



Flamingos and the High Andes

Photographic tour with tour leaders Mark Sisson & Pablo Cersosimo

15th - 26th November 2027

Trip Overview

Group size:

The trip accommodates a maximum of 7 guests.

Cost includes:

All transportation, local guiding, accommodation, and meals.

Cost excludes:

International and domestic flights to and from Calama in northern Chile (precise recommended schedules will be advised once available for booking), sundry items, alcohol and personal travel insurance.

Accommodation:

Our accommodation throughout will be a combination of comfortable hotels and lodges. Rooms are on a twin basis; single supplements may be possible in some locations on request.

Level of fitness:

With the Atacama desert being at altitudes approaching 5000 metres and the need to undertake some walking there then a decent degree of fitness is required. We will take our time to acclimatise as we go higher to take this into account.

LEVEL 4



Trip Overview

At Natures Images, we always select the right time and the right locations, working with the best wildlife photographers and guides in the business.

Occasionally we come across a corner of the world that is well off the beaten track and as a result offers a combination of genuine adventure travel alongside the wildlife and environmental photographic opportunities and the High Andes of the Atacama regions of Chile and neighbouring Bolivia is just such a place. Alongside the dramatic mountains, salt lakes and some of the best night skies to photograph anywhere in the world, indigenous wildlife such as vicunas and viscachas can be found and if that wasn't enough it is one of the most dramatic regions in the world to photograph flamingos. Three species can be found here and at this time of year they will have gathered in large numbers for the start of the breeding season which offers dramatic photographic opportunities. We'll explore salt lakes where they gather to breed and feed in both Chile as well as the colourful Laguna Colorada across the border in Bolivia in this trip which will have them as our core focus but will no doubt throw up a great diversity of images as part of a genuine adventure in a remote corner of the world.



Itinerary

Day 1: Our overnight flights will depart from the UK this evening to Santiago, Chile.

Day 2: On arrival at Santiago de Chile airport we will connect with a domestic flight to Calama in the Atacama region of Chile arriving in the afternoon and we will then pick up our transfer to our hotel in San Pedro de Atacama for a well-earned nights rest.

Days 3 - 6: During these first few days we will be working at Flamingo lagoons relatively close to San Pedro de Atacama not only because there are some excellent locations here but also to help us to adapt to the altitude before heading to the Bolivian salt flats highlands later in the trip.

At this time of year all 3 South American species of flamingo (Andean, Chilean and James') will be feeding and breeding and so there should be good numbers at the salt lake flats where they gather. Our plan will be to be there for the early morning light and photograph for as long as the light conditions are favourable at this and the other end of the day. In the middle part of the days we will rest as well as explore the extraordinary (and very photogenic) High Andes landscapes and where other species including vicuna and viscacha can be found.

The incredibly clear night skies here also offer a great opportunity for night sky and milky way photography which we will look to do on a number of evenings as well in a very full few days.

Itinerary

Day 7: After an early breakfast we will head higher and across the border into head Bolivia, heading specifically for the Laguna Colorada which is also called “the red lake” due to the high content of minerals and algae it contains. Situated in the Eduardo Avaroa Andean Fauna National Reserve this shallow salt lake (it’s less than a metre deep) is home to all three species of flamingo with large numbers of the rarest of all, James’. They gather here to feed on plankton, which is abundant in these scarlet waters, and we will photograph here until as late as we can before heading to our desert lodge.

Day 8: We will again head out early in the morning to focus on landscapes (with vicuna in to make them even more dramatic) and an excellent location for viscachas, before returning for lunch at our lodge. In the afternoon we will return to the Laguna Colorada once more until as late as we can before our second night in our Bolivian base.



Itinerary

Day 9: After breakfast we check in with the flamingos at Laguna Colorada before returning to San Pedro de Atacama in Chile during the afternoon no doubt stopping at times to photograph the incredible landscapes of the Bolivian and Chilean highlands as we pass through.

Day 10: After breakfast we will head to Calama airport for our domestic flights to Santiago de Chile where we will spend our final night.

Day 11: After breakfast, we go to the international airport of Santiago de Chile and get our lunchtime flight back home.

Day 12: Arrive back in the UK after overnight flights.



Things to bring

Our accommodation is clean and comfortable and typical of the region. It is quite remote though so please inform us of any special dietary requirements you may have. We will be coming into summer here, so the weather will be starting to get warm during the course of the day but also has the potential to be quite variable so good wind and waterproof clothing will be required and some good walking boots. Lighter showerproof outer clothing will be sensible as well as good sun protection as it can be very strong here, and head protection (wide brimmed hat) and eye drops to keep them moisturised are also advised.



Camera equipment



In terms of camera gear then the longest lens you have will be needed (300mm with converter as a minimum really and 500mm + ideal) along with tripod. You will want some shorter lenses for the array of landscape opportunities (70-200mm and 24-70mm say) and a polarising filter in particular will be good for this too if you have one. You will need storage devices for the array of images you'll build up and a laptop for viewing these on the evenings can be both sociable and good for critiquing purposes. You might also consider a good torch and also a flashgun to help with some of the night photography.

Useful Contact Information

Our contact numbers for the build up to and for the duration of the trip are:

Mark: +44 (0) 7905 569685



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Please don't hesitate to contact us even if you think it is a minor question, we're here to help.



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