

## Easter Island & Patagonia, Chile

Walk amidst the spectacular rock pinnacles of the Torres del Paine National Park and the mysterious landscapes of Easter Island.



### Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

### Holiday overview

Style	Walking
Accommodation	Hotels, Eco Camp
Grade	Moderate
Duration	17 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	Walks on: 7 days
Min/Max group size	5 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 5
Trip Leader	Local Leader Easter Island
Land only	Joining in Santiago, Chile
Max altitude	Max altitude 900m/2,952ft, Patagonia

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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# Departures

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## Group departures

### 2024 Dates:

Wed 24 Apr - Fri 10 May

Tue 01 Oct - Thu 17 Oct

### Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

### No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

### Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 5 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

### Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

### Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

### Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts, who will have first-hand experience of the destination/s you want to visit. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday.

If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

## Your guide

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We use a number of knowledgeable English speaking local guides on Easter Island. Two of the guides who we use are:

Hugo Rosas - Hugo is originally from Chile and married the manager of the museum on Easter Island. He has climbed Aconcagua, the highest peak in the Andes, and has spent many years studying the history of Easter Island. He works now as a full time guide.

Christian - Christian is a Rapa Nui guide who appeared as an expert historian in the BBC 4 programme “Easter Island: Mysteries of a Lost World” presented by Jago Cooper, broadcast in January 2014. He is extremely knowledgeable on all aspects of the history and culture of Easter Island.

In Chile, we use expert, English-speaking local guides who have an intimate knowledge of the area and an infectious passion for nature. They are very hard-working, attentive and helpful.

## Your trip highlights

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- Take a thorough walking tour of Easter Island to see the mystical Moai as well as other scenic and cultural sights
- Hear the history and debate the legends with knowledgeable English-speaking guides
- Enjoy walks and boat rides for close up views of the highlights of the Torres del Paine
- Stay in a geodesic dome at the award winning Eco Camp in the heart of the Torres Del Paine National Park and in a delightful, waterfront hotel on Easter Island
- Take a guided tour of Chile's laid back capital of Santiago

## At a glance itinerary

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Day 1-2	Fly to Santiago. Afternoon city tour.
Day 3	Fly to Punta Arenas.
Day 4	Drive to National Park. Walk Fauna Trail.
Day 5-6	Choice of activities at Eco Camp.
Day 7-8	Drive to Punta Arenas. City tour and fly to Santiago.
Day 9	Fly to Easter Island. Walking tour of town and visit Tahai Ahu.
Day 10	Full day tour of island.
Day 11-14	Walks including Rano Kau, Aku Akivi, Poike and the northern coast.
Day 15-17	Fly to Santiago. Fly to London.

## Trip summary

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This superb holiday gives you the opportunity to combine two stunning regions - the amazing landscapes of the Torres del Paine where granite pillars soar vertically more than 2,000m above the Patagonia steppe, and the enigmatic landscapes and statues of Easter Island.

You begin the trip by flying into Chile's modern, lively capital City of Santiago where you take a guided tour. You then fly to Punta Arenas and transfer to a camp in the heart of the Torres del Paine National Park where you spend three days enjoying a range of walks and boat trips that showcase the classic scenery of the park - glaciers, rushing rios, granite towers, snow-clad summits and turquoise lakes abound. Your accommodation in Torres del Paine is in the striking geodesic domes of the Eco Camp, a truly unique and very comfortable experience that will make you feel at one with the beautiful Patagonian scenery. Before leaving Patagonia you also have time to explore Punta Arenas, the largest city in Southern Patagonia with many interesting buildings and museums.

As you fly out of Punta Arenas and back to Santiago, part one of your exciting adventure is complete. It's now time to embark on part two as you make the long flight west, far across the Pacific Ocean, to remote Easter Island. Whereas, most visitors to Easter Island only stay for a couple of days - just enough to photograph the main Moai sites - you will have almost six full days to undertake a really in-depth exploration of the island. Starting with a walking tour of the attractive harbourside town of Hanga Roa, you then head deep into the island, visiting many extraordinary Moai sites as well as the quarry where the statues were originally carved. You will also enjoy walks to lava-tube caves, volcanoes and an abandoned crater-rim village as well as a good long hike along the island's rugged northern coastline. Throughout, you will be accompanied by an expert guide who will give you a real insight into the fascinating history and geology of the island as well as the intriguing mysteries of the giant Moai heads and the Rapa Nui people. Along with your guided walks and excursions you'll also have free time to relax at your attractive oceanfront hotel.

Finally you fly back to Santiago with time to reflect on your thrilling adventure discovering two of the world's most beautiful and remarkable places.

## The mysteries of Easter Island and Thor Heyerdahl

Easter Island must surely be one of the greatest mysteries of human civilization. How did the first people arrive there and where from? Why were the giant statues built? How were the 800 statues transported around the island? Did the original inhabitants come from South America, or did they come from Polynesia? Why are there traces of Inca stone work and plants from South America, but at the same time why are there Polynesian legends and why does the DNA of the local Rapa Nui people suggest a Polynesian ancestry?

