



# ATACAMA DESERT BOLIVIAN ALTIPLANO PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR

Otherworldly is the first thing that comes to mind when you see the awe-inspiring landscape of **Atacama Desert in Northern Chile** and the **Altiplano's of Bolivia**. The landscape is surreal with unique light that is seemingly easy to photograph throughout the day. Atacama with its dramatic desert wilderness, lagoons and colourful flamingos is surrounded by the volcanic mountains of the Andes. Higher up in the Andean plateaus of Atacama and Bolivia, beautiful lagoons, snow-capped volcanoes and some of the most colourful geological landforms are scattered throughout the stark desert landscape., including one of the world's most spectacular sights, Salar de Uyuni, the largest salt flat in the world. This is an adventurous photographic tour not to be missed.



## Highlights

- Ba'hai Temple and Cerro San Cristobal Hill in Santiago
- Santiago's Historical Centre
- Valparaiso and its colourful graffiti buildings
- Chuquicamata Copper Mine
- Moon Valley and Mars Valley
- El Tatio Geysers
- Miscanti and Miñiques Altiplano lagoons, Tuyacto, and the famous Piedras Rojas also known as Salar de Talar.
- The village of Tononao and Laguna Chaxa
- Laguna Tebiquinche for sunset
- Astrophotography tour
- Sol de Mañana Geyser
- Seven Colours Mountain
- Laguna Colorada
- Necropolis and Coral Army
- Train Graveyard
- Numerous altiplano lagoons
- Beautiful flamingos and much more

## Included

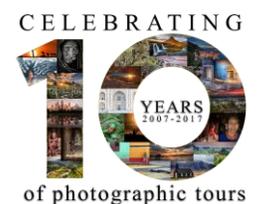
- The complete tour as per the itinerary
- Transfers on arrival
- Meals as specified (B/L/D)
- Private ground transport
- All accommodation during the tour
- Experienced photographic leader and local guides where required.

## Not included

- Return International Flights to Calama
- Airport and Airline taxes & charges
- Travel Insurance
- Any expenses of a personal nature (such as laundry, phone calls, personal tipping etc.)
- Any meals other than those specified (B/L/D)
- Any drinks (alcoholic or non-alcoholic)
- Optional tours and activities
- Excess baggage fee
- Tips and gratuities
- Visa/Reciprocity Fees

## Details

- Departure date: **March 2023 (14 days/13 nights)**
- Price: **US \$7195** per person twin share.
- There will be a **minimum of 4 people** and **maximum of 11 people** on this tour.
- International return airfare is not included in the tour price. Flights departing Sydney/Melbourne are estimated to be around **AU \$2000** per person depending on airline and when purchased.
- For anyone requiring a single room, there will be an additional surcharge of **US \$1400**.



## Tour Itinerary

### Day 1: ARRIVE SANTIAGO (L/D)

Upon arrival we go to a local restaurant for lunch before continuing to our hotel in Santiago. After checking in we will have a short break to recover from our lengthy flight.

Later in the afternoon we visit the beautiful Ba'Hai Temple before going to Cerro San Cristobal Hill to watch and photograph the sunset over the city. Overnight in Santiago.



### Day 2: SANTIAGO – VALPARAISO (B/L/D)

This morning we enjoy a walking tour of Santiago's historical centre, including the Presidential Palace of la Moneda, the Plaza de Armas and the Cathedral. We then commence our drive to Valparaiso, stopping to visit a winery and the scenic landscape of Casablanca Valley.

On arrival in Valparaiso we explore the city with its interesting architecture and colourful street art before heading to a roof top for sunset over the Pacific Ocean and a Pisco Sour workshop. Overnight in Valparaiso.

### Day 3: VALPARAISO (B/L/D)

Today we enjoy a full day tour of Valparaiso, visiting local attractions and walking the colourful streets with their beautiful street art.

