



tierraatacama

THE SPIRIT OF THE ALTIPLANO

Excursions

HALF DAY WALKING & HIKING

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
1. Cornisas	Transfer: 20 min. Hike: 1,5-2,5 hrs. Duration: 3 hrs.	Easy	This excursion can be done in the morning or afternoon. Departing the hotel in a van, we will head down the old San Pedro-Calama road to a tunnel that offers spectacular views of the region's volcanos. After enjoying a moment at 2,600 meters (8,530 feet) above sea level, we will descend to the main dunes of Valle de la Muerte (Death Valley), an enigmatic landscape that invites contemplation.
2. Quebrada del Diablo / Vilama	Transfer: 20 min. Hike: 1,5-2 hrs. Duration: 3 hrs.	Medium	We will take a vehicle to the Quebrada del Diablo located in the Cordillera de la Sal (Salt Mountain Range) and then walk on flat terrain through a dry river bed with its labyrinth walls. Then we will begin a gradual ascent that leads to a view of all the surrounding volcanoes. Continuing by the old caravan route, we will find some petroglyphs that are evidence of the commercial activities of the area. Our hike ends with a view of the historic fort known as "Vilama." We will then return by vehicle to the hotel.
3. Guatin / Gatchi	Transfer: 30 min. Hike: 1.5-2.5 hrs. Duration: 3-3,5 hrs.	Medium	By vehicle, we will travel northeast from the hotel toward the Valle de Guatin (Valley of Guatin). First, we will walk through an impressive forest of cardones (giant cacti) until we reach the place where a warm river, the Puritama, meets a cold river, the Purifica. These two rivers give birth to a new waterway, the Vilama, which brings life to the ecosystem of the Guatin Valley. We will descend via a rocky path, cross the river and see small waterfalls while making our way through a variety of vegetation.
4. Guatin / Puritama	Transfer: 35 min Hike: 2 hrs. Duration: 4-5 hrs.	Medium	We will walk uphill through the Guatin Valley, its igneous rocks a testament to volcanic activity of the past. We will pass through areas with lush pampas grass that grows at the edge of the river, whose flowing waters will be audible throughout the hike. Our walk will end at Puritama with the reward of relaxing in its thermal springs, then we will head back to the hotel by van. This excursion reaches an altitude of 2,800 meters (9,186 feet).

FULL DAY WALKING & HIKING

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
5. Purilaktis	Transfer: 45 min. Hike: 2,5- 3,5 hrs. Duration: 5-6 hrs.	Medium	We will begin our journey on the highway heading to Calama and, turn off towards the Domeyko Mountain Range. We will start our hike near the Salado River (3,000 meters/9,842 feet), the Matancilla Valley and the petroglyphs of Hierbas Buenas. We will begin by traversing a small, serpentine ravine that later opens up into large rock formations with petroglyphs. Following the dry riverbeds surrounded by mountains, we will stop at several lookouts to see petroglyphs and take in the traditional local settlements. The tour will end with lunch in the famous Rainbow Valley amidst the colorful rock formations that give it its name, and then we will head back to the hotel.