There are so many theories and so much conflicting evidence that even today the debate still rages. The person most famous for bringing Easter Island to the world's attention was Thor Heyerdahl, the Norwegian explorer and archaeologist who postulated that the Inca sun worshipers of Peru saw their god sinking into the ocean every day and set off on their balsa wood rafts sailing out towards the setting sun. He theorised that the Incas accidentally made landfall on Easter Island. Today his theories are generally largely discounted, but who knows!!! Quite probably Easter Island was the last place on planet earth to be colonised by mankind - now there's a good theory if ever there was one!!

Certainly Heyerdahl's film Kon Tiki which documented his and his friends' adventure in sailing across the Pacific on their balsa wood raft was awe inspiring. In the days before GPS satellite navigation and satellite phone communication it was an amazingly brave thing to have done. Incredibly they hit land as their trusty balsa wood raft sank beneath them.

Heyerdahl also spent a long time living on Easter Island and basically theorised that the local inhabitants historically had fallen into two categories - 'The Long Ears' and the 'Short Ears'. The Long Ears were the ruling class and the Short Ears had been made to quarry the statues and roll them on logs across the island. He said that the Short Ears eventually rebelled and fought a war with the Long Ears who barricaded themselves into a corner of the island. The Short Ears had won and the Long Ears had all been killed bar one man, who, when Thor Heyerdahl had visited the island, was the local postmaster.

Heyerdahl wrote a number of books concerning Easter Island the best of which are 'Aku Aku' and his book 'Kon Tiki'. A great deal of work has been done since his time and now much more is known about the history and culture. Half the fun of visiting Easter Island is indeed reading and debating the various theories. One thing is certain though Easter Island will always continue to be a great mystery.

### Some facts about Easter Island

- Created a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995
- Nearest inhabited land is Pitcairn Island 2,075km
- Nearest continental point is central Chile 3,512km to the east
- Protectorate of Chile and was annexed in 1888
- First European to visit the island was Dutch navigator Jacob Roggeveen on 5th April 1722
- First British explorer was Captain James Cook in 1774
- Highest point on the Island is the volcano Terevaka 507m/1,363ft
- Easter Island is triangular and has an area of 163.6 square km (63.2 square miles)

# Your trip itinerary

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## Day 1: Fly London to Santiago

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Depart London on an overnight flight to Santiago.

**Overnight: In flight**

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## Day 2: Arrive Santiago. Afternoon city tour.

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Today you arrive in Santiago where you will be met and transferred to your hotel for a rest and freshen up. You will then have a briefing from your guide. In the afternoon there will be a city tour which begins with you being picked-up from the hotel and taken downtown to Mercado Central. This well-renowned market, popular with locals and tourists alike, supplies many Santiago homes and businesses with fresh fish all year round. Next to the market is Plaza de Armas, Santiago's main square and kilometre zero, the point from which all distances in the country are measured. Famous architecture in the square includes the Metropolitan cathedral and the central post office, originally built as a house for Spanish conqueror Pedro de Valdivia. Close by stands the Justice Tribunal, in a neo-classical building housing the Supreme Court and ex-Congress.

From here you walk towards the Alameda, the main street of the city centre, via the busy pedestrian walkway Paseo Ahumada. This walkway is famous for its crowds, shops, and diversity of people. Once you reach the Alameda you walk a couple of blocks west to the Presidential palace, La Moneda. The palace, a model of 18th century colonial architecture, is one of Santiago's most recognisable landmarks and a symbol of Chile's political past and its famously turbulent history. Next you climb Cerro Santa Lucía, where Santiago was founded in 1541 by Pedro Valdivia. From the top of the hill there is a great 360° panoramic view of Santiago. Your tour finishes by visiting the bohemian Lastarria neighbourhood, lined with cafés, restaurants, small theatres, bookstores and boutique shops.

Afterwards you will be driven to your hotel.

**Overnight: Hotel 45 by Director, Santiago**

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## Day 3: Fly to Punta Arenas - 3½ hours. Drive to Puerto Natales - 250 km, 3 hours. Free time.

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This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Punta Arenas. On arrival, you will be met by your guide who will give a quick briefing before the journey to Puerto Natales. The drive takes you through the scenic Patagonian landscape before arriving in Puerto Natales, a town located on the edge of Last Hope Sound. The rest of the day is free to explore this picturesque town which was originally inhabited by the Kawésqar or Alacaluf people and the Aoniken or Tehuelche people. The first European to discover the city was Juan Ladrillero, a sailor who was looking for the Strait of Magellan in 1557, but no Europeans settled here until the late 19th century when the German explorer Hermann Eberhard established a sheep station. The town is now the main base for excursions to the Torres del Paine National Park, one of the most popular parks in Chile. Catering well for its many visitors there are plenty of excellent cafes and restaurants to try, seafood being a speciality.

