

SOUTH AMERICA STUDY TOUR 2019

DATE	ACTIVITY	OVERNIGHT
DAY 1 Friday, Jun 28 (Meals on plane then dinner)	Overnight flight to Santiago (Chile). The flight time from Sydney is about 14 hours, most of which is at night. As we fly north along the Chilean coast we should get a great view of the coast backed by the magnificent snow capped Andes. Afternoon arrival and transfer to a direct flight to Cusco. There are also direct flights from Melbourne to Santiago but these may entail an extra night in Santiago.	PERU Cusco
DAY 2 Sat, Jun 29 (B,L,D)	Tour of Cusco in the morning and time to visit one of the markets. This afternoon we enjoy a spectacular bus and train journey through farming valleys and imposing mountains to Aguas Calientes station (1000 metres lower than Cusco).	Aguas Calientes
DAY 3 Sun, Jun 30 (B,L,D)	Early start by bus to the top of the mountain and our unforgettable introduction to the citadel of Machu Picchu, one of the most renowned examples of Inca architecture, surrounded by lush cloud forest. Lost in history, it was not discovered until 1911 by the American explorer Hiram Bingham. After a guided visit of the ruins, we will have a self-service lunch at the local mountain-top restaurant. After lunch, there will be some time to wander the ruins and maybe climb to the Sun Gate for a spectacular view of the whole site (about 45 minutes each way). Then return to Cusco. Dinner and folkloric show at a local restaurant this evening.	Cusco
DAY 4 Mon, Jul 1 (B,D)	Fly to Sao Paulo via Lima, staying in an airport hotel overnight.	BRAZIL Sao Paulo
DAY 5 Tues, Jul 2 (B,L,D)	We will take a morning flight to Cuiaba in Mato Grosso, then travel through the spectacular Chapada dos Guimarões, an area of stunning table-top mountains, ravines, caves, streams and waterfalls perched about 800m higher than the enormous, flat plains of the Pantanal. It enjoys cooler temperatures and its vegetation is 'cerrado' or tropical savannah which gives rise to different flora and fauna. This cerrado landscape dominates Brazil's broadacre agriculture – not only in Mato Grosso, but Minas Gerais, Goias and Bahia. It was thought to be worthless for agriculture until Brazilian researchers found that it could be made highly productive with the addition of lime and phosphorus. We will visit some of the huge farming operations near Campo Verde. It is truly farming on a grand scale. Dinner with some local consultants and farmers.	Campo Verde
DAY 6 Wed, Jul 3 (B,L,D)	Visit to Bom Futuro. The size of this operation is almost incomprehensible. They grow 90,000 hectares of cotton which is classed as a secondary crop to soybeans. They are big enough to build a hydroelectric power station 200 km away which provides 60 per cent of the power to their nine cotton gins and farming operations. They have scaled back their cattle enterprise but still have something like 100,000 head. And they have moved into fish farming in a big way. Be prepared to be amazed.	Campo Verde
DAY 7 Thur, Jul 4 (B,L)	Visit more farms in the area as we travel along some roads which will give you an idea of the logistical problems facing farmers in this frontier area. Then back to Cuiaba, where we catch a flight to Rio de Janeiro for an evening arrival. Transfer to our hotel right on Copacabana beach.	Rio de Janeiro
DAY 8 Fri, Jul 5 (B,L,D)	While in Rio we will see the major sights of this fantastic city including Corcovado (Christ the Redeemer), the Lagoon, Copacabana and Ipanema Beach and the Sugarloaf cable car. After lunch, we have the opportunity to do something most tourists don't – an amazing guided tour of some of the favelas (hillside shanty towns) of Rio. This tour is not intrusive or patronising. It has the full backing of the local communities to help raise awareness of their unique living, social and political conditions.	Rio de Janeiro
DAY 9 Sat, Jul 6 (B,L,D)	Morning flight to Cascavel via Sao Paulo. This is a very productive established dryland cropping region in Parana state – a contrast with the huge frontier production areas of the Mato Grosso. This afternoon, we will visit a local grain farm and overnight in Cascavel.	Cascavel

