND APPRECIATE THE SITE'S **PETROGLYPHS**.

THEN WE HEAD TOWARDS **MATANCILLA**, WHERE WE WILL WALK THROUGH A DRY RIVERBED AND SEE ENORMOUS STONES AND **PINGOPINGO SHRUBBERY**. WE KEEP GOING, PASSING OLD RANCHES AND CORRALS, UNTIL A WORLD OF COLORS ULTIMATELY UNVEILS ITSELF: FOLLOWING A TRAIL FORGED BY SHEPHERDS, WE REACH A BREATHTAKING VIEW OF **RAINBOW VALLEY**. WE HEAD DOWN INTO THE VALLEY AND CONCLUDE OUR HIKE WITH A DELICIOUS LUNCH.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



MACHUCA – RÍO GRANDE (13.120 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 8:30 / RETURN: 17:00
 VEHICLE RIDE: 118 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 7.5 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 5 HOURS APPROX.

IN THIS HIKE WE FOLLOW AN OLD SHEPHERD'S TRAIL. LEAVING AWASI HEADED NORTH, WE REACH THE TOWN OF **MACHUCA** AFTER SOME 50 MINUTES AND BEGIN OUR HIKE HERE. WE START WALKING THROUGH GREEN **WETLANDS**, WHICH HOUSE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF DUCKS AND BIRDS AND WHERE THE LLAMAS OF THE MACHUCAN FAMILIES GRAZE.

THE RIVER IS ALWAYS AT OUR SIDE. WE WALK UNTIL WE REACH A PLACE CALLED **PEÑALIRI**: A COUPLE OF ABANDONED STONE HOUSES WHICH SERVE AS AN IDEAL RESTAURANT FOR OUR PICNIC. FROM HERE, WE START A MODERATELY CHALLENGING CLIMB WITH THE RIVER BELOW US AND A LANDSCAPE WELCOMING US WITH COLORFUL MOUNTAINS, IMMENSE RAVINES AND THE **TOWN OF RIO GRANDE** AT OUR FEET.

WE WALK DOWN TO THE TOWN, PASSING ALFALFA AND GARLIC CROPS AND HERDS OF LLAMAS, SHEEP AND LAMBS. WE CONCLUDE OUR HIKE IN THE RIO GRANDE CHURCH WHERE THE CAR WILL BE WAITING TO TAKE US BACK TO THE HOTEL AND REST AFTER THIS MARVELOUS AND INTENSE ADVENTURE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



QUEBRADA DE NACIMIENTO (13.760 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 8:30 / RETURN: 17:00
 VEHICLE RIDE: 118 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 6.2 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 5 HOURS APPROX.

THIS HIKE IS ESPECIALLY TOUCHING AND ALSO GOOD TRAINING FOR HIGH MOUNTAIN HIKES. LEAVING AWASI BY CAR, WE PASS THE PRE-HISPANIC TOWN OF **SOCAIRE** 55 MILES SOUTH OF SAN PEDRO. WE KEEP GOING FOR A FEW MORE MILES ON A ROAD TOWARDS ARGENTINA, STOPPING AT 12,140 FASL TO BEGIN OUR HIKE.

WE BEGIN BY WALKING THROUGH A DRY RIVER BED THAT ENDS IN A CREEK WHICH LEADS US TO AN ABANDONED RANCH. WE HIKE UP AN INTERMEDIATE SLOPE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE ANDES RANGE, WHICH IS CHALLENGING GIVEN OUR ALTITUDE (13,450 FASL). AFTER TWO HOURS OF WALKING BEFORE A SPLENDID **PANORAMA OF THE ATACAMA SALT FLATS** WITH INACTIVE VOLCANOES NEARBY, WE REACH **NACIMIENTO CREEK**. WE CONTINUE WALKING ON THE INSIDE OF THE RIVER, WHICH FLOWS DOWN THE GORGE, PROVIDING WATER TO THE NEARBY SOCAIRE COMMUNITY AND ITS AGRICULTURE. WE INCORPORATE OURSELVES INTO A COLORFUL LANDSCAPE SURROUNDED BY ROCK FORMATIONS. NEXT, WE HEAD DOWN A TRAIL LEADING TO A RIVER BANK AND EAT LUNCH WHILE IMMERSSED IN THE VEGETATION. LATER, WE VISIT HISTORIC PASTORAL RANCHES, RUINS OF CORRALS AND CAVE PAINTINGS. WE CONTINUE WESTWARD ALONG THE RIVER UNTIL WE REACH THE SPOT WHERE IT IS CHANNELLED INTO THE TOWN OF SOCAIRE. THE CAR WILL BE WAITING FOR US HERE TO TAKE US BACK TO AWASI.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT. REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



COPA COYA (14.760 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 7:00 / RETURN: 16:00
 VEHICLE RIDE: 114,9 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 3,1 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 3 HOURS Y 30 MINUTES APPROX.

