

HOSTERÍA
ISLA VICTORIA
ISLA VICTORIA



dentro de una isla, fuera del mundo

Tour
Operator's
Handbook
Isla Victoria
National Lodge

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Historical outline – Isla Victoria National Lodge

The present Victoria Island National Lodge was rebuilt and extended on the base of the old building burned down in 1982. This new work was done by Mares Sur with the aim to build a better place and, at the same time, give a fresh impetus to it.

An island is unusual in Argentina. And a Lodge in an island is even more unusual.

The original lodge was built in 1932 by the *Dirección de Parques Nacionales*. It was design by the architects **De Cesaris** and **Estrada** who were part of a working group led by the architect **Alejandro Bustillo** who stamped his own style to the design: significant sitings and the use of stone and wood.

By 2002, the Lodge was finished new, respecting the essence of the original project but with every detail of modern comfort.

The current proposal is to create a new Product, with the mode 'All Inclusive', to end with every traditional scheme of marketing. We want the guest to feel that once he / she arrives to the place, everything will be settled for his / her stay in the island to be unforgettable.

From far-off times...

Cave paintings that can be easily seen, confirm the presence of Tehuelches aborigines – perhaps from the VIII century. It is thought that they arrived to the region in trunk made canoes. Later on, in 1620, Capitan Juan Fernández arrived to the region and let the Spanish to know these lands. In 1670, Father Mascardi arrived to the island and started to evangelize.

The expert Francisco P. Moreno, saw these lands in 1870. But the first white inhabitant of the island, Aarón de Anchorena, was settled there in 1902, in the bay that today has his name. He got the National Government's permission and built his house. Anchorena began with a production activity that marked the first years of the XX century – with sawmill and a cow farm. Since the 20s, an important nursery was settled. It had national importance because many species to be planted in Buenos Aires and other parts of the country were taken from there. The nursery worked until 1960.

Philosophy of the Lodge

Taking into account the foundations of the previous construction and respecting the central outlines; we looked for building elements of the region, we added high quality spaces to serve modern and demanding tourists who can appreciate a distinguished proposal. Thus, **22 rooms**, including 2 suites were built; each of them has a Jacuzzi in the bathroom.

The Lodge has also 3 living-rooms with minimalist atmosphere; a very complete wine cellar with the best exponents of the national stock; a great library and a health club that has an outdoor heated swimming pool which is at a temperature of 20°C from September to Holly Week, a big hydro massage, an alternately hot and cold shower and sauna.

Rooms do not have telephone, TV set, music or fridge. We did not forget it; this is our way to protect guests from sounds and elements that you can easily find in your their daily life outside the island. We want you to rest in the exclusive environment offered by the views that surround us.

Even though the rooms are 'non-smoking' we have a very comfortable cigar-room.

At the Lodge, each guest is unique. This is seen in the special treatment towards guests, adapted to everyone's need.

We want every person that visits us, to have ‘its own’ experience and to be linked to the environment in ‘its own’ way, feeling every single and pure thing offered by the island’s quietness and pristine framework.

We highly respect the surrounding nature.

We tend to make this territory, which is ‘our and yours’, to be enjoyed by future generations; that is why we care so much about the plants and animals that live in the island.

Every outing should be felt as unique.

We want the guest to be part of this and to be happy, because he / she is the only recipient of our training.

Region’s geography. Flora and fauna. The weather.

- The meaning of its Name

The first name of the island was ‘Isla Larga’ (Large Island).

In the XX century, after being inhabited by Aarón de Anchorena, people started to call it ‘Victoria Island’, in honor of Anchorena’s beloved causing Victoria Aguirre.

- Surface, length, wide.

It is the larger lacustrine island of the country, 20km in its maximum length and a variable wide – from 200 to 4000m – this means a total surface of 3710 has.

- Main geographical characteristics.

It has precipitous shapes, with tertiary origin soils. It is shaped by the action of the ancient glaciers that covered the region and left their marks on the sharp cliffs of most of its shores. Nevertheless it has some beaches with fine sand.

It is situated 764m above the sea level, and its maximum summit is Cerro Quemado that reaches 1050m.