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DAY 10 Sun, Jul 7 (B,L,D)	<p>We have a morning visit to a major seed production company, then, after lunch, inspect the giant Itaipu Dam – one of the seven wonders of the modern world. This enormous hydro scheme is a joint project between the governments of Paraguay and Brazil. Eight kilometres wide and requiring enough concrete to build five Hoover Dams, the Itaipu Dam spans the Parana River at the Brazil/Paraguay border.</p> <p>The plan is to get back to enter the Iguacu National Park and arrive at our hotel in time for sunset and an unforgettable (and easy) stroll along the boardwalk, from the front of our hotel, to many vantage points including Garganta del Diablo. Free evening to explore the falls and enjoy this magnificent hotel.</p>	Iguassu Falls Belmond Hotel das Cataratas
DAY 11 Mon, Jul 8 (B,L,D)	<p>Full day to explore all aspects of the falls. We go straight to our jungle tour and exhilarating jetboat ride to the most impressive part of Iguassu Falls – Garganta del Diablo (translated as the ‘Devil’s Throat’).</p> <p>After lunch, there are options for helicopter flights over the falls and other activities.</p>	Iguassu Falls Belmond Hotel das Cataratas
DAY 12 Tues, Jul 9 (B,D)	<p>This morning we cross the border into Argentina for a flight to Rosario. the agricultural capital of Argentina. We will be met by Andrés Sylvestre Begnis, the former CEO of the Argentinean No Till Farmer’s Association, who is going to be our tour leader for the next few days. Over the next two days our guides will introduce us to the farms and farmers of La Pampa (the pampas), an almost uninterrupted fertile plain of 75,000,000 hectares covering a large part of eastern Argentina through to Uruguay and southern Brazil.</p>	ARGENTINA Rosario
DAY 13 Wed, Jul 10 (B,L,D)	<p>This morning we will travel 120km to Pergamino, the biggest city in the northern region of Buenos Aires province, in the middle of the humid Pampas. We’ll stop to visit Agrouranga, a family company with more than 150 years farming in the region. In the farm, Jose Luis Ferri, the agronomist who is responsible of production, is going to receive us. Then, we’ll continue travelling to visit Cesar Belloso, former President of Aapresid and a very well-known agronomist and consultant. Dinner in La Cava Restaurant, near the hotel.</p>	Pergamino
DAY 14 Thu, Jul 11 (B,L,D)	<p>More farm visits around Pergamino. We will visit cropping and cattle operations on the way to Buenos Aires for a late afternoon arrival.</p>	Buenos Aires
DAY 15 Fri, Jul 12 (B,L)	<p>We take a guided city tour of the major sights of BA.</p> <p>This is a vibrant city of many barrios (neighbourhoods) and we’ll visit colonial San Telmo, the colourful houses of La Boca and the newly redeveloped Puerto Madero. At the Plaza de Mayo, we get a look at the Casa Rosada (the Pink Palace) where Eva Peron waved to the adoring crowds and visit her tomb in the cemetery at La Recoleta. Our hotel is located on the widest street in the world – the Avenue 9 de Julio – which honours Argentina’s independence day in 1816. It is in an area known as Microcentro and is close to shopping and almost opposite the beautiful Teatro Colon, BA’s opera house.</p> <p>The afternoon and evening are free, but we will suggest a few options such as bike tours and just generally exploring the many interesting areas of BA.</p> <p>For those interested, we can organise an optional visit to a Tango show, which may also include dinner. Or perhaps a night at the opera appeals.</p>	Buenos Aires
DAY 16 Sat, Jul 13 (B,L,D)	<p>This morning you will have the option to visit the famous Liniers cattle market. In the afternoon we fly south to the magnificent Patagonian region to the lake-side resort centre of El Calafate, the gateway to the Argentine glaciers. In the afternoon we will visit one of the local large scale sheep farms and discuss their particular (and unique) problems, such as pumas</p>	El Calafate
DAY 17 Sun, Jul 14 (B,L,D)	<p>We are in the arid rain-shadow region of the Argentine Patagonia. This is an environment ranging from enormous, majestic glaciers through to thick sub-Antarctic woodlands and savage unclimbed crags. El Calafate is sited on the shores of Lago Argentino, one of the world’s largest and most beautiful lakes.</p> <p>El Calafate is also the access town for Glacier Perito Moreno, undoubtedly one of the world’s natural wonders and one of the very few advancing glaciers on Earth. Early this morning we board our charter 4 wheel drive coach and travel about an hour to visit this glacier as it wages a titanic battle with Lago Argentino. On our spectacular boat cruise to the face of the glacier we will witness huge chunks of ice detonate off the face with the report of a cannon, and plunge into the water below. There will be plenty of time to enjoy the walking trails and viewing platforms. Lunch has not been organised, but is available from the well stocked kiosk.