PATAGONIA!
Tracing the Footsteps of Darwin
at the Ends of the Earth

Tierra del Fuego National Park

MARCH 15-26, 2012

Cornell University
Cornell’s Adult University
Thursday, March 15
DEPART U.S.
Depart from Miami for an overnight flight to Argentina’s capital city, Buenos Aires. *Overnight flight* (Meals aloft)

Friday, March 16
BUENOS AIRES
Arrive this morning in Buenos Aires and transfer to our hotel. In the afternoon, enjoy a tour of this celebrated city – including the Plaza de Mayo, the Catedral Metropolitana, and the Casa Rosada, the famed pink building from which Eva and Juan Perón addressed the Argentinean people. See the Boca section, an area of colorfully painted houses where artists display their wares, and browse through the antique shops of the San Telmo district, a picturesque part of Old Buenos Aires. Finally, join Warren for a tour of the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, home to one of the most magnificent fossil collections in South America. In the evening, enjoy a welcome dinner, where Warren will provide an introduction to the places we’ll visit and a brief overview of Patagonian natural history.

Loi Suites D
Warren’s First Lecture: “In The Footsteps of Darwin”

River Plate, Buenos Aires
Saturday, March 17
BUENOS AIRES / TRELEW / PUERTO MADRYN
Transfer out and fly to Trelew. Explore Bryn Gwyn, a paleontological park designed to be an open air exhibit. It is the result of 14 years of excavations and is the first park of its kind to open in South America. Next we’ll tour one of the most interesting paleontological museums in Argentina, the Museo Paleontológico Egidio Feruglio (www.mef.org.ar/mef). The museum opened in 1999. Its modern facilities include a 150 seats auditorium and cafeteria, where we have a light lunch prior to the visit. Visit the research private areas not open to the public and meet some of the scientists. Journey to Península Valdés home to a kaleidoscope of wildlife. Shaped like an ax, the Valdés peninsula is marked by its vibrant coastline, a stunning array of tall cliffs, rocky reefs, and exotic marine mammals.
Territorio Hotel B, L

Sunday, March 18
PENINSULA VALDES
Enjoy the sights and sounds of Peninsula Valdes as we visit several colonies of South American sea lions and southern elephant seals. Declared a “World Heritage Site” by UNESCO this is one of the most important reserves of Patagonia. Here we’ll also look for herds of guanacos and fox. The landscape corresponds to the Patagonian plateau with steep slopes along the coasts.
Territorio Hotel B, L
Warren’s Second Lecture: “Megatheriums to metamorphism: Patagonia in the Past”

Monday, March 19
PUERTO MADRYN
Head out to explore the sights and sounds of Península Valdés as we visit the main colony of sea lions in Punta Norte. Continue on to Estancia San Lorenzo, home to a large colony of Magellanic penguins. This reserve is nesting ground for some 300,000 penguins. Return to Puerto Madryn.
Territorio Hotel B, L

Tuesday, March 20
TRELEW / USHUAIA
This morning fly south to Ushuaia, Argentina’s southernmost city and Tierra del Fuego, the gateway to the immense and mysterious Antarctic region. In favorable weather there will be stunning views of the snow-capped Andes before landing in Ushuaia. Located on the shore of Isla Grande,
Tierra del Fuego’s largest island, Ushuaia commands a view across the Beagle Channel to Chilean islands nestled against a backdrop of rugged peaks and glaciers.

*Los Acebos Hotel  B, L*

**Warren’s Third Lecture: “The end of the world: The natural and human history of Tierra del Fuego”**

*Wednesday, March 21
USHUAIA*

This morning visit the legendary **Tierra del Fuego National Park** which contains, on a single island, all the different ecosystems which typify Patagonia. See an unique sub-Antarctic rain forest where lush beech, canelo and wild cherry forests are covered with a carpet of green mosses, lichen, and Spanish moss waving in the breezes. Also present here are carnivorous plants that are a fatal attraction to insects. Abundant animal life is remarkably diverse in this park and includes guanacos, red fox, magellanic woodpecker, wild geese, the noisy austral parakeet, and pink flamingos. Spend the afternoon sailing by catamaran through the **Beagle Channel**, named after the ship in which Charles Darwin sailed here in 1832. Observe “flag trees” on the shore inclined to the east due to the strong winds. From our spectacular vantage point, view the seals, sea lions, cormorants, penguins, and wide variety of other Antarctic birds and marine mammals inhabiting the rocky islets formed as the Andes Mountains literally plunge into these waters. The Channel is also the playground to whale and dolphin populations such as the black and white commerson’s dolphin. The skies above the rocky cliffs are home to the condor.

