



## Experiences for the day

Available from September 15, 2024 to May 15, 2025

Nibepo Aike is an estancia dedicated to rural tourism. Hereford cattle breeding is its main livestock activity, besides having a long history of sheep breeding. It is located within Los Glaciares National Park, 56 km from El Calafate. An estancia with more than 110 years of history, which is still run by the same family, pioneers who settled on the shores of the southern arm of Lake Argentino.

The estancia offers the opportunity to have a rural experience in a setting of mountains and glaciers. An immersion in the life of an authentic Patagonian estancia.

### Ranch day program (Half day)

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Departing from El Calafate at 8:30h along the unpaved Provincial Route 15, also known as “the road to the estancias”. Along the way it is common to come across condors, foxes and hares, with Cerro Frías taking centre stage. After crossing over the Río Rico, the landscape changes suddenly from the steppe-land to mountain scenery.

The estancia is reached after travelling along the edge of Lago Roca and having entered Los Glaciares National Park. The host guide welcomes you to the Estancia and takes you to the Quincho, a very spacious and cozy wooden and brick building, where you will be invited to have a hot drink (tea, coffee or mate) accompanied by home-made cakes and pastries. A good moment to pause and enjoy a magnificent view of the Andes mountain range.

The walk starts around the main building, the perfect example of a typical Patagonian estancia which was formerly devoted to sheep rearing and nowadays has become the most prestigious Hereford breeding ranch of these latitudes, while still retaining a small herd of sheep.

At the stables, those who have paid the extra to do a horse-ride will be given a mount and go out to explore the surroundings accompanied by a guide.

Meanwhile the rest of the group has a good long walk during which there are excellent views of the Southern Arm of Lago Argentino, discovering the diverse rocky outcrops eroded by glacial action and the changes of water level in the lake (due to the periodic closure of the way out by the Perito Moreno glacier and its subsequent breaking). The folds of the earth's crust can clearly be appreciated there, differentiated by the variety of sediments from which they originate. These formations continue until they reach a point where the rocks form a natural amphitheatre, creating quiet beaches of curious shapes.

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The footpaths lead through native woodland of lenga and ñire, a habitat for caranchos, Austral parakeets, hares, woodpeckers, eagles and an abundant variety of native flora and fauna. The route may vary according to weather conditions.

After the walk or horse-ride, the group meets up again at the door of the shearing shed. This is a chance to see inside such a shed with all its skilled hands and understand the work of the shearing teams. The process is described from the shearing of the animal to the baling of the fleece, ready for the wool to be stored and transported. Manual shears are used for the shearing as they were on all the estancias until the appearance of the mechanical handle with cutting comb, a much faster and more practical system, although not so kind to the animal and does not give such a good cut.

Then a demonstration is given of horse handling skills, or according to the rural activities of the day, working with the herd in the corrals close to the main buildings. Between the daily activities the guest could also be able to participate at the morning of the cow milking and at the afternoon of the herding sheep, concluding therefore with a typical work day at the Estancia. These activities are subject to the weather conditions.

After the activities it is time to return to the Quincho where a whole lamb is being roasted on a vertical stake in traditional Patagonian fashion. During the short walk the guide tells some more stories and anecdotes of the place and the early settlers. Upon arrival at the Quincho the “Asado” (barbecue) is ready to delight the diners while enjoying the impressive view of the mountain range. On days with good weather, roasting can be done and served at tables set outside. Meanwhile the life of the estancia carries on and it is not uncommon to see the gauchos ride past herding the cattle and/or sheep and disappearing over the horizon.

Back in El Calafate, the experience of life on a typical Patagonian estancia will have given a fresh outlook on things, making more sense of the wide-open Patagonian landscapes characteristically stretching out into the remoteness of infinity.

**It includes:**

- Elevenses (tea/coffee/mate and cakes).
- Lunch: charcoal roast lamb with salads and dessert. Beverages: 1 glass of wine or 1 non-alcoholic drink.
- Bilingual guide (Spanish/English) during ranch day activities. Horseback rides are accompanied by a ‘Baqueano’ (local) guide.
- 21% VAT

**Additional services:**

- Shared scheduled transportation to and from El Calafate.
- 45 min horseback riding



- Extra beverages.

