



**ExChile Greatest Playground on Earth!
2010-2011-2012 season**

Trip Name: Whitewater Guide School

Last Name:
First Name:
Email:
Phone:
in group:
Comments:

Overview: Whitewater River Guide School

Learning to whitewater guide on Chile's Rio Futaleufu isn't for everyone. The river is one of the most difficult commercially run rivers in the world, a test of any guide's river running, verbal, and decision making skills. The river requires technical maneuvers in big water unmatched by any commercial runs in North America. Guiding on the Futaleufu blends strategies of big water rowing while simultaneously commanding a paddle crew in big, technical Class IV and V whitewater. A competent Futaleufu guide has the ability to adapt quickly and guide on any river in the world.

The type of water students will encounter on the Futaleufu will be unlike any encountered in North America. The rapids offer few slack periods requiring the oars and paddles to be constantly engaged with the water. Even a seasoned raft guide will find it necessary to adjust their style of rowing and paddling on the Futaleufu.

Our raft guide school tries to maintain a student to instructor ratio of four to one, ensuring that every student receives extensive and personalized instruction. Our instructors are seasoned Futaleufu guides that will take this week to impart their knowledge to others. The owner of Expediciones Chile, Chris Spelius, will also be a participating instructor. He has been captaining rafts since the 1970s and has been paddling the Futaleufu since 1985. In 1991 he helped pioneer the first two successful raft descents of the Futaleufu River.

The textbook for the course is *The Complete Whitewater Rafter* by Jeff Bennett. All students are required to purchase a copy of the book and begin reading it BEFORE heading down to Chile. We also recommend that students read up extensively on swiftwater rescue and make themselves as knowledgeable as possible about the raft guiding profession.

The first session of the class will be held on the Class II-III Rio Espolon before heading out to the Rio Futaleufu. For the paddle boat captaining section we will raft the Rio Azul or less intense sections of the Rio Futaleufu. Most of the class will be taught on the Class IV sections of the Futaleufu - all the Class V drops will be captained by one of our experienced river guides. Graduation day will involve the entire group running the Class V Inferno Canyon.

Expediciones Chile's approach to teaching is total immersion. Students will first serve as part of the raft crew with the instructor in charge. Throughout the day the boat captaincy will switch, giving each student the opportunity to captain the raft with the guide school instructor serving as a guest. Each successive day will focus on different aspects of river running and raft piloting. Students will have the opportunity to master all of these skills. Participants will advance on the oars as far as their skill level and comfort level will allow.

In the evening there will be guide school lectures covering all aspects of the raft guide profession that will include knot tying, trip preparation, customer service, rigging, raft repair, trip leading, and the basics of river rescue. We will outline the qualifications, professionalism, and attitude of what it takes to be a first class river guide.

This course will cover some of the basics of swiftwater rescue and first aid, but will not emphasize teaching rescue or first aid techniques. Those topics are covered in our Swiftwater Rescue class. More time will be spent teaching river and team safety procedures that emphasize our "triangle safety system"; the coordination and positioning of raft, safety kayaker and catamaran to rescue swimmers.

Successful graduates of this program will be welcome to submit their applications for guiding on the Futaleufu with us the following season. We will likely have guide jobs available as well as guide internships. If accepted, participation in our Swiftwater Rescue Class will be required before our season starts.

Who is this course for? This course is designed for avid beginners and experienced raft guides who want to begin guiding on the international river scene. We have scheduled our guide school to coincide with the Spring Break of many colleges so that university students might participate. All students should be in top physical condition and be mentally ready for the challenges this course will present.

National Geographic International Adventurist: [Seven days to the Futaleufu - Trailer Slideshows:](#) [Slide Shows](#)

Day by Day:

Day 1 Friday: Depart your home town:

Fly to Miami and connect on an over night flight to Buenos Aires Argentina. Welcome to the warmth of the southern Hemisphere in summer.

