

MAGDALENA & MARTA ISLANDS



AROUND
PATAGONIA

The March of the Penguins

Magdalena and Marta Islands became a National Monument in 1966 and are located 35 KM north of Punta Arenas, in the middle of the Strait of Magellan and together comprehend the biggest Penguin Colony in South America.

During our visit to the islands we will visit the sea lions colonies, the cormorants and other birdlife living on Marta Island. We will also experience Pear's dolphins, Commerson's dolphins, panda dolphins (tonina overa), sei whales and birds such as petrels, cormorants and even the giant albatross. Even before the boat docks, you'll see thousands of penguins crowding the shores and hear their squawking.

If you have ever watched "March of the Penguins" and found it fascinating, this excursion will be perfect for you.

During summer time (between October and April), there are approximately around 69,000 couples of Magellanic penguins (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) visiting the island during their reproductive period.

Once we have landed on the island we will be welcomed by thousands of penguins walking around us smiling on the pebbly terrain that serves as their breeding grounds. On either side of the trail, see hundreds of burrows in the ground, about a foot (30 cm) in diameter, each populated by a pair of penguins. Watch penguins pop in and out of the holes, where eggs are laid, and others excavate new burrows by flinging aside heaps of dirt with their webbed feet. We will follow our guide along a cordoned-off path leading up to a lighthouse where you will learn about the islands' ecosystem.

Our program includes pick up from your hotel in Punta Arenas and drop off at the pier where you will join the rest of the group for the island excursion.

You also have the possibility to have a private guide if needed. We aim to make you feel free and comfortable during your time in Patagonia.



Keywords

Magellan penguin, King penguins, Magdalena & Marta Islands, Strait of Magellan, Tierra del Fuego.

Geography

Both islands are part of Los Pingüinos Natural Monument that is located at a 35 KM navigation to the north of Punta Arenas. The islands are the breeding location for several species of seabirds, most notably the Magellanic penguin. The penguin colony on the island has been monitored since 1998 and was estimated to hold 69,000 breeding pairs in 2016.

Birds

Penguins are birds, but are unable to fly. This is not a problem: they are great swimmers. They can be around 2 feet tall (61 cm).



WALK AMONG 100,000 PENGUINS

When is it the best time to visit the Magdalena & Marta Islands?



The island can be visited from October to March on tourist vessels departing from Punta Arenas. Around Patagonia offers you three different possibilities to visit the penguin's colony.

In general, the sailing time is about 5 hours in total considering one hour stay on the island. There is a 850 meters path which penetrates into the island ending at the lighthouse on top of the island where you can visit the museum and learn more about the local flora and fauna. From the lighthouse you will have a panoramic view of the Strait of Magellan and the Marta Island.





"It's better to see something once than to hear about it a thousand times."

Depending on your choice, you can arrive on the island via ferry, speedboat or catamaran:

A short speedboat or catamaran ride are the best options according to us when you try to optimise your travel time.

By speedboat the traveling time will be around 45 minutes and 20 minutes more to visit the Marta Islands. You will get close to the island, but we are not allowed to disembark. The highlight of this option include sea lions, elephant seals, cormorants, dolphin gull, south polar lar skua, the Austral seagull, Antarctic pigeon, southern sea lion (*Ota*

ria flavescens) and southern fur seal (*Arctocephalus australis*).

After a marvellous half day sailing in the Strait of Magellan, your tour will end back in Punta Arenas. If you take the morning trip you can also make a reservation with us for lunch and we will drop you off at your restaurant of choice.

By ferry you will be sailing on the Strait for at least 2 hours before you arrive at Magdalena Island. This option does not include the sea lions colony, but it is cheaper and at the same time slower than the speedboat.



You don't have to trek all the way to Antarctica for a sizeable dose of happy feet.

Visitors can get up close to the penguins at the Magdalena Island where penguins are crossing in front of you.

Penguins are naturally shy and spend most daylight hours feeding at sea or hiding away in burrows depending on the time of the year that you are visiting them.



Experience your own "March of the Penguins" during a morning/afternoon tour with us.





Flora & Fauna

Preserving the eco-system for future generations

- It is very important to remember that we as visitors must respect the penguins all the time, because at the arrival point on the island the penguins will be feeding their babies.
- Do not disturb the penguins when you visit the colony. Become an observer.
- Avoid making loud noises. Do not run after them and allow them to pass in front of you when then come and go from the sea to their burrows.
- Do not use flash when taking pictures. Penguin's eyes are affected by flash lights.
- Do not throw garbage or food leftovers. Do not feed the penguins.
- Penguins will come and go, but please do not touch them.
- Because penguins are so friendly and also because they will be arriving in masses from the sea they will be crossing in front of us all the time. Therefore we have to wait, at least 5 minutes for the penguins to move again but, sometimes and because they are so friendly, they do not want to move and just stare at you. In that case, wait at least 5 minutes and move aside slowly.







Small Print

Cancellations and Conditions:

- Season migration, which is somewhat unpredictable, can affect the operation of this tour in March and April. The ship or speed boat will liaise with the tour operator prior to arrival in Punta Arenas and, in the event that the penguins are no longer present, the guests will be given the chance to substitute an alternative shore excursion. The circumnavigation of the Marta Island is dependent up on weather and sea conditions.
- Any cancellations must be made in writing per email and received by Around Patagonia Ltd before the time constraints detailed below. Requests for cancellations over the phone will not be accepted.
- Bookings of 3 passengers or fewer – cancellations within 48 hours of departure are charged 50% of tour costs. Cancellations within 24 hours of departure or failure to attend are charged 100% of tour costs.
- Bookings of 4 passengers or more – cancellations within seven days of departure date are charged 50% of tour cost. Cancellations within 48 hours of departure or failure to attend are charged 100% of tour costs.

- All tours are subject to weather conditions.
- The colonies we visit are very consistent in their habits and behaviours, however we ask you to approach every encounter with caution and respect and to never assume that we have any control over their appearance.
- In the unlikely event that we don't go to the penguins excursion, then you are allowed to come back free of charge for another tour the same or the next day, prior to the end of the current season.

Season: Opens 15 October - 15 April, including weekends and public holidays.

Opening Hours, Tickets & Reservations: We work seamlessly with different companies to offer you the best service possible. Reservations are desired for Magdalena & Marta Islands. Please send us an email to: info@around-patagonia.com

Pick Up & Drop Off: From your hotel or private address.

What to bring with you: Comfortable shoes and warm clothes for an hour trekking on Magdalena Island.

Contact Us

We build tours for individuals and groups.

We enjoy putting together tailor made trips and tours for our customers and always make sure that everyone is happy and pleased with the outcome. We take everything in account and make sure that our customers can enjoy all of the natural pearls of Patagonia included some of our secret spots.

The logo for 'AROUND PATAGONIA' is displayed within a black circle. The word 'AROUND' is in large, white, sans-serif capital letters, with a red location pin icon replacing the letter 'O'. Below it, the word 'PATAGONIA' is in smaller, white, sans-serif capital letters.

We have years of experience putting together tailor-made tours for groups of any size, big or small. Make sure to express your wishes and we will be happy to plan the perfect tour that fits all your needs and will create a lot of good memories.

We will be delighted to help you plan your dream trip in a friendly and very inviting atmosphere while in Patagonia.

If you have some questions please send us an email and we will get back to you shortly.

Visit our website for the latest tours and information at:

www.aroundpatagonia.com

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