**Overnight: Hotel Weskar or Indigo, Puerto Natales (Meals: B L)**

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## Day 4: Drive to the National Park - 2 ½ hours. Walk on the 'fauna trail'. View petroglyphs.

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Today starts with a drive to the EcoCamp Patagonia, your home for the next 3 nights, located in the heart of the Torres del Paine National Park. The journey takes you through amazing scenery with wild and wonderful landscapes to gaze at and plenty of birds and mammals to be seen. The landscape of the park is dominated by the Paine massif, which is an eastern spur of the Andes located on the east side of the Grey Glacier, rising dramatically above the Patagonian steppe. Four small valleys separate the spectacular granite spires and mountains of the massif.

Arriving in the park you will hike along the so called Fauna Trail. Walking northwards you will see some of the park's fauna including guanacos (cousins to the alpaca and llama) who graze the open

steppes where its main natural enemy the puma cannot hunt it undetected. Guanacos are considered to be the



park's conservation success. After over a decade of protection from hunters and poachers the population has increased and they can now be admired all over the park. There are also likely to be ostrich like nandus, foxes and maybe, if lucky, even the occasional puma print. You will also see some prehistoric cave paintings. Passing Goic lagoon you will reach Laguna Amarga Ranger Station where your transport will meet you and transfer you back to the EcoCamp, nestled in the heart of the park with views of the Torres. This will be your first night in this award winning sustainable lodge where you can enjoy being in close proximity to nature.

**Overnight: Eco Camp, Torres del Paine - Standard Domes (Meals: BLD)**

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#### **Day 5: Choice of activities from EcoCamp.**

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While you are at the EcoCamp there will be a daily choice of excursions organised for their guests which you may join. Each day there are several options available which will include a selection of walks to the key sights of the park such as the Towers of Paine or Glacier Grey. There may also be the option to do an organised bike ride or boat trip. The walks and excursions change daily.



**Overnight: Eco Camp, Torres del Paine - Standard Domes (Meals: BLD)**

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#### **Day 6: Choice of activities from EcoCamp.**

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As yesterday there will be a selection of walks and activities at the EcoCamp for you to choose from today.

**Overnight: Eco Camp, Torres del Paine - Standard Domes (Meals: BLD)**

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#### **Day 7: Drive back to Punta Arenas - 6 hours. Free time.**

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After an early breakfast you will board the bus for the return drive back to Punta Arenas. After arriving in the town you will have the rest of the day free to relax and explore the city. Set at the foot of the Andes on the western side of the Strait of Magellan, Punta Arenas is considered to be Patagonia's most interesting city featuring many mansions and other impressive buildings dating from the late 19th/early 20th century wool boom. There are plenty of sights and museums to explore and numerous cafes and restaurants to relax in and watch the world go by.

**Overnight: Hotel Rey Don Felipe, Punta Arenas (Meals: B L)**

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#### **Day 8: Morning city tour and visit to Nao Victoria Museum. Afternoon fly to Santiago.**

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In the morning you will be driven the short distance to the Nao Victoria museum created as a life-size replica of the vessel, Nao Victoria, built for and commanded by Ferdinand Magellan when he set sail to conquer the world back in 1519. The replica vessel has been built with original plans to create an interactive and dynamic museum that enables you to re-live the discovery of the Strait of Magellan and to imagine what it was like to be part of a sixteenth-century sailing experience when America and Patagonia in particular, was still uncharted.

Returning to the city you can try a local restaurant for your lunch before the transfer to the airport and flight back to Santiago.

**Overnight: Hotel 45 by Director, Santiago (Meals: B)**

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**Day 9: Fly to Easter Island. Museum visit and guided walking tour of Hanga Roa town. Visit Tahai Ahu.**

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Today starts with a short transfer to Santiago airport for the 5 hour 10 minute flight to Easter Island. Taking off there are good views of the Andes and their foothills stretching out to the coast. Excitement builds as you approach the island which you overfly and then turn back to drop slowly on one of the longest runways in the world. It was built and the length increased by the Americans to act as an emergency landing site for the space shuttle. Already you will notice a relaxed laid back atmosphere as you walk through the large low airport building. Drive the short distance to hotel O'Tai for your first briefing and a welcome lunch.



In the afternoon you will drive to the museum for a guided tour followed by a walking tour of the town including the cemetery, church and other places of interest. The town of Hanga Roa really feels like a south sea island. It is very green with lots of tropical plants, flowers, palm trees and wide roads with low buildings. There are shops, cafes, restaurants, the harbour where you will find the dive centres, and the Catholic Church which sits at the top of the town. Anchored off the harbour are usually a few yachts whose owners must have sailed across the Pacific to get there! The town contains many fine wooden carvings and it is interesting to note that the bird man symbol is incorporated into many of the figures (you will hear more about the bird man culture on your 3rd day on Easter Island).