The island has interesting and wide inner lagoons.

- Arborous species

Among the most spread species we can find cypresses and *coihues* that reach 30m high and very beautiful *arrayanes*. As in every mix forest there are many local varieties such as *maitenes*, *radal*, *ñire*, *laura*, *cane colighue calafate* and fungus.

An important characteristic of the island is that in its central area (some decades ago), a wide variety of European and American species were brought in, on a trial basis and with trading purposes. There the visitor can easily find sequoias, pines, eucalyptus and many others.

- Fauna

In the island almost every animal of the region can be found, as the *pudu-pudu* and the *monito del monte* (little wild monkey). Among the fish, the commoner one is the perch. You can also find *cromoranes marinos*, seagull, turkey buzzard, a type of ibis, *avutardas*, woodpecker, *chucaos* and hummingbirds.

With all these native species, live some other species that were recently introduced in the island, for example the red deer which can be easily seen with the right conditions at the right time.

Temperatures of the island.

Spring and summer: min. 3°C and max 25°C, with an average of 15°C.

Autumn and winter: min -3°C and max 15°C, with an average of 8°C.

Programs

The Lodge's basic program is called Discovering Victoria Island. It includes 2 or 3 days accommodation, in-out land and water transport, and breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner with beverages, according to the Restaurant's menu. ALL the activities are included.

Guests only have to pay for bar charges, phone calls, wines from the cellar, any transport or activity that is not part of the Exploration – fishing with specialized guide, for example – and massage.

We have other Programs that need more time and also those called 'Special Programs'.

Please ask for the valid price list, where these options will be found:

- Discovering Victoria Island: 2 nights and an additional night.
- Two Destinations Reflected in the Same Mirror
- Honeymoon.

Trips

We are in an Island separates from Bariloche and Villa La Angostura by Nahuel Huapi Lake. To us, this distance is part of the beauty of being here, in an island. We believe that this trip on the lake is part of guests stay and not something separated from it.

We ask guests to consider and we advice them in the right way about this when it comes the time to offer our Lodge, because it is an important part of the Product.

Passengers arriving by plane to Bariloche's airport.

First, you should let us know the flight number.

We will be waiting for the passenger with a sign and we will take the road that goes along the edge of the lake to take him / her to Tunquelén (40km, which mean a 40 minutes drive).

Once we are there we organize a comfortable wait until the departure time of the boat that will take us to Victoria Island. Depending on the availability of boats and weather conditions, the trip will take 40 minutes approximately.

We suggest taking the flight that arrives in Bariloche before 3pm.

Passengers already in the Region

With their own car: we offer guest to get to Tunquelén Hotel-Villa Llao Llao on their own. There we will welcome them and they can put their cars in our parking lot. Then, we take them, in a motor boat, to the island.

For those staying in another Hotel by the Lake: if they don't have a car and want us to take them from there to the island, please let us know place and time they want to be picked up so as to confirm them according to the availability of boats.

Even when, in general, the weather is nice for navigation; before a possible worsening of it, we offer Tunquelén Hotel as a temporary waiting place.

Special or important dates for guests

It is possible that the stay of a guest coincides with a special date such as birthdays or anniversaries.

Please let us know about that, so we can coordinate with our staff an adequate attention to such an important date, thus we can adequately the guest if he wants to.

Special programs

We offer fishing outings with Professional Guides properly authorized. Fishing season goes from November to Holly Week.

For Christmas and New Year, we ask for a minimum of nights before each reservation.

Due to its small size, the Lodge can also be booked by Groups that completely full it facilities or they can ask for exclusiveness for a specific day.

These groups can be:

- Business Groups
- Friends or family groups

We keep the 'All inclusive' mode in these cases, and we adapt ourselves to customer's need, so as to provide the required service.

<h3>Explorations and Baqueanos of the Lodge</h3>
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We call Exploration to the outings, daily suggested to guests, to the interior of the island and natural environment.

They can be adjusted to weather conditions as well as guests' physique condition.

