

BORDER CROSSING EL CHALTEN – VILLA O'HIGGINS SELF-GUIDED TRAVEL SEASON 2009-2010.

An adventurous travel through the Heart of the Andes Patagonian, crossing from Los Glaciares National Park (Argentinian) to Carretera Austral (Chile) between native forests, crosses lakes, lagoons and rivers.

The crossing consists of five segments. The first 40 kms, corresponding to **segment 1** El Chaltén to Desierto Lake, are fit for bus or cycling, continuing with 13 kilometers corresponding to **segment 2** Crossing Desierto Lake, only fit for navigation or trekking. The next 22 kilometers correspond to **segment 3** Border Crossing Desierto lake to Candelario Mancilla, which are fit for horse riding, cycling and walking. The following 51 kilometers corresponding to **segment 4** Crossing O'Higgins Lake, only fit for navigation, ending with **segment 5** Bahamondez Port to Villa O'Higgins, of 7 kilometers, that just like first segment, is fit for any kind of land jeans of transportatin.





Hielo Sur & Villa O'Higgins Expediciones
Carretera Austral km 1.240. Villa O'Higgins.
Región de Aysén. Chile
Fono fax 56-67-431821 & 56-67-431822
www.villaohiggins.com
PATAGONIA



GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BORDER CROSSING.

- **Duration:** 2 days.
- **Distance:** 133 kilometers.
- **Difficulty:** Moderate.
- **Start / Finish:**
Day 1: El Chalten – Candelario Mancilla
Day 2: Candelario Mancilla - Villa O'Higgins
- **Transport:** bus, boat, bike & walk or horse riding.

THE TRAVEL

1.- EL CHALTEN TO LAGUNA DEL DESIERTO

Distance: 40 kms; **Drop:** 105 mt. Meters above sea level : El Chalten 400 m.; Desierto Lake 505 m.

Condition: OK gravel road, a bit hilly in places but relatively flat approaching Desierto Lake.

Schedule: Bus every day 8:30 AM and 03:00 PM; "Buses Las Lengas", Av. Antonio de Viedma 95, El Chalten. Phone (+54-02962) 493 023.

Journey Time: Bus 1:30 hr. Bike 2:00 hr.

Fare Bus: AR\$ 80, US\$ 30 .

Camping: Available at Desierto South Shore AR\$ 20 and Estancia Ricanor (km 22) AR\$ 20

Food: Not available, beverage only at Desierto Campground

2.- FERRY ACROSS LAGUNA DEL DESIERTO.

Boat "Huemul". (40 passengers capacity). Agencie "Patagonia Aventura", Av. San Martin 56, El Chalten. Phone (+54-02962) 493 110.

Schedule: South to North: Every Day 10:30 AM and 16:30 PM;

Journey Time: 35 minutes

Fare: \$Ar 75.

3.- ARGENTINIA/ CHILE BORDER. LAGUNA DEL DESIERTO to LAGO O'HIGGINS.

Distance: 22 kms. Drop: 430 mt.- Meters above sea level: Desierto L. 506 m. / Town Border 685 mts / O'Higgins Lake 255 mt.

In Argentina: 7 Kms. Trekking 2 HR. Horse Riding 1 Hr, Bike 2 at 4 Hr **Condition:** First 2km are narrow and very steep - pushing only. The rest is undulating with lots of mud, tree roots and several streams to cross.

In Chile: 15 Kms. Trekking 4 Hr, Horse Riding 2,5 Hr, Bike 3 Hr.; **Condition:** Regular gravel road. Easy for trekking. Moderate for bikes. Last 6-7 km huge downhill; use caution near cliffs

Argentinian Border Control: Gendarmeria Argentina in Desierto Lake north shore

Chilean Border Control: Carabineros de Chile at 1.000 meters from C. Mancilla Port.

Horse riding: Laguna del. Desierto to Candelario Mancilla .

Horse for persons: Fare CH\$ 15.000; AR\$ 90; US\$ 30 for horse.

Horse for bags -60-70 kgs. Fare CH\$ 15.000; AR\$ 90; US\$ 30 for horse.

Schedule: Horses for riding for bags only booking for days Tuesday and Friday: 13:00 PM, from Desierto lake North Shore to Candelario Mancilla. Contact for horses: info@villaohiggins.com.

Lodging: Mancilla family for 5.000 pesos/night. 200 meters from Candelario Mancilla Port.



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Camping: In Candelario Mancilla (CH\$ 1.500), in the border km 15 (free) and Desierto north shore (free).

Food: Mancilla family: breakfast: CH\$ 3.000, lunch/dinner: CH\$ 4.000.

4.- BOAT RIDE ACROSS LAGO O'HIGGINS.

Boat "Quetru" (60 passengers capacity).

Schedule: Monday, Wednesday and Saturday during January and February). In March: Wednesday 3, 10 and Saturday 6, 13, 20, 27.

Booking: info@villaohiggins.com. Pay on the boat.

11:30 A.M. Departure by boat to Glaciar O'Higgins, passing in front of the glacier calving area en route.

16:30 P.M. Arrival at Candelario Mancilla Port.

17:30 AM. Departure by boat to Villa O'Higgins, passing La Florida Penninsula in route.

20:00 A.M. Arrival at Bahamondez Port.

Journey Time: Crossing O'Higgins Lake 2:40 hr. O'Higgins Glacier Trip: 5:00 hr.

Fare: - Lago O'Higgins Crossing: CH\$ 40.000; AR\$ 320; US\$ 80. Bike free.

- O'Higgins Glacier Trip: CH\$20.000 ; AR\$ 150; US\$ 40.

5.- BAHAMONDEZ BAY PORT (LAGO O'HIGGINS BOAT DOCK) TO VILLA O'HIGGINS

Distance: 7 KM Drop: 15 mt ; **Condition:** Good gravel road. Great scenery. For Bikes: First 4k are hilly with many bends.. From rio Mayer bridge to Villa are flat. Easy

Schedule: 20:15 Bus from dock to Villa O'Higgins.

Journey Time: 15 minutes in bus. 35 minutes in bike.

Fare Bus CH\$ 2.000 (US\$ 4).- Pay on the bus.

*** TIPS***

Food: Supermarket, Hostels, Restaurant only El Chalten and Villa O'Higgins.

Clothing: Take warm and water-proof garments.

Lodging in Villa O'Higgins: Hospedajes B&B from ch\$6.000 and camping ch\$3.000.

Money Exchange: No traveler's checks or credit cards accepted anywhere; try *Hielo Sur* for US\$ and exchange Argentinian pesos to Chilean. No Bank in Villa O'Higgins . Bank and ATM in Cochrane, 230 KM.

Carretera Austral Transfer:

- Bus Acuario: Monday and Friday. Departure 9:00 A.M. Rate ch\$ 12.000 to Cochrane.
- Bus El Mosco. Tuesday. Departure 8:30 A.M. Rate ch\$ 14.000 to Tortel.

Cicling: Stock-up on supplies in Villa O'Higgins because there is very little available until Tortel or Cochrane.

Map:

- Patagonian South Icefield. Trekking & Mountainnering 1:50.000. Zagier-Urruty. Cover all the area between El Chalten and Lago O'Higgins (Candelario Mancilla and Glaciar trails). Satellital views. Buy in El Chalten or El Calafate.
- Carretera Austral for Bikes (Only in german). Description and height profile. Villa O'Higgins – Cochrane – Coyhaique – Chaiten –Chiloe – Pto Montt. Buy in Villa O'Higgins (Hielo Sur Agency).

Last updated: 20 January 2010.