

**RIDE ANDES CHILE**  
**ATACAMA DESERT DISCOVERY RIDE**  
Season: March to May, September to November

*Chile – remarkable desert experience*





## **Introduction**

A daily dip into the desert surrounding the charming thatch and Adobe village oasis of San Pedro De Atacama. The very best of both worlds: desert exploration by day returning to unwind around the pool at a comfortable hotel at night. The little known 105,000 square kilometres (41,000 miles) of Atacama Desert, the driest desert in the world, is awash with other-worldly geological formations and awaits your discovery.

## **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 other-worldly landscape, the staggering beauty and the extreme colours of this ever-changing desert will never stop flashing in your memory...15 rides behind me, this one remains the best."  
Veronica S, Extreme Desert Itinerary, October 2018.

## **Atacama Desert Discovery Ride**

Nights at a comfortable lodge with swimming pool and rooms with private bathrooms, located in one of the 'ayllus' that make up the charming red sand village of San Pedro, the gateway to the Atacama Desert.

## **What You Need To Know?**

- 7-day itinerary, on 1 day excursion by vehicle
- Length of ride/routes adapted for private groups
- Each night in lodge in the San Pedro oasis
- Normally covering a total of 125km (80 miles) over 5 days riding
- Fixed date departures/Private groups
- Maximum 8 guests on fixed departures
- Single riders very welcome (single rooms available)
- Pace generally steady, some fast-paced riding possible.
- Season: March to May, September to November
- Flexible start day for private groups



**RIDE ANDES**

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## **Atacama Desert Discovery Ride Overview:**

### **DAY 1: Arrival & Introductory Ride**

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

### **DAY 2: Colonial and Pre-Colonial Settlements**

*Dinner & 2nd Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)*

### **DAY 3: Salt Flats, Salt Lake Float**

*Dinner & 3rd Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)*

### **DAY 4: Valley of The Moon**

*Dinner & 4th Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 8hrs horse riding)*

### **DAY 5: The Ride!**

*Dinner & 5th Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 8hrs horse riding)*

### **DAY 6: Geysers**

*Dinner & 6th Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 3 hours vehicle transfers)*

### **DAY 7: Departure**

*After breakfast we will take you to the Calama Airport.  
B (approx. 1 hour vehicle transfer)*

### **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](http://www.rideandes.com)



### **Detailed Itinerary:**

#### **DAY 1: Arrival & Introductory Ride**

You will be met at Calama International Airport, then driven to San Pedro de Atacama to a comfortable hotel. After settling in, riders can meet the horses and, once everyone is settled, we head out for a quick ride along the shady tracks of the oasis to get to know the horses and the tack. After riding back, we head into the centre to wander the sandy streets and dine at a local restaurant.

*Dinner & Overnight at Lodge*

*D (approx. 1 hour ride, approx. 1 hour vehicle transfer)*

#### **DAY 2: Colonial and Pre-Colonial Settlements**

We set out to explore the Beter ruins, to visit the remains of the first colonial settlement established by the arriving Spanish. The desert dunes are once again taking over, many dwellings covered by sand. Colonial era ceramics can also be found buried here. We then ride on – but back 3000 years in time, to the Tulo archaeological site. Two hundred people are estimated to have lived here and, thanks to a reconstruction project, we can visit the traditional adobe houses to peer into the past; the lookout point provides an excellent view over the site. After the ride, relax and enjoy a refreshing swim before dinner.

*Dinner & 2nd Overnight at Lodge*

*B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)*



### **DAY 3: Salt Flats, Salt Lake Float**

Today, riding off southwards, we soon notice the sand whitening as we approach the largest salt flats of Chile. Hidden under the 3,000 sq km (1,158 sq miles) of thick salt crust are various lakes and, where these lakes have managed to poke through the salt crust, we will find the flamingoes. Thirty kilometres (18.5 miles) from San Pedro, we arrive at the intense blue waters of the Cejar Lake, framed by a crystalline border. With a 40% saline concentration (more than the Dead Sea!), enjoy a relaxing float on the water. We then turn and head back to San Pedro.

*Dinner & 3rd Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 6hrs horse riding)*



#### **DAY 4: Valley of the Moon**

The fantastical rock/salt formations hidden in salt ridges 15km (10 miles) from San Pedro need to be experienced! First riding across the open desert, we then climb up a large sand dune to find the narrow path allowing us to enter the valley. The silence and tranquility among this lunar-like landscape, formed by wind and water erosion of the salt and rock formations, is awe-inspiring. After contemplating the scenery, we ride back via a spectacular canyon for dinner and a night at the lodge. Do not forget to bring your binoculars: the skies over the Atacama Desert are renowned for being clear, packed with stars and well worth a viewing.

*Dinner & 4th Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 8hrs horse riding)*

#### **DAY 5: THE ride!**

Rivers, gorges, dunes, oases & desert vegetation and a panoramic view – this route is the perfect grand finale for our desert discovery. Setting out along the native chañar and algaroba tree-lined lanes, we then follow the Catarpe Valley and climb onto a ridge, joining an old cattle drivers road. The return journey is by way of a dramatic descent of from the immense dunes of the 'Valley of Death'. Sadly, we then have to say 'goodbye' to the horses and, after a swim at the lodge, enjoy a pleasant evening in San Pedro.

