RIDE ANDES CHILE ATACAMA EXTREME DESERT RIDE

Season: March to May, September to November

Chile, northern – the perfect desert ride





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Introduction

An awe-inspiring, in depth immersive desert experience across a part of the driest desert in the world. The little known 105,000 square kilometres (41,000 miles) of Atacama Desert, covers a plateau in northern Chile between the Pacific and the Andes. A challenging ride – with canyons to negotiate, and long days in the saddle – brings huge rewards from the up-close encounter with this phenomenal region.

Testimonial

"...Nothing was going to prepare me for what I was going to see and live and experience in the Atacama. That big sense of adventure, the immense otherworldly landscape, the staggering beauty and the extreme colours of this everchanging desert will never stop flashing in your memory...15 rides behind me, this one remains the best." Veronica S, October 2018.

Atacama Extreme Desert Ride

Nights are a mix of small lodges and wild camps, sitting around a campfire in idyllic locations, as we cross the 'altiplano' over huge sand dunes, through canyons, across salt lakes... stopping to soak in natural thermal springs along the way and always watched over by the towering San Pedro and San Pablo Volcanoes.

What You Need To Know?

- 9-day itinerary including some long days riding (6-8 hours/day, one 9 hour day)
- Some challenging, technical terrain; experienced riders only
- Camping and small lodges (3 nights) on this remote trail
- Fixed date departures/Private groups
- Maximum 12 guests on fixed departures
- Single riders very welcome (limited single rooms/tents available; no single room available in hotel day 4, option single tent)
- Pace generally steady, a few gallops.
- Altitude: Ride starts at 2525 metres (8285 feet) above sea level with the highest night, day 4, at 3600 metres (11,811 feet)
- Season: March to May, September to November
- Flexible start day for private groups

Atacama Extreme Desert Ride **Overview:**

DAY 1: Meeting Up And A Typical Atacama Village *Dinner & Overnight at Guesthouse*

D, (approx. 1 hour vehicle transfer)

DAY 2: Out Into The Desert!

Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)

DAY 3: Desert Sunrise Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 7hrs horse ridina)

DAY 4: Fortress & Terracing and a Hotel! Dinner & Overnight at Lodge, 2 & 4 person bedrooms B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)

DAY 5: The Long Ride! Dinner & Overnight Camp in the village corral B, PL, D (approx. 9hrs horse riding)

DAY 6: Pools To Bathe In Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx, 8hrs horse riding)

DAY 7: Inca Trail Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 7hrs horse riding)

DAY 8: Arriving At San Pedro De Atacama

Dinner & Overnight Hotel B, PL, D (approx. 7hrs horse riding)

DAY 9: Departure

After breakfast we will take you to the Calama Airport. BB

End of services



Arriving/Departing/Extensions: Start & end point: Calama Airport, northern Chile. Please contact us if you would like to add more adventures around this ride.

www.rideandes.com



Detailed itinerary:

DAY 1: Meeting Úp And A Typical Atacama Village An early afternoon meetup at Calama Airport, then a drive to a typical village to stay overnight at a small guesthouse. Riders can wander through the village including a visit to the oldest church in Chile – San Lucas de Chiu Chiu, built in 1600.

Dinner & *Overnight at Guesthouse D*, (approx. 1 hour vehicle transfer)

DAY 2: Out Into The Desert!

Once guests are comfortable on their horses, we set out from the village to Laguna Inka Coya at a trot – taking advantage of the terrain to cover some miles. Meeting the Salado River we follow the riverbed, ascending up to a natural bridge known as 'Devils Bridge' that allows us over the narrowest part of the River Salado Canyon. Here, once onto the plains close to the riverbed, we set up our first camp. As the sun sets, the Atacama Desert, renowned for its clear skies, will reveal a million stars – many riders decide to take full advantage and sleep outside.

Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)

DAY 3: Desert Sunrise

There is nothing more spectacular than waking up in the desert!

After coffee and a good breakfast at the campsite we mount our Criollo horses and continue our desert expedition. We ride along the Rio Salado and follow part of the pilgrim route of the Virgin Aiquina – the mighty volcanoes of San Pedro, San Pablo and Paniri watching us from nearby. We continue along the canyon where we will probably come across herds of llamas and goats until we reach the vast plains of Turi. We arrive at the foot of pucará Turi, where we set up camp.

Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 7hrs horse riding)



DAY 4: Fortress & Terracing and a Hotel!

How about having an early swim in the natural mineral pools of Turi – a fun way to start the day before jumping on your horse! We ride to the the Pucara of Turi for a visit: a look around remains of the largest fortress built by the Atacameño people. We then continue on our way, to stay the night in a lodge in Caspana. This typical village is surrounded by a fertile valley where we see its many terraced crops and fruit trees. The village has only 400 inhabitants and the houses are built in liparita clay; it also boasts a church built in 1641 and now declared a national monument. Overnight at a charming hotel with hot showers and serving delicious food.

