



Trekking in Patagonia National Park & San Lorenzo

February 19 – March 3, 2025 (13 days)

The Aysén region of Patagonia is still a wild frontier—an isolated wilderness with a captivating landscape of endless glaciers, old-growth beech forests, and shimmering lakes. It's also home to the recently formed Patagonia National Park, a hidden gem created from land donated to the government of Chile by Tompkins Conservation in 2018. This expedition-style trek, led by guide extraordinaire Cathy Ann Taylor, is designed especially for those ready for a true challenge. You'll hike trails that bring you through a variety of sensitive ecosystems, from the desert steppe to nearby glaciers, and through pristine forests and across fast-flowing rivers—it will be like what hiking in Patagonia was 50 years ago! Be prepared for rough conditions, including wet river crossings—even a zip line to facilitate crossing one particularly challenging river! We end the trek at a luxurious and cozy lodge (complete with outdoor hot tubs!) in the Chacabuco Valley, the heart of the park. Our other accommodations are in rustic lodges and wilderness camps—far from any crowds. Be among the first to explore this region—to date, only 40 people have done this trek. An extension to explore the environs of 12,159-foot Monte San Lorenzo, on the border of Chile and Argentina, is available.

TRIP DETAILS

Strenuous ▶ 8 days strenuous hiking, some long drives; 7 nights hotels, inns, or lodges, 4 nights camping

ITINERARY

(You will need to leave the U.S. on February 18 in order to arrive in El Calafate on February 19.)

Day 1, February 19 ▶ Arrive in El Calafate

Arrive in El Calafate, a town named for the berry that, once eaten, guarantees your return to Patagonia! You will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel. Our hotel complex is near the center of El Calafate; amenities include a spa and Wi-Fi. In the early evening, we'll gather with our group and trip leader for a briefing on the adventure ahead, followed by a welcome dinner. D...Posada Los Alamos

Day 2, February 20 ▶ La Posta de Los Toldos

In the early morning we start our long drive from El Calafate to Posta de Los Toldos, a remote but well-appointed refugio in the deep Patagonian steppe of Patagonia Park. Here we can explore nature in utter comfort—our lodge has just nine rooms with private bathrooms, a wonderful kitchen with delicious regional food, cozy common spaces, inspiring maps and books, and a star observatory. Upon arrival, we'll head out on a short hike to Cerro Colores, a lookout with stunning earth-toned

hues, and we'll meet our local guide here. Overnight at Posta de Los Toldos. (8 hours driving, 334 miles, but with ample stops along the way to stretch our legs and enjoy the scenery; 1 hour hiking.)
B,L,D...Posada de Los Toldos

Day 3, February 21 ▶ Cañadón Rio Pinturas

Today we'll hike to Cañadón Rio Pinturas, a protected area offering exploration of the wildlife and landscapes of the Patagonian Steppe. Here we can explore a series of hiking and walking trails ideal for wildlife watching, as well as discover the canyons where the native settlers painted rock art more than nine thousand years ago. Return to our lodge for dinner and overnight. (8 hours hiking, 14 miles, 1.5 hours driving.)

B,L,D...Posta de Los Toldos

Day 4, February 22 ▶ Cueva de Las Manos – Raleigh Camp

Today we'll have a guided tour of Cueva de Las Manos (Cave of Hands), a UNESCO World Heritage cultural site and Patagonia's main archaeological spot. It contains cave painting depictions of hunting scenes, handprints, and abstract figures. In 2018, Rewilding Argentina, a foundation created to confront and reverse the crisis of species extinction, donated the land to create Parque Patagonia. At midday we drive to the border of Los Antiguos-Chile Chico where we meet our local guide and porters and set up everything for our trek, including sorting out equipment. We continue an hour to the north entrance of Parque Patagonia-Jeinimeni Lake. Here we shoulder our packs and start our trek along the vibrant turquoise waters of the lake to Raleigh Camp, where we will have dinner and spend our first night in the park. (2.5 hours hiking, 5.7 miles, 164' elevation gain, 2 hours driving.) Overnight at Raleigh Camp.