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FULL DAY WALKING & HIKING

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
6. Machuca / Río Grande	Transfer: 1 hr. Hike: 3-4 hrs. Duration: 5-6 hrs.	Medium - High	This walk occurs at around 4,000 meters (13,200 feet) and follows the Peñaliri Riverbed. Along the way, we will see llamas, alpacas and local birds. After lunch in the old mountain village of Peñaliri, we will continue along the cactus-filled, deserted terraces of the gully. We will finish our walk in the village of Río Grande, surrounded by typical crop plantations – garlic, corn and other vegetables of the high plains.
7. Tulán	Transfer: 1-1,5 hrs. Hike: 2-3,5 hrs. Duration: 6-7 hrs.	Medium	We had south from the hotel towards the Tilomonte Oasis where we will begin our hike at the southern end of the Salar de Atacama (Atacama Salt Flat) with an initial elevation of 2,350 meters (7,700 feet) above sea level. We will walk along the Cordón de Lila, a thin range made up of large Palaeozoic- to Cretaceous-era volcanic rocks. We will walk along the Tulan River with a view of the Domeyko Mountains where we will see old farms and ancient trees before arriving to the Tulan Ruins, vestiges of 6,000-year-old human settlements. Here too we will visit a small cave with unique petroglyphs left behind by the indigenous peoples. We will eat lunch here before going back to the hotel.
8. Copa Coya	Transfer: 1-1,5 hrs. Hike: 3 hrs. Duration: 6-7 hrs.	High	This excursion is a high-altitude hike that starts at 4,300 meters (14,100 feet) above sea level in the area of the Tatio Geysers. We will arrive by van and start the hike near Copa Coya Hill with its striking volcanic rock formations. During our journey, we might see fauna such as vizcachas and vicuñas as well as yareta, one of the longest-living plants in the world capable of enduring the extreme climate of the high plains. We will also see old shelters, frozen streams and wayside shrines, typical of the area. This excursion is ideal for acclimating for later volcano ascents.

HALF DAY SCENIC VOYAGES

The perfect balance between an excursion by van and shorter easy walks. Ideal for those who enjoy photography and bird watching.

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
9. Puritama Hot Springs	Transfer: 45 min. Hike: 15 min. Duration: 3 hrs.	Easy	The thermal pools of Puritama are hidden at the bottom of a steep-sided canyon in the middle of the mountains. With an average temperature of 33 °C (91°F) and altitude of 3,500 meters (11,482 feet), these waters are known for their therapeutic and rejuvenating properties. We will explore the streams of this true desert oasis and immerse ourselves in its restorative waters before returning to the hotel by van.
10. Moon Valley	Transfer: 20 min. Hike: 40 min. Duration: 3 hrs.	Easy	Just to the northeast of San Pedro de Atacama lies the Salt Mountain Range and the surreal landscape of the Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley) at 2,500 meters/ 8,200 feet. These strange and beautiful rock formations are the result of water and wind erosion as well as extreme desert temperatures. They bring us into close contact with the Atacama Desert's otherworldly dimension. Since most people visit this area in the afternoon, we set out in the morning, which allows us to have the beauty and silence of the desert almost to ourselves.



Excursions



HALF DAY SCENIC VOYAGES

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
11. Salar de Atacama (Chaxa Lagoon)	Transfer: 45 min. Hike: 40 min. Duration: 4-5 hrs.	Easy	We will head south to the village of Toconao where the local artisans, historic church, and town square are the main attractions. Our journey will continue to the National Flamingo Reserve, located in the Salar de Atacama (Atacama Salt Flat). Here we will walk the trails, see of flamingo and other local birds and enjoy the spectacular, colorful sunsets offered reflected in the water.



FULL DAY SCENIC VOYAGES

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
12. Tara Salt Flat	Transfer: 2-2.5 hrs. Hike: 30-40 min. Duration: 5-7 hrs.	Easy	Heading east on this excursion, the Licancabur Volcano, the Atacama people's guiding landmark, comes into sharper focus. The drive ascends to 4,700 meters (15,419 feet), the highest point on the road with stunning, colorful surroundings dotted by birds, wetlands and salt flats. After the paved road ends, the towering rock formations of Monjes de la Pacana come into view and we set off towards Tara, an unexpected salt lake in this desolate landscape. The area is a photographer's dream, rife with captivating scenery and wildlife. We will have lunch here and then return to the hotel.

