

Patagonia River Odyssey

Rio Palena
Sea Kayaking Trip



Sea Kayaking in Chile: Journey Back in Time: Espolon Crossing

A four-day Patagonia sea kayaking and trekking trip to places rarely visited by outsiders. Come explore the real Patagonia, one of oil lamps, horseback transport and remote settlements. Bring home a perspective on life few will ever know. Truly, this trip is priceless.

ITINERARY:

Day 1 Saturday: Arrival and Introductions

Arrive at either of our entry points in Puerto Montt, Chile or Esquel, Argentina, the gateways to Patagonia. Connect with our representative and travel to the remote riverside town of Futaleufu, surrounded by majestic mountains. Here you will find your accommodations at our Tres Monjas Eco-Camp. A hearty meal, hot sauna, and wonderful views welcome you to Chile.

Day 2 Sunday: Introduction to Moving Water Sea Kayaking

You will gear up in your sea kayaks to tour the Class II Espolon and enjoy its crystal clear waters. It is the perfect way to introduce the basic strokes and control of a sea kayak in moving water. The day of learning and fun will add to the experience we need to paddle across the entire country of Chile on the Rio Palena. In the evening we will study the map and chart our course through the Andes. You'll help plan our menu and select your sea kayaks. After a hearty meal with organically grown vegetables from our ranch, we will go to sleep under the stars of the Southern Cross.

Day 3 Monday: Sea Kayaking – Start of our Trans-Patagonia Odyssey

We will drive 2.5 hours to the border of Argentina and get our first peak at the emerald Rio Palena, where an oxcart will take our sea kayaks to the put-in. We will wait to load them up until after our portage of a Class III rapid, keeping our sea kayaks maneuverable and light. After the run we load our sea kayaks for this weeklong adventure. We kayak downstream and enter a canyon that looks intimidating but is a Class II run and very fun. After a three-hour paddle, we set into our camp, located below the Rio Tigre.



Day 4 Tuesday: Sea Kayaking – Paddling through the Canyon

As we sea kayak through the Canyon, waterfalls fall off the rim and the forest encroaches on the river. We need to keep alert because the banks of the turns are filled with hazardous trees. The Class II rapids have gravel bars, which also present a possible obstacles. After several hours we come to a ferry crossing that the locals use to traverse the river. Here the valley opens up and we get an idea of how people live in this remote area. Soon we are at the confluence of the Rio Frio with the Palena, adding volume to the river. We camp here for the night, surrounded by the beauty of the mountains and the virgin wildlife. The unknown treats of the river are replacing our normal life with their secrets. Sea kayaking in Patagonia doesn't get much better than this!!!

Day 5 Wednesday: Sea Kayaking – Paddle to La Junta

Our first two hours of sea kayaking this morning takes us deeper into the Canyon. We see our first sign of civilization as the “Road to the End of the World” (the Carretera Austral) crosses the river. When we come out from underneath the bridge, it is as if we were coming out of a tunnel. The river valley now opens up, the rapids become calmer, and we see a few farms dotting the wild. The volume of the river increases once the Palena is joined by the Rio Figueroa drainage. It's three more hours of paddling to get near to the town of La Junta. Although still far from the main town, some signs of civilization will start coming into view. Here we have a chance to get some fresh bread from a nearby farm, interact with some true frontiersmen that have little interaction with the outside world, and share some stories of our Chile sea kayak vacation with a captivated audience.

Day 6 Thursday: Sea Kayaking – Hot Springs and White Sand

After we break camp today, we will enter the strong current of the lower Palena River. This day's paddle is a short one, marked by a towering glaciated peak called Volcan Melimoyu. Just past mid-day we will camp on a white sand beach across from a pristine hot spring, giving us the opportunity to relax our sore muscles and enjoy the scenery of this spectacular site. This is one of the most idyllic camps you probably will ever experience. This is sea kayaking Chile at its best!.



Day 7 Friday: Sea Kayaking – Nearing the Pacific Ocean

Departing our sandy campsite, we will sea kayak through huge bends in the river as it starts to slow in its journey towards the Pacific. Here the water really rises, with the high tide backing the river up. The forest is nearly impenetrable and we understand why Darwin called this the "Green Desert". We will find a nice little place to camp on river right, with a little shelter to cook under. Here we will set up our tents, as the enormous peaks rising straight up from the water's edge look over our shoulders.

Day 8 Saturday: Sea Kayaking – Raul Marín Balmaceda

In the morning we sea kayak for twenty minutes where we'll find a narrow channel overhung by dense vegetation, which will lead us to the Pitipalena estuary. If you were not in Patagonia Chile, you would think there would be crocodiles in this jungle channel. We will continue paddling to the isolated village of Raul Marín Balmaceda. Accessible only by boat, this storybook village is unplugged from the "real" world. It is built on a broad sand spit between Palena and the Pitipalena estuary. Porpoise's may play with us as we approach the town beach. The tides will determine if we are sea kayak against the current or if we get a free ride into town. We will get pampered with a stay in the village's comfortable cabins, and enjoy fresh seafood and Chilean wines.

Day 9 Sunday: Day to Relax in Raul Marin Balmaceda

We will explore the area with a day adventure to the local sea lion reserve or relax in the town's hot springs. We depart at 3:30 pm from Marin, taking a 1-hour boat ride, with sea kayaks on board, to where the road and our Expediciones Chile vehicle is waiting. We drive the five hours to Chaiten, check into our Bed and Breakfast where our celebration dinner awaits, along with our comfortable beds, enjoying a good nights sleep to be ready for tomorrow's trip back home.

Day 10 Monday: Departure

After breakfast, explore Chaiten for a few hours. A quick shuttle takes you to the airport for your flight back to Puerto Montt, unless you decide you just can't leave and want to return to Futaleufu for more fun in "The World's Greatest Playground!" You will have just experienced in one week what some folks won't experience in a lifetime.



INCLUDED:

All local transportation, shuttles, food and lodging while in Futaleufu. Round trip transportation between Chaiten and Puerto Montt or Esquel. One night of lodging in Chaiten at the end of your trip. All kayaks and equipment specified in the packing list. The cost of finding alternate activities for the week should sea kayak vacation be prematurely terminated.

TRIP OVERVIEW:

Experience Needed: Expert
Physical Challenge: High
Cultural Experience: Medium
Lodging: Camp
Comfort Rating: Low
Days away from home: 12
Days with us: 10
Max Trip Size: 8
Price: \$2495.00 USD

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