B,L,D...Raleigh Camp

Day 5, February 23 ▶ Raleigh Camp to Glacier Hut Camp

Today we tackle several steep inclines, cross Gloria Pass (3,600'), and ford countless wide, shallow rivers as we head to Glacier Hut Camp, a beautiful site hidden in Valle de los Glaciares, our home for the night. Upon arrival at camp, we can take a sunset stroll around the glacier lake, then relax around camp. (7-8 hours hiking, 10.5 miles, 750' elevation gain on one steep incline.)

B,L,D...Glacier Hut Camp, Valle de los Glaciares

Day 6, February 24 ▶ Glacier Hut Camp – Guardaparques Glacier Circuit

We take a round-trip hike to the Glaciar del Guardaparques lookout. The hike is steep and ascends eroded rock and gullies until it arrives near the serac band of Guardaparques Glacier. Lakes and waterfalls are visible from here, and we get an overlook of the valley we are traversing through, with our campsite in the distance. We hike up to the picturesque hanging glacier of Punta Guanaco peak by the upper lake, then return via the same path to Glacier Hut Camp for dinner and overnight. (5 hours hiking, 4 miles, some scrambling, 900' elevation gain.)

B,L,D...Glacier Hut Camp, Valle de los Glaciares

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Day 7, February 25 ▶ Glacier Hut Camp to Refugio Renoval (3,600')

We rise early for a hike offering breathtaking views of the Jeinimeni, El Tronador, and Las Llaves Mountain ranges and their ragged peaks. Our path brings us from the open alpine environs to the lush northwest evergreen forest, down to the Avilés Valley, around lagoons to an old lenga forest, and to a remote, newly constructed wilderness camp. Along the way, we'll catch glimpses of the past as we trek past abandoned shelters built by gauchos. (7-8 hours hiking, 9.5 miles, 535' elevation gain and 1,568' loss.)

B,L,D... Renoval Hut Camp

Day 8, February 26 ▶ Refugio Renoval to Chile Chico – Zip Line

The last day of our first backcountry trek traverses the wide rivers of the Avilés Valley. Depending on weather conditions (and if the water level is high), we'll enjoy exhilarating river crossings by zip line—complete with rope systems and harnesses! We'll follow cattle trails used by gauchos to get their animals to summer pastures, including some narrow-cut trails beside a canyon. We arrive at Chelenco Lake (Lago General Carrera), near the old mining village of Fachinal, and meet our van for a rugged, bumpy drive to Chile Chico. Along the way we'll take in spectacular views of the lake and surrounding mountain terrain. Overnight in cabins at Chile Chico. (9 hours hiking, 14 miles, 1,545' elevation gain, 2,560' loss, 2 river crossings with rope systems and harnesses.)

B,L,D... Chile Chico, Chile

Day 9, February 27 ▶ Chile Chico to Borde Baker – (need to change description).

We enjoy incredible views of El Avellano and the mountain ranges of the North Icecap as we make our way to tonight's lodge. Along the way we'll stop at some Tehuelche Indian paintings for a short 15-minute hike. Passing through Puerto Guadal and Puerto Bertan Town, where the Baker River—the most voluminous river in Chile—begins, we'll stop again for another short, 30-minute hike to the confluence of the Baker and Nef rivers, famous for the difference in the color of their waters. We arrive at our lodge, Explora Valle Chacabuco, with enough time to visit the information center where we can get detailed information of the Fundación Rewilding Chile. This non-profit organization's mission is to encourage rewilding as a conservation strategy to restore ecosystems and strengthen local communities' connection with nature. The exploration center focuses on climate change and has an exhibit of the original inhabitants of the Valle Chacabuco. Overnight at the lodge. (6 hours driving.)

B,L,D... Green Baker Lodge

Day 10, February 28 ▶ to San Lorenzo Mountain

San Lorenzo, the largest mountainous massif in Northern Patagonia beyond the Patagonian Ice Cap, is surrounded by a unique environment of rivers and forests and offers spectacular walks and views of beautiful hanging glaciers.

