



PATAGONIA W TREK

DURATION: 7 DAYS

LOCATION: CHILE

SKILL LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

ALPENGLOW



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Expedition Details

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LOCATION: CHILE

SKILL LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

SEASON: FALL (N. HEMISPHERE)

DIFFICULTY LEVEL DESCRIPTION:

Trekking - No technical climbing or backpacking experience is necessary. It is important, however, that you are in good physical shape, and able to hike in rugged terrain for several hours each day. We are happy to detail physical training programs needed to get you ready for our treks.

PREREQUISITES:

No experience necessary.



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Expedition Introduction

The W Up Close

Torres del Paine has built a reputation as one of the most iconic trekking destinations on Earth.

The granite towers, the wind off the Patagonian ice fields, and the glacier-fed lakes get most of the attention, but the experience of walking the W comes from the rhythm of moving through the park itself. You wake up in a refugio, eat a hot breakfast, walk all day under shifting weather, and arrive somewhere new before dinner. The park does the work of putting you in front of the views. The route does the work of stringing them together.

When you trek the W, you join a long list of climbers, photographers, and travelers who come here specifically for these valleys. You walk past trekkers from a dozen countries on the same trails. You sit in the same refugios at night. The shared experience is part of why this trek holds the place it does in the global trekking community.



ROUTE CHOICE

The W follows the southern flank of the Paine Massif and links the park's three most iconic valleys: the Base of the Towers, the French Valley, and Grey Glacier. Traverses along the north shore of Lake Nordenskjöld beneath the Cuernos connect the valleys together. Over five days on trail we cover 70 to 80 kilometers with roughly 3,000 meters of cumulative elevation gain.



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Torres del Paine National Park sits at the southern end of the Chilean Andes, recognized internationally as one of the great protected mountain landscapes on the planet. The Paine Massif itself is a young range, geologically speaking, with granite spires and glacial valleys carved by ice that still moves across the park today. Grey Glacier flows off the Southern Patagonian Ice Field, the third-largest reserve of fresh water on Earth.



7-Day Itinerary

To trek the W is to walk one of the most recognizable routes in the trekking world, a circuit shaped by the weather and geography of southern Chile.

- Our aim is to create an itinerary that hits all three of the W's iconic valleys while maintaining a relaxed, immersive pace.
- 7 days allows us to spend quality time in the park without rushing.
- Our goal is to leave Torres del Paine with a personal, unique connection to the landscape, the refugio network, and the rhythm of Patagonian trekking.

Our goal with a 7-day itinerary is to give you a real experience of Patagonia while handling the logistics that can make or break a trip down here. You walk during the day, eat a hot meal in the evening, and sleep in a real bed.

This trek is an all-inclusive experience. We use four different refugios at the key points along the route, allowing you to carry a light pack during the day and return to a hot meal and warm bed each night. Our guides know the park intimately and adjust the itinerary on the fly when the weather calls for it.



The W is a pinnacle for trekkers, and a strong introduction to international trekking. Trekkers often set their sights next on bigger objectives like the Everest Base Camp Trek in Nepal or the Cordillera Huayhuash in Peru.

**See more trips at
[ALPENGLOWEXPEDITIONS.COM](https://alpenglowexpeditions.com)**



About Alpenglow Expeditions

Alpenglow creates and fosters a community of climbers prepared to achieve their dreams in the world's greatest mountain ranges.



About the Company

Alpenglow Expeditions is an AMGA accredited business, and prides itself on working with guides who uphold and exemplify the highest standard in the profession of mountain guiding.

Led by IFMGA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow focuses on creating expeditions that reflect our high standards in mountain guiding by providing precision logistics, cutting edge technology, and thoughtful itineraries that combine for successful climbs.

History of Alpenglow Expeditions

Founded in 2004 by IFMGA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow Expeditions began as a boutique guide service that focused on high altitude climbing. In those 20+ years we've expanded our offerings, both internationally and in the United States. We are now proud to offer courses and expeditions ranging from a climber's first experience on the Tahoe Via Ferrata, to basic backcountry education for those interested in exploring winter landscapes, to climbing the world's highest mountain for those on the Road to Everest.



