



# RIDE WORLD WIDE ARGENTINA, PATAGONIA ADVENTURE WITH JAKOB VON PLESSEN 2025-2026

## RIDE INFORMATION

Inspired by the traditional gaucho culture he witnessed growing up in Argentina, Jakob has set up these rides to showcase some of the highlights of rural Argentina, its incredible scenery, horses and people. Most rides focus on Patagonia and we think they are one of the best possible ways to explore the stunning landscapes of the northern Patagonian Lake district and to get an insight into the traditional gaucho way of life. Jakob spent his 20s working as a riding guide in Kenya and those years of experience have helped him understand what it is that makes a riding trip special: escape, exhilaration, excitement; great horses, stunning scenery and a sense of style - these rides offer it all!



## DATES

7 night rides in Northern Patagonia are run between November and late February from set dates. Other dates, or tailor-made rides for private groups of 8 to 10 riders can be arranged on request. Private groups can sometimes combine a ride in Patagonia with 3 nights at El Boqueron, Jakob's family estancia in Buenos Aires province, which can also be booked independently for a group on request. Please contact us to discuss dates and availability.

## HORSES

The horses used are owned by Jakob and his team and are locally bred. In Patagonia horses are Argentine Criollos and Criollos crossed with Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred or Percheron. They are strong and sensible, very sure footed and at ease on rough or steep mountain terrain but also energetic, responsive and forward going making them a real pleasure to ride. There is an excellent choice for riders of different abilities. The horses are ridden in the local style, similar to western riding. They are used to neck reining with a light contact and relaxed seat. As part of a new breeding programme Jakob recently imported a Noriker stallion from Austria to cross with some of his Criollo mares - an exciting project with the aim of creating a new line of ideal mountain safari horses.

## TACK

Argentine style in Patagonia - saddles are similar to westerns without the big pommel, topped with a comfortable sheepskin. Bridles are also local style, made from raw-hide and with shanked bits so that only a loose contact with the mouth is required. Saddle-bags are provided.

## RIDING

On a 7 night Patagonia Adventure, there is riding on 7 days, usually a short ride into camp on the first day, a great chance to try the horses, and then 4 to 8 hours in the saddle on the next 6 days. On some days, riding is from camp to camp stopping for a long lunch and siesta on the way; on others you ride out from the night's base, stopping for lunch and refreshments and perhaps also to fish or swim. Rides are either lead by Jakob himself - bi-lingual, charming and thoughtful with more than 20 years' experience leading adventurous and personally tailored riding trips - or by other experienced English speaking guides, always assisted by the excellent, experienced local gauchos who look after the horses and provide support and back-up. Groups are limited to a maximum of 10.

## WEIGHT LIMIT

95kgs / 15 stone (with a lower 90kgs limit for less experienced riders) but please contact us if your weight is close to this to check suitable horses are available (some heavier experienced riders may be taken by prior arrangement).



## PACE

Varies with the going but routes in Patagonia cross rugged, narrow and steep terrain where the vegetation is often thick so it is predominantly slow. You are always free to move on where the ground allows and in the valleys there are good places for occasional energetic canters.

## RIDING EXPERIENCE

Suitable for intermediate riders and above, who are comfortable, relaxed and secure in the saddle at a walk, trot and fast canter and are looking for good quality, fun riding. Some less experienced, but confident, riders can be taken and there are plenty of calm and good natured horses who are adept at covering steep and rough terrain - however with several tricky passes and some river crossings to negotiate, you need to be relaxed and confident in the saddle with a reasonable amount of experience of this type of riding. **You should also be comfortable with heights** - one day in particular crosses a narrow pass and although the horses cope with ease, those with vertigo can find it alarming! There will be times when you need to get off and lead your horse up or down steep hills, so as well as riding experience you should be happy handling a horse from the ground and mounting unassisted. You will definitely enjoy the riding much more if you are riding fit and generally fit to walk up and down hills on uneven ground and if you don't ride regularly at home, we strongly recommend plenty of practice before you go to get used to the hours in the saddle.

## TERRAIN

Rides in Patagonia explore an area between Lago Falkner and Lago Traful in Argentina's Nahuel Huapi National Park, much of which is inaccessible other than by horse. There are steep climbs into the mountains following winding paths, narrow mountain passes and high ridges to cross above the tree line as well as valleys with open grassy meadows, southern beech forest and broad, clear rivers. It is wild, rugged and unspoilt with some challenging going for horses.

