



Expeditions

CHILE - Ojos del Salado 6893m



EXPEDITION OVERVIEW

Just sixty metres lower than Aconcagua, Ojos del Salado can be found on the edge of the Atacama Desert (the driest spot on earth) and is the world's highest volcano. Our journey to the mountain takes us by jeep to the remote region of the Chilean Altiplano where few people go, passing through salt flats and pristine mountain lakes in this region of amazing beauty. We acclimatise on the beautiful peak of Volcan Copiapó 6052m, before making our ascent of the majestic massif of Ojos del Salado where the 360° summit views are beyond description. No crowds on this peak!

Participation Statement

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary

Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.

OUTLINE ITINERARY

KEY to inclusions (H-hotel, HO-Hostel, C-Camping, B-breakfast, L-lunch, D-dinner/evening meal)

Days 1 and 2 Fly to Copiapó via Santiago. Transfer to the hotel. Briefing and equipment checks **(H,B on day 2)**

Day 3 Copiapó to Vallecito

Rested after the long flight we start driving east towards the Altiplano, following narrow and dry river valleys that lie in between the desert and the high plateau. (Drive 4-5 hours) **(C,B,L,D)**



Day 4 Vallecito to Laguna Santa Rosa

After breakfast we take a morning acclimatisation hike for 2-3 hours before packing up camp and continuing our journey by road crossing the Portezuelo Maricunga, a mountain pass at 4,125m above sea level. Our camp at Laguna Santa Rosa, located at 3,800m in the Maricunga Salt Flat is in the middle of the Chilean high plateau, the southernmost part of the Atacama Desert and home to a great diversity of wildlife such as flamingos and foxes. In the evening, we take a short walk to the nearby lagoon where we should see local flora and fauna and a large variety of birds. **Camp, Laguna Santa Rosa 3800m (C,B,L,D)**

Day 5 Ascent of Cerro Siete Hermanas (4950m)

After breakfast we continue our acclimatization process by climbing the easy summit of Cerro Siete Hermanas (6-7 hours), located in the Domeyko Range, after which we return to our camp. We will probably come across some guanaco families (a type of llama) during the climb. This is the first of a number of climbs we will do on this trip, before tackling Ojos del Salado. **Camp, Laguna Santa Rosa (C,B,L,D)**

Day 6 Ascent of Cerro Pastillitos (5090m)

Today after a short drive we make an ascent of Cerro Pastillitos, (7-8 hours walking). We will camp again at the charming Laguna Santa Rosa **(C,B,L,D)**

Day 7 Drive to Laguna del Negro Francisco

A 3-4 hour drive through dramatic landscape leads us to Laguna del Negro Francisco (4,100m). We stay at the CONAF ranger station. **(HO,B,L,D)**

Day 8 Ascent of Volcan Copiapó (6052m) Starting off very early in the morning with a short transfer to the start of the climb, we ascend the mountain (8-9 hours). There is a considerable amount of loose scree on the ascent which makes it very tiring. There are a few Inca tombs near the summit, excavated by archaeologists some time ago. We return to the ranger station hostel for the night. **(HO,B,L,D)**

Day 9 Lagoon Negro Francisco to Atacama Refuge Heading North we gain altitude very quickly as we cross sand flats, steep rocky terrain and sometimes snow-covered, slopes. Finally, we arrive at the Atacama refuge (5200m) where we set up our base camp. (4-5 hours driving) **(C,B,L,D)**.

Day 10 Carry to Camp 1-Tejos Refugio (5825m) Today, we carry some food and fuel to Camp I by the Tejos Refugio, following the sandy and rocky slopes. We drop off our gear, take a look around and then go back down to base camp. This walk is part of our acclimatisation in order to maximize our chances of reaching the summit. (5-7 hours walking) **(C,B,L,D)**



Day 11 Rest Day

We use this day to rest and recover for our summit ascent whilst also preparing our food and equipment for the summit day. **(C,B,L,D)**

Day 12 Atacama Refuge to Tejos Refugio (5825m)

Today we move up to Camp 1 by the Tejos Refugio, carrying the rest of the gear we will need for the summit. It is a short day enabling us to arrive early to get rehydrated, and rested for the summit day. **(3-4 hours walking)** *(The Tejos Refugio is a small hut which we may use depending on availability instead of camping and is possibly the highest mountain hut in the world!)* **(C,B,L,D)**

Day 13 & 14 Ascent of Ojos del Salado 6893m

We start very early in the morning and climb to the summit in 8 to 9 hours. The terrain may be snowy or dry. From the summit we have an amazing view over all major mountains in the area, including Tres Cruces and Pissis. Depending on time, we will descend to Camp 1 or to Base Camp. Day 14 is a reserve summit day. (C,B,L,D)

Day 15 Return to Copiapó / Bahía Inglesa

Descend to Base Camp, pack the equipment and load the cars. Then we drive back to Copiapó, and on to Bahía Inglesa next to the beach, where we arrive 6-7 hours later. Hotel. (H,B,L)

Days 16 and 17 Return flights (or Aconcagua extension)

Transfer to the airport for flights to Santiago, then international flights home (usually arriving home next day), or same day flights to Mendoza if you are going on to climb Aconcagua.



PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/FITNESS

The peaks on this expedition are non-technical and are suitable for hill walkers with ice axe braking and crampon experience. The route is usually free of snow throughout or can have a solid covering of snow. Clients should have prior experience climbing to around 5500m before attempting this expedition. The summit days can take 8-10 hours to ascend and 2-4 hours to descend and can prove to be extremely tiring. You should make sure you are fit and used to long days on the hill. A considerable amount of loose scree makes the ascents physically demanding. Near the summit of Ojos there are two short sections on fixed rope in place which can be used as a security line (with a prussic loop).

WEATHER CONDITIONS

It can be very hot in the valleys and lower down on the peaks where wearing shorts and t-shirts with sunhats and plenty of sun cream is the norm. However, there can also be torrential rain so full waterproofs are essential. From Base Camp upwards there can be heavy snowfalls and the wind can cause severe wind chill. At high camp and on summit day the temperature can drop to -15 Celsius. So down jackets, good mitts and double boots are essential. It

will be **extremely** cold on pre-dawn starts on Copiapó and Ojos.

THE DAILY ROUTINE

Most days start around 7.00am enabling us to make the most of the cool morning air and involve around 6 hours of walking. Summit days will be the exception, when we make pre-dawn starts. The expedition is well supported at the base camps however cooking and daily camp chores are shared amongst the expedition members at the high camp. This will enhance your experience of a fully-fledged expedition.

WHAT TO CARRY

On the trekking and acclimatisation days you should aim to carry a light rucksack. A 35l sac is ideal and this should contain 1-2l of water; waterproofs; a spare warm layer; camera; mini first aid kit; sun hat, sun-cream and sun-glasses; a warm hat and gloves. We must carry our own equipment to the high camp on days 10 & 12 and for this you will need a 60-70l sac.

HEALTH

All our leaders hold first aid certificates and carry a fully equipped first aid kit for medical emergencies. However you should bring your own supplies of plasters, blister prevention pads (Compeed), Paracetamol etc. and any medication you are taking. Contact your GP around eight weeks before your trip to check whether you need any vaccinations or other preventive measures. Country specific information and advice is published by the [National Travel Health Network and Centre](#), and useful information about healthcare abroad, including a country-by-country guide of reciprocal health care agreements with the UK, is available from [NHS Choices](#). Tap or stream water should never be drunk without first sterilizing with chlorine dioxide tablets or by boiling.



INSURANCE

Insurance which covers rescue, medical expenses and helicopter evacuation is **essential** for all expeditions. **We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure.**

USEFUL TIPS

Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but comfortable, well worn-in boots are more difficult to replace.

EQUIPMENT

A detailed equipment list is provided on booking. Specialist items such as double boots, sleeping bags and down jackets can be hired or purchased with 15% discount off the RRP of clothing and gear from our shop (excludes books, maps & electrical gear).



BAGGAGE

For your own comfort, travel light. Normally airlines restrict baggage to 23kg, but you will be wearing boots

and one set of trekking clothes. Some items can be left at the hotel for your return. A suitable kit bag is provided but important items should also be packed in plastic bags.

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

We ask that you ensure that all your rubbish is carried back to base camp from where it will be removed back down to the valley

VISAS AND PERMITS

No visa is required for Chile for UK and US Citizens and those of many other countries. Non UK Citizens may need to pay a reciprocity fee before entering Chile - please check with your nearest Chilean Embassy for up to date information. Permits for **Ojos del Salado** are obtained for you prior to your arrival at no cost.

CURRENCY

The currency in Chile is Chilean peso. Foreign currency can be exchanged at most banks. Credit Cards Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted but surcharges of 10% are common. Ensure the magnetic strip is in good condition. Bank hours are generally until 3.30pm, but close on Sundays. US dollars are widely accepted as an alternative to the local currency. It may be advisable to take some Chilean pesos with you as there are no change facilities at Copiapó airport.

TIPPING

Allow in the region of \$100 USD for tips. The average tip in town is generally 10%. For exceptional service you may wish to consider a higher amount.

ACONCAGUA EXTENSION (+ 13 days)

Having climbed Ojos del Salado you will be acclimatised to the altitude and be ready to make a faster ascent of Aconcagua than those starting from Mendoza. We avoid the normal and somewhat busier route from the Horcones valley and opt for the more remote and exciting approach up the Vacas Valley. Mules will be used to support the trek into the base camp. We take the False Polish traverse using Camp 3 Guanacos & Camp Colera joining the Normal Route for the final summit day. Our itinerary has a good number of spare climbing days giving the best chance of summiting one of the continental Seven Summits.

For more information and prices please refer to our specific dossier for this extension which is available from the Ojos del Salado page of our website or direct from our office