We will head out early morning visiting the local fish market, a funicular railway and more of the local streets with street art. As this is a walking tour, we will have an extended lunch and break in the middle of the day before continuing our tour in the afternoon. Our day will conclude with sunset and twilight from a strategic vantage point. Watching all the city lights come on is a beautiful sight to see and photograph. Overnight in Valparaiso.



### Day 4: VALPARAISO – CALAMA – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA (B/L/D)

This morning we rise very early and transfer to the airport for our flight to Calama. On arrival we meet our local guide/driver before having a light early lunch. After lunch we join a unique tour of Chuquicamata Copper Mine, which by excavated volume is the largest open pit copper mine in the world.

It's now time to commence our drive to San Pedro de Atacama, our base for the next four nights, stopping at Mars Valley to photograph the sunset over the Andes. Overnight in San Pedro de Atacama.

### Day 5: ATACAMA DESERT (B/D)

This morning we rise early and go to Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley) for sunrise. After a picnic breakfast it's time to drive into the valley to explore and photograph the otherworldly landscape. On return to San Pedro de Atacama you're free to explore the town and find a restaurant for lunch (own expense).

Depending on the conditions when we are in Atacama, we have an option of either going to Laguna Tebinquinche or Valle del Arcoíris (Rainbow Valley) for sunset. Atacama is also one of the best places in the world for astronomy so tonight we will enjoy an astrophotography tour. Overnight in San Pedro de Atacama.





#### **Day 6: ATACAMA DESERT (B/L/D)**

We have a long day of travel up into the altiplano lagoons surrounding the Atacama basin, visiting the famous Piedras Rojas (Red Stones) also known as Salar de Talar followed by Laguna Tuyacto a short distance further. The landscape in this region is amazing and there will be numerous stops as we travel.

On our return journey we take a short detour to visit two more lagoons, Laguna Miscanti and Laguna Miñiques, both at the foot of Cerro Miscanti volcano. On our return journey to San Pedro de Atacama, we will have brief stops at the small towns of Socaire and Toconao. Overnight in San Pedro de Atacama.

#### **Day 7: ATACAMA DESERT (B/D)**

We rise very early this morning for our long drive to El Tatio Geysers. This is a very popular destination and an early start is crucial to beating the crowd and seeing the geysers at their very best. For the brave, there's also an opportunity to take a bath in the thermal pool. On our way back we will stop at a lesser known area with some interesting colours and a unique geyser different from the others. There is some amazing scenery and wildlife on the return journey, so expect to have a number of photo stops.

On return to San Pedro de Atacama you will have some free time to get lunch at your own expense, explore the town or just take a rest. Later in the afternoon we return to Moon Valley for sunset. Overnight in San Pedro de Atacama.



#### **Day 8: SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA – SILOLI DESERT (B/L/D)**

This morning we will be collected and transferred to the border crossing of Hito Cajones. This will very likely be a slow process so patience will be required. Once we get through the Chilean checkpoint, we proceed to our 4WD vehicles at which time we will once again need to go through border formalities.

Our first stop will be Laguna Verde and Laguna Blanca. If there's no wind we will have great panoramic reflection shots with Volcano Licancabur in the background. We then continue to Laguna Colorada where we enjoy photographing the lagoon and Flamingos. As we continue our way through the Siloli Desert there will be numerous stops to photograph the spectacular landscape, including Árbol de Piedra (Stone Tree). Our day ends with the beautiful Seven Colour Mountain.

Tonight we stay at Tayka Desert Hotel, a remote hotel in the Siloli Desert. Overnight in Siloli Desert.

*Please note that the initial part of this drive to Laguna Colorada will be repeated on Day 13 in reverse so some stops may or may not be done today.*



#### **Day 9: SILOLI DESERT – SAN PEDRO DE QUEMES (B/L/D)**

We rise early to photograph the Seven Colour Mountain in the early morning light, returning to the hotel for breakfast.

After breakfast we commence a slow drive past a series of lagoons including Laguna Ramaditas, Laguna Honda, Laguna Chiarkota, Laguna Hedionda, Laguna Chullunkani and Laguna Turquiri. This is a spectacular drive with amazing landscapes and a great opportunity to photograph more Flamingoes and most likely Vicuna.

