




SOUTH AMERICA STUDY TOUR 2020

DATE	ACTIVITY	OVERNIGHT
DAY 1 Saturday, August 8 (Meals on plane then dinner)	Overnight flight to Santiago (Chile). The flight time from Australia's east coast is about 14 hours, most of which is at night. Afternoon arrival and transfer to a direct flight to Lima to check in to a hotel close to the airport. There are also direct flights from Melbourne to Santiago but these may entail an extra night in Santiago.	PERU Lima
DAY 2 Sun, Aug 9 (B,L,D)	Morning flight to Cusco with a walking tour of the city with its magnificent Spanish colonial architecture and Incan heritage. Plaza de Armas is the central square in the old city, with arcades, carved wooden balconies and Incan wall ruins. The baroque Santo Domingo Convent was built on top of the Incan Temple of the Sun (Qoricancha), and has archaeological remains of Inca stonework. Then maybe time to visit one of the markets, but take it easy as you acclimatise to the altitude. Dinner and folkloric show at a local restaurant this evening.	Cusco
DAY 3 Mon, Aug 10 (B,L)	This morning we enjoy a spectacular bus and train journey through farming valleys and imposing mountains to Aguas Calientes station (1000 metres lower than Cusco). Then 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.	Cusco 
DAY 4 Tues, Aug 11 (B,D)	Fly to Sao Paulo via Lima. Because we are flying across the continent, it will be a late afternoon arrival, so we will stay at an airport hotel overnight.	BRAZIL Sao Paulo
DAY 5 Wed, Aug 12 (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 Thurs, Aug 13 (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 Fri, Aug 14 (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 Sat, Aug 15 (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 

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DAY 9 Sun, Aug 16 (B,L,D)	<p>Morning flight to Fox do Iguacu 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 5 star hotel, perched right on the edge of the falls.</p>	Iguacu Falls Belmond Hotel das Cataratas 
DAY 10 Mon, Aug 17 (B,L,D)	<p>This is the only hotel inside the National Park, so we have the falls to ourselves in the early morning and late afternoon when the park gates are closed.</p> <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 Iguacu 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 11 Tues, Aug 18 (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 million hectares (3 times Australia's total cropping area) covering a large part of eastern Argentina through to Uruguay and southern Brazil.</p>	ARGENTINA Rosario
DAY 12 Wed, Aug 19 (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 13 Thurs, Aug 20 (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 14 Fri, Aug 21 (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 15 Sat, Aug 22 (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 16 Sun, Aug 23 (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. After our glacier encounter we will return to El Calafate by the "back road," passing through a very large sheep operation – Estancia Altavista. This estancia (ranch) is 75,000 hectares running 28,000 sheep.</p>	El Calafate 

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DAY 17 Mon, Aug 24 (B,L,D)	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. 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.	CHILE Puerto Natales
Day 18 Tues, Aug 25 (B,L,D)	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.	Punta Arenas
DAY 19 Wed, Aug 26 (B,L,D)	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.	Villarica Villarica Park Lake Hotel
DAY 20 Thurs, Aug 27 (B,L)	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. Return to Villarica for overnight and a free evening.	Villarica Villarica Park Lake Hotel
DAY 21 Fri, Aug 28 (B,L,D)	This morning we transfer to Temuco 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).	Santiago
DAY 22 Sat, Aug 29 (B,L,D)	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.	Santiago
DAY 23 Sun, Aug 30 (B)	A leisurely morning and a chance to do some last minute sightseeing or souvenir hunting before transfer to the airport for our flight home. Arrival back into Australia on September 1.	On plane