## SAFETY

Guides, who are first aid trained, carry a medical kit and satellite phone for emergencies and there is a first aid kit and satellite phone in all camps. As most of the riding is in remote mountainous areas, at times there will be limited or delayed access to professional medical support.



## ACCOMMODATION

Nights in Patagonia are in different private camps and at a privately owned gaucho farmstead. On 7 nights trips, usually the first 2 nights, and nights 4 and 5, are at a comfortable semi-permanent base camp that has been set up in a lovely situation on a private 1200 hectare estancia, Estancia Tres Lagos, which borders the Nahuel Huapi and Lanin National Parks.



A comfortable home in the wilderness, the base camp has 4 large, walk-in twin / double safari-style guest tents, raised on teak decking, each with en-suite shower and loo. There is also a shepherd's caravan that can be used as an extra bedroom if rider numbers require and a cozy log cabin living / dining room or 'quincho' overlooking the river. Guest tents are spacious with proper beds, made up with cotton sheets, pillows and duvets; they are set under a protective roof, are heated by wood burning stoves and lit by solar and rechargeable lantern (a generator runs during limited hours). Nights 3 and 6 are usually spent in more basic 'fly' camps using 2-man dome (igloo) tents, with camp beds, mattresses and sleeping bags provided. There are no showers in these fly camps - a little water can be heated for a morning wash or you can have a quick dip in a stream knowing you return to base the next night where you can have a proper hot shower - and there is a shared long drop loo.



The final night is spent on a local property belonging to Felipe, one of the gauchos who works with Jakob and is third generation descendant of a settler family. His traditional cattle-station, with its ancient corrals and barns surrounded by huge beech trees, close to the shores of Lake Traful, is like something out of a fairy tale - an atmospheric, authentic 'gaucho style' home that is only accessible by horse or boat. Here you sleep in reasonable comfort in big walk-in safari tents, with proper beds and sleeping bags provided. There is a bathroom block with hot water showers and flush loos and one of the barns has been converted into a kitchen and dining room, where convivial meals are served with tremendous hospitality by Felipe and his family. Single accommodation is sometimes an option in the caravan but is not always possible.

## MEALS

All meals are included and a real effort is made with the food, which reflects local Argentine traditions. Full cooked breakfasts keep you going when camping, lunch is either a picnic out riding, often carried by pack horse and eaten 'picnic style' along the way or it might be a traditional 'asado', a big part of gaucho culture and much more than simply Spanish for BBQ..... Argentine beef is renowned for its excellence and is often served with chorizo as part of an 'asado' or sometimes there might be a whole lamb asado accompanied by salads, home-made bread, cheeses and plenty of carefully chosen Argentinian wine. Dinners in base camp are three courses, eaten at a long table in the 'quincho' or around the campfire. Although meat is the mainstay of the Argentinean diet, main courses also include fish or perhaps a traditional with a selection of salads and vegetables. Vegetarians can be well catered for but please give us prior notice of any special dietary requirements. Drinks are included - the well-known Pisco Sour, especially mixed to fortify mind and body ('courage in a bottle'..) as well as other spirits, beer and good Argentine wines. Dinner is usually eaten quite late in tune with local custom (customarily in Argentina dinner is never before 9pm and sometimes not until 11pm).

## WEATHER

The season starts in November, with the arrival of spring and ends in February, late summer. Day time temperatures in the area between November and March average 20-27C but can vary and nights are generally cool, sometimes down to -2C. January and February are mid- summer and usually the warmest months but in the mountains, anything is possible and you should always be prepared for weather that is best described as capricious - unpredictable and changeable, with rain (and snow) possible at any time with little warning. In Buenos Aires province, the summer is hot and sunny, with daytime temperatures up to about 30 C .



## WHAT TO BRING

We will send you a list when you book.

## ITINERARY

The following is an example itinerary for the 7 night Patagonian Adventure. **Please note** it is only an example and day by day arrangements may be varied by your guides at their discretion if the weather or other local conditions require.