After lunch, we drive to Cochran and continue to Monte San Lorenzo, where we meet Lucy and Luis Soto, local pioneers who came to the area 35 years ago and still live the traditional gaucho lifestyle. We'll take a 2-hour hike through a beech forest and past heart-shaped Corazon Lake to our basecamp, where we'll spend the night. (2 hours hiking, 4.5 miles, 2 hours driving—46 miles.)

B,L,D... San Lorenzo Camp

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Day 11, March 1 ▶ Hike to D'Agostini Refuge

We follow a trail through a beech forest that opens onto a valley with views of the San Lorenzo Mountains. We'll explore the remains of a rustic hut built by Alberto De Agostini, the famous Italian priest and mountaineer who was the first to summit San Lorenzo. Weather permitting, we'll enjoy lunch with views of an alpine lake and the pinnacles of the massif. Return to San Lorenzo Camp for a typical gaucho barbecue with the locals, complete with music and tales of the legendary pioneers and adventurers who first explored this rugged land. (7 hours hiking, 12 miles, 700' elevation gain.)
B,L,D...San Lorenzo Camp

Day 12, March 2 ▶ Baker River

After an early breakfast, we'll depart by shuttle bus and take a bumpy road to the peaceful Green Baker Lodge on the emerald-colored Baker River. Along the way, we'll stop for a short hike to Mirador Confluencia. This afternoon is at leisure to fish, take a well-deserved soak in the hot tub, and relax. In the evening, we gather for a festive farewell dinner at the lodge. (2-3 hours hiking, 5 miles, 3 hours driving—60 miles.)
B,L,D...Green Baker Lodge

Day 13, March 3 ▶ Depart from Chile

Rise early for a morning departure to Balmaceda Airport for homeward-bound flights. This is a long drive but the spectacular views of General Carrera Lake, beech and larch forests, and the vastness of the Patagonian Andes are worth it. We'll stop for lunch in one of the small towns. (6 hours driving, 165 miles.) You should schedule your flight to depart after 3:00 pm.
B,L...

LAND COST

\$12,295 per person (3 - 4 members)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

*Should you choose to pay with credit card there will be a service charge of 3.5%, the fee we incur from the bank.

Note—Prices listed are subject to change. We are occasionally faced with unavoidable cost increases due to fuel increases, costs of services or currency fluctuations that we cannot absorb. We will, however, do everything we can to keep prices the same as published.

LAND COST INCLUDES...

- Expert leadership
- Local guides
- Accommodations in hotels, inns, and camps
- Meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Ground transportation
- Wine at dinner, water, and snacks

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- First Aid and Bio Security Kit
- Tips for local guides, porters, drivers, and staff at hotels and restaurants
- Airport transfers on Days 1 and 12 (and on Day 15 if doing the extension)

LAND COST DOES NOT INCLUDE...

International airfare to El Calafate, Argentina, and return from Balmaceda, Chile; meals not noted on the itinerary; individual transfers for early arrivals or late departures; trip insurance (we urge you purchase trip insurance to include trip cancellation; **emergency evacuation insurance is mandatory for Patagonia trips**); optional tipping to leader, local guides and staff; excess baggage charges; airport taxes (if any); cost of medical immunizations; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages beyond dinner, laundry, etc.).

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation25% of land cost
 120 days prior to departure25% of land cost
 90 days prior to departure.....Balance

CANCELLATION FEE SCHEDULE

From time of reservation
 until 90 days prior to departure25% of land cost
 89-60 days prior to departure50% of land cost
 59 days or fewer prior to departure.....100% of land cost

EXPERT LEADERSHIP

Expert leadership is the key to every successful trip. Cattara attracts knowledgeable and gifted leaders who are passionate about guiding trips and truly enjoy sharing the experience with others. They understand the cultures and traditions they work in and are a fountain of information. In addition to making sure everything runs smoothly and safely, Cattara guides enhance your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends.