> Dinner & Overnight at Lodge, 2 & 4 person bedrooms B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)



DAY 5: The Long Ride!

An early wake-up call, as we have a long day of riding ahead. We head off, climbing the impressive rocky landscape following an Inca trail until we reach a high plateau. We continue in a southeasterly direction passing at the foot of the Cablor mountain and, after four hours of riding, reach the Chita mountain. We follow a path along the top of the plateau with stunning views of all the peaks and volcanoes surrounding us. Nearing the end of our day in the saddle, we descend a long slope that leads us to the bottom of a huge and very rugged canyon with small salt flats. We visit one of the few locals who lives in a natural cave and continue to ride in the canyon til we reach Turcapo. We set up camp in a corral of local villages.

Dinner & Overnight Camp in the village corral B, PL, D (approx. 9hrs horse riding)

DAY 6: Pools To Bathe In

We set out between the orchards of local inhabitants, then ride up a beautiful slope reaching another plateau. We continue through dramatic landscapes and come to a ravine where large pools offer an ideal place to stop for a refreshing bath. Continuing on across the plateau along an Inca Trail we then descend towards the Rio Grande, where we spot an oasis in the valley. It is here that we will set up camp.

Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 8hrs horse riding)

DAY 7: Inca Trail

We leave Rio Grande, climbing up the hill with our horses til we reach the pampa. From here we meet the Inca Trail again and later descend for a long time through low hills, never losing the magnificent views of snow-covered volcanoes and mountains. In the distance, you can see the sparse vegetation of San Pedro de Atacama. We continue the ride through San Bartolo to reach the place where the rivers Rio Salado and Rio Grande meet. Descending the ridge, we reach our camp place on the lands of Catarpe.

Dinner & Overnight Camp B, PL, D (approx. 7hrs horse riding)

DAY 8: Arriving at San Pedro De Atacama

After having our last camp breakfast, we mount up and ride to the river. We follow the Rio Grande River till we reach the Valley of Death (Valle de la Muerte). Here we continue along the path all the way until we enter the impressive Valley of the Moon (Valle de la Luna). Sand dunes and breathtaking surroundings provides the ideal décor for our last gallop in the Atacama Desert. Due to the layer of dust we arrive looking like bandits in the splendid village of San Pedro de Atacama! At our guesthouse we will wash away the dust with ice-cold beer and take a warm and well-deserved shower before sitting down for our last dinner. Also tiem for a pre-dinner swim in the hotel pool. You'll spend the night in a guesthouse in the center of town.

Dinner & Overnight Hotel B, PL, D (approx. 7hrs horse riding)

DAY 9: Departure

After breakfast we will take you to the Calama Airport. BB

End of services



Length	double/twin per person	Single Supplement	Rider weight supplement 100kg/200lb
(9D/8N)	from USD 4510	USD 300	Normally 0

Included:

All accommodation (2 person rooms days 1 & 8, 2 & 4 person rooms day 4, camping days 2 & 3, 5 to 7) ; all meals and water (from day 1 dinner to day 9 breakfast); English speaking guide & 2nd local guide; 7 riding days; horses; saddlebags; all necessary transfers/transport as per itinerary – back up vehicle brings luggage; all necessary local taxes, private reserve & national park entrance fees.

Not included:

Appropriate medical insurance (mandatory), visa (as necessary), international or national airport taxes, soft and alcoholic drinks (inexpensive), personal expenditure, tips, and all services not mentioned in the detailed description.



F.A.Q's

Horses & Tack: During this ride, you'll be on strong Chilean Criollo horses – ideally suited to the terrain and with a wonderful temperament. Criollo breeds have developed from horses that were first brought from Spain in the 17th century, developing very different characteristics in each region, depending on terrain and the needs of the local horsemen. The tack is local and very suitable for long days in the saddle.

Accommodation: The accommodation provided in this itinerary is two nights at lodges with double/twin bedded rooms, one night at lodge with 2 & 4 person rooms, the other nights camping. The guesthouses are charming with private bathrooms days 1 & 8, swimming pool day 8. The tents are 2 person igloo tents. There is a large dome tent which serves as a kitchen/social area.

Meals: Riding into camp, to be greeted by the smell of final preparations of a freshly cooked dinner is a wonderful thing!

Surprisingly varied dishes are served, given the remoteness. With prior notice, we can also cater for certain dietary requirements – please consult.

Climate: We expect that the climatic conditions in March & April, September to November to be as follows: humidity on average 5%; precipitation chance is normally 0; daytime temperatures 16°C - 26°C; temperature at night between 8°C - (-5°C).

Clothes and Equipment: Travel notes will be sent with useful information including a suggested packing list and guide contact details etc. To cope with changing temperatures, as a good idea 'layering' is advised. Space for luggage during the ride will be strictly limited.