### Patagonian Adventure (7 nights)

*[Own arrangements to arrive and perhaps overnight in Buenos Aires, making your way to the domestic airport for an internal / domestic flight to San Martin de los Andes (Chapelco airport). Meeting arrangements will be confirmed before you depart - the recommended flight from Buenos Aires to San Martin normally depart Buenos Aires AEP around 11.40 / arrives San Martin 14:00 but please check with us **before** booking any internal flights].*

**Day 1** Own arrangements to fly to San Martin arriving at about 14.00. Met on arrival and driven approximately 1 ½ hours by vehicle to the shores of Falkner Lake with plenty of snacks to keep you going en-route. Then (weather allowing) cross the lake by boat, to meet gauchos and horses. Mount up, get settled and a short ride (about 2 hours) to camp, a great chance to try your horse and the traditional Argentine tack and style of riding. Arrive at camp, shown to your tents and time for a welcome hot shower before a first sundowner and dinner in the traditional 'quincho' overlooking the beautiful Filo Huahum River. Night base camp in the Filo Huahum Valley. (D)





## ITINERARY cont.

**Day 2** Wake-up call is at about 08.00 and a hearty cooked breakfast sets you up for the day, whilst horses are tacked-up. Once everyone is settled (it always takes a bit longer on the first day) head off, riding for about 3 hours down the Filo Huahum valley before returning to camp for a delicious Argentine style asado (barbecue) lunch. In the afternoon, ride a different route, testing your horse, tack (and riding muscles) on some climbs along the way, to get used to mountain riding. Arrive back in camp late evening for showers to shake off the dust before sundowners in camp or on the river bank. Dinner and night base camp. (B,L,D)



**Day 3** This morning, packhorses are loaded with all that is needed for a night in the mountains. You will be given saddle bags, plenty of snacks and a packed lunch, before mounting up to set off on an exciting day riding through Argentina's oldest national park, Nahuel Huapi and high into the montane wilderness. The Park is renowned for its particularly diverse flora and fauna, with species that include the beautiful 'llao llao' fungus, adopted as symbol of the area and of the nearby Hotel Llao Llao, a famous resort landscaped by Hermann Botrich who also landscaped Estancia El Boquerón, where Jakob grew up. After a morning making a gradual ascent of the mountain, stop for lunch and a siesta at the edge of the treeline before the challenge really begins! After lunch, mount up again and ride up to the summit, heading along the "Pass of Tears" where there are breathtaking views across mountain peaks into Argentina and Chile, terrain you never imagined a horse could cross. As your adrenalin surges, you'll be amazed at the calm, steadfastness of the horses – a thrilling achievement but not for the fainted hearted or those who suffer vertigo! After crossing the pass, head down to the 'fly' camp, set up by the gauchos in a spectacular spot overlooking the Buque mountain. Sundowners around the fire whilst the gauchos prepare a delicious supper. Dinner and night "fly" camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 4** - Breakfast in camp, then ride back down into the valley, following the spectacular ridges of the Buque mountain range with their tremendous views. After about 3 hours riding, arrive back at base camp for hot showers and a well-deserved lunch or, if the weather is particularly good, you might stop for a swim and perhaps an 'asado' by the river. The afternoon to relax, walk, fish or ride again. Dinner and night base camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 5** - A leisurely day to enjoy and explore the area around base camp. You might ride out after breakfast, to check the herd of horses or ride to a local estancia where gauchos make raw hide tack in the traditional way, stopping for lunch by one of the lakes or heading back to base for a long lunch and siesta. After lunch there's plenty of time to ride again or to relax, swim or walk - with 2 long days ahead its good chance for 'R&R' in this gorgeous peaceful setting. Dinner and night at base camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 6** - After breakfast, packhorses are loaded, saddlebags are packed with all you need for the next two nights and you mount up to head into the mountains. The route today includes some spectacular scenery, wonderful views of volcanoes across the border in Chile and perhaps a chance to see some of the area's plentiful, but shy, wildlife - otter, huemul (deer), the rare and tiny pudu deer, guanaco, mara (a sturdy relative of the guinea pig **cont.**

## ITINERARY cont.

**Day 6 cont** - also known as the Patagonian hare), parakeet and condor. Stop for a picnic lunch before riding on to the second fly camp, set up ahead at a remote spot on land owned by Felipe Chandia, a local gaucho whose family have farmed here in a way that has not changed for generations. Dinner and night Felipe's fly camp. (B,L,D)