*Dinner & 5th Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 8hrs horse riding)*

## **DAY 6: Geysers**

After 5 days of riding, 125km (80 miles) later, today we opt for wheels for a visit that rounds off the Atacama Experience perfectly: El Tatio Geysers. These geysers spout out very hot water and a lot of superlatives: they comprise 8% of the world's geysers, are the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, and equal the highest Geyser field in world, at 4,230 metres above sea level (13,877 feet). An early start is needed – as well as very warm clothes – but the sunrise is beautiful here. We then descend to the Puritama hot springs to bathe in the eight natural pools surrounded by native vegetation, before returning for a relaxing afternoon in San Pedro and a farewell dinner.

*Dinner & 6th Overnight at Lodge  
B, PL, D (approx. 3 hours vehicle transfers)*

## **DAY 7: Departure**

After breakfast we will take you to the Calama Airport.  
*B (approx. 1 hour vehicle transfer)*

***End of services***



**2020/2021 Prices from:**

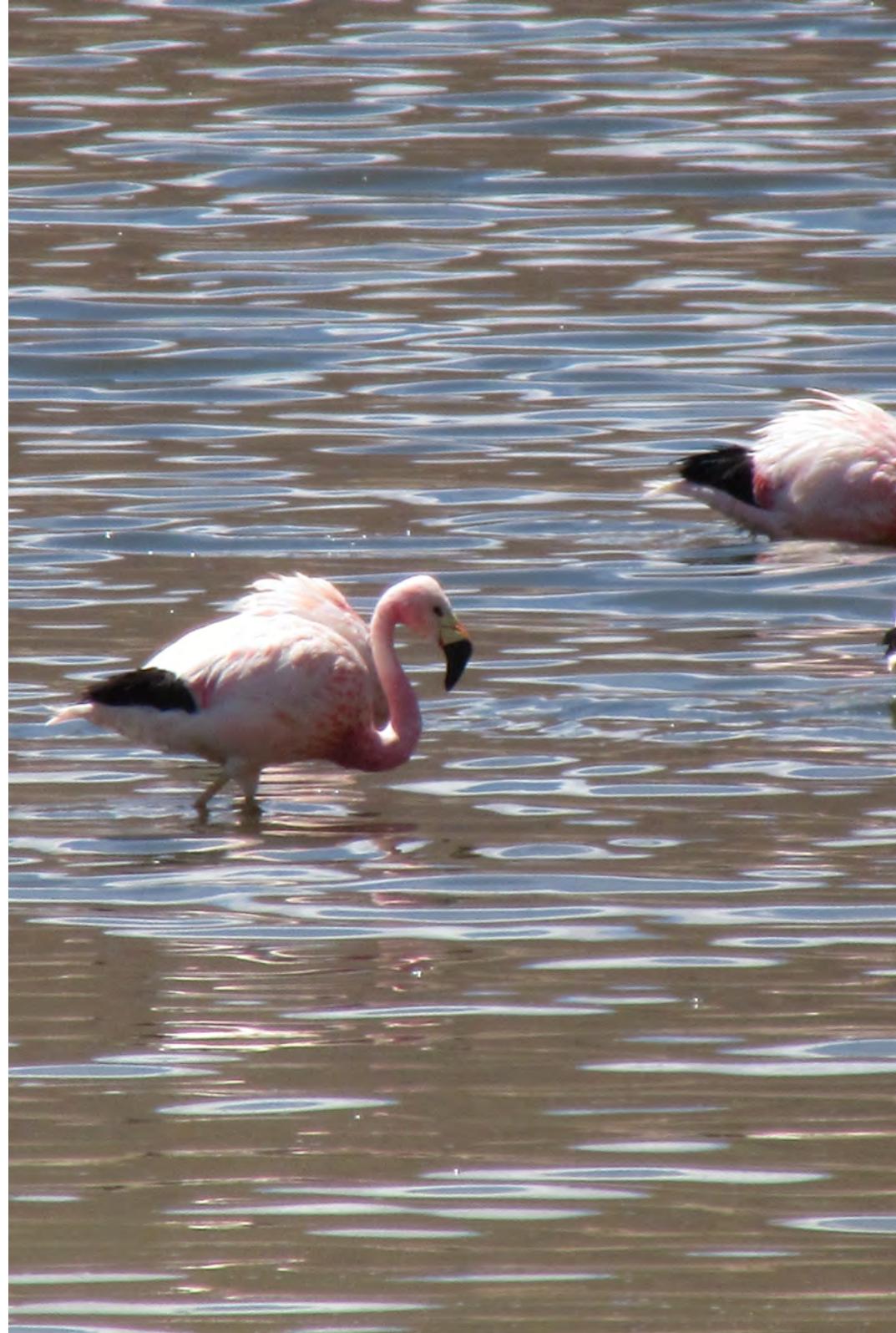
<b>Length</b>	<b>double/twin per person</b>	<b>Single Supplement</b>	<b>Rider Weight supplement (100Kg max)</b>
(7D/6N)	from USD 3530	USD 350	Normally 0

**Included:**

All accommodation (twin/double rooms with private bathrooms); all meals and water (from day 1 dinner to day 7 breakfast); English speaking guide & 2nd local guide; 5 riding days; horses; saddlebags; all necessary transfers/transport as per itinerary including day 6 excursion; 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, riders will be riding 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 a comfortable lodge with swimming pool.

