

EXPERIENCE THE GAUCHO WAY OF LIFE



ESTANCIA HOMESTAY AND GAUCHO EXPERIENCE

In the far southern reaches of Chile, on the bottom of the Earth, an ancient way of life persists amongst the mountains and lakes and harsh conditions. The term Gaucho describes a “cowboy” of the South American continent. They’re livestock farmers, often migratory, and have made their way of life in the Patagonian Region for hundreds of years. Typically of Spanish and Indigenous decent, these are rugged people who love to work and love to share their way of life.

In this rare and unique experience, you will immerse yourself in the Gaucho Way. Your home will be Estancia Mercedes, a traditional working ranch that has been in operation for hundreds of years. This family owned and operated ranch will be ground zero for your cultural experience as well as your adventure into the mountains. There are few things more beautiful than watching the sun rise over the Patagonian Mountains atop a beautiful horse surrounded by new friends.

IMMERSION IN THE GAUCHO WAY OF LIFE

In this action packed itinerary you will experience the full range of Gaucho life and what it means to live as one with the land around you. Your experience begins with a taste of the work that the people of this region participate in: raising livestock. You will help in herding and branding the cattle, an activity that is exhilarating and challenging. You will also get to experience the amazing landscapes that the Gaucho call home. From waterfall rides to Condo viewing, you will drink in the natural beauty of Patagonia with every step. The activities are amazing, but still cannot overshadow the warmth of the people, or the taste of the delicious local foods! At the end of this adventure you will be filled with a sense of community and connection.

Note: This itinerary pairs perfectly with a trip into the Patagonian Backcountry for trekking and camping. If you would like to couple this with some mountain trekking please let us help you create a perfect itinerary.

DAY 0

ARRIVE CHILE – TRAVEL TO PUERTO NATALES

This itinerary starts when you meet the Estancio Mercedes staff in the town or Puerto Natales. Travel to this region can take some time, so give yourself a few days from your home country to arrive here. Typically you can transfer from Santiago to Punta Arenas or Puerto Natales direct, but will depend on flights. If you would



like assistance on getting to your starting point we can help. Arrive Puerto Natales and spend the night there. We also recommend, if you have time, to build in at least one day here. It is a charming town with warm people and delicious food. Spend night in hotel of your choice.



DAY 1

ARRIVE ESTANCIA MERCEDES – CATTLE ROUND-UP

Today you will be picked up by your shuttle at a meeting point in Puerto Natales and be transferred to the Estancia Mercedes. Once there you will leave your bags at your room and prepare for your first taste of Gaucho Life. You will head out on horseback with ranch staff in search of cattle. Accompanied by your trusty k-9 companions you will locate the cattle and herd them back to the ranch. Once there, calves will be branded and released back to roam free. You will have the chance to practice your lassoing skills and riding prowess throughout the day.

Once your work is done you will be rewarded with a traditional Gaucho barbecue on the ranch grounds. Hear stories of adventure and hardship around the fire as you connect with your new friends in this amazing place.

DAY 2

IN SEARCH OF CONDORS

Following an old path laid by the forefathers of the Estancia, you will cross lush forest rich with birds and

flora to arrive to Cerro Mirador. This is a traditional nesting site for the South American Condor. If good luck is with you there will be nesting birds which you can observe up close and learn about their life from knowledgeable guides. Panoramic views abound and the chance to connect with your hosts will be plentiful. This activity can be done on foot or by horseback. Once back at the Estancia enjoy local food and drinks around the campfire.



DAY 3

CANTO DE LOS TURBALES EXCURSION

Today you will roam the countryside on horseback exploring the beautiful landscape and learning about local flora and fauna. As you traverse peat bogs and lichen covered cliffs, you will move ever closer to the magical waterfall that will be the destination for this excursion. Remember to soak in your surroundings, ask questions, and connect with your new friends.

Once you return from your trip, a filling and delicious meal will await you for your last night at the Estancia. As you sip wine and partake in all manner of treats, gaze up at the stars and realize that you walk in the footsteps of ancient peoples who have come and gone from this land. You sit in the presence of countless cultures who have called this land home. Get a good night's rest and prepare for your departure from Estancia Mercedes.

DAY 4

RETURN TO PUERTO NATALES

It is always hard to leave a place you have come to connect so closely with, as you are bound to do. Depart in the morning heading back to Puerto Natales.

CONTINUED ACTIVITIES

PATAGONIA

This itinerary is the perfect prelude to other amazing adventures in Patagonia. Whether it is a trip to Torres Del Paine National Park, or an exploration of one of the many destinations in the region, let this not be the end but only the beginning of your Patagonian Adventure.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Days 1-4 in above itinerary
- Transportation to and from Estancia Mercedes
- All food, lodging, and activities during stay

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Travel to and from Puerto Natales
- Lodging in Puerto Natales before and after Estancio stay
- Tips for staff
- Clothing for activities
- Additional activates before or after itinerary



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