WE DRIVE NORTHWARDS FROM SAN PEDRO AND HEAD TOWARDS THE **TATIO GEISERS**. ONCE WE ARRIVE, WE WILL VISIT THE GEOTHERMIC CAMP, APPRECIATE THE FUMAROLES AND THE ACTIVITY OF THE MINIA-TURE VOLCANOES, AND BEGIN OUR HIKE. THIS HIKE IS ONLY RECOM-MENDED ONCE YOU HAVE ADAPTED TO THE ALTITUDE, SINCE FOR 3 HOURS WE WALK AT AN ALTITUDE OF 14,760 FASL.

OUR WALK LEADS US TO A HIGH ANDEAN PLATEAU, SURROUNDED BY A MOUNTAIN WITH THE SAME NAME AS THE HIKE: COPA COYA. THIS AREA HAS AN IMPORTANT HISTORY MARKED BY **LLARETA**, A BUSH IDEAL FOR COMBUSTION, AND LLARETERO TRAILS. AS WE WALK, WE CAN OBSERVE **VIZCACHAS**, WHICH BLEND INTO THE TALLER VEGETATION, AND MOUNDS OF NATIVE ROCKS. NEARING THE END OF OUR WALK, WE FACE A STEEP SLOPE WORTH CLIMBING BECAUSE ONCE WE REACH THE TOP, WE WILL BE REWARDED WITH AN IMPRESSIVE VIEW OF THE ALTO LOA TOWNS. ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE OF ATACAMA.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT. REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONE:



QUEBRADA DE PATOS (11.810 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 8:30 / RETURN: 17:30
 VEHICLE RIDE: 59 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 9.3 MILES
 DURATION OF HIKE: 5 HOURS APPROX.

WE DRIVE SOUTHWARDS FROM AWASI BY CAR UNTIL WE REACH THE TOWN OF **TALABRE**, WHERE WE BEGIN OUR HIKE. WE WILL FOLLOW THE OLD ROAD THAT SHEPHERDS OF THE PAST USED TO REACH THE **TOWN OF PATOS**. WE WILL CROSS NUMEROUS RAVINES, BUT IT WILL BE WORTH IT BECAUSE THROUGHOUT THE ROUTE WE WILL SEE NUMEROUS CAVE PAINTINGS IN THE FORM OF **PICTOGRAPHS**.

THESE ANCIENT ROCK PAINTINGS TELL US ABOUT THE LIVES TH OF SHEPHERDS FROM THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO AND ARE EXPLAINED BY OUR LOCAL GUIDE WHO ACCOMPANIES US ON THIS TRIP. WE STOP FOR LUNCH BY THE CREEK, APPRECIATING HOW ONE THREAD OF WATER RUNNING THROUGH THE AREA CAN MIRACULOUSLY MAKE EVERYTHING GREEN.

FINALLY WE REACH PATOS: A PLACE WHICH WAS ONCE INHABITED BY TABRENIAN FAMILIES IN THE 40'S AND WHOSE STONE CONSTRUCTIONS HAVE REMAINED INTACT OVER TIME. WE TAKE A DIFFERENT ROUTE BACK TO TALABRE, PROTECTED BY THE LASCAR VOLCANO.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT. NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PEOPLE WITH VERTIGO.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



CERRO TOCO (18.390 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 7:00 / RETURN: 15:00
 VEHICLE RIDE: 62,1 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON FOOT: 1.24 MILES (ASCENT: 0.62 MILES; DESCENT: 0.62 MILES)
 DURATION OF HIKE: 3 HOURS 30 MINUTES APPROX. (ASCENT: 2 AND A HALF HOURS. DESCENT: 1 HOUR)

WE LEAVE AWASI BY CAR HEADING EAST ON AN INTERNATIONAL ROAD TOWARDS BOLIVIA AND ARGENTINA. AFTER TRAVELING 24,8 MILES, WE EXIT THE HIGHWAY AND TAKE A ROAD TOWARDS AN OLD SULFUR MINE CALLED **PURIGO**, WHICH WILL LEAD US TO THE BASE OF THE HILL. TOCO HILL IS LOCATED NEARLY THIRTY ONE MILES FROM SAN PEDRO, BETWEEN **JURIQUES VOLCANO** AND **CHANJNANTOR HILL** (WHICH CONTAINS TELESCOPES FOR THE RADIO ASTRONOMICAL PROJECT ALMA), AND OFFERS UNSURPASSED VIEWS OF THE ATACAMA SALT FLAT BASIN.