TRIP LEADER



Cathy Ann Taylor, a high-altitude trekking & cultural guide for the last 35 years will be leading his trip. Cathy Ann has trekked all over Nepal, Tibet, India, and Bhutan, with well over 200 trips in the Himalayas (she still considers the Himalayas her “second home”)! She has also hiked extensively in the European Alps (Tour du Mont Blanc—six times, Tour of Monte Rosa, The Haute Route, Gran Paradiso, Scotland—three times, and the Dolomites—two times), the Georgian Caucasus—six times, South America (20 trips in Peru, 7 in Patagonia), Antarctica— three times, Kilimanjaro— one time, Morocco —four times, and Uganda & Rwanda—eight times. A devout hiker and mountain biker, she leaves no trail undiscovered, and her passion for the mountains, caring nature, and boundless energy are renowned. Her experience, knowledge, positive attitude (she can find the

good in anything!), and her wonderful rapport with the local staff will enhance your experience. With the help of caring and like-minded individuals she has been able to manage the sponsorship of nineteen remote village children, all of whom are in boarding school in Nepal or in universities in India, Nepal, and the United States. She consistently gets rave reviews from members of her groups and has quite a following. Cathy Ann is active in the Breast Cancer Prevention Partners and has participated in sixteen expeditions, including Mount McKinley, Mount Cho Oyu, Mount Fuji, Mount Shasta, and Mount Rainier, which helped increase awareness of breast cancer. Cat's special trekking program, Sacred Treks, benefits Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (formerly the Breast Cancer Fund). Past trips include Bhutan, Mont Blanc, Peru, Everest, Ladakh, Mustang, Georgian Caucasus, Sikkim, Dolomites, Cordillera Blanca, and Annapurna Sanctuary treks (she has raised \$1,700,000 to date!). Cathy Ann has also been active in the American Himalayan Foundation and has helped raised \$30,000 for their STOP Girl Trafficking project. She has also raised over \$25,000 for Lama Pasang's Himalayan Children's Care Home which houses 87 children from Mustang. Cathy Ann is also involved in fundraising for the National MS Society has raised over \$81,000 for the organization. She has also reached the summit of Ama Dablam (22,500') and Island Peak (20,305') in Nepal and Argentina's Aconcagua (22,834'), the highest peak in South America. Cathy Ann received an honorable mention in *Hooked on the Outdoors* magazine's Outdoor Person of the Year Awards, and also received a letter of recognition for her fundraising and environmental work from former Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS

You should be an experienced hiker in excellent physical condition. This trip is rated strenuous, as you will be hiking five to ten hours on most days, and will encounter rugged wilderness conditions, with several river crossings and even a zip line over one particular river. You will be wet a lot of the time! All hikes take place below 4,000 feet, so altitude acclimatization is not an issue. There are a couple of long drives on the trip (Days 2 and 9, and Day 15 if doing the extension), but we will try to stop often to stretch our legs. For physical preparation, we recommend regular cardiovascular exercise for one hour at least 4-5 times a week. We suggest stair climbing, running, and mountain biking on hills, squats, and lunges or elliptical or treadmill training in the gym. And, of course, the best way to train for a trek is to go hiking! We recommend you get out on the trails at least once a week. Wear your boots and daypack and pick some trails with hills so you can strengthen your leg muscles and build up your stamina. We believe other important pre-requisites are a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You will need a passport, valid for at least six months beyond the date of completion of the trip. No visas are required for U.S. citizens for this trip. Upon entering Argentina you will be given a Tourist Card; keep it with your passport as you'll need it when you leave the country to enter Chile. Note—it's a good idea to make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement. Extra passport photos can also be helpful to have just in case.

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AIR TRAVEL

Airfare is not included in the land cost of the trip. For air reservations, please contact the airlines directly, either by phone or via the Internet. Plan your arrival in El Calafate by 3:00 p.m. on Day 1. Many travelers elect to use their “frequent flyer” miles when traveling, but please check with us before purchasing or obtaining your tickets. We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip. Note—Names on air tickets and passports must match!

MEDICAL MATTERS

No vaccinations are currently required to enter Chile and Argentina, but usual immunizations for typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis A, and polio are recommended. These regulations and recommendations change frequently, so please check with your local health department or the CDC for more information (www.cdc.gov).

