Mt. Fitz Roy Loop Patagonia, Argentina



Vicinity Location: The trailhead is about 7,200 miles southeast of Portland, Oregon in the Los Glaciares National Park, Argentina.

Directions:
We arrived after a long bus ride crossing the border from Chile to Argentina. It was an easy border crossing. We stopped at a gas station and mini-mart in Argentina but I had brought some snacks so I didn't buy anything.

From the bus depot, it was a fairly short walk over to our Chaltén Suites where we were staying for two nights. The next day was a zero day where we wandered around town and took a day hike. The weather was kind of cloudy and very windy.

Length and Elevation:
Total distance is 36.4 miles. Trailhead elevation is 1,300 feet. Highest point is 3,850 feet. Lowest point is 1,300 feet. Total ascent is 9,066 feet and total descent is 9,100 feet.

Itinerary	Mileage	Camp Elevation	Ascent	Descent	Notes
Day 1 El Chalten to C.B D'Agostini-Started 10:40 am – Finished at 2:00 pm	9.1	2,601	2,008	1,387	Dayhike along the Laguna Torre and to other camp.
Day 2 C.B D'Agostini toPoincenot-Started 10:30 am – Finished at 6:45 pm	10.7	2,402	3,233	2,863	Dayhike to Logo de los Tres and Mt. Fitz Roy overlook
Day 3 Poincenot to Eco Dome Hotel-Started 10:10 am – Finished at 4:20 pm	8.9	1,480	1,650	2,508	Walked to road to avoid bridge.
Day 4 Eco Dome Hotel to El Chalten Hotel-Started 10:10 am – Finished at 4:20 pm	7.7	450	2,175	2,350	
Totals:	36.4		9,066	9,066	

Trails:
Senda a Laguna Torre, Sendero Madre a Hija, The Fitz Roy Trail, Laguna Piedras Blancas Trail, Glaciar Piedras Blancas Trail

Trail Maps:
Topo Map, Download Garmin .gpx file, Open Garmin .gpx file

Review: March 6, 2024
The next morning we started on our backpacking trip. It was a fairly short walk to the trailhead, and then a fairly long climb up out of town.

The trail has some nice mountain views, and after a few hours we reached our campsite at D' Augostini at Laguna Torre. It was easy to find a campsite because we got to camp fairly early. Later on in the afternoon the camp got much fuller.

We walked up to the lake for the views of the glacier and mountains and encountered a little blowing snow. Pamela and I took a trail to the other camping area then continued back down to the junction about a mile before our campsite and walked back to camp, getting fresh water at a stop along the way.

The next morning we broke camp and headed to Poincenot, our next campsite which had views of Mount Fitzroy. When we got there, it was cloudy but soon the clouds broke up, and we had a great view of the mountains. I decided to hike the hard trail up to Lago des las Tres. Sylvia stayed in camp and Pamela took the easier trail along the river to another lake. The hike up to Logo de las Tres starts out easy but gets steeper and steeper until it is almost a scramble up the mountainside. A couple of series of stone steps shows that once upon a time this trail was in much better shape but with the hundreds of people who walk this trail every day it has beaten down any signs of recent maintenance. The elevation of the lake is about 3800 feet and there are no trees anywhere to block the wind. The only shelter is some of the large boulders up on the top of the moraine. The views are stunning with My. Fitz Roy behind the glacial lake. The blue sky only lasted a few hours before the clouds started rolling in again. After spending about an hour taking in the view I joined the clusters of people making their way back down. I met a couple that I had seen a week ago on the O Circuit as well as Pamela making her way up the trail.

By late evening the campground was mobbed. Some very noisy people joined their friends and set up tents that didn't even look like spots and had loud conversations late into the night until Pamela yelled at them to shut up.

The next morning was still windy but clear. We got packed and left before the noisy campers returned from their sunrise hike.

It took us three tries to find the re-routed trail and we started backpacking down the river flood plain. The trail was indistinct but marked pretty well with cairns. It was slow going over the rocks and the wind was howling and driving rain for short bursts.

We climbed above the riverbed for bits on a trail that could best be described as a goat track.

When we reached the side trip for Laguna Piedro Blancas the boulders got sharper and bigger. Soon we needed to drop our packs to scramble over the rocks and boulders. Sylvia stayed back and Pamela and I made our way to the lake. We found some shelter from the wind and watched gusts lift water off the lake and blow a waterfall back up the mountain in gusts.

The lake and glacier were amazing but we needed to go. We met up with Sylvia and Pamela went ahead and started going back the way we had come. We were able to flag her down and then go the right way following cairns across the rocky old streambed.

The trail got rougher and then we saw the rushing stream. Upstream it passed through big boulders

that we could scramble over and get past the stream.

Thankfully, it wasn't raining or snowing at the time so we carefully took our time negotiating the boulders across the stream and then along the valley until we found the trail again.

From there the trail was much easier and less than a quarter mile later, it started climbing up a muddy Seeping hillside away from the river. This section of Trail looks like it had not had maintenance on it in many years. We had to climb over several fallen trees and through several muddy spots.

Once we got to the top of the hill, the terrain changed drastically. The landscape became a grassy tree meadow gently rolling up and down as we descended a wide valley.

There was a trail bridge. We weren't sure of so we walked couple of miles down to the road and over a bridge and along the road and then cut back down another gravel road and took a trail to the Eco Domes. We got all checked in as the rain returned, and the staff came and started a little woodstove fire in our dome for heat. Our shower was really crummy, but we talked to someone else and they had a good shower. Ours was just a dribble. We went into the main dome and I had a glass of Malbec wine which was quite good. We talked to a couple of guys from the Netherlands while we snacked on some peanuts.

We had a very nice dinner that night with filet mignon on mashed potatoes and some vegetables. I had wished I would've asked for my steak to be rare because it was well done, but it was OK.

We watched the rain come down some more and went back to our dome for the night. We heard rain several times through the night and Sylvia and Pamela decided to take the shuttle back into El Chalten and I would leave my heavier stuff with them and hike back on the trail all in one day.

This trail was in much better shape than the one we did the day before. Much wider and easier to hike on and most of the trail was Sandy. I made good time back to our camp at Poincenot and looked at the fresh snow that had fallen on the trail up to the lake. There was no view of Mt. Fitz Roy just snowy, looking clouds. I went back into the trees and had lunch, then started Hiking a bit and needed to put my rain pants on because there was more blowing snow snow.

Now the trail was much more crowded with day hikers, hoping for a view of Mt. Fitz Roy. I headed back the last few miles with the wind, rain, and snow mostly at my back.

I took a side trail to a nice waterfall and then another side to Trail to Capri Lake. The waterfall was nice, but there wasn't much in the way of mountains to be seen at the lake.

Back on the main trail I was heading downhill and saw Pamela. She had decided to go on a day hike up to the lake. We exchange greetings and headed our separate ways to meet later back at the Charlton suites hotel.

When I got to the hotel, I got our room number and took my stuff up and talked to Sylvia. She was just chilling out and feeling pretty good.

We didn't need much to eat so I went over to the market and bought a bottle of wine and some snacks.

I was really glad I completed the hike and they were really glad they took the shuttle. Sounds like a win-win situation because later that day, the rain and wind really picked up and it was the worst day we had had weatherwise on our whole trip. It felt great to be in a nice hotel room and have a nice

shower before catching the bus the next day.

Enjoy the photos!!
Gallery Pics
Switchback Steve