Day 2 Saturday: Travel to Trevelin, Patagonia Argentina

Early morning arrival in Buenos Aires. Change airports and catch another flight to Bariloche Argentina. From Bariloche, a luxury bus can take you on a beautiful drive along the Patagonian lakes and mountains to Esquel. It is 20 minutes taxi ride from the bus station to your hotel in Trevelin. Trevelin, Argentina is a Welsh mountain village just 45 minutes from the Futaleufu River in Chile. Trevelin is also serviced by a private transfer service direct from Bariloche airport (4 hrs) to your hotel in Trevelin. After you check into a hotel in this charming village you are walking distance to several superb restaurants. Unwind, relax, and get a good nights sleep before the start of your trip 9:00 am the next morning.

Day 3 Sunday: Introduction to Rafts & Equipment

Our guide school program starts on the Class II/III Rio Espolon. Here we orientate ourselves to the rafts and equipment. We will then outline paddle rafting strategies concerning command of the crew and control of the raft with stern mount oars and paddle crew. Before we move onto whitewater, we go over the fundamentals of the "Triangle Safety System" and learn about the job of safety kayaker and safety catamaran. In the afternoon, we put into practice what we learned on the "El Macal" section of the Rio Futaleufu, hitting each eddy on opposite sides of the river as we zig-zag back and forth through the section. Each student will have a chance to change positions in the raft, and experience every part of the raft. We return to the camp for a summary of the information presented and dinner at our Campo Tres Monjas.

Day 4 Monday: Guide School Training Day - El Macal & Bridge to Bridge

We return this morning to the "El Macal" (Class III) stretch of the Rio Futaleufu giving each participant an opportunity to man the oars and command the raft. This will be the final warm up before putting in at the Class IV sections of the Rio Futaleufu. Before moving up to the Bridge to Bridge section we will review the strategies of the run and decide who will start on the oars and the catarafts in the afternoon. The Bridge to Bridge section requires the team work we have developed on the easier sections below. Afterward we will return to camp for a lecture on the specifics of each rapid and what could be improved using video taped analysis.

Day 5 Tuesday: Guide School Training Day - Bridge to Bridge

We will spend both the morning and afternoon rafting on the Bridge to Bridge section, going over all that we have learned in the previous two days and mastering our river running techniques. Participants will be involved in setting up safety and develop decision making skills. We will rotate all participants so that each gets a turn on the oars and safety cataraft, if they so desire. At the end of the day we will do a swim test of all the participants in anticipation of the Class V runs to come. This evening we will do a video review of the runs, discuss river running strategy and diagnose problems.

Day 6 Wednesday: Guide School Training Day - Guide School Training Day - Bridge to Bridge

We will spend both the morning and afternoon rafting on the Bridge to Bridge section, going over all that we have learned in the previous two days and mastering our river running techniques. Participants will be involved in setting up safety and develop decision making skills. We will rotate all participants so that each gets a turn on the oars and safety cataraft, if they so desire. At the end of the day we will do a swim test of all the participants in anticipation of the Class V runs to come. We will also go over strategies for just paddling rafts. This evening we will do a video

review of the runs, discuss river running strategy and diagnose problems. We will discuss the action plan for the following day of rapids and how to get the team around the two rapids we will portage.

Day 7 Thursday: Guide School Training Day - Infierno Canyon (Class V)/Guide School Graduation Day

We take our entire class for an early morning descent of the world class "Infierno Canyon" (dependent on water levels). This descent will require the best efforts and attention of the entire team. If the water is too high we will put in just below the Infierno canyon. We will ghost raft the Class V "Zeta" and the "Throne Room" rapids. Afterwards we run the chaotic Wild Mile. This time of the year this run is Explosive continual class 4 plus action that is stimulating to the maximum. We will take out at Camp. Graduation ceremonies will begin before dinner and carry into the always fun award ceremonies.

Day 8 Friday: Terminator & Casa de Piedra and on to Trevelin, Argentina. Full on fun!

