

## Frequently Asked Questions

### About South America

#### **Is it safe to travel to South America?**

For many years from now Argentina and Chile have been two of the most growing countries of the SA region, going through a process of calm and economy stability, travelling through these countries it's considered completely safe!

However it's important to know that as in most big cities, bag snatching is common in Buenos Aires and Santiago, so it's important to look after your belongings around very crowded streets, airports and bus stations.

#### **When is the best time to ski in South America?**

The season runs from mid-June to mid-October but the best time for dry powder usually is June, July, August, and up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in September. Some special circuits are good into November. The last two weeks in July are student holidays, so resorts get crowded, but nothing like North American or European resorts over the holidays.

#### **How good is the ski resorts infrastructure?**

The Andes resorts start working around 9.00 AM but this can be delayed until middle morning depending on weather conditions. However, due to longer natural light, you can also ski later into the afternoon (somewhere even up to 6 PM)

It's important to say that, even investments and improvements are made every year, SA resorts don't have the infrastructure and lift facilities that you can find in your own country. The good thing is that you do not have thousands of skiers fighting for untracked powder runs. If you come down willing to enjoy, relax and with an open mind you will become a huge fan of South America!

Another important thing to note is that in Las Leñas, the famous Marte chairlift can be closed for weather conditions. When this happens you will find the access to advanced and expert terrain seriously compromised. Like local says: "Marte can make your dream trip come true or your worst nightmare as well...it all comes to Mother Nature".

#### **Language skills**

Most people in Argentina and Chile understand a little bit of English, although a Spanish-English dictionary can be really useful sometimes!!

#### **Weather**

Weather in the mountains can change rapidly and South America is not the exception, so be prepared for everything from hot sunshine to heavy snow.

#### **Electricity**

Electricity in Argentina is 220 Volts, alternating at 50 cycles per second. If you travel to Argentina with a device that does not accept 220 Volts at 50 Hertz, you will need a voltage converter.

#### **Hygiene**

Argentina and Chile has a very developed medical infrastructure, every city has full equipped hospitals and capacitated doctors. With quality foods, no yellow fever or malaria, and an abundance of well-stocked pharmacies, the only discomforts travelers occasionally have, are upset stomachs and a temporary bowel disorder. This is common with travels anywhere in the world, and can be avoided by drinking bottled water, avoiding side salads, and uncooked foods.

#### **Do I need a Visa to enter Chile or Argentina?**

The following countries require Visas:

To enter Argentina:  
Countries outside of the EU, Switzerland and Canada may require visas.  
Check with the Argentine Consulate in your country for the latest's requirements.

To enter Chile:  
New Zealand  
China  
India  
Russia  
Egypt

Attention USA, Canadian, and Australian Passport holders:  
\*Although no Visa is required, there is a one time reciprocity fee to enter Chile.  
This is charged in USD cash at the airport upon arrival.  
The fee is good for the life of your passport.  
The fee fluxuates, but recently was \$30 for Australians, \$100 for Canadians, and \$100 for USA.

## About the Trip

### **How do I choose the best Big Powder tour for me?**

Big Powder offers you 3 distinct Tours and 1 Freeride Camp, every one of this tours guarantee you visiting fantastic cities, enjoying great cultural life and, most important, riding incredible mountains with tons of "non crowded" powder!

Every tour can be focus on **Resorts** (if you are not interested in hiking and you want to take the best of the ski lifts), **Off-Piste** (the perfect mix between hiking and ski lifts to explore the best local spots at every mountain we reach) or **Backcountry** (if you want to access unexplored tracks outside the ski resorts limits this is the Focus for your tour)

No matter which your choice is you will be accompanied all the way by our local experts guides! If you have any questions please contact us, we are here to help you make the best decision ([info@bigpowderarg.com](mailto:info@bigpowderarg.com))

### **Will I be assisted during my stay in South America?**

From the moment you arrive at the Argentinean International Airport a member of our crew will be there waiting to assist and advice you in everything you may need. On the other hand, you will have a local guide whose only mission will be show you the best spot a mountain can offer in every resort you visit.

### **Do we need avalanche equipment?**

Yes, avalanche safety kit (snow shovel, transceiver and probe) is mandatory to ride with us. If you can't bring it don't worry, you can rent it here. See the reservation form for more info!

### **What happens if the weather doesn't allow us to ride?**

There may be days that there is so much wind or snow that lifts close. Many resorts are 100% alpine, meaning no trees. When the visibility is poor due to a storm or low clouds it is very difficult to see and for safety reasons we may choose not to go out.

Although we do not refund money for unused lift tickets, we do cover the expenses of alternate activities when it is not worth going riding.

We have many fun optional activities tucked up our sleeves for when these glitches in scheduling occur!!

### **Do I need any special insurance to travel with you?**

Yes, we require that our guests have insurance that covers personal accident, medical expenses, air ambulance, loss of effects, repatriation costs, etc. Please see the Terms and Conditions for more information.

**Are tours exclusively for snowboarders or skiers?**

Our Tours are open for skiers, snowboarders and telemarkers. However if you want to travel in a group or snowboarders only we can fix you a special date, just let us know!

**Do I need to be in good shape to come on these trips?**

Like in any other sport the better shape you are in, more fun you will have. It's not necessary to be super trained but it's important to be honest with yourself and let us know your real ski level and physical shape in order to let our guides fix the best itinerary for you!

**What age are most of the guests that go on these tours?**

We do not have any age restrictions on our trips. The majority of our clients are between the ages of 20 and 45, but we also have many clients who are older and younger than this. Clients 18 years old or younger need to have full parental consent and preferably be accompanied by an adult.

**Extra Costs?**

There are no many extra costs for you on our trips. Accommodation, transportation, breakfast, lift tickets and guides are included in most of our packages. Check if your tour also includes launch and dinners, if not consider that eating in South America it's not expensive; you can have a great meal for less than \$20 usd. Consider other expenses such as optional activities, party and shopping in your travel budget.

**What type of ski should I bring?**

We suggest an "all mountain" style ski with a waist between 80-95 mm.

**Do you offer Group Discounts?**

Yes! Please contact us to check our current group discounts.

**If I am and expert skier but my friend is an intermediate one can we travel together?**

Yes, our Resort Focus and Off-Piste Focus Tours are for intermediate and advanced level, although our Backcountry Tours Focus are only suitable for advanced and experts riders.

**Is airfare to Chile and Argentina included with the trip price?**

No, you are responsible for the cost of your flight to Argentina or Chile.

If you have any more questions please contact us! [info@bigpowderarg.com](mailto:info@bigpowderarg.com)