ONCE YOU HAVE REACHED THE SUMMIT, YOU CAN ENJOY THE SIGHT OF LAGUNA BLANCA IN BOLIVIA. TOCO HILL IS AN EXCELLENT ALTERNATIVE FOR THOSE FOR THOSE JUST STARTING IN THE MOUNTAINS, OR FOR THOSE WITH EXPERIENCE WHO WISH TO TRAIN IN ORDER TO CLIMB MORE DIFFICULT SUMMITS LATER. THE ASCENT IS FAIRLY EASY, SINCE THE RISE IS MINIMAL AND THE SLOPE IS NOT VERY PRONOUNCED. THE DECLINE IS EVEN EASIER, DESPITE THE HARD-SOFT SURFACE. THE REAL CHALLENGE IS THE ALTITUDE AND THE COLD WHEN THERE IS WIND OR SNOW, FOR WHICH YOU WILL NEED MOUNTAIN CLOTHING. THE ESTIMATED CLIMB IS TWO AND A HALF HOURS AND THE DESCENT IS ONE HOUR, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE ACCLIMATIZATION STOPS AND THE TIME TO ADMIRE THE MAGNIFICENT LANDSCAPE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT. REQUIRES PREVIOUS ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



SAIRECABUR VOLCANO (19.590 FASL)

RECOMMENDED DEPARTURE: 6:00 / RETURN: 17:00

VEHICLE RIDE: 99,4 MILES (ROUND TRIP)

DISTANCE ON FOOT: 0,62 MILES APPROX. (ASCENT: 0,31 MILES / DESCENT: 0, 31 MILES .)

DURATION OF HIKE: 4 AND A HALF HOURS TO ASCEND AND 3 HOURS TO DESCEND.

LEAVING AWASI NORTHEAST BY CAR WE FOLLOW THE SAME ROAD THAT LEADS TO THE **TATIO GEYSERS**. ONCE WE ARRIVE AT THE ABANDONED CAMP OF THE FORMER **SASIEL SULFUR MINE**, WE REDIRECT TOWARDS THE BASE CAMP OF THE MOUNTAIN, WHICH STANDS ABOUT 18.050 FASL.

LOCATED BETWEEN THE SASIEL AND LICANCABUR VOLCANOES, THIS IMPRESSIVE PEAK REACHES AN ALTITUDE OF 19.590 FASL, AND FROM HERE YOU CAN SEE THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPES OF THE BOLIVIAN AND CHILEAN ALTIPLANO.

WE BEGIN OUR HIKE THROUGH RISEN TERRAIN AND LARGE ROCKS, WITH A SHARP SLOPE MAKING THIS A DEMANDING CLIMB. AFTER ABOUT 4-5 HOURS, WE WILL HAVE REACHED THE HIGHEST PEAK IN THE AREA.

WE REMAIN AT THE SUMMIT A FEW MOMENTS TO ENJOY THE SPECTACULAR VIEW IT OFFERS, AND THEN START OUR DESCENT, WHICH, DUE TO THE QUALITY OF THE FIELD, TAKES ABOUT THREE HOURS. THE CLIMB DOES NOT REQUIRE ESPECIAL MOUNTAINEERING TECHNIQUES, HOWEVER, GIVEN THE INCLINE OF THE SLOPES AND IRREGULARITIES OF THE SURFACE, IT IS NOT A MOUNTAIN SUITABLE FOR EVERYONE, RATHER, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE IN HIGH MOUNTAIN HIKING AND ARE IN EXCELLENT PHYSICAL CONDITION.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT. REQUIRES PRIOR ADAPTATION TO THE ALTITUDE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



CEJAR (7.550 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 11.18 MILES (FROM)
 DISTANCE ON BIKE: 11.2 MILES (TO)
 DURATION OF BIKE RIDE: 1 HOUR 45 APPROX.

WE LEAVE AWASI ON BIKE HEADED SOUTH. THE ROUTE IS ALWAYS FLAT, INICIALLY ON A COMPACT ROAD FOR THE FIRST 3.7 MILES AND THEN ON DIRT FOR 7.5 MILES.