You will then get into your minibus and drive the short distance to Aku Tahai where you will see your first proper Moai and begin to hear something of their history and some of the theories. Firstly, it is thought that they were erected in a form of ancestor worship and having been brought from the quarries all the way over to their final resting place they were then erected on the stone platforms called ahus. The main construction probably started around 1,100 or 1,200 AD and building probably continued into the 1600's when it is thought that warfare broke out between the various tribes. Probably the various tribes knocked each other's statues over. It is thought that the statues were built on their ahus facing inland and facing the villages that they were supposed to protect. The Rapa Nui people felt that the power of their ancestors resided in these statues and therefore protected their individual villages.

In any event at Aku Tahai the fallen statues have been re-erected, by the American archaeologist William Mulloy between 1968 and 1970, and you will see that one has been given eyes. Apparently many of the statues did indeed have eyes and this was not known for a long time. 18 sets of eyes were found and others have been identified in museums around the world. The eyes were designed just to sit in the eye sockets. They were made of coral and the centre made of the same red stone as the statues hats.

You will return to Hangarua where your guide will be able to suggest a restaurant for dinner.

**Overnight: Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island (Meals: B L)**

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**Day 10: A full day tour to include Tahai Ahu, Vaihu, Rano Raraku quarry, Pito Kura and Anakena beach.**

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After the first of many great breakfasts at your hotel you will drive to Vahai which is about 10 km from Hangarua and is a classic example of an ahu where all the statues have been knocked over and have been left as they were. You can see some of the hats that have rolled off the fallen statues and lie scattered around. The hats are made from a completely different stone, reddish in colour, and much lighter than the statues themselves. It was therefore easier for them to put the hats on top of the erected statues, although quite how they did this is still debated.

Next you move on to one of the highlights of the Island - the main quarry where the statues were carved. This is called Rano Raraku. Here there are dozens of finished statues already on their way towards their resting places but left abandoned when conflict broke out on the island. There are also dozens and dozens of statues in various stages of carving in the rock face itself. The quarry is located in the south east end of the island and it is from here that there are a whole series of "roads" that criss cross the island, and which must have been used to transport the statues to their ahus.



There are something like 400 moai in various stages of development. It is all a very strange sight, particularly because most of the statues that had started their journeys have sunk deep into the ground so that only the heads are left visible. You might wonder how the statues were carved when there was no metal on the island and the answer to this apparently is that chisels and hammers were made from a much harder obsidian rock found elsewhere on the island. The much softer volcanic tuff rock that the statues are made of were therefore carved with the flints made from shards of obsidian.



Some of the largest statues on the island are here at Rano Raraku. There is in fact the largest moai on the island at the highest part of the walking route. It is 21m long and the head alone is 7m. It is estimated to weigh more than 200 tons. There will be plenty of time to hear lots of the amazing stories from the guide and wander around the site and look at the ranger station at the foot of the quarry. You will then have a picnic at Rano Raraku quarry.

From Rano Raraku you now move on to Pito Kura. This site has the largest Moai ever transported from Rana Raraku and erected on a platform. The Moai is almost 10m tall and now lies face down with its top knot next to it. On this site there is another mystery. There is a very large round stone almost like an egg which is magnetised. Place a compass near it and the needle goes crazy. The legend is that the first king of the island Hotu Matua brought it with him from Polynesia. Apparently there are other magnetised stones in other parts of the island.

Lastly, you proceed to Anakena beach which is some 18km from Hanga Roa. This is Easter Island's main beach, an absolutely idyllic place fringed with palm trees and the perfect spot to hang out at the end of a fascinating day.

**Overnight: Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island (Meals: B L)**

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#### **Day 11: Trek to Rano Kau Crater, 384m/1,260ft, and continue to Orongo village. Afternoon at leisure.**

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It is a short drive to Ana Kaitangata. This literally means "man eating cave" and certainly there are legends about cannibalism on the island. The roof of the cave has some very interesting paintings. You will then start the walk up to the crater of Rano Kau and following that the village of Orongo. The path you are following is called Arao Te Ao (the path of power). This starts at the top of the cliff above the cave and leads you through eucalyptus trees and past the National Park office (CONAF). Here they are doing lots of useful work on re-forestation. After about 45minutes you come to the end of the eucalyptus trees and looking back can see the runway. You now walk up slowly through lush vegetation to the view point of Mirador Rano Kao. It takes between an hour and an hour and a half to reach the view point. Looking down into the crater it is almost circular and the circumference of the crater is some 1,650m. At the bottom of the crater is a lake/swamp where rainwater collects and vegetation grows and floats on the water. The original settlers apparently planted oranges, apples, taro, yam, sweet potato, and wild grapes on the banks of the crater. In fact the grapes may have come with the first Catholic priests. There are also medicinal plants grown at the bottom. The height at the top of the rim is some 384m/1,260ft above sea level.