Who We Are

MISSION

TO INSPIRE ADVENTURERS THROUGH POWERFUL MOUNTAIN EXPERIENCES

VISION

LEVERAGING THE POWER OF THE MOUNTAINS TO CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE WORLD

VALUES

Alpenglow Expeditions facilitates epic mountain expeditions. From Via Ferrata to summiting Mount Everest – our innovative climbing techniques, premier logistics, experienced & accredited guides, and smaller, curated teams result in an inspiring, powerful experience for every client.

Our logistical team is focused on quality and detail at every step resulting in a higher level of personal comfort with fewer delays and a better chance at success. As an AMGA accredited business, we surpass industry norms, guaranteeing that our guides are the best of the best, which includes requiring all international guides to have their IFMGA and/or AMGA certifications.

Our guides are extensively trained across every route encountered - knowing the mountain inside and out makes for a smart, safe decision process resulting in efficient, seamless trips. This training also allows our guides to focus on facilitating the best experience for our clients, including educating and teaching while on the mountain.

Our guides and logistics ensure professionally managed and enjoyable expeditions, cohesive group dynamics, and an optimal trip for all. Attention to detail extends to group dynamics and team size as well. We believe that the right people on the right mountain results in a unique and memorable adventure.

We spend time understanding each participant, precisely matching them with the rest of the team. Small team size enables us to focus on each team member's goals for the trip, maximizing success and safety, which results in an outstanding curated experience.

Alpenglow Expeditions is a group of passionate adventurers with a love for the high alpine. Our mission is to inspire adventurers through powerful mountain experiences because we know the transformative power they hold. Our clients feel empowered, surprised, delighted, and changed by the possibilities and promises of the mountains.

About Alpenglow Expeditions



Founder — Adrian Ballinger

Adrian Ballinger founded Alpenglow Expeditions in 2004 envisioning a more holistic climbing experience for his clients than the status quo.

Adrian is the only American who has skied two 8,000 meter peaks, was the first person to ski Makalu and Manaslu, the 5th- and 8th-tallest peaks in the world. In 2011 he became the first person to summit three 8,000 meter peaks in only 3 weeks (Everest twice and Lhotse once).

Adrian holds both an AMGA and IFMGA guide's certifications and has achieved more than 15 summits of 8,000 meter peaks (including 10 summits of Mt. Everest).



Partner / Chief Guide — Logan Talbott

Logan has been guiding professionally for over a decade in the disciplines of Rock, Alpine and Ski Mountaineering. When not out guiding, Logan spends time in the office helping the team with the day-to-day operations of the business. From one day ascents of El Capitan to big Alpine climbs in the Himalaya, or from ski descents on Denali to backyard ski tours in Lake Tahoe, he can't help but smile when out running around the hills.

Logan is an AMGA/IFMGA mountain guide, an Avalanche course leader with AIARE, as well as a wilderness EMT. In addition to guiding, Logan has extensive experience in mountain rescue, having worked for rescue teams in both Yosemite and Denali National Parks, and volunteering locally for Tahoe Nordic SAR.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, LOCAL PARTNERS

We partner with local logistics companies in each country and region that we operate in. Often we have partnerships that have been with us since the beginning of Alpenglow. Whenever we bring on a new operator, we have them thoroughly vetted to ensure their reliability and quality. Our local and regional logistics partners are the backbone of our in-country logistics and help us achieve the success that we're known for.

The Alpenglow Difference

EXPEDITION DOCTOR ON CALL

Dr. Monica Piris, has been on fourteen 8,000-meter peak expeditions. She is in daily communication with our teams during the entirety of the expedition and is available for client consultation at any time.

OUR GUIDES

Alpenglow's guides are a fundamental part of our operation and your experience. Your trip will be lead by one or more of our AMGA Certified guides who have intimate knowledge of their craft and the terrain. AMGA (American Mountain Guides Association) certification is the highest possible training available to guides, and only the most experienced and dedicated attain it.

PRECISE LOGISTICS

Time is a scarce resource in all of our lives. To maximize the value of our time we work with a local logistics team and have relationships with the services we use.

HIGH-QUALITY FOOD

Imported and local foods of the highest quality, combined with a Western-trained cook staff. Alpenglow has the best food on the trail, ensuring your strength and health throughout the expedition.

FULL TIME OFFICE STAFF

We understand that scheduling and booking an international expedition is a large step. Therefore we maintain a full-time office staff to provide peace of mind and support you throughout the process.





