



Southern Patagonia

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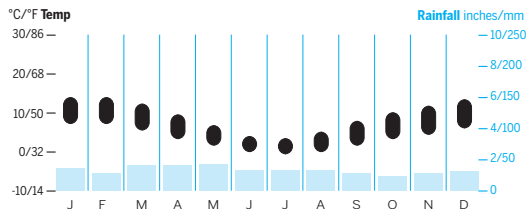
Why Go?

Pounding westerlies, barren seascapes and the ragged spires of Torres del Paine – this is the distilled essence of Patagonia. The provinces of Magallanes and Última Esperanza boast a frontier appeal perhaps only matched by the deep Amazon and remote Alaska. Long before humans arrived on the continent, glaciers chiseled and carved these fine landscapes. Now it's a place for travelers to hatch their greatest adventures, whether hiking through rugged landscapes, seeing penguins by the thousands or horseback riding across the steppe.

Parque Nacional Torres del Paine is the region's star attraction. Among the finest parks on the continent, it attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, even some towing wheeled luggage (though we don't recommend it). Throughout the region, it's easy and worthwhile to travel between Argentina and Chile. Included in this chapter are the highlights of Argentine Patagonia.

When to Go

Punta Arenas



Dec–Feb
Warmest months, ideal for *estancia* (grazing ranch) visits and back-packing.

Mid-Oct–early Mar
Coastal fauna, including penguins and marine birds, abounds.

Mar–Apr
Blasting summer winds start to die down and brilliant fall colors come in.



Southern Patagonia Highlights

1 Discover the remote backside of **Parque Nacional Torres del Paine** (p359)

2 Join the march of the penguins on **Isla Magdalena** (p349)

3 Hike the under the toothy **Fitz Roy Range** (p374) near El Chaltén, Argentina's trekking capital

4 Ride the range and trade fireside yarns at a working *estancia* (grazing ranch) at **Skyring Sound** (p350)

5 Enjoy a local microbrew, massage and lovely meals in **Puerto Natales** (p352) after time in Torres del Paine

6 Explore the gnarled volcanic steppe of the little-known **Parque Nacional Pali Aike** (p351)

7 Ice-trek the cool blue contours of 15-story **Glaciar Perito Moreno** (p373) in Argentina