Having admired the incredible view you then walk along the rim of the crater to visit Orongo village. This occupies a precarious position on the top of the crater rim with 300m cliffs plunging down into the Pacific on one side and the steep slope dropping into the crater on the other. It is thought that Orongo was never occupied as a permanent place of residence but rather was used only for ceremonies. Eventually a cult emerged here in the late 17th century called Tangata Manu (bird man) which worshiped the Make-Make God. This new religion, which superseded the old ancestor worship, was based on the bird man competition. Each year the chiefs of the island either took part themselves or sent their best warriors to take part in the bird man competition. If you now look out to sea you will see the 3 islands of Motu Kao-Kao, Motu Iti and Motu Nui. The latter is the largest island and it was here that the Easter Island seagull appeared every year to lay its eggs. The object of the competition was to descend the dangerous cliffs and swim to the island and wait there until the first eggs had been laid. An egg then had to be carried while the contestant swam back, climbed the cliff and delivered the first unbroken egg to the king, who was waiting at the village of Orongo.

There are 53 houses which were largely reconstructed in 1974 by the archaeologist William Malloy and a group of islanders. Because of its location there were no Moai here. However it was from here that in 1868 the crew of the English ship Topaze took the famous Moai called Hoa Hakananai'a which is currently on display in the British Museum in London. It is in fact 2.5m high and unlike most of the Moai was carved out of basalt. On its back are carved figures representing the bird man and its rituals. In fact in many places on the island there are

bird man figures carved onto the rocks. Your guide may well show you some of these as you explore Easter Island. Look out for the birthing stone, which is very interesting, in the village.

After this you visit the fascinating Orongo visitor centre and have a picnic lunch on the edge of the crater. You will then return by car from the visitor centre to the hotel. After this the afternoon is free to “do your own thing” and perhaps explore a bit more of the town of Hanga Roa.

**Overnight: Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island (Meals: B L)**

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**Day 12: Drive to Vaitea. Walk to Terevaka, 511m/1,676ft. Descend to Ahu Akivi. Return to town. Lunch and afternoon at leisure.**

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Today you will drive to Vaitea, formerly a settlement of the English sheep company Williamson Balfour who operated their business, growing sheep and sending the hides to the Chilean continent, on Rapa Nui.

You will start your walk up to the summit of the extinct volcano of Maunga Terevaka from here. You first walk through a forested area until you come out into the wide open slopes leading to the summit of Maunga Terevaka. On the way you visit the actual crater of the volcano and a Hibiscus cave. Having reached the summit of Terevaka, you are now standing on the highest point of the island at 511m/1,676ft, and from here you have a full 360 degree view of the island. It is very interesting to be able to see the other two main volcanoes situated on the western and eastern points of the island's triangle and in addition to appreciate about 75 secondary volcanic cones that cover the island.

The Ahu of Akivi is unusual because it is one of the few platforms which were build inland with its statues looking out to the west towards the setting sun. The statues and platform were restored by American archaeologist William Molloy and the Chilean Gonzalo Figueroa between 1960 and 1961. The statues are of a very similar style and it is thought that they may have been carved around the same time. Your guide may tell you the fantastic and amazing oral tradition of the priest Haumaka who lived on an island named Hiva, somewhere in French Polinesia, supposedly related to the Marquesas. He had a dream that because of the situation at Hiva it might be necessary to send embarcations to another island. He convinced his king to send 7 explorers in a boat laden with provisions to find Rapa Nui and prepare it for him and his people. Having found the island they planted crops and trees and then returned to Hiva in order to bring Hotu Matua together with his sister Avareipua with their people to their new home. The oral tradition tells us that the 7 Moais at Akivi represent the 7 explorers who first landed on Rapa Nui.

Returning to town lunch will be provided in a local restaurant. The afternoon is free time.

**Overnight: Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island (Meals: B L)**

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**Day 13: Visit Tongariki. Trek to Poike, 410m/1,345ft.**

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Fewer people visit this end of the island but the walk is very interesting. There are some fascinating sites and even more amazing legends.

First though you take the bus to visit Tongariki. This is the largest and most impressive Ahu on the island with 15 standing statues. Each Moai is very different and it is thought that they represented specific individual ancestors. The restoration work carried out between 1993 and 1996 was based on drawings made by the famous British archaeologist, Katherine Routledge who spent 17 months on the island in 1914. She and her husband commissioned the building of a special sailing boat and then sailed all the way to Easter Island from the UK. Incidentally it is well worth reading of her adventures in her book “The Mystery of Easter Island”.