Route Description + Itinerary

Embark on a guided trek through the most recognizable route in Patagonia. Your adventure begins in Puerto Natales, the gateway town to Torres del Paine National Park. On Day 1 we transfer to our hotel, sit down for the circuit briefing, and prepare for the trail.

Day 2 starts with a roughly two-hour drive from Puerto Natales into the park. From the trailhead at Hostería Las Torres, we hike up to Refugio El Chileno, drop our heavy packs at the refuge, and continue light to the Base of the Towers viewpoint. If conditions are poor, we may wait for sunset, or plan an early morning hike the following day for better odds of clear views of the Paine Towers.

On Day 3 we trek out of El Chileno and traverse along the north shore of Lake Nordenskjöld to Refugio Los Cuernos. The Cuernos themselves loom directly above us for most of the day, their dark sedimentary caps sitting on lighter granite bases.

Day 4 is the longest day on trail. From Los Cuernos we climb into the French Valley for the day's main viewpoints, then continue west to Refugio Paine Grande for the night. The French Valley sits between Paine Grande to the north and the Cuernos to the south. Hanging glaciers calve regularly off the upper walls.

On Day 5 we trek from Paine Grande out to Grey Lake and overnight at Refugio Grey, close enough to the glacier to walk down and take it in. Grey Glacier flows off the Southern Patagonian Ice Field and terminates in icebergs that float across Grey Lake.

Day 6 closes the loop. We hike from Grey Refuge back to Paine Grande, catch the catamaran across Lake Pehoé, meet our transfer out of the park, and return to Puerto Natales for dinner in town.

Day 7 is reserved for departure from Puerto Natales.

Patagonian weather can turn a blue-sky morning into a horizontal rainstorm by lunch, and that unpredictability is a real part of what trekking in this park feels like.

Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 1 — Arrive in Puerto Natales, Chile. We transfer to our hotel and sit down for the circuit briefing.

Activity: Arrive in Puerto Natales
Lodging: Hotel TBD
Meals: None

DAY 2 — Drive into Torres del Paine National Park and trek to the Base of the Towers. From the trailhead at Hostería Las Torres, we hike up to Refugio El Chileno, drop our heavy packs, and continue light to the Base of the Towers viewpoint before returning to El Chileno for the night.

Activity: Trek to the Base of the Towers
Distance Covered: 13 km / 8.1 mi
Moving Hours: 6–8 hours
Elevation Gain: +1,000 m / +3,281 ft
Lodging: Refugio El Chileno
Meals: All Meals

DAY 3 — Trek along the north shore of Lake Nordenskjöld from Refugio El Chileno to Refugio Los Cuernos. The Cuernos sit directly above us for most of the day.

Activity: Trek to Los Cuernos
Distance Covered: 13 km / 8.1 mi
Moving Hours: 5–7 hours
Elevation Gain: +250 m / +820 ft
Lodging: Refugio Los Cuernos
Meals: All Meals

DAY 4 — Climb into the French Valley, then continue to Refugio Paine Grande for the night. This is the longest day on trail and includes the central viewpoint of the W.

Activity: French Valley to Paine Grande
Distance Covered: 22–26 km / 13.7–16.2 mi
Moving Hours: 8–10 hours
Elevation Gain: +900 m / +2,953 ft
Lodging: Refugio Paine Grande
Meals: All Meals

DAY 5 — Trek from Paine Grande out to Grey Lake and overnight at Refugio Grey. We have time in the afternoon to walk down to the glacier and take it in.

Activity: Trek to Grey Lake
Distance Covered: 11 km / 6.8 mi
Moving Hours: 3.5–5 hours
Elevation Gain: +350 m / +1,148 ft
Lodging: Refugio Grey
Meals: All Meals

DAY 6 — Hike from Refugio Grey back to Paine Grande, catch the catamaran across Lake Pehoé, meet our transfer out of the park, and return to Puerto Natales for dinner in town.

Activity: Return to Puerto Natales
Distance Covered: 11 km / 6.8 mi
Moving Hours: 3.5–5 hours
Elevation Loss: -350 m / -1,148 ft
Lodging: Hotel in Puerto Natales
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 7 — Departure from Puerto Natales.

Activity: Depart

Travel Details

FLIGHTS

Trekkers should schedule flights to land in Puerto Natales on Day 1 of the itinerary. Trekkers will meet their guides and transport to our first hotel will be arranged. Flights into Chile are double checked by the Alpenglow logistics team, please verify with us before booking.

