

BORDER CROSSING EL CHALTEN – VILLA O'HIGGINS. SEASON 2011-2012

An adventurous travel through the Heart of the Andes Patagonian, crossing from Los Glaciares National Park (Argentinian) to Carretera Austral (Chile) between native forests, crosses lakes, lagoons and rivers.



GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

- **Duration:** 2 days.
Start day 1: El Chalten 8:30 A.M.
Finish day 2: Villa O'Higgins 9:00 P.M.
- **Distance:** 133 kilometers.
- **Difficulty:** Moderate.
- **Transport:** bus, boat, bike & walk or horse riding.

THE TRAVEL

The crossing consists of five segments.

The first 40 kms, corresponding to **segment 1** El Chalten to Desierto Lake, are fit for bus or cycling. The **segment 2**, Crossing Desierto Lake for 13 kilometers, corresponding to only fit for navigation or trekking. The next 22 kilometers correspond to **segment 3** Border Crossing Desierto lake to Candelario Mancilla, which are fit for horse riding, cycling and walking.

The following 51 kilometers corresponding to **segment 4** Crossing O'Higgins Lake, only fit for

navigation, ending with **segment 5** Bahamondez Port to Villa O'Higgins, of 7 kilometers, is fit for any kind of land of transportation.

1.- EL CHALTEN TO DESIERTO LAKE

Distance: 40 kms; **Drop:** 105 mt; **Condition:** OK gravel road, a bit hilly in places but relatively flat approaching Desierto Lake.

Schedule: Bus every day 08:30, 12:00 y 15:00 hs.

- Las Lenguas, Av. Antonio de Viedma 95, El Chalten. Fono (+54-2962) 493023.
- Zona Austral Turismo, Av MM de Güemes 173, Fono (+54-2962) 493214.

Journey Time: Bus 1:30 hr. / Bike 2:00 hr.

Fare Bus: AR\$ 130.

Food: Not available, beverage only at Desierto Campground

2.- FERRY ACROSS DESIERTO LAKE.

Boat "Huemul". (40 passengers capacity). Agency "Patagonia Aventura", Av. San Martín 56, El Chalten. Phone (+54-02962) 493110.

Schedule: South to North: Tuesday 18:00 hrs; Wednesday to Sunday 10:30, 14:00 and 17:00 hrs.;

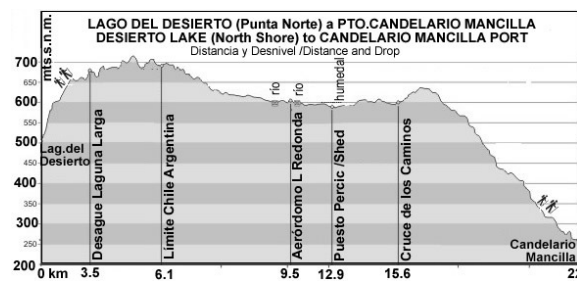
Journey Time: 40 minutes.

Fare: AR\$ 110.

3.- ARGENTINIA/ CHILE BORDER.

DESIERTO LAKE to O'HIGGINS LAKE.

Distance: 22 kms. Drop: 430 mt.- Meters above sea level: Desierto L. 505 m. / Town Border 685 mts / O'Higgins Lake 255 mt.



In Argentina: 6 Kms. Drop 180 mt ascent. Trekking 2 HR. Horse Riding 1 Hr, Bike 2 at 4 Hr **Condition:** First 2km are narrow and very steep - pushing only. The rest is undulating with lots of mud, tree roots and several streams to cross.

In Chile: 16 Kms. Drop: 430 mt descent. Trekking 4 hr, Horse Riding 2,5 hr, Bike 3 hr; **Condition:** Regular gravel road. Easy for trekking, moderate for bikes. Last 6 km huge downhill; use caution near cliffs

- **Argentinian Border Control:** Gendarmeria Argentina in Desierto Lake north shore
- **Chilean Border Control:** Carabineros de Chile at 1.000 meters of C. Mancilla Port.