*Los Acebos Hotel  B, L*

![Perito Moreno Glacier](image-url)
Thursday, March 22
USHUAIA / EL CALAFATE
This morning we’ll fly to Calafate. Here we’ll visit the Galciarium, Argentina’s new museum of ice. The museum will aid us in understanding glaciers and their environmental impact. Explore the charming town of Calafate. 
Kosten Aike Hotel  B, D

Warren’s Fourth Lecture: “Guanacos to glaciers: Patagonia in the Present”

Friday, March 23
EL CALAFATE / MORENO GLACIER
Explore Glaciers National Park, bordering Chile and the Andean crest and declared by UNESCO as part of the Natural Heritage of Humanity. The park boasts 47 major glaciers, the only remains of the last Ice Age and the third-largest concentration of ice in the world. View the impressive Perito Moreno Glacier that rises nearly 250 feet above the Iceberg Channel, spans three miles across and reaches back 22 miles up the Andes. This glacier offers an overwhelming sight and deafening roar every time one of its ice towers breaks into multiple icebergs and plunges into the water. For those who are interested, time is available to experience first-hand this place of extraordinary beauty by donning crampons for an optional (extra cost) mini-trek over the glacier’s surface (participants must be under 65 years of age). Those not opting for the mini-trek will go on a nautical safari to see the glacier up close. 
Kosten Aike Hotel  B, BL

Saturday, March 24
ESTANCIA CRISTINA
Early morning transfer to Puerto Bandera to board a boat on Lake Argentino to Estancia Cristina, a historical sheep ranch. Enter the North Channel for amazing views of mountains and culminating with the Upsala Glacier, the largest of all the lake’s glaciers and truly spectacular. (This day may be modified due to lake conditions.) Upon arrival at Estancia Cristina, you will learn about the geology of the area and the history of this ranch. We’ll gather here for a memorable farewell lunch. Kosten Aike Hotel  B, L

Estancia Cristina
Sunday, March 25
EL CALAFATE/ BUENOS AIRES/ HOME
Transfer to the airport in Calafate for the flight to Buenos Aires and evening flight home to the U.S. Those passengers wishing to visit Chile will cross the border thorough the high Patagonia plateau to the border and continue on to Torres del Paine National Park and Puerto Natales, on a post-trip extension. B, BL

Monday, March 26
ARRIVE U.S.
Arrive in the U.S. and connect to flights homeward.
OPTIONAL POST TRIP EXTENSION TO CHILE
TORRES DEL PAINE NATIONAL PARK & SANTIAGO
March 25-31, 2012

Depart El Calafate and climb up towards the high Patagonian plateau from where we can appreciate the whole Santa Cruz River valley, the Argentine Lake, and the Andes Mountains in the background. After driving through typical Patagonian windswept landscapes, we arrive at the Argentina/Chile border at Cancha Carrera pass. We clear customs and immigration formalities and continue on to Torres del Paine National Park, declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1978. As we approach the park, we can see, beyond Lago Sarmiento, the Paine Massif with the spectacular granite Towers and the magnificent Horns. In the background, we might get a glimpse of the Southern Patagonian Icefield. Along the way, enjoy photograph stops and watching the guanacos and other wildlife. Our goal is the Remota hotel renowned for its architecture, cuisine and views.

Enjoy four full days to explore the most impressive sight in southern Patagonia, Torres del Paine National Park and its surrounding wilderness. Hidden at the southernmost end of the Andes, it is one of the newest nature reserves in South America. The dramatic mountain formations of towering rock, windswept pampas, ice fields, and glaciers make it an impressive and unforgettable sight. We’ll look for herds of guanacos and rheas, flamingos, condors, foxes, geese, and black-necked swans. Lakes and lagoons of different hues of blues, greens, and even grays, and ochres abound. The park is surrounded by impressive mountains including the famous Cuernos del Paine (Paine Horns), twisted pillars of gray granite, dusted with snow that rise from the flat Patagonian plain. The Torres del Paine massif (towers), giant granite peaks, is even more spectacular. We’ll see Grey Glacier and lake with its blue iceberg, Salto Grande, a glacial waterfall set against majestic peaks, and many lakes. There will be opportunities to explore or hike in the park individually or with one of the guides.

On our return we’ll tour Punta Arenas, Chile’s southernmost city. We’ll depart for Santiago where we will visit the city’s historical center and have a special curator lead tour of the city’s famous pre-Columbian museum. Later we’ll enjoy an exclusive farewell lunch at Viña Santa Rita, located in the nearby Central Valley, home to many of Chile’s finest wineries.