Depending on our time of arrival, we will either check in prior to or after sunset. Our sunset shoot will be a unique location known as the Coral Army (or Rock Soldiers), named for the shape of volcanic rock scattered in the same position over a vast area. Overnight in San Pedro de Quemes.



#### Day 10: SAN PEDRO DE QUEMES – UYUNI (B/L/D)



This morning we take a short walk from our hotel to visit Pueblo Quemado, the original village that was destroyed by the Chilean forces in 1879 during the War of the Pacific. We then depart for Uyuni, stopping near the village of San Juan to visit the Necropolis and museum. Here we will see hollow coral bubbles that were transformed into tombs by the ancient Aymara people between 1250-1450 AD.

After lunch we continue to Uyuni where we visit the local office to collect gumboots for use during our stay. We then visit Cementerio de Trenes (Train Cemetery), a rusty collection of historical steam trains that were left to rust in the desert early 19<sup>th</sup> century before heading out onto Salar de Uyuni for sunset. Over the next two nights we will also have the opportunity to do an astrophotography shoot. Overnight in Colchani/Uyuni.

#### Day 11: UYUNI (B/L/D)

Today we have a full day to explore and photograph the largest salt flat in the world, Salar de Uyuni. Our program will be dependent on how much rain they had earlier in the year and how much water there is. This trip has been specifically scheduled for after the rain season at which time Uyuni becomes the world's largest mirror.

During our drive around the salt flat we visit areas where they are mining the salt, Ojos de agua (Eye of the salt flat) where water from a distant volcano bubbles up through the salt crust. If the water level is low enough, we will also visit Isla Incahuasi, a rocky island in the middle of Uyuni Salt Flat with giant cactus. Our day no doubt will end with another sunset over the salt flat. Overnight in Colchani/Uyuni.



#### Day 12: UYUNI – VILLA MAR (B/L/D)



This morning we depart Colchani/Uyuni and commence our drive back south through San Cristobál to Valle de Rocas (Stone Valley). We stop briefly at San Cristobál to visit lovely a 350-year-old Jesuit church. San Cristobál is a mining town with one of Bolivia's largest mining facilities producing zinc-silver and lead-silver concentrate. It's the world's sixth largest producer of zinc and third largest producer of silver.

Valle de Rocas is one of the most beautiful and visually striking landscapes in Bolivia if not all of South America. With locations such as Laguna Negra, Lost City of Italy, Camel Rock, World Cup Trophy, Balancing Rock and much more, you're guaranteed to return with truly incredible, otherworldly photos. Overnight in Villa Mar.

#### Day 13: VILLA MAR – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA (B/L/D)

We depart early this morning, slowly making our way back to the border. There will be a number of stops for landscape photography along the way to Laguna Colorada, where we will stop again if time allows. We're now be back on familiar roads however they will look very different travelling in the opposite direction, and you will be wanting to stop many times to capture the different compositions. We also take a slight detour to visit Geiser Sol de Mañana, an extensive geothermal area at 4800 to 5000 meters altitude.

After lunch we continue to the border crossing of Hito Cajones where we once again must patiently go through border formalities before being transferred back to a Chilean vehicle for journey back to San Pedro de Atacama. Overnight in San Pedro de Atacama.





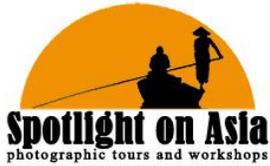
#### **Day 14: SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA – CALAMA - DEPART (B/L)**

This morning we enjoy one final excursion to Laguna Chaxa in the Salt Flat. This is a great location to get some final images of Flamingos in still conditions, hopefully with a good reflection. Afterwards we return to our hotel where we have arranged a late check out so we can casually prepare for our journey back home.

Mid to late afternoon we will be transferred to the airport in Calama for our domestic flight back to Santiago and connecting flight to Australia or other destination.

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If you're interested in joining me on this fantastic photographic tour or require additional information, please contact:



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