Horse riding: Laguna del. Desierto to Laguna Redonda .

Horse for persons: Fare CH\$ 15.000; AR\$ 150; US\$ 30 for horse.

Horse for bags -60 kgs. Fare CH\$ 20.000; AR\$ 200; US\$ 40 for horse.

Transfer Pickup (new service): Laguna Redonda to Candelario Mancilla. For groups 4 persons and bags. CH20.000 or AR\$200.

Schedule: Horses for riding for bags only booking for days Tuesday and Friday: 02:00 PM, from Desierto lake North Shore to Candelario Mancilla.

Booking for horses: info@villaohiggins.com.

Lodging: Mancilla family for CH\$6.000 /night. 250 meters from Candelario Mancilla Port.

Camping: In Desierto Lake North Shore (free) and Estancia Candelario Mancilla (CH\$ 2.000).

Food: Mancilla family: breakfast: CH\$ 3.000, lunch/dinner: CH\$ 5.000.

Maps for border Crossing: Buy in El Chalten or El Calafate.

- Patagonian South Icefield. Trekking & Mountainering Escala 1:50.000. Zagier-Urruty;
- Chalten Trekking Maps. Zona Lago O'Higgins, Escala 1:100.000. Chalten Outdoors

4.- BOAT ACROSS O'HIGGINS LAKE.

Boat "Quetru" (60 passengers capacity).

Schedule:

- November: Saturday
- December: Wednesday and Saturday
- January and February 2012: Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.
- March: Saturday

11:30 A.M. Departure by boat C.Mancilla to Glaciér O'Higgins, passing in front of the glacier calving area en route.

16:30 P.M. Arrival at Candelario Mancilla Port.

17:00 AM. Departure by boat to Villa O'Higgins, passing La Florida Peninsula in route.

20:15 A.M. Arrival at Bahamondez Port.

Journey Time: Crossing O'Higgins Lake 2:40 hr. O'Higgins Glacier Trip: 5:00 hr.

Fare:

- O'Higgins Lake Crossing: CH\$ 40.000; AR\$ 400; US\$ 85. Bike free.
- O'Higgins Glacier Trip: CH\$25.000 ; AR\$ 250; US\$ 53.

Booking: info@villaohiggins.com. Pay on the boat.

5.BAHAMONDEZ PORT (O'HIGGINS BOAT DOCK) TO VILLA O'HIGGINS

Distance: 7 KM Drop: 15 mt ;

Condition: Good gravel road. Great scenery.

For Bikes: First 4k are hilly with many bends..

From rio Mayer bridge to Villa are flat. Easy

Schedule: 20:15 Bus from dock to Villa O'Higgins.

Journey Time: 15 minutes in bus / 35 minutes in bike.

Fare Bus CH\$ 2.000 (US\$ 4).- Pay on the bus.

***** TIPS *****

Food: Supermarket, hostels, restaurant only El Chalten and Villa O'Higgins.

Clothing: Take warm and water-proof garments.

Lodging in Villa O'Higgins: Hospedajes B&B from ch\$8.000 and camping ch\$3.000.

Money Exchange: No traveler's checks or credit cards accepted anywhere; try *Hielo Sur* for US\$ and exchange Argentinian pesos to Chilean. Bank and ATM in Cochrane, 230 KM.

Carretera Austral Transfer:

- Bus Villa O'Higgins to Tortel: December to February, Tuesday, Friday and Sunday: CH\$ 15.000. Booking info@villaohiggins.com.
- Bus Villa O'Higgins to Cochrane. Buses Aldea (Booking phone +56 67 431829) : Monday and Friday. Departure 8:30 A.M. Rate ch\$ 13.000 to Cochrane.
- Bus Cochrane to Coyhaique. Every days.

Cicling Carretera Austral: Stock-up on supplies in Villa O'Higgins because there is very little available until Tortel or Cochrane.