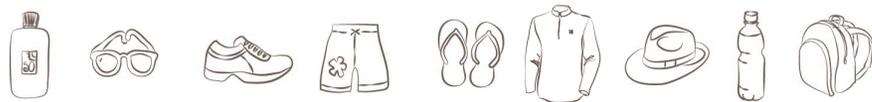
THE ROUTE OFFERS US A 360 DEGREE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE THREE MOUNTAIN RANGES THAT SURROUND THE ATACAMA SALT FLAT BASIN: THE ANDES, DOMEYKO AND SALT RANGES.

AFTER BIKING 11.2 MILES, WE REACH CEJAR: THREE TURQUOISE LAKES, IN ONE OF WHICH YOU CAN SWIM AND FLOAT DUE TO THE HIGH CONCENTRATION OF SALT IN THE WATER. HERE WE REFRESH OURSELVES FROM THE HEAT AND REST AFTER ALL OUR EFFORT.

THERE ARE TWO OPTIONS TO RETURN TO THE HOTEL, BY BIKE OR BY CAR.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



PIEDRA DE LA COCA (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 DISTANCE ON BIKE: 18.75 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION OF BIKE RIDE: 5 HOURS APPROX.

WE LEAVE AWASI ON BIKE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE QUITOR OASIS. WE VISIT THE FORTRESS WITH THE SAME NAME AND CONTINUE ON TO CATARPE AYLLU.

WE PEDAL THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF A LANDSCAPE MARKED BY THE SAN PEDRO RIVER, THE PAMPA GRASS THAT SURROUND IT AND THE SALT RANGE, WHICH FRAMES THE PANORAMA. NEXT, WE FOLLOW AN OLD ROAD THAT JOINS SAN PEDRO TO THE CITY OF CALAMA. THIS RISE CONSISTS OF A STEEP SLOPE, LEADING TO A TUNNEL BUILT IN 1930, WHICH WE CROSS TO ENJOY AN EXTENSIVE VIEW OF PURE DESERT ON THE OTHER SIDE.

AFTER PEDALING FOR A FEW MORE MILES, WE STOP AT COCO ROCK: A PLACE WHERE SHEPHERDS OF THE PAST ALSO STOPPED TO REST AND WHERE WE CAN OBSERVE THE ROCK ART THEY CREATED OVER THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO. HERE WE ENJOY AN AWASI-STYLE PICNIC TO RE-GAIN OUR STRENGTH AND MOVE ON. WE PEDAL ON A DIRT ROAD THAT TAKES US TO THE HIGHWAY LEADING TO SAN PEDRO, AND FROM THERE WE RETURN TO AWASI.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: DIFFICULT.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



QUEBRADA DEL DIABLO – CATARPE (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 5,9 MILES (RETURN)
 DISTANCE ON BIKE: 4.3 MILES (TO) / 9.3 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION OF BIKE RIDE: 2 HOURS APPROX.

WE SET OUT ON BIKE FROM AWASI AND HEAD NORTHEAST. WE VISIT THE QUITOR PUKARA, CROSS THE SAN PEDRO RIVER AND PEDAL ONWARD TOWARDS QUEBRADA DEL DIABLO.

ONCE INSIDE THE GORGE, THE ROAD IS SANDY, WINDING AND FLAT IN GENERAL WITH OCCASIONAL GENTLE SLOPES. THE LANDSCAPE, SURROUNDED BY THE SALT RANGE AND CLAY FORMATIONS, MAKES THIS TRIP AN INDESCRIBABLE ADVENTURE. AFTER 45 MINUTES IN THE RAVINE, WE PEDAL TOWARDS THE CATARPA VALLEY, WHERE WE FIND OLD ADOBE HOUSES, SOME STILL INHABITED, AND A BEAUTIFUL CHAPEL BELONGING TO A LOCAL FAMILY. HERE WE FIND AN AWASI CAR WAITING TO TAKE US BACK TO HOTEL. THERE IS ALSO THE POSSIBILITY OF RETURNING ON BIKE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



DOWNHILL TALABRE (10.091 FASL)

DEPARTUR: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 63.4 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DISTANCE ON BIKE: 8.7 MILES (DESCENT)
 DURATION OF BIKE RIDE: 30 MINUTES APPROX.

LEAVING AWASI BY CAR, WE HEAD SOUTH ON A PAVED ROAD THAT LEADS TO PASO SICO, BORDERING ARGENTINA.

AFTER DRIVING FOR NEARLY 31 MILES, WE TURN EAST AND CONTINUE FOR 8.7 MORE MILES, DISTANCE WHICH WE WILL TRAVEL AGAIN UPON OUR DESCENT. WE REACH **TALABRE** AND WALK AROUND THE TOWN AMIDST THEIR CROPS, DIRT ROADS AND STONE HOUSES.