**Day 7** - Scrambled eggs and bacon for breakfast in camp before riding on to Felipe's homestead, at the edge of the forest and close to the shores of Lake Traful. After about 4 hours riding arrive at the homestead where Felipe's wife Marta is preparing a delicious lunch. In terms of the 'gaucho experience' this day, amongst the barns and corrals of the old farmstead, is about as authentic and immersive as it gets. The afternoon to relax, walk or ride along the lake and swim before a delicious asado dinner, a traditional "al asador" (Argentine Lamb). Night at Felipe's. (B,L,D)

**Day 8** - Breakfast and depending on onward travel plans there may be time for a short ride or swim. Then a 20 minute walk to the beach, where you say farewell to the team and meet the boat which will take you across the lake to Villa Traful where your luggage and a mini bus are waiting. A drive of about 1 ½ hours to Bariloche airport to meet flights back to Buenos Aires departing around 14.00-15.00 and onward journey (B)

If you are travelling as a private group and wish to add a few days in Buenos Aires province, estancia El Boqueron can sometimes be booked privately for a minimum of 3 nights. It is usually possible to connect from Patagonia through to Boqueron in a day although you may need to overnight in Buenos Aires in between. Please ask if you would like help or advice booking flights or arranging accommodation in Buenos Aires





**Please note** that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in USD. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the USD/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay. (Rates valid to March 2026)

### **Patagonia Adventure: 7 nights - USD 7000 per person**

Rate **INCLUDES** twin / double accommodation, all riding, guiding and back up, meals (lunch first day to breakfast last day), local drinks, camping equipment (including sleeping bags for fly camps), laundry service and all road / boat transfers within itinerary.

**Note** - A service charge of USD 175 per week will be added to your invoice to cover staff tips.

Rate **EXCLUDES** International and domestic flights and taxes, any accommodation in Buenos Aires or outside ride itinerary, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have with cover to ride), any visa fees, optional activities such as fishing & fishing licences, clay pigeon shooting etc, personal items such as telephone calls and any tips.

**Single Supplement** - Rates quoted assume twin shared accommodation. If you would like to guarantee a single tent / room this is sometimes possible but a supplement may be charged. Please note that this supplement is **not** compulsory for people booking alone - it is not charged if you are willing to share with another guest of the same sex if necessary.

### **2024-2025 Dates Patagonia Adventure**

17th to 24th February 2025

17th to 24th February 2026

Other dates sometimes available on request for private groups



## FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION

British Airways currently have daily flights from London to Buenos Aires (touching down in Rio de Janeiro), usually leaving London Heathrow at about 22.00 arriving Buenos Aires at about 11.00 the next day. Iberia and Aerolineas Argentinas also have daily flights from London to Buenos Aires with a change in Madrid. Other options include LATAM, Air France and Lufthansa, or via the USA. Fares start at about £900 per person economy return London to Buenos Aires although this will vary depending on the carrier, date required, availability and how long in advance you book. Please call us for more flight information or if you would like a fare quote. We would be happy to book flights for you (our ATOL number for flight sales is 6213).

Domestic flights are best booked in conjunction with international tickets. For the domestic flights Buenos Aires to San Martin & Bariloche to Buenos Aires budget around \$600 USD return although you always need to confirm on booking. Meeting and transfers in San Martin / to Bariloche are usually arranged to combine with the following Aerolineas Argentinas flights:

IN: departs Buenos Aires AEP 11:50 / arrives San Martin de los Andes CPC 14:10

OUT: Departs Bariloche BRC 14:30 / arrives Buenos Aires AEP 16:40

NB Aerolineas change timings quite regularly

***IMPORTANT Please check with us before booking domestic flights as we try to co-ordinate so that everyone is on the same flight.***

## GENERAL VISA & HEALTH INFORMATION

NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking)

**Visas** If you hold a full British Passport and are visiting Argentina for less than 3 months, you do not need to arrange a visa in advance although visa requirements are always subject to change and you should always check up to date requirements before you travel

**Health** No jabs are required as a condition of entry into Argentina from the UK and Europe. The TravelHealthPro website (NaTHNaC) recommends you ensure you are up to date with Tetanus. For some travelers (normally if traveling around or longer stay), inoculation against Typhoid, Hepatitis A and B and perhaps Rabies can be suggested. You should visit your GP or a travel clinic for advice about 4 weeks before departure.

**(DRAFT 11/12/2024)**