Our Explorations in Victoria Island are made for visitors to have a pleasant, unique and personal experience. With that purpose we carefully draw a series of circuits that, little by little, discover the island nature; always preserving the e nature reserve inside the National Park. We have bilingual 'Baqueanos', experts in open air activities and a wide infrastructure for support and services (including: horses, boats, bicycles, motorboats, etc)

The different means of transport make each Exploration to vary as regards time, circuit and goals. Before each outing, the Baqueano ask for the preferences, apart from the possibilities of each guest, in order to advise them about the most appropriate transport for each outing.

Every Exploration discovers the history and most remote places of Victoria Island, with thematic content about: fauna and flora, aborigines that inhabited the island and the most beautiful sightseeing.

Victoria Island Explorations have a very special characteristic: guests are permanently walking inside Nahuel Huapi National Park. We are all the time moving around this territory and guests, guides and National Park Rangers are part of its care.

We want guests to be in contact with their deepest feelings and have new experiences.

The working group that draws the explorations is formed by Baqueanos of the Lodge.

Why a Baqueano?

Our Baqueanos are trained to discover real possibilities, to do the Explorations of each guest. They know the area and its history very well and are experts in different open air activities: horse back riding, biking, rowing, trekking.

They'll be the natural hosts that accompanied and orient each guest.

Description of some Explorations of Victoria Island.

1. - To the Northern part of the Island

From the Lodge (central part of the Island), we take the 'camino de la costa' and then all the way through 'picada del medio', this is deep inside the Island. Then go on to Piedras Blancas Bay. The alternatives of this Exploration include the combination of trekking, horse back and bike riding. This make possible for the Exploration to last all day long including a rustic lunch. The way back to the Lodge is done through the 'camino de la costa', to the south. It's a 9km trip.

2.- Skirting Anchorena's Bay

From the Lodge (central part of the Island), we take the costal path to 'Aserradero Viejo', skirting the bay and then all the way through 'picada del medio', up to the diversion that lead to

‘Antepuerto’s Bay’. The alternatives of this Exploration are, trekking, horse back and bike riding, it includes the way back. Or guests can go back to the Lodge’s Port in a kayak. Then the Exploration will last all day – with rustic lunch included. This is a 3.5km’s trip.

3. - To the Southern part of the Island

From the Lodge (central part of the Island) to the South, through the path that takes to Punta Sur covering 7.5km of attractions. This Exploration can be done on foot, by bike or horse back riding, combining the way back through the lake. It last all day – with rustic lunch included.

4. - To the North part of the Island by the Pescado lagoon

(Walking Exploration)

From the Lodge the costal path is taken, this path leads to ‘Aserradero Viejo’ skirting the bay with the same name. Then we go through ‘Picada del Medio’ to the North in the middle of the island and its forest. Thus we walk through ‘Valle de las exóticas’ (forest of introduced species), after 5km we find the Pescador lagoon. There we can see rupestrian paintings on the stones. We keep on the trip through the same path to Pto. Turbina. From there ‘Camino de la Costa’ is taken to reach the starting point: the Lodge -7km-. Due to the extension of the Exploration, guests have the possibility to get back to the Lodge in a support car.

The experience: to discover the inner and costal forest of the island, enjoy its water mirrors and see rupestrian paintings.

Difficulty: mid / high

Duration: all day

Km.: 16.-

5. - Exploring the Northern area

(Horse back ride Exploration)

Leaving from the Lodge’s stable (central area), to the North up to ‘Camino de la Costa’, then taking the path that goes behind ‘Cerro Bella Vista’; from there we can’t see the lake. Through this path we get into the island seeing the forest’s changes. After the ‘Picada del Medio’ that leads to the North we keep on discovering the Island but this time we horse back ride until the road to ‘Pto. Turbina’ where we turn east and go to the lake again. That is the path taken in the way back to the Lodge -7km-.

The experience: to discover the corners of the island by its many walkways riding horses.

Difficulty: basic riding knowledge.

Duration: all day

Km: 17.-

Equipment: legwarmer, poncho, Patagonian hats, they are all given by the Lodge.