It is a short drive from Tongariki turning right onto a rough road to reach a single house from where you start the trek. It is quite hard work walking to the top of the volcano through long grasses and takes about an hour and a half to reach the summit at a height of 410m/1,345ft. Here there is a crater choked with trees and on the rim an aerial and a solar panel. From the summit you now descend to 2 further volcanic cones Maungu Teatea, and Maungu Parehe. Just below the summit of Poike is a Moai which is said to be one of the oldest on the island, thought perhaps to date from 800 AD. There are carvings on the rocks of the first volcanic cone, including a large head whose open mouth was used to collect rainwater. Just below the 3rd volcanic cone is the

edge of some very precipitous cliffs. Thor Hyerdahl explored some of the caves in the cliffs by abseiling down. Here there is another very old head next to a substantial Ahu. These smaller volcanic cones are made from a white coloured rock which was used to make the only female Moai. There are thoughts that there may have been 10 female Moai as there were 10 queens in the early part of their history. One is in the museum, one is buried (for protection against the elements) and one is at Vinapu.

You will now cross a pass between the 2 smaller volcanic cones and return to the bus by walking along an old 4 x 4 track.

Poike was the territory of the Long Ear people and legend has it that this was where they were all killed in a battle with the Short Ears. Apparently they had built a ditch across the “neck” of the island, filled it with wood and set fire to it. However, the Short Ears crossed at the other end unseen by the Long Ears, climbed Poike and fell upon the warriors below who they then threw into the burning ditch, all except one man who was allowed to live. Poike is the oldest volcano on the island at 10 million years old.

**Overnight: Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island (Meals: B L)**

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#### **Day 14: Trek the northern coastline.**

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All the day walks that you have done to this point will have been good preparation for the long hike along the northern coastline. This can be 6-7 hours or 7-8 hours depending on how many things you stop to look at! Don't forget to take plenty of drinking water as it can be a long hot day and there is no water to be had on the way.

The minibus will take you out to Ahu Tepeuu. It is located 8km from Hangaroa and was at some point a large village. There has been no restoration and very few visitors make the effort to go but it is a good place to learn something of the agricultural way of life of the original inhabitants. For instance there are several manavais - stone circles in which crops were grown to protect them from the elements. You will also see the remains of some elliptical houseboat dwellings. Original village houses were built in the shape of upturned boats, and in many of the places you visit along the coast you will see the clear stone foundations of these houses. The foundation stones are set in the ground with drilled holes. Branches were then inserted into the holes, bent over, and laced together and thatched. Your trek starts from Ahu Tepeuu and after 20 minutes you come to an unnamed Ahu where there is a burial chamber and more circular agricultural enclosures. Occasionally you will see lying on the ground shards of obsidian that they used as cutting tools. Look out for hollowed stones - used for collecting water. Ten minutes beyond here there is a conical border marker called a Pipi Horeko. Often it was forbidden to cross such a border and the ancestors spirits (or Aku Aku) might kill somebody for such a transgression. Beyond here there is another Ahu which shows a burial tomb inside. After about an hour from the start of the trek you come to some large rocks and small caves, from here you can see the main town in the distance. Your guide may show you the round stone towers that people built to watch the stars. There is a small tunnel hole at the bottom of the towers that you could crawl through and then lie on your back to watch the stars through the top of the tower.



You will see in parts of the walk areas where there are many caves and throughout the day you will come across ancient Ahu all with fallen Moai. Some of them are built right on the edge of cliffs and the foundation stones are very reminiscent indeed of Inca workmanship. In some places you will walk up what must have been the roads that brought the Moai to the villages. Today you will see lots of ‘wild horses’. They are owned by locals but roam free. There are lots of hawks on the island and other interesting bird life.

After about 2 hours you come to a boat house next to an Ahu, next to a cave, next to a dry stream bed. 10 minutes later you arrive at a cairn on a big pile of rocks where the path is well defined. After 3 hours from the start you come to a solitary eucalyptus tree by the path. Descend from here a steep long slope to a flattish area with some fantastic boat houses (4 or 5 of them), an Ahu with fallen statues, a chicken house in the shape of a big boat and a huge burial chamber that is perfectly built with a separate entrance.

Half an hour on from here there is a cave with petroglyphs, Hanga Omohi. By now you are turning the corner of the coastline and after another 15 minutes you come to 3 or 4 Ahu like burial tombs and another Tupa tower for looking at stars. After about 6-7 hours you come to a lone palm tree and soon after that there is a track to follow with views of Anakena beach in the distance. After a long and exciting walk you reach Anakena Beach where you will have time to relax before returning to town.

**Overnight: Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island (Meals: B L)**

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**Day 15: Fly to Santiago - 5 hours.**

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With great sadness and with perhaps the forlorn hope that you might return one day it is time to leave the island. With so much information and so many theories that you have absorbed you will undoubtedly want to read more on the subject in years to come. When you get back to the UK you might wonder whether it all really did happen or whether it was a dream.

You now transfer for the 5 hour flight back to Santiago. Rest of the day free to do as you please.

**Overnight: Hotel 45 by Director (Meals: B)**

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**Day 16: Fly to London.**

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After breakfast you transfer to the airport for your overnight flight back to London.

**Overnight: In flight (Meals: B)**

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**Day 17: Arrive London.**

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Today you will arrive back in the UK.