**It does not include:**

- Private transportation.
- Bilingual guide during the horseback ride.

**NOTES:** Activities described as "reins testing" skills, herding, milking, are subject to feasibility due to weather conditions, terrain conditions or rural agenda. The estancia reserves the right to cancel/alter all or part of the pre-established program as it sees fit.

**Regular departures** in the morning. It opens late shift with a minimum of 10 people or paying the value equivalent to that amount.

**Activity schedules:** 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Transportation pick up** from El Calafate: 8:30 a.m. (8:00 a.m. in April and May) to 4:15 p.m. **Drop off:** 4:30 p.m.

**Riding level:** easy – no previous experience necessary.

Schedules are estimated and subject to change.

## Ranch day + Cristales horseride (Full day)

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Whoever chooses this option will undertake a ride of approximately three hours with the 'Baqueano' (local) guide to tour the territory of Nibepo Aike and the shore of the southern arm of Lake Argentino in greater detail. The ride will take place after the ranch day activity.

**It includes:**

- Elevenses (tea/coffee/mate and cakes).
- Visit to the estancia installations, walk in the surroundings. Stories of the first settlers of the Estancia and of livestock farming.
- Brief historical review of the breakings of the Perito Moreno Glacier and its consequences in the area.
- Milking at the morning. Feeding a lamb or calf with a bottle and herding of sheep. (Milking is subject to the calving season)
- Shearing demonstration, horse handling skills.
- Lunch: charcoal roast lamb with salads and dessert.
- Beverages: 1 glass of wine or 1 non-alcoholic drink.
- Bilingual guide (Spanish/English) during ranch day activities.
- Horseback ride of approximately 2:30 hours, shared service.
- 21% VAT

**Additional services:**

- Shared scheduled transportation to and from El Calafate.
- Extra beverages.

**Regular daily departures in the morning.**

**Schedule times from the estancia:** 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**Transportation pick up** from El Calafate: 8:30 a.m. (8:00 a.m. in April and May)

**Drop off:** 9:30 p.m.

**Riding level:** moderate - it is recommended to have ridden at least once.

*Schedules are estimates and subject to change.*

## Cristales horse ride

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The ride starts from the corrals, heading west towards the Andes Mountain Range. To the left is the Cordón de los Cristales and to the right the southern arm of Lago Argentino. It is a horseback ride guided by a “baqueano” (local guide), who defines the route according to the weather and experience of the riders. The ride then continues south while contemplating an imposing scenery: Lake Argentino, the majestic Cervantes Hill with its eternal snow, the Perito Moreno and Adriana mountain ranges. The trail goes through forests of ñires and lengas. It is likely to find Hereford cattle grazing and horses at rest. During the tour you can see wildlife: condors, hares, foxes, woodpeckers, among others.

**INCLUDES**

- Horse ride with an authorized National Park local guide. (\*)
- VAT 21%

**DOES NOT INCLUDE**

- Bilingual guide
- Transportation to and from El Calafate.

**Regular daily departures.**

**Schedule time:** From 15 to 18 hrs, it is a 2:30 h ride. You must be at the Estancia 30 minutes before starting time. (show up 30 minutes before at Quincho Don Juan)

**Riding level:** moderate – it is recommended to have ridden at least once. The minimum age to ride is 10 years old. The experience and physical fitness of the child will be evaluated before starting the activity.



## Patagonic barbecue: lunch

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Sometimes the travel agenda does not allow more time to enjoy the Estancia, but you can go for a few hours, enjoy the scenic scenery of its route, and try our specialty. The lamb roast is cooked on the spit, individual grills with chorizos, black pudding, different cuts of lamb and beef (upon request) are brought to the tables. It is accompanied with salads from the garden and the service ends with a delicious dessert made with milk milked at the estancia.

Includes:

- Charcoal roast lamb with salad and dessert.
- A glass of wine or one soft beverage during the meal.
- VAT 21%.

It does not include:

- Drinks during the meal (alcoholic or soft drinks).
- Transportation.

**Ask for alternative menus** for vegetarian/vegan and other dietary restrictions.

**Scheduled times:** 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Christmas and New Year's Eve: December 25th and January 1st available from 8pm to 10pm dinner time.