13. High Plains Lagoons	Transfer: 2-2.5 hrs. Hike: 30 -40 min. Duration: 5-7 hrs.	Easy	At more than 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) above sea level, we will arrive at the remote Aguas Calientes and Tuyajto lagoons and their awesome surroundings, making this excursion one of tranquility and peace amidst the amazing colors and contrasts of the salt flats. We will also visit the area of Piedras Rojas (Red Rocks) with its impressive, inspiring geological formations. Weather permitting, we will lunch at Tuyajto and enjoy the colors of the high plains in their maximum expression.
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14. Tatio Geysers	Transfer: 1-1.5 hrs. Hike: 30-40 min. Duration: 5-6 hrs.	Easy (with acclimatization)	An early morning departure will take us to the Tatio Geysers, located at 4,300 meters (14,200 feet) above sea level. This geothermal field includes more than 80 active geysers where columns of water vapor reach over 12 meters in height from several of the pools of boiling water. Breakfast will be served as dawn breaks. Our return trip offers the opportunity to spot local species: vicuñas, foxes, vizcachas and Andean ostrich. We will stop in the picturesque village of Machuca before returning to the hotel at noon. * This excursion is not suitable for children as the altitude will affect them.
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Excursions



SPECIAL INTEREST

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
15. Petroglyphs/ Rainbow Valley (Half Day)	Transfer: 40-45 min. Hike: 20-40 min. Duration: 3-4 hrs.	Easy	On this excursion we will head west on the highway toward Calama and the town of Matancilla. Here we will find ourselves in Rainbow Valley, a part of the Domeyko Mountains, to enjoy its many-colored rocks resulting from minerals experiencing different erosion and environmental processes. After this no longer than 30 minute scenic hike we will ride to the town of Hierbas Buenas and visit a natural shelter made of compacted volcanic ash once used by farmers travelling in caravans. Here we will see many petroglyphs of archaeological and historic significance. We will return to the hotel by vehicle.
16. Astronomy	2 hrs.	Easy	César Anza, our guide, will teach us about the worldview and the Andean cosmic view of constellations. We will gaze at the universe with the naked eye and then through the largest public telescope in the area. Depending on the phase of the moon and the time of year, we might be able to see Saturn's rings, craters on the moon, nebulas and/or supernovas. * This excursion is not available when the moon is full.
17. Full Moon	Transfer: 20 min. Hike: 40 min. Duration: 2-3 hrs.	Easy	After dinner we will leave the hotel in a van and travel away from the town to an area without light pollution. There we will begin a leisurely hike, stopping to contemplate the silhouettes and shadows left by the light of the moon. This scenic hike offers a unique way to view the singular desert geography. After walking for about an hour, we will share a campfire and snack and enjoy the peace of the high plains in the moonlight. This hike is available from one day before the full moon through one day after.
18. Bird Watching (Full Day)	30 min. of Observation in each place	Easy	For this excursion we will take the road toward the Tatio Geysers and head to the Putana and Machuca (high-altitude wetlandss). This type of ecosystem, occurring over 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) above sea level, offers the opportunity to see birds such as flamingos, caitis, guallatas (Andean goose), Andean seagull, giant taguas, Puna teal, crested duck, jergón, pimpollos and tyrant flycatchers, among other local and migratory birds. It might also be possible to see vicuñas and llamas in the area of Machuca. These wetlands are surrounded by beautiful mountains and volcanoes that are part of the Andes Mountains.



Excursions

BIKING

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
19. Cycling through the Ayllus / Atacama Communities	Duration 2 hrs.	Easy	We will depart from the hotel on bicycles to visit some of the most typical Ayllus (extended family communities) of the San Pedro de Atacama oasis at 2,400 meters (7,900 feet altitude). After seeing some of the farms, plantations and typical adobe construction of the area, we will return to the hotel. This is a great way to spend the first day acclimatizing to a stay in San Pedro de Atacama.
20. Devil's Canyon	2 - 3 hrs.	Medium-Difficult	We will leave from the hotel on bicycles and head north from San Pedro following the course of its namesake's river to 2,400 meters (7,900 feet) above sea level. The landscape varies between the Cordillera de la Sal (Salt Mountain Range) and its surrounding oasis. After crossing the river, we will arrive at Devil's Canyon and bask in the singular beauty of this winding dry riverbed and its tall clay walls. Continuing to ascend along this sandy path, we will come to the labyrinth's end where the barren landscape contrasts with the green oasis of the ever expanding Catarpe plantations. The return journey follows the course of San Pedro River.
21. Windy Lookout Point / Death Valley, the Dune	3 hrs.	High	We will leave the hotel heading northeast by highway through the Salt Mountain Range, taking in an amazing view of the Andes volcanoes. We will remain at high-altitude and see the Death Valley formations from above then descend by old roads to the San Pedro oasis. This excursion makes steep ascents and descents and is a great route for mountain bike enthusiasts.

