

SAN PEDRO, ATACAMA DESERT and the ALTIPLANO



Highlights of the journey :

- *San Pedro de Atacama village*
- *Tatio Geysers*
- *Atacama salt flat*
- *Moon Valley, Rainbow Valley*
- *Puritama Hot Springs*

Characteristics of the trip :

- **Type of tour :** *Discovery*
- **Possible departures:** *all year*
- **When to travel :** *April to October*
- **Physical level:** *all public*
- **Physical level:** *none*

DAY 1 CALAMA - SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA (approx. 100km)

Reception at Calama airport by your guide. Private transfer to San Pedro de Atacama.
Excursion to the Moon Valley at sunset. Return to San Pedro de Atacama.
Astronomic tour at night.

Overnight at Kimal (or similar category according to availability). ***No meals included***

DAY 2 - SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA – SALAR DE ATACAMA – HIGHLAND LAGOONS – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA (approx. 270km)

Breakfast at the hotel

Full day excursion to the **Atacama Salt Flat**, the biggest salt flat of Chile with a surface of 3.000 square kms and natural habitat of three flamenco species. We go on to the highland lagoons (approx. 4200msnm) of Miscanti and Miñiques from where we have a spectacular view on the high plateaus and can appreciate the contrast of colours: the blue sky, the yellow tones of the vegetation, reddish and black rocks, snowy volcano tops and the blue lagoons with their white mineral boarders. Drive back to San Pedro de Atacama.

Overnight at Kimal (or similar category according to availability). ***Lunch included***

DAY 3 – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA – SALTY MOUNTAIN RANGE – RAINBOW VALLEY – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA (approx. 100 km)

Breakfast at the hotel

Today we trek for 2-3 hours through the **Salt Mountain Range**, where we see curious geological formations, caves, gorges and ridges. Our vehicle takes us back towards the **Domeyko Mountain Range** to the archaeological **site of Hierbas Buenas** where we can appreciate its petroglyphs. We are about 5 minutes away from the entrance to the **Rainbow Valley** which owns its name to the various colours of its mountains (reds, greens, blues, greys, yellows among others). We wonder through the rock sculptures created by erosion. Return to San Pedro de Atacama.

Overnight at Kimal (or similar category according to availability). ***Pic-nic lunch included***

DAY 4 – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA - TATIO GEYSERS – CASPANA – LASANA CHIU CHIU– CALAMA – FIN (approx. 280 km)

We leave early in the morning from San Pedro to the **Tatio Geysires**. Impressive fumaroles can reach a height of 7m at this geyser field situated in the Andes Range at the feed of the Tatio and Linzor volcanoes. We take a pick-nick style breakfast on the spot and swim in the natural hot springs.. Afterwards we drive up to Calama, visiting on the way Caspana, Chiu-Chiu, Lasana Fortress and the petroglyphs of Loa River. Drop off at Calama Airport.

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Breakfast and pic-nic lunch included.

END OF SERVICES

The prices include:

- Accommodation in hotels 3*Sup category
- Meals as mentioned in the program
- Private transportation during the whole trip, including fuel
- Private English speaking guide during the whole trip
- Staff expenses
- Excursions and visits as mentioned in the program
- Park entrance fees as mentioned in the program

NOT included:

- Flight and airport taxes
- Tips
- Visa if necessary
- Personal insurance
- Personal equipment
- Single room supplement
- Other services NOT mentioned in the program

ASTRONOMIC TOUR *By S.P.A.C.E.*

S.P.A.C.E. offers a general star tours each clear night, apart from a possible small period around the full moon. They allow people without any prior knowledge of the sky to understand how to look at it, and observe as well through powerful telescopes, and discover a new world, our universe ! And maybe from one of the best place on Earth to see the sky, the Atacama desert.

S.P.A.C.E. tries during the first part of the tour to explain the naked eye sky. What do we see when we look at the stars, what is a constellation, how to learn them, how to read a sky map and recognize the main stars. We use a green laser pointer to show you unambiguously the various constellations. When the moon is visible, it is possible to take images of it through the telescopes, either with digital cameras, or with reflex (we have adapters for Nikon, Canon, Minolta and Pentax cameras).

While you can find a lot of astronomical photographs on the web, there is nothing like the experience of visual observing. Everybody has seen images of Saturn, but the first time you really see the planet with your own eyes becomes a moment to remember.

S.P.A.C.E. has the largest park of telescopes of any public observatory in south America (between 20 and 60cm diameter), correctly aligned to always provide the best possible view, in order to let you discover some of the incredible views the sky has to offer. These telescopes are correctly maintained, and we use only high quality eyepieces to provide clear, sharp wide angle views. The 60cm telescope is for now the largest touristic telescope in Chile, but this record will not hold, since we are currently building two larger telescopes, which should enter operation near the end of 2009. Large diameters give much better views of the sky. What is hard to see in a 30cm telescope becomes quite visible, some stars show very vivid colors, and some nebulae start to be visible in color (normally, at night, we see in black and white). To provide the best possible views, we only use Televue Nagler, Panoptic or Ethos eyepieces. If it does not tell you much, we have spent more money on good quality eyepieces than some other observatories on telescopes.

Our tours are ending around a warm drink to talk a little bit before returning to San Pedro. The tours last two hours and a half. The schedule vary during the year (later during the summer, i.e. january and february).

****This tour is subject to cancellation due weather condition (cloudy nights). This tour is not operated during full moon, 3 days before and after full moon.***

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GENERAL INFORMATION:

VISA :

No visa is required for US or EU citizens for journeys up to 90 days.

Weather in Atacama:

Temperature peaks up to 40° Celsius during the day and can drop to -10° Celsius at night. In the summer months (January-February) rain and heavy storms are not an exception. Due to the desert climate and high altitude, sun protection is a must.

Vehicle(s):

Up to 3 persons, vehicle type 4x4, with AC.

From 4 to 6 persons, vehicle type Van, with AC.

More than 6 persons, vehicle type Sprinter, with AC.

Hotels:

The hotels listed in the program are subject to availability. When they are not available, we use similar hotels. All hotels have a private bathroom. We choose 3* accommodations but it is perfectly possible to upgrade if needed.

For all other info to customize your trip, please contact us:

www.prismandino.com