THEN WEPREPARE FOR OUR DESCENT: APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES OF PEDALING IMMERSSED IN THE LANDSCAPE: **A VIEW OF THE ATACAMA SALT FLAT IN ALL ITS SPLENDOR**, THE TUMISA AND CORONA HILLS AT OUR SIDE AND THE DOMEYKO RANGE ON THE HORIZON WITH MOUNT KIMAL AWAITING FOR US UPON OUR ARRIVAL.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.
 WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



TULOR (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 VEHICLE RIDE: 7.5 MILES (RETURN)
 DISTANCE ON BIKE: 7.5 MILES (TO) / 15 MILES (ROUND TRIP)
 DURATION OF BIKE RIDE: 1 HOUR AND A HALF APPROX.

LEAVING AWASI BY BIKE, WE HEAD SOUTH TOWARDS THE **COYO AYLLU**. THERE ARE SEVERAL PATHS WE CAN TAKE TO REACH TULOR, ALL OF WHICH OFFER A SPECTACULAR VIEW OF THE SALT RANGE.

UPON ENTERING THE COYO AYLLU, WE HAVE A TASTE OF WHAT ATACAMA CULTURE IS LIKE TODAY: WE SEE DIFFERENT LOCAL CROPS, OLD ADOBE HOUSES AND TREES NATIVE TO SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA, SUCH AS **CHAÑARES AND ALGARROBOS**.

ONCE WE REACH THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF THE **TOWN OF TULOR**, WE TRAVEL BACK IN TIME TO SEE HOW THE FORMER INHABITANTS OF ATACAMA BUILT THEIR HOMES AND FORMED A COMPLEX SOCIETY ON THE SHORES OF THE SALT FLAT.

THE CAR WILL BE WAITING TO TAKE US BACK TO AWASI, HOWEVER WE ALSO HAVE THE OPTION TO RETURN TO THE HOTEL ON BIKE.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



AYLLUS (8.005 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON
 DISTANCE ON BIKE: 5 MILES
 DURATION OF BIKE RIDE: 1.5 HRS. APPROX.

LEAVING AWASI ON BIKE, WE HEAD TOWARDS SOME OF SAN PEDRO'S AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES: SOLOR, SOLCOR, SEQUITOR, LARACHE, QUITOR AND CATARPE.

THIS TOUR ALLOWS US TO APPRECIATE ANOTHER SIDE OF THE TOWN, DIFFERENT FROM THE MAIN STREET AND THE TOURIST ATTRACTIONS. HERE WE WILL SEE THE SECTORS WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE SAN PEDRO POPULATION ACTUALLY LIVES, THEIR FIELDS AND CURRENT CONSTRUCTION PATTERNS AND LIFESTYLES.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



AYLLUS (8.005 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON

DISTANCE: 6,2 MILES

DURATION: 2 HOURS APPROX.

THIS IS A CALM HORSEBACK RIDE AROUND THE TOWN WHICH TAKES US THROUGH NARROW STREETS, PAST TYPICAL HOUSES OF THE AREA AND TOWARDS SOME AYLLUS CLOSE TO AWASI.

WE CAN ALSO TRAVEL A LITTLE BIT FARTHER TO VISIT MORE DISTANT AYLLUS, SUCH AS THE SOLOR, TOWARDS THE SOUTH, OR QUITOR AYLLU, TOWARDS THE NORTH.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



DEATH VALLEY (8.200 FASL)

DEPARTURE: MORNING OR AFTERNOON

DISTANCE: 3.72 MILES (ROUND TRIP)

DURATION: 3 HOURS APPROX.

SETTING OUT ON HORSEBACK FROM AWASI IN THE DIRECTION OF THE QUITOR OASIS, WE RIDE ON A NARROW DIRT ROAD TOWARDS DEATH VALLEY.

THIS TIME THE SALT RANGE OFFERS US A BACKDROP OF HUGE CLAY FORMATIONS AND LARGE DUNES, WHICH MAKES RIDING THROUGH THIS TERRAIN BOTH STRANGE AND EXCITING. AFTER LEAVING THE MOUNTAINS, WE FOLLOW A PATH BACK TO AWASI.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: EASY.

WHAT TO BRING ALONG:



NOTE:

CARRYING LARGE AND HEAVY BACKPACKS IS NOT RECOMMENDED ON ANY OF THE HORSEBACK RIDES. IT IS PERMITTED TO CARRY SMALL ITEMS, LIKE CAMERAS, SUNSCREEN, ETC IN THE SADDLE BAGS OR IN A SMALL BACKPACK.

