



Chile's Atacama Desert and Bolivia's Uyuni Salt Flats Combo
May 1-12, 2022 (12-days)

The Atacama, whose surreal landscapes are often compared to that of Mars, is the World's driest desert and possesses some of the Planet's most interesting and colorful geologic landforms, wildlife and archeological wonders. Additionally, its extreme dryness and high altitude combine to make it one of the very best places in the World to view and photograph the night sky. It is for this reason several important observatories are located here including the ALMA project.

Nearby to the north in Bolivia, Uyuni is the World's largest salt flat, 10,000 sq kilometers in area. Uyuni's heaven-like landscape is one of the most picturesque on Earth. During the wet season a thin layer of water covers the expansive flats creating the World's largest mirror. This creates endless opportunities for interesting daylight and night sky photography. The area is also an important habitat for several species of flamingos. Wild Vicunas as well as domestic llamas abound and there is rich historical evidence of the native Andean peoples who to inhabit the area.

This tour begins with 5-nights based from the picturesque desert oasis of San Pedro de Atacama. Days are spent exploring the area's best know geologic wonders like the Valley of the Moon, Geysers of Tatio, or the Rainbow Valley. Evenings will be devoted to observing and capturing images of the brilliant southern night sky. Following Atacama we will venture by road north into Bolivia for 5 nights. Locations to be visited include: The Red and Green Lagoons, Dali Desert, Eduardo Avaroa National Park, Isla Incahuasi, Arbol de Piedra, Valley of Rocks, Volcan Tunupa and the Train Graveyard. We return to San Pedro de Atacama in Chile for our final night.

Itinerary:

- May 1: Arrive Santiago, fly North to Calama, drive 1 hr East to San Pedro de Atacama. Check in to the [Hotel Altiplanico](#).
- May 2-5: We will spend 4 full-days exploring the best locations around San Pedro de Atacama for wildlife, scenic and night sky photography. Locations: Rainbow Valley, Salar de Atacama,

Valley of the Moon, Salar de Atacama, Monjes de Pacana, Rainbow valley, etc. Evenings spent photographing the night-sky one night visiting a nearby observatory for a star tour led by a trained astronomer.

- May 6: Drive East from San Pedro to the border of Bolivia and after crossing continue North to the Tayka Hotel del Desierto. Night-sky photography in evening. The next several days we will be at close 12,000 ft altitude on average. We will have acclimatized ourselves in San Pedro beforehand but we will need to still need to pace ourselves and be sure to drink plenty of water.
- May 7: Drive further North to Tayka Hotel de Piedra on the south side of the Salar de Uyuni (Uyuni Salt Flats). Many interesting photo spots along the way and night-sky photography in the evening.
- May 8: Drive across the Salar de Uyuni to Tayka Hotel de Sal on the North edge at the foot of Volcan Tunupa. This location is the highlight of our journey and we will spend 2 nights here. Along the way we will pass by Incahuasi which is a stunning cactus adorned island stuck in the middle of the Salt Flats.
- May 9: Full-day exploring the Uyuni Salt Flats from Tayka del Sal. There is an interesting Indian ruins very nearby that is excellent for night-sky photography.
- May 10: Depart Tayka del Sal and cross the flats to the town of Uyuni to visit the famous "Train Graveyard". After an hour or so shooting there we will make our way back towards the border passing by the "Piedra Arbol" or Stone Tree and the Valley of the Rocks. Tonight we will spend the night in small Andean village of Vallemar.
- May 11: Today we will make our way back to the border and San Pedro de Atacama. Evening farewell dinner at our lovely hotel.
- May 12: Drive to Calama to catch our flight south to Santiago for our connecting flight back home.

Price = US\$6,650 based on shared accommodations, US\$7,980 single accommodations (private room).

Included: all hotels, meals, transportation, guiding and park entrance fees.

Not Included: international or domestic airfare, visa fees, alcoholic beverages, laundry service and gratuities for hotel/restaurant staff and local guides (approx \$20/day).

**Note: This itinerary may require some slight modifications prior to departure.*