Patagonia - an Unspoiled Landscape by Gary Clail

Article published on June 22nd 2012 | Travel

Patagonia lies at the southern-most tip of South America. Its vast, bucolic landscape stretches across both Chili and Argentina, and is one of the most beautiful, yet formidable locations on the planet. Its isolation ensures that much of it remains unspoiled, and this is one of the many reasons why it is home to such a richly diverse variation of wildlife, including the endangered condor and the puma.

The landscape is dominated by snow-capped mountain tops, blue, shimmering glaciers and volcanoes including 'Brown Bluff', which has the unique history of having erupted whilst submerged inside an englacial lake. This natural marvel is just one of the many reasons why the region maintains its popularity as a hotspot for adventure-seeking tourists.

There are several ways to explore the region; trekking and adventure cruises both proving to be incredibly popular with holiday-makers. If you choose the former, you can specify the length and difficulty of the trek; ranging from one day hikes to full, three week expeditions. A five-day cruise of the region is another fantastic way of exploring the area and discovering its dramatic coastlines. Alternatively, a cruise of Antarctica is a unique experience that you are unlikely to forget in a hurry.

For those who enjoy their home comforts there is the Singular Hotel, a luxury establishment which combines authentic local history and culture with modern conveniences, including a spa. What better way to relax those weary limbs after a day of exploring, than in the comfort of a contemporary spa?

The history of Patagonia is quite remarkable; Naturalist Charles Darwin first visited the region back in 1833, after sailing on the HMS Beagle. His experiences and subsequent discoveries inspired him to write the infamous 'Origin of Species'; a cataclysmic literary work which hugely influenced scientific theory.

The area is often referred to as 'The Land of the Giants'; it is believed that this derived from observations made by the earliest European explorers. The first documented reference to this mythical race of beings comes from an account of the voyage made by Ferdinand Magellan and his crew, during their world exploration in the 1520s. A survivor's account reads:

"One day we suddenly saw a naked man of giant stature on the shore of the port, dancing, singing, and throwing dust on his head. He was so tall that we reached only to his waist, and he was well proportioned..."

However, it is now widely accepted that such reports were simply misconceptions; although belief in the 'Giants' persisted well into the 1700s. Historical context aside, upon visiting the region it is not difficult to understand how such myths arose. Even in this age of technological advancement, it is still a landscape that fires the imagination; both mystical and awe-inspiring, even the most scientific of minds could quite easily find themselves 'seeing' all manner of mythical creatures.

Patagonia is a most unique holiday destination; perfect for those seeking thrills and adventure. If you're tired of mediocre package holidays to Greece or Spain and you're looking for an exceptional holidaying experience, Patagonia will not disappoint.

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If you are interested in finding out more about Patagonia, or perhaps even visiting the region, then a www.swoop-patagonia.co.uk can provide you with further detailed information about the area's culture and history, as well as ways in which to explore the region. This includes trekking and exploring Antarctica by boat; attractions a like these cruises are particularly popular with holiday makers.

Article Keywords:
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