6- Rowing through Anchorena's Bay

We leave from 'Playa del Toro' (located at the bottom of the Lodge) with very stable double kayaks; rowing through the lake, which has very calm waters, visiting its inner bays, costs, beaches where we can rest, to its estuary where we can see the immensity of the open lake. In our way back we can snorkel or swim ending with the Exploration in 'Playa del Toro'.

The experience: to know the inside of the bay, discovery the contrast of its costs, explore sunken ships, among other things.

Difficulty: low.

Duration: 2 hs.

Equipment: neoprene suits and boots, life vest, face mask. Everything is given by the Lodge.

7- 'Dos costas' circuit

(Walking Exploration)

Leaving from the Lodge (central area) to the south, going by the old dairy farm (nowadays is the carpenter's workshop of the Lodge), we pass by the stable and walk through a path into the woods, where we'll find an interesting combination of native and introduced forest, up to Guerrero's Bay - a beautiful beach overlooking the west and where we'll find very old trees. We go to the south, following the west coast, into a Cohiue's forest thus walking away from the lake to the middle of the island. In this area we find the main road of the island and we take it to the central area. After walking through the inner woods, we go east again to the west coast but this time Totoras' Bay. We walk on the beach and we end our Exploration at the Lodge's gardens.

The experience: to know in the same trip the panoramic views of the West coast and East of the island, as well as its costal, inner and exotic woods, and the possible presence of typical fauna.

Difficulty: low.

Duration: 3 hs.

Km: 6.5

8- Walking around Totoras' Bay

(Walking Exploration)

We leave from the Lodge to the East up to the path call 'Jardín de las Piñas', and then to Totoras' Bay. After some minutes downhill walking, we reach Totoras' beach where we can discover the immensity of the landscape. Walking on the beach we find a path that leads us to the deepest part of the woods. Thus, after a 1.30hs walking we arrive to the Lodge's park.

The experience: to know native and exotic trees introduced from different parts of the world as well as watch the landscape.

Difficulty: low.

Duration: 1.30 hs.

Km: 2.5

9- Manzanito's Peninsula

(Walking Exploration)

From the Lodge, we walk to 'Playa del Toro' up to a fir tree forest, then through a walkway up to a stone beach, where we find the open lake. We go back to the forest and keep on walking through a path that leads us over the island's cliff to Guerrero's Bay. From that bay we go on through another walkway into the island, visiting its woods up to the central area and the Lodge.

The experience: to see cave paintings, walk on the beach with its warm sand and water in summer, and know open lake beaches where we find trees carved by the water and walk by the coastal cliffs.

Difficulty: mid.

Duration: 2.30 hs.

Km: 3

10- Cerro Quemado

(Walking Exploration)

We take south from the Lodge going by the old dairy farm (nowadays is the carpenter's workshop of the Lodge); we pass by the stable and walk through a path up to a walkway to Totoras' Bay. After that we take a diversion to a small path that goes up to the hillside of Cerro Quemado. We walk uphill by the Eastern side, under native forest, up to the viewpoint east oriented. After that we walk around the hill to the West until the highest point of the island where we find beautiful views. We keep on walking south and start to downhill in order to reach Puente de Tierra; from there we take the main walkway to the central area.

The experience: panoramic views, to see the native fauna and flora and enjoy it.

Difficulty: mid.

Duration: 3.30 hs.

Km: 5

11. - Pedalling around the island

(Exploration by bike)

Leaving from the Lodge we take the paths of the central area, then we go south by the road call 'Jardín de las Piñas' so as to reach the way to the Southern point (punta Sur). We keep on going to punta Sur up to Chacra Esperanza where we take another path that leads to Guerrero's bay through the coastal forest, then to Manzanito's Peninsula up to its coasts. After that we keep on

with the Exploration inside the peninsula's forest, up to 'Playa del Toro' from where we arrive to the Lodge's beach bar ending with the mountain bike Exploration.

The experience: to enjoy the ride through the island as well as different kind of ground – soil, stone or sand. At the same time we can know different parts of the island and its history.

Difficulty: low. Before the Exploration, a basic training on mountain bike riding will be given.

Duration: 2 hs.

Km: 7.5

Equipment: mountain bike – state of the art Zenith Manta 2002. Helmets – Cratoni.