Please advise us of any pre-existing medical conditions that may affect your health on the trip (recent injuries or surgeries, chronic illnesses, etc.). We recommend you bring your own personal first-aid kit, pain killers, and allergy medicines if you are prone to allergic reactions (especially epipens if you are allergic to bee stings). Moleskin or Second Skin for blisters is also recommended, as well as Band-Aids and antibiotic ointment. Consult your doctor about bringing other medications, such as antibiotics like Cipro. The trip leader will also carry a basic kit for emergencies, but will not have any prescription medications.

MONEY MATTERS

You should bring enough money for any souvenirs you may buy, plus a few items like aperitifs, extra beverages, and the like (most of your meals are included in the cost of the trip). Depending on how much of a shopper you are, \$500-\$600 should be plenty for incidentals and souvenirs. At least US \$650 per guest is recommended as a tip for the trip leader. You can present your gratuities to your trip leader individually. Gratuities to all the local guides and drivers are included in the cost of the trip.

The currency of Chile is the Chilean Peso, and the currency in Argentina is the Argentine Peso. You will want to check the current rate of exchange just before traveling when planning how much cash to bring with you. We suggest you withdraw money from an ATM in El Calafate before the trek begins, as there are few ATMs along the way while trekking. Major credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard and American Express and USD are accepted at most shops and hotels.

WEATHER & CLIMATE

The weather in Patagonia is wildly unpredictable. You can have all the seasonal elements—rain, wind, snow, sun—all in one day! Each day on the trail you need to be prepared for a variety of weather conditions: for that reason you will carry your raingear and jacket in your daypack every day, even if the morning starts out bright and warm. Dressing in layers that can be adjusted to suit the prevailing conditions is highly recommended. Patagonia has one of the largest holes in the ozone

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centered directly above it. The sun is incredibly strong even if you can't feel it, and it can cause serious sunburn in a very a short period of time.

WHILE ON THE TRIP

Accommodations in this area of the world are simple, but they offer great access to our hiking trails. We'll be staying in a combination of hotels, inns, and wilderness camps.

FOOD & WATER SAFETY

Water provided by your guides is safe to drink. When traveling within Patagonia, the local tap water is generally potable. However, at hotels or on your own, we recommend using bottled water, readily available for purchase.

INCIDENTALS

Laundry: You will not really have time to have your laundry done during the hike, but you can hand wash a few items and hang them to dry in your room. We have a two-night stay at Posta de Los Toldos and three nights at Explora Valle Chacabuco, so there is ample time for clothes to dry. Synthetic, quick drying fabrics are best (see the equipment list).

Electricity: Chile and Argentina are on the 220V system. Plugs in Chile usually have two or three round pins (type C and L); plugs in Argentina usually have three slanted flat pins (type I). If you are planning to use something like a hairdryer, electric shaver, camera battery, or phone charger, bring a converter and a selection of plug adapters (you can buy these in drugstores or travel specialty stores in the U.S.).

Time Zones: Chile and Argentina are two hours ahead of New York and five hours ahead of California.

Communications: While we discourage the use of cell phones on our trip, we can't deny the fact that you may want to be in touch with your friends or family. Please be sensitive to the needs of others and use them in the privacy of your room. The international dialing code for Argentina is 54; for Chile, 56. Contact your cell phone service about international coverage. Wi-Fi is very limited while in Patagonia National Park. The hotels in Chile and Argentina have internet access.

WHAT TO BRING: CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST

Packing Notes

It's best to go as light as possible and take only the essentials. Excess baggage can be a burden, not only to you but to support personnel.

Always bring all irreplaceable items, such as camera, medications, important documentation, and trekking boots in your carry-on luggage.

Luggage

- Duffel bag, large enough to hold your hiking and city clothes. It should have a full-length zipper (for easy access) and be sturdy. Wheeled duffels are OK to bring, but hard-shelled suitcases are not advisable (they are difficult to load compactly in the vans).
- Daypack with a capacity of about 2,800-3,200 cubic inches, with a good padded waist belt. It can double as your carry-on bag.*
- Spare roll-up duffel (optional). This is essential if you wish to bring home those great souvenirs! It should be lockable.

*Remember, you must carry a warm layer and rain gear with you every day on the trail, as well as your picnic lunch, 2 liters of water, sunscreen, warm hat, gloves, camera, and cover for daypack in case of rain. Be sure your daypack is large enough!