> For futher information please contact: rideandes@rideandes.com www.rideandes.com

Emergencies: In case of accident, our guides carry a mobile phone so that they can contact assistance.

Health Services: No special vaccine is currently required for this part of South America but each quest must check the vaccine situation with an appropriate travel clinic. Also depending on where you live/have travelled to recently there may be special entry requirements (yellow fever, etc). Clients with special medication should bring enough for the whole trip since you will not be able to buy medicine during our journey. It is very important that you state on the information sheet if you have suffered from heart disease; if you take diabetes medicine, if you have some kind of blood illness, etc. In certain seasons a wasp species called "chaquetas amarillas" (yellow jackets) appears. If you are allergic to wasp stings, we suggest you take the treatment required with you and warn us so that we can help in the case of an emergency. We do not recommend people who are highly allergic to wasp/bee stings – rather than just a mild allergy, to come on this ride as it is impossible to evacuate people quickly. Each person must evaluate the wasp/'yellow jacket'/bee situation very carefully, please contact us to discuss

Safety: Generally, Chile is considered one of the safest countries in South America and Atacama known as a very safe area but, as with all over the world, in major cities/tourism centres theft can be an issue hence we ask guests to be cautious with their belongings while not out in the desert.

Important Note

- Please note the altitude: The ride starts at 2,525 metres (8,285 feet) above sea level with the highest night, day 4, at 3,600 metres (11,811 feet).
- Booking will be confirmed upon receipt of the corresponding deposit (A 30% payment will be required upon confirmation and balance of payment will be required no later than 45 days before beginning of the tour).
- Exceptional postponement/cancellation policy in place due to circumstances directly related to Covid-19, please request full details.
- We reserve the right to alter the itinerary due to circumstances beyond our control.
- Prices can alter without prior notice (preceding a confirmed booking)
- Appropriate medical insurance is mandatory and the responsibility of each guest/booking agent.
- It is the responsibility of the individual guest/booking agent to ensure that participants have the necessary riding skills to take part in the chosen tour.
- Rider weight limits are in place, please refer to each itinerary for details
- Guests are strongly advised to bring and wear their riding helmets while riding during the tour.
- Guests will be required to sign a responsibility release before starting a tour.

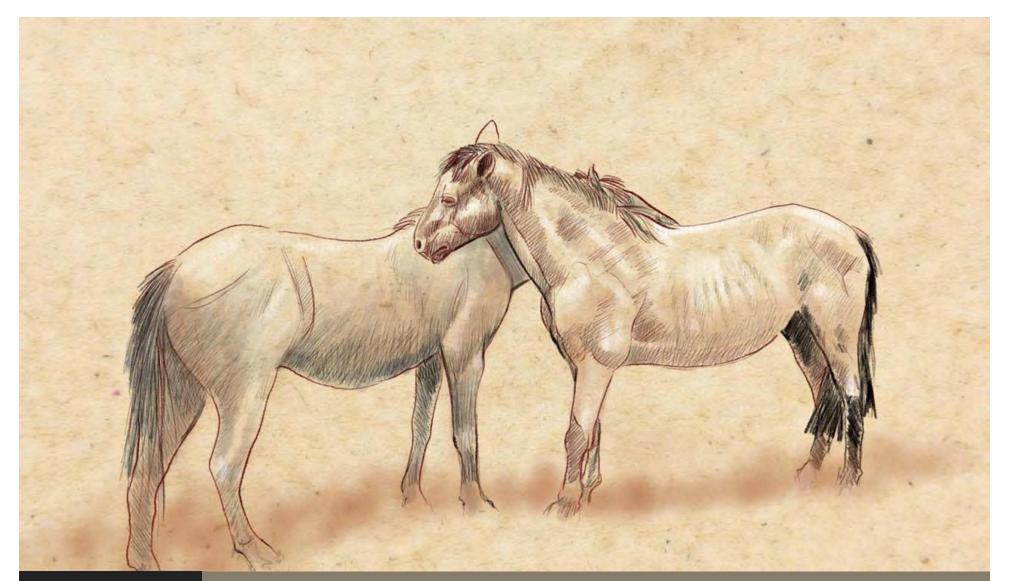
About Ride Andes:

Sally Vergette, an English rider, moved out to Ecuador in 1996 and shortly afterwards founded Ride Andes specializing in tours 'journeying on' through magnificent parts of South America. In 2003, using her knowledge acquired in Ecuador and with a local business partner, she was the first to set up estancia to estancia riding tours in Uruguay.



Ecuador is still our base but Ride Andes is involved in providing spectacular riding tours – many itineraries designed by Sally – in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Chile-Argentina, Colombia and Uruguay. Sally is still very active in all aspects of the rides in these destinations but is now supported by excellent local guides and only leads a few of these tours.

For futher information please contact: rideandes@rideandes.com www.rideandes.com





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