12- Discovering the island's horses

It is an adventure to get into the equestrian world, with open gates for all those visitors interested in horses, both with experience or not. Everything is valid when is about shearing few days on the back of real 'criollos' horses. We see different parts of the island; enjoy customs and experiences that are part of the equestrian world, such as contact with animals, the stables, the Patagonian implements, our clothes, the rural chats accompanied by the typical 'mate'. You always are with a Baqueano expert in the equestrian field; they will take care of everything all the time, so as for the rider to only enjoy the equestrian life in a unique island.

Difficulty: low.

Equipment: baggy trousers or jeans, boots, shoes or snickers that can fit into the stirrup, gloves- if it is cold-, coat.

Equipment given by the Lodge: hats, legwarmer, poncho.

Horses: 10 'criollos' horses with typical implements and Andean saddle.

Interesting data.

Suggested clothes for the Island and the Lodge.

The natural framework of the Island is a combination of Andean forest surrounded by sand beaches or cliffs. Te heights over the lake reach 300 m and all along its 22 km you'll find inner lagoons. In this scenery, Explorationist need adequate clothes in order to enjoy, all the time, and the outings that varies according to the year season.

Spring and summer

Comfortable outdoor shirts, short and long sleeves. T-shirts. Cotton trousers or jeans, short and long legs. Swimming suits. Warm clothes for the night and water-proof like coat. Comfortable walking shoes, sneakers and sandals. Socks. Hat, lip stick and sun filter.

Autumn and winter

Warm outdoor shirts. Long sleeves T-shirts and polo-neck. Water-proof trousers. Trekking shoes, sneakers. Wool socks. Gloves. Winter under wear. Coats. For rainy day Exploration we give you water-proof coats to make the outing more comfortable.

Inside the Lodge you can always wear comfortable sport casual clothes.

For the guests, the Lodge has:

- _ Neoprene suits and boots to swim or row.
 - _ Legwarmers, hats and ponchos, for the guest to have a pleasant horse back riding.
 - _ helmets for guests' security when riding bicycles.
- Sizes are standard. Please let us know in advance if there is the need of special sizes.

Temperatures in the Island

Spring and summer: min. 3°C and max. 25°C, with an average of 15°C.

Autumn and winter: min. -3°C and max. 15°C, with an average of 8°C.

Lodge's timetable

It is very flexible and can be adapted to guests need. Nevertheless, for a better living with the other visitors, we suggest to have breakfast between 8 and 10 am.

Communication

The Lodge has telephone service at the reception and Internet connection.

There is no telephone service in the rooms because we want the quietness and silence to reign.

At the Lodge's facilities we have a very good reception of cell phone and satellite companies signal.

Languages

We have bilingual staff that perfectly speaks English and Spanish.

Electricity

In our country, electric power is 220v.

Tips

Even when the guest is going to be served with efficiency and cordiality without needing any tip, if he wants to give any additional money, we ask to do it at the end of the stay and at the Reception because in this way it will be distributed among all the members of the working team.

Kids and adolescents

The Lodge just accepts guests over 12 years old.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in the Island.

Health care

We recommend having valid welfare coverage at the time of the travel.

In the case of an emergency, the Island has an evacuation plan.

Our Baqueanos are trained as first-aiders in wild areas.

We have first-aid kit and some basic medicine for not prescribed sale.

General conditions

Reservations

Call our Responsible Operators or get in touch with the business office of Mares Sur Hotels.

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Payments

Every reservation should be pre-paid before the arrival of the passenger. Together with the confirmation of the reservation we ask for a 50% down payment and the other 50% should be paid 15 days in advance to the guest arrival.

Cancellation Policies

Any cancellation done with less than 7 days before the arrival of the passenger it can imply a withholding of 50% of the total contracted service. Within the period of Holly Week and New Year any cancellation done within 15 and 7 days before the arrival of the passenger can have a withholding of 50% and any cancellation done in less than 7 days before the arrival, will have a withholding of 100% of the value of the contracted service.

Responsibilities

Isla Victoria National Lodge reserves the right to change prices, programmes and explorations described, with no previous notice.