Clothing Notes

You should be prepared for very unpredictable weather. The weather in Patagonia is very unpredictable and can change drastically and unexpectedly. Strong winds are often prevalent. Bring comfortable clothing that will protect you from cold and possibly wet weather. Synthetic fabrics (such as polypropylene, capilene, or wool) are the most effective barriers against the cold. They provide the best insulation, are light in weight, wick away perspiration, and dry quickly if wet. (Cotton garments are not good in cold or wet mountain conditions.)

When layering, your innermost layer should be a synthetic T-shirt or long underwear. The middle layer can be a synthetic turtleneck or wool shirt, and pants. The outermost layer should be a synthetic fleece jacket, and/or a good quality Gore-Tex wind/rain parka and over-pants.

We haven't included quantities for each item listed. Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions, your personal needs, and the overall weight restrictions for your luggage. Note: It is acceptable to wear clean hiking pants and a shirt to dinner every evening.

Underwear

- Regular underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry.
- Thermal underwear (lightweight), top and bottom.

Socks

- Casual socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for your walking (not hiking) shoes.
- Lightweight hiking socks (synthetic or wool/synthetic—we suggest 3 pairs).
- Synthetic or silk sock liners—optional. Some people wear sock liners to help prevent blisters, and some wear the same pair of hiking socks for three days in a row and achieve the same result.

Shirts

- Long-sleeved, synthetic or wool shirt.
- Short-sleeved synthetic T-shirts (in case we have some hot, sunny days on trek).
- Shirts for non-hiking activities.

Pants

- Full-length synthetic hiking pants or synthetic sweatpants.
- Hiking shorts
- Casual pants or skirts for non-hiking activities.

Outerwear

- Medium-weight jacket of synthetic fabric, such as fleece or thinsulate.
- Rain/wind parka (must fit over bulky clothing).
- Rain/wind pants, preferably with full-length side zipper (must fit over your other pants).
- Lightweight gloves (wool or fleece).
- Waterproof daypack cover.

Head Gear

- Sun hat with wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off, or baseball cap.
- Fleece or wool hat
- Bandana. A generally useful item—it will keep your neck from getting sunburned and can double as a hand towel in the field.

Footwear

Please break new boots in well before the trip.

- Hiking boots (not waterproofed). There are several river crossings, and it is impossible to keep shoes dry.
- Comfy shoes for around camp.
- Comfortable walking shoes to wear while in towns.
- Sandals or flip-flops for showers.

Sleeping Gear

- Sleeping bag, rated to -10C.

Other Items

- Water bottles, 1- or 1.5-quart capacity. Make sure they are leak-proof. Bring 2 and mark them with your name or initials as several people may have the same bottle.
- Hiking poles—highly recommended. These are essential to relieve the impact on your knees during long downhill; they are also useful on uphill. Practice with them before the trip.
- Toiletry kit—soap, toothbrush, small synthetic towel, etc.
- Purell hand sanitizer for quick hand washing and hygiene (a must!).
- Toilet paper and a Ziploc bag (for stops along the trail).

- Personal medical kit, including blister protection.
- Ace bandage or brace if you're prone to sore knees or ankles.
- Sunglasses (100% UVA/UVB protected).
- Spare pair of prescription glasses, prescription sunglasses, or contact lenses.
- Sunscreen lotion and lipstick of SPF 25 or higher.
- Small padlocks or combination locks for your duffels.
- Heavyweight plastic garbage bag to help keep the contents of your daypack dry during hikes.
- Headlamp with spare batteries.

Optional Travel Accessories

- Camera and plenty of memory cards, extra batteries.
- Repair kit with needle, thread, and safety pins.
- Pair of compact binoculars.
- Swiss Army-type pocketknife.
- Powdered electrolyte mixes for your water.
- Your favorite trail snacks or supplements, especially if you have dietary restrictions.
- Reading and writing material.
- Swimsuit (optional).
- Sit upon pad for trailside stops.
- Biodegradable laundry detergent (for hand-washing clothes).

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