HORSEBACK

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
22. The Atacama on Horseback	The rides can take between 2 - 5 hrs. Depending on experience and wishes of the participants.		We have a selection of rides available with horses from the Atacama. Our saddles are Chilean (western) style. As part of our sustainable practices, we work with small local companies. The horses are mounted in the hotel grounds and a local guide leads the rides which range from beginner level to expert hard hats and chaps are supplied.



Excursions

HILL AND VOLCANO CLIMBING

* Climbing hills and volcanoes in the Atacama is considered to be highly challenging. While ascents can never be guaranteed, it is absolutely imperative that a guest spend a minimum of five nights in order to acclimatize properly, both to the altitude and extreme desert conditions, before attempting an ascent. Climbers must be of legal age. Based on the physical conditions of each guest, and for their own security, we reserve the right to prohibit high-altitude excursions.

EXCURSION	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
23. Toco	Transfer: 1-1.5 hrs. Hike: 2-4 hrs. Duration: 4-6 hrs.	High	We will begin this excursion at 2,400 meters (7,900 feet) and, after an hour and a half by van, arrive to an altitude of 5,000 meters (16,400 feet). We will then begin our ascent to the summit on foot (5,600 meters/18,700 feet), which offers beautiful views of Bolivia including the Blanca Lagoon to the east and the Salar de Atacama to the west. We will safely and gradually descend via the same route and once at the van, return to the hotel. This excursion requires acclimatization and experience with hiking.
24. Lascar	Transfer: 1,5-2 hrs. Hike: 3-5 hrs. Duration: 6-7 hrs.	High	We will leave the hotel, located at 2,400 meters (7,900 feet) above sea level to ride more than 100 km (62 miles) south, passing by the Laguna Lejía. We will arrive to an altitude of 4,800 meters (16,000 feet) above sea level where we will start our challenge up the southeast side of the volcano to the base of the Lascar Crater at 5,592 meters (18,300 feet) above sea level. This volcano has experienced about 30 eruptions since the nineteenth century, making it the most active volcano in northern Chile. The ascent is three kilometers long with a 600 meter rise in altitude along compact soil with no sediment. Once there, we will see the active fumaroles and multiple craters in addition to enjoying a panoramic view of the entire Atacama Salt Flat and Laguna Lejía. We will then begin a safe and slow descent along the same route to the vehicle which will take us back to the hotel. This more than four-hour roundtrip hike is a full-day excursion and offers the challenge of climbing a high mountain in a fascinating environment surrounded by impressive peaks and diverse bird species. This excursion requires acclimatization and previous hiking experience.

Excursions

Our excursions are led by qualified guides with extensive experience in order for you to get to know the Atacama Desert and its areas of interest. With them, you can experience a variety of activities such as hikes, horseback rides, scenic tours and bicycle rides

Activities are divided into three levels of difficulty:

- Easy: Appropriate for all ages and abilities.
- Medium: Require some degree of physical fitness and experience.
- High: Require a high degree of physical fitness, experience and ability.

During your stay, the all-inclusive program allows you to choose two half-day excursions or one full-day excursion per day, except on the day of your departure.

- Half-day: These activities take place in the morning and/or the afternoon, lunch is eaten in the hotel.
- Full-day: These activities start in the morning, a box lunch is served and guests return to the hotel usually after 6:00 PM.

If you would like to have a massage or therapy and take advantage of Uma Spa, we recommend that you check excursion return times with the guides and make reservations ahead of time.

*** We recommend that those under 12 abstain from excursions above 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) above sea level.**

**** All of our excursions are subject to weather conditions.**



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