

SPRING 2025

# OFFSHORE

TRAVEL AT ITS FINEST

## Going solo

Why more women want  
to travel on their own

- + Staycation: Self-indulgence at The High Acre in Dundas
- + Road tripping Patagonia's Argentine Lake District
- + The best luxury trips to take right now
- + Jungle adventures in Belize



*Wendy McClung is the creator and publisher of OFFSHORE, published by Baxter Media. Her editorial team travels the world to find the finest in travel for its audiences.*

# Flying solo

While the title might conjure images of solitary journeys, today's solo travel landscape is anything but lonely. Flying solo and solo travel are two very different experiences. The former suggests travelling alone, while solo travel has evolved into a dynamic, social, and enriching way to see the world – often in the company of like-minded adventurers.

The solo travel sector is experiencing unprecedented growth, with travel companies and accommodations adapting to meet this surging demand. Small group adventures, communal spaces in boutique hotels, and specially curated experiences for individual travellers are becoming increasingly prevalent.

Some tour operators are eliminating or reducing single supplements, and hotels are designing spaces that encourage interaction among guests while respecting their independence.

This issue of OFFSHORE features a collection of exciting opportunities for your solo travel experience. In our cover story, you'll learn more about the trends that are shaping solo travel, including a stark rise in solo female travel. Next, join Cathy Senecal as she embarks on a road trip through Patagonia's charming Lake District. Then, catch up with Deputy Editor Ann Ruppenstein as she heads deep into the Belize jungle.

Whether you've always dreamed of a romantic overnight sleeper train through Europe, or to become captain of your own luxury yacht, you can rest assured that you'll find a welcoming community of travellers and a growing infrastructure designed to support your journey—and it all starts within these pages.

Solo travel means travelling on your own terms with the world of possibilities at your fingertips!

Bon voyage

Publisher

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# Roadtripping Patagonia's Lake District, from peaks to plates

*Cathy Senecal sets out on an adventurous road trip through Patagonia to discover the pristine lakes, hiking trails and local cuisine that make this Argentine region so unique.*



A few cyclists jumped up from their group at Campo Base Hielo Azul and danced a quasi tango to the live band while the rest of us feasted on grilled *asado* on the deck overlooking Rio Azul, a river of liquid turquoise. *Porteños*, or holidayers from Buenos Aires, sang along and young girls twirled in their own dance world while we marvelled at the sight.

November is a beautiful time—it's spring—to be in Argentina. Joyce and I met and travelled cheaply across Africa in our 20s and remain great friends. We're well into our 60s now, and recently booked a car to traverse Patagonia's Lake District. A vehicle gave us the freedom to stop at viewpoints, trailheads and shops in this mountainous area known for outdoor activities and vivid alpine towns.

## SAN MARTIN DE LOS ANDES

On the edge of Lake Lácar, San Martin de los Andes is a quieter gem for adventure seekers. Roam the rosebush-laden streets and pick up fleece vests or any outdoor gear you need. Stop for berry-infused chocolates or ice cream at Mamusia.

Hike the four-kilometre trail starting at the end of Juez del Valle Street to Mirador Bandurrias for stunning views over Lago Lacar. El Abasto, a restaurant with walls laden in cuckoo clocks and antique toys, features culinary specialties native to the Argentinian Patagonia. Try the deer a la cazadora and pair it with a 'Mayuco' Torrontes, a dry white wine with hints of honeysuckle and orange blossoms.





## ROUTE OF THE SEVEN LAKES

Take a leisurely day to drive north to south along the yellow Scotch broom lined road and soak in lush forests, snow-capped peaks and serene lakes along this stunning 108-kilometre Route of the Seven Lakes between San Martín de los Andes and Villa La Angostura. Walk the one-hour trail to Cascada Nivínco near Lago Tráful. Continue to Bariloche, where Route 40 straightens and enters a dry desert-like terrain, a marked difference to the forested mountains further north.

## SAN CARLOS DE BARILOCHE

San Carlos de Bariloche rises along the steep southern banks of Nahuel Huapi Lake. Wooden chalets abound, built by the Germans and Swiss who settled here in the early 20th century. Roam La Calle Mitre and the main square but save a day or two for nearby Llao Llao Park, a protected forest with giant beech and cypress trees.