## Our grading system

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Easter Island & Patagonia is graded as a Moderate walking holiday, as described below.

### **Moderate**

Holidays in this grade typically involve 5 to 10 days of walking or trekking. They will often venture into more remote country and can cross mountain passes. Altitudes though are still relatively low, going no higher than around 4,300m/14,000ft. Accommodation can include simple hotels, tea houses, lodges and camping.

## What the price includes

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Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

### What's included:

- ✓ Local English-speaking guides in Chile, plus knowledgeable English-speaking guides on Easter Island
- ✓ Economy class return airfares from the UK including flights to Easter Island and any internal flights
- ✓ Single, timed, group airport transfers for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ All other transfers as per the itinerary
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Good standard accommodation in Santiago, Puerto Natales, Punta Arenas and Easter Island on a twin share basis
- ✓ Three nights EcoCamp accommodation in the Torres del Paine - standard domes, twin share
- ✓ 14 breakfasts, 11 lunches and 3 dinners
- ✓ Sightseeing and activities as specified with a choice of activities at EcoCamp
- ✓ Entry fees to national parks
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ The option of joining one of our pre-trip meets in the Cotswolds
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle

### Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

### What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Some dinners and lunches as per the itinerary
- ✗ Optional trips and activities
- ✗ Tips

### Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

For our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag (these are required for certain treks), there is the choice of receiving either a free Water-to-Go bottle or a free Mountain Kingdoms fleece. If you are not eligible for a free bottle, you will still be able to buy a special Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle from us at a discounted rate. For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

## Your accommodation

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We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



### **Hotel 45 by Director, Santiago**

This chic, contemporary hotel is around a 30 minute drive from the airport with a selection of shops and restaurants within easy walking distance. Rooms are light and bright with a good range of amenities including minibars and free Wi-Fi. The hotel has two bars and its own restaurant where a buffet breakfast is served.



### **Hotel Weskar or Indigo, Puerto Natales**

Situated on the shores of Ultima Esperanza Fjord, the Hotel Weskar Patagonian Lodge is just a short scenic walk from Puerto Natales. All bedrooms are en-suite and attractively furnished in alpine style.



### **Eco Camp, Torres del Paine - Standard Domes**

Unique in Patagonia this camp has been operating in its current location within the Torres del Paine National Park since 2005. The complex is made up of various sized geodesic domes: large domes house the dining room, a bar, lounge and relaxation areas, with smaller sleeping domes reached via a network of wooden boardwalks. Built over a wooden floor the strong canvas domes are built to withstand all weathers and offer twin beds, all bedding, electric light and attractive decoration. In standard domes, bathroom facilities are shared, with toilets and showers housed in separate domes. 'Luxury' domes have en suite facilities - these are available at a supplement and are subject to availability.



### **Hotel Rey Don Felipe, Punta Arenas**

Located 2 blocks from the central square, it is close to many historic buildings and other tourist sites. This modern hotel has an architectural design inspired by the traditions and history of the province of Magallanes, with cozy and comfortable interior spaces. It offers four star service, there is a good restaurant and a fitness centre. All rooms are en-suite with most facilities you would expect.



### **Hotel Taha Tai, Easter Island**

Just a stone's throw from the Pacific coast in Hanga Roa, the main town of Easter Island, the Taha Tai is a great base to return to when exploring the Island. The hotel has an outdoor pool and its own restaurant with lovely views over the ocean. All rooms include free Wi-Fi and a small outdoor terrace.

## Meal arrangements

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Bed and Breakfast in Santiago. While in the Torres del Paine, breakfasts, lunches and most dinners are included. On Easter Island all breakfasts and lunches are included. (14 x breakfasts, 11 x lunches, 3 x dinners). For evening meals on Easter Island, there are very many excellent restaurants in Hanga Roa to choose from.

## Flight arrangements

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### Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

### Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

## Further information

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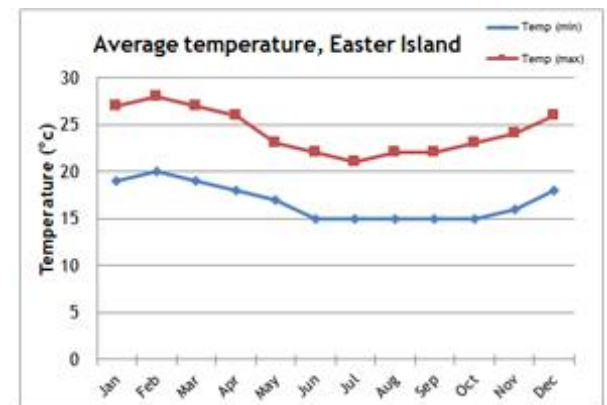
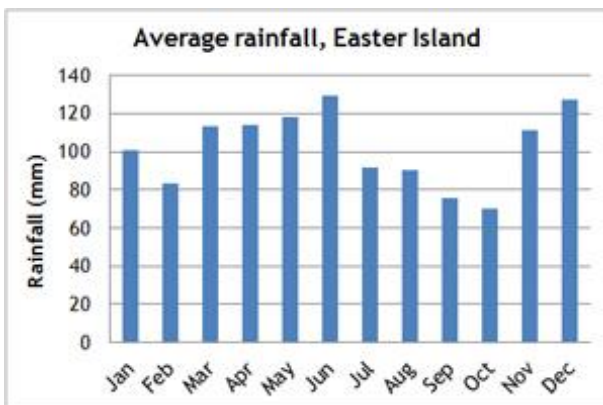
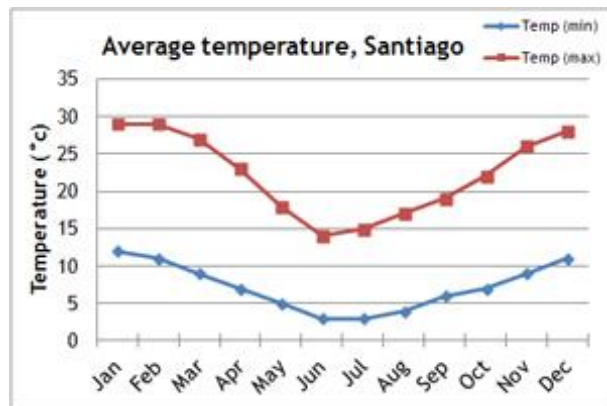
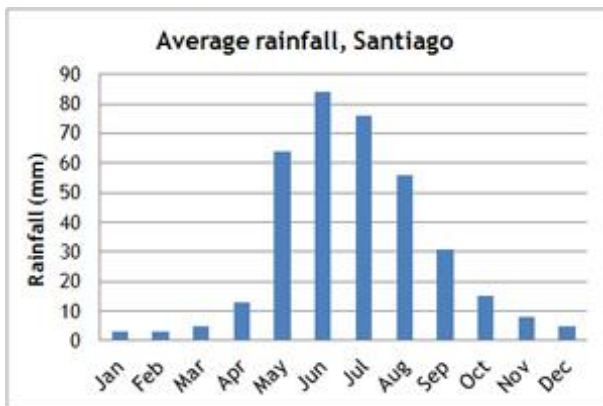
When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

## The nature of adventure travel

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Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

## Climate information



## Extensions

### Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra hotel nights at the start or end of your trip, arrange a personal sightseeing tour or enjoy some other exciting activities. In fact, whatever's available we can help make it happen. We're happy to suggest ideas, provide quotes and make all the arrangements. We can also assist with flight and hotel upgrades.

### Optional activities Easter Island



You have some afternoons free whilst staying on Easter Island and you might like to try an optional activity such as: cycling (bike hire), horse riding, boat hire or scuba diving.

You are able to book these in advance please contact us for more information and prices.



## Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

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- A unique combination of Patagonia and Easter Island in one exciting holiday
- No other British company offers such a comprehensive walking holiday of Easter Island with walks and excursions to all the key Moai sites plus other fascinating natural and cultural attractions.
- In Patagonia we include three full days in the Torres del Paine with walks, boat rides and a selection of other adventurous activities. There is also time to explore the town of Punta Arenas and a guided city tour.
- We use good quality hotels in Santiago, Punta Arenas and Puerto Natales plus the exceptional Eco Domes in the heart of the Torres del Paine. On Easter Island we use one of the nicest hotels by the ocean with an outdoor swimming pool.
- You will be guided throughout by highly knowledgeable and engaging, English-speaking guides.
- We include a guided tour of Chile's vibrant capital city, Santiago.
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger groups.
- We have a wealth of travel experience at Mountain Kingdoms with a team of friendly and knowledgeable travel experts. If you have any questions about any aspect of this holiday please don't hesitate to give us a call on 01453 844400 or email [info@mountainkingdoms.com](mailto:info@mountainkingdoms.com).
- We offer a flexible service and can extend your holiday with extra hotel nights and tours.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com) or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

## What we say

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*I remember reading Thor Hyerdahl's book *Aku Aku* when I was about 14 years old. I thought it was the best book I'd ever read and it left an indelible impression on me. Later I saw a re-run of Thor Hyerdahls *Kon Tiki* film and I promised myself that one day I would visit Easter Island. It did not disappoint, it is a stunningly beautiful island and the mystery still remains"*

*- Mountain Kingdoms' MD, Steve Berry*

# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

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## **Truly independent**

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

## **Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality**

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

## **Complete financial security**

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

## **No Surcharge Guarantee**

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

## **Award winning Responsible Tourism**

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).

## **Genuine small group travel**

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

## **Loyalty Discount**

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

## **Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier**

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

## **Comprehensive information**

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit [www.tourismdeclares.com](http://www.tourismdeclares.com)

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

### **Carbon Offsetting**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

### **Reducing Carbon Emissions**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