</p> <p>After lunch, we will meet back up with the more adventurous travellers who have been on a glacier walk.</p> <p>After our glacier encounter we will return to El Calafate by the ‘back road’ passing through a very large sheep operation – Estancia Altavista.</p> <p>This estancia (ranch) is 75,000 hectares running 28,000 sheep. We then travel to Estancia Nibepo Aike for a welcome reception and a run-down of the operation from the owner, Senor Adolfo Jansma, followed by a Patagonian lamb barbecue and a late return to El Calafate.</p>	El Calafate

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Day 18 Mon, Jul 15 (B,L,D)	<p>We start early on a long, but spectacular trip across the stark Patagonia plains – with some wildlife spotting, especially the local guanacos (type of llama) and maybe a condor or two. We cross the border into Chile and the famous Torres del Paine National Park with a picnic lunch on the way. Torres del Paine is a massif crowned with weird twisted granite peaks rising out of the surrounding plains. It is one of the planet's most visually stunning national parks standing guard against the elements at the foot of the world.</p> <p>By late afternoon we arrive at the ferry terminal of Puerto Natales. The town is a spectacular settlement sited on the Seno Ultima Esperanza channel – or Last Hope Sound.</p>	CHILE Puerto Natales
DAY 19 Tues, Jul 16 (B,L,D)	<p>We board our Chilean coach and enjoy a scenic journey to a local estancia. There will be time to inspect the farm and livestock and talk about grazing at the far end of the world, before we arrive at Punta Arenas, on the Straits of Magellan in Patagonian Chile. This was long-considered the world's southernmost city (with a recent surge in population, Ushuaia, a bit further to the south, now carries that tag). Punta Arenas is roughly 1420 km from the coast of Antarctica.</p>	Punta Arenas
DAY 20 Wed, Jul 17 (B,L,D)	<p>This morning we fly through to Puerto Montt and pick up our coach for a wonderful drive through the beautiful Osorno region. There will be spectacular views (weather permitting) of Volcano Osorno and other snow clad peaks soaring to 3500 metres. The region is the jewel in the crown of Chile's southern lakes district. It is also the heart of the pasturage zone, concentrating over half the cattle in the country, with many dairies and beef operations. We visit the farm of the Neumann family, descendants of the original Germans, where they produce milk and beef with the local dual-purpose breed – the Overo Colorado. Marcelo and Maria Elena, and their children, will welcome us to their home for afternoon tea. We then continue through to spectacular Villarica for dinner and overnight. Our hotel is perched right on the edge of Lake Villarica, with snow capped Mount Villarica just behind.</p>	Villarica Villarica Park Lake Hotel
DAY 21 Thurs, Jul 18 (B,L)	<p>Full day of farm visits. We visit some major farms in the area to talk with the owners about their agricultural practices and product marketing. With reliable rainfall and rich volcanic soils, this region of Chile boasts some of the highest average wheat yields in the world.</p> <p>Return to Villarica for overnight and a free evening.</p>	Villarica Villarica Park Lake Hotel
DAY 22 Fri, Jul 19 (B,L,D)	<p>This morning we transfer to the airport for our short flight to Santiago. On arrival we enjoy a panoramic tour of the city. This intriguing city of 5 million people has one of the world's most dazzling locations. Sights visited include the Palacio de la Moneda, the Plaza de Armas and the incongruously named, Avenida del Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins (la Alameda).</p>	Santiago
DAY 23 Sat, Jul 20 (B,L)	<p>Today we take a day trip through some magnificent scenery to the beautiful and historic seaside city of Valparaiso for our farewell lunch. Return to Santiago for a free evening and overnight.</p>	Santiago
DAY 24 Sun, Jul 21 (B)	<p>A leisurely morning and a chance to do some last minute sightseeing or souvenir hunting before transfer to the airport for our flight home.</p> <p>Arrival back into Australia on July 22.</p>	On plane