VISAS

Visa requirements for Chile vary by nationality. US citizens currently do not require a visa for short-term tourist travel. Please check visa requirements well in advance if you are not from the United States.

PASSPORTS

You will need to email a proper photo of your Passport upon signing up for your trip. Your Passport must have more than 6 months validity after the last date of the trip and have at least 2 blank pages for stamps. Copies must be high quality, color, no glare, no cropping, in focus, straight on/no angles.

Please confirm your itinerary with Alpenglow Expeditions before purchasing.



Accommodations

All expeditions include double occupancy lodging in town and double occupancy refugio rooms on the trail. No matter where we travel, Alpenglow strives to stay in safe, clean, and comfortable accommodations.

IN-TOWN

While in Puerto Natales, we stay in a comfortable hotel in town. We use this time to settle in after international travel, run the circuit briefing, and prepare for the trail. While in refugios on trail, we will also stay in shared rooms unless otherwise requested. Read below for single supplement details.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

If you prefer a single room while in town, please let us know as soon as possible. There will be an additional cost associated. Refugio sleeping arrangements are typically shared and single rooms are limited or unavailable depending on the refugio.

ON-MOUNTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS

The W Circuit is unique among Patagonian treks because you sleep indoors every night. Our itinerary uses four refugios positioned at the key points along the route: El Chileno, Los Cuernos, Paine Grande, and Grey. You carry a light pack during the day and return to a hot meal and a real bed each night.





General Trip Information

FOOD

Most of the food we eat on the trail is prepared in the refugios where we stay. Meals are fresh and substantial, designed to fuel long days on the trail. We are usually able to accommodate most dietary restrictions, including gluten-free, vegetarian, and vegan diets. Please flag dietary needs at sign-up so we can coordinate with the refugios in advance.

MOUNTAIN TRAINING

The Patagonia W Trek is a large physical undertaking, and trekkers who are joining our teams should have a deep understanding of what it takes to train for a trip like this. For a personalized training schedule, please reach out to our in-house trainer:

lynette@alpenglowexpeditions.com.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

All of our expeditions and treks are physically demanding. Regardless of the skill level or experience needed, it is essential that you arrive in good physical shape, and prepared to handle extreme conditions, including cold, heat, and long tiring days. Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC and its guides reserve the right to remove any member of our trips at any time if we do not believe they are ready for the rigors of the trip.

You are responsible for your own medications, inoculations, and deciding whether you are physically able to participate in an Alpenglow Expeditions trip. You should discuss your participation in this trip, and the dangers involved, with your physician.

On Mountain Medicine

Our guides are certified in wilderness medicine, CPR, and are experienced in client care in remote, high altitude locations. However, Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC is not a medical facility and Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC assumes no liability regarding medical care.

INCLUSIONS

The cost of your trip includes your land costs (*excluding in-town meals*). This includes:

- double occupancy lodging while in town
- meals on the trail
- group camping and climbing equipment
- scheduled transportation while in country
- certified guides

CANCELLATION POLICY

View our cancellation policy online at alpenglowexpeditions.com.

INSURANCE

We require that all participants carry rescue insurance and health insurance. Travel insurance is strongly recommended. Your policy numbers must be provided to us prior to leaving the USA.

EXCLUSIONS

The cost of your trip does not include:

- flights to/from the starting city
- airport taxes
- visas
- in-town meals
- immunizations
- tips for guides or local staff
- travel, rescue, or any other type of insurance
- hospitalization or evacuation costs
- single supplement charges
- excess baggage charges
- alcohol
- other personal expenses.

***** The costs of delays or changes to itinerary that are beyond the control of Alpenglow Expeditions or its agents are not included.***





Expedition of a Lifetime

Success is only achievable with your hard work and perseverance, and of course the right team of people around you.

We think of ourselves as your partner in dreaming, planning, climbing and celebrating. Our entire team from Adrian, guides, support personnel and logistics partners are excited to have you along for the expedition of a lifetime.

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expeditions

ALPENGLOWEXPEDITIONS.COM

BOOKING + INQUIRIES

For booking details, questions, or more information please call or email us:

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This expedition is operated by Adrian Ballinger, IFMGA Mountain Guide.

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