**Meals:** Lunches are served out on the rides and dinners at the lodge or in the various restaurants of San Pedro.

**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), although nights in San Pedro rarely drop much below freezing.

**Clothes and Equipment:** Travel notes will be sent with useful information including a suggested packing list and guide contact details etc.

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

**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.

**Health Services:** No special vaccine is currently required for this part of South America but each guest 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.

**For further information please contact:  
rideandes@rideandes.com  
www.rideandes.com**

## 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.

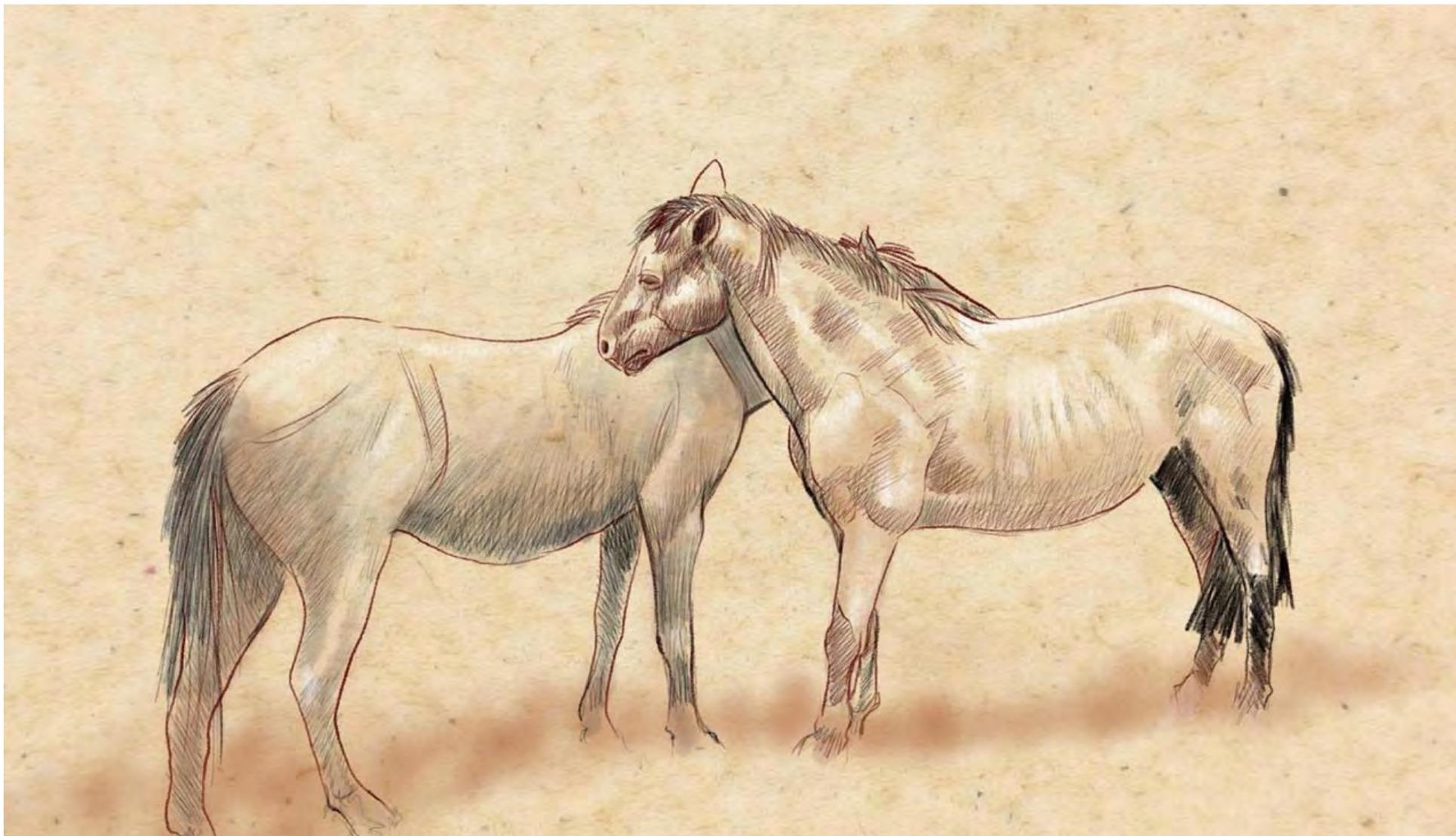
## About Ride Andes:

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 her 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 further information please contact:  
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RIDE ANDES

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