We start at Campo Tres Monjas as we head down for a complete descent of the lower Futaleufu; 21 kilometers of challenging whitewater. We group scout the "Terminator" as our team threads the needle. After this Class V rapid, we continue to rotate our team through the oars increasing the your time guiding oars. This day is a full day of rafting, taking out after the "El Macal" section, passing the technical Class V "Casa de Piedra" and "Mas o Menos" rapids. Our vehicles will be waiting at the end of today's run. Our luggage will join us as we make our way toward the border on our way to Trevelin. Check into your hotel, take a shower and change clothes before enjoying your last night in Patagonia. There are several outstanding and reasonably priced restaurants in Trevelin that we can recommend. Relax, recover and look back on the exciting week of training before heading back the following morning from the Esquel Bus station or Airport.

Day 9 Saturday: Return to Capital City

Depending on your connections you are now are in Argentina ready for an early departure in a cab from your hotel to the bus station in Esquel for the trip to Bariloche and your flight back to Buenos Aires. A private transfer can be arranged direct from your hotel to the airport in Bariloche. If you have a flight from Esquel you have the morning to enjoy and buy gifts in Trevelin before your 2 pm flight to Buenos Aires and the connection back to your home country.

Day 17 Sunday: Return home

Accommodations:

[Eco Camp Campo Tres Monjas](#)

Price per Person: \$1995.00 USD

Special Flexibilities: Exchile will be flexible to make your trip a total success. The actual program for your custom trip will vary according to the desires and skill level of your group, weather, or other factors. Patagonia has constantly changing weather patterns that might affect what day is best for a certain activity. If a certain part of your trip is not possible due to danger risks and weather extremes, our experienced guide staff will work with you to figure out the best possible option to substitute for the weather complications. If you have any concerns, please feel free to ask us more about the situations and what is guaranteed on the trip.

Included: Your described trip, guiding, instruction, activity equipment, local transportation, shuttles, all meals, accommodations at our eco-camps, cabins, ranches or lodges, while on your trip. We offer a free pick up on Sunday mornings at 9 am in Trevelin at your hotel, and drop off to your hotel in Trevelin, Argentina on Fridays at 9 pm. See the packing list of your activity, for the specific clothing that is required.

Not Included: Transportation to and from your home town, and your accommodations and meals in Trevelin Argentina or alternate trip pick up point. You can reserve and prepay on the web your transport from your final air destination, to and from your pick up-drop off point before and after your trip, or you can direct us to charge your visa card and do it for you. We highly recommended having exchile make hotel reserves in Trevelin. (room capacity in this small village is limited). Expediciones Chile is not financially responsible for your travel complications getting to your trip pick up point and from the drop off point, HOWEVER, we will be relentless allies in offering our services to help solve any issues that you may encounter.

Trip Summary:

Season: **N29-D4 2009**

Spring and Fall Colors Season:

Experience Needed: Familiarity with rivers and rafting.

Physical Challenge: Extreme

Cultural Experience: High

Nature Experience: High
Comfort Rating: Moderate
Max Trip Size: 12
Min Trip Size: 4
Regions visited: Futaleufu Valley
Lakes, rivers and sites: Espolon, Azul, Futaleufu, Palena, Corcovado

Travel Summary:

Days away from home:

In:

Final Flight Destination airport: Sunday November 29, Bariloche Argentina
Trip pick up point: Trevelin Hotel Argentina
Trip pick up date and time: Sunday 9:00 am

Out:

Trip drop off point: Trevelin Hotel Argentina
Trip drop off date and time: Friday Dec 4, 9:00 pm
Return Flight Departure airport: Esquel Argentina

Map: [Interactive Travel Map](#)

Travel Route Alternatives: [Traveling through Chile and, or Argentina](#)

Air Fare: [Online quote](#) +1.866.498.0530

Luxury Bus Tickets Chile & Argentina: [Information and reserves](#)

Lets GO!

Reserve your trip: [Credit Card deposit](#)

Travel Insurance: [Quote and or online purchase](#)

Sign up process: [Sign up NOW!](#)

Packing Lists: [Select your list to print.](#)

Enroute guidance: [Print this and take it with you.](#)

Type of Clothes ready for your trip pick up:

Thank you,

Trip Designer: Nick Fechter, Dave Carrs & Chris Spelius

Direct line to my Desk +1.208.629.5032