Rent bikes from Circuito Chico Adventure and cycle the 26-kilometre route with stops at Bahía López Bay, Punto Panorámico, and

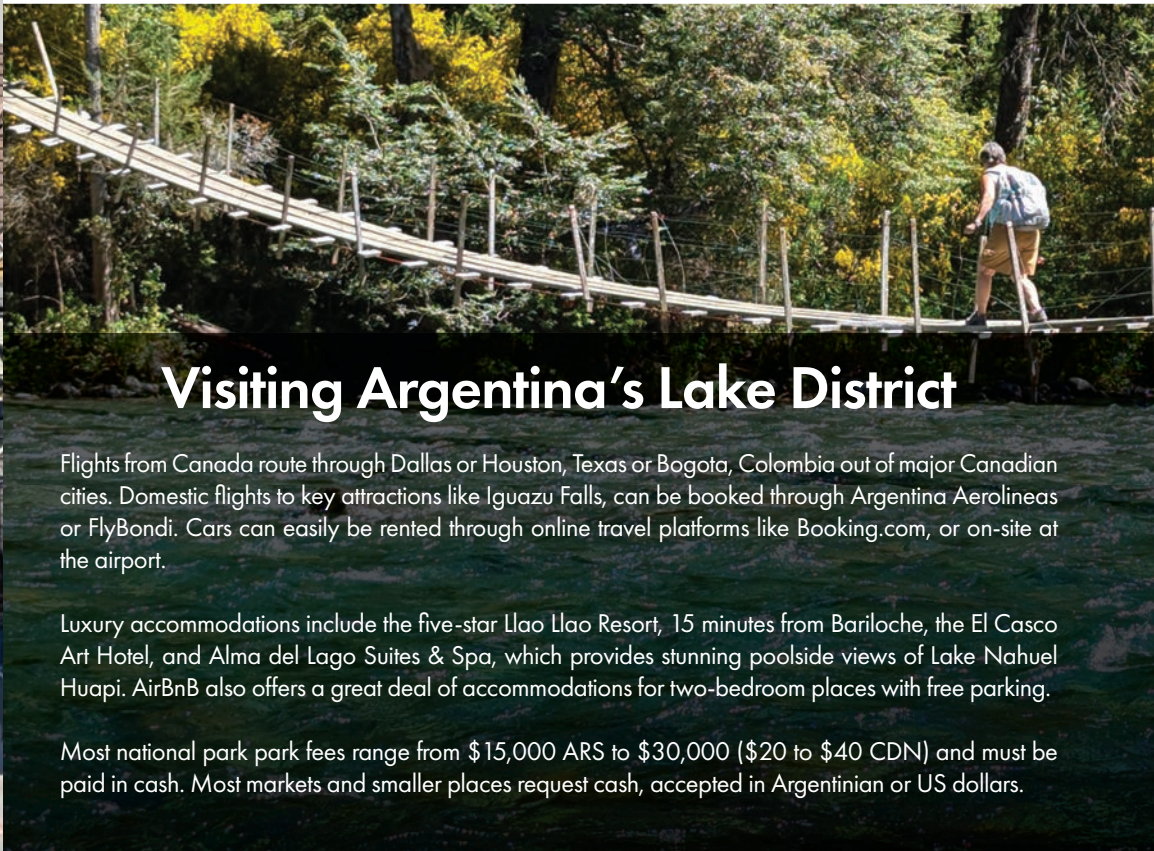
Colonia Suiza, an historic Swiss colony known for its crafts and *curanto*, a traditional method of cooking meat and vegetables underground.

Another day, drive and park at the main lot on your left as you enter the park. Hike the Arrayanes Trail past distinctive cinnamon-coloured trees and combine that with the trail to Tacul and Cerrito Llao Llao, the highest point, to make a loop back to the lot. Brazo Tristeza Lookout Point has one of the best lookouts over Nahuel Huapi Lake.

## EL BOLSON

This laidback town is surrounded by valleys producing raspberries, mushrooms, truffles and hops. El Bolson's artisan market in Plaza Pagano has up to 400 vendors on Saturday selling fabric, food and leather wares under the shadow of Cerro Piltriquitrón.

Here was where we chanced upon Campo Base Hielo Azul, our favourite hiking experience, despite a steep, rutted road to get there. The trail winds along the gorgeous Rio Azul past shady gazing spots. Post hike, garner a prime table on the river deck and take in the scene.



## Visiting Argentina's Lake District

Flights from Canada route through Dallas or Houston, Texas or Bogota, Colombia out of major Canadian cities. Domestic flights to key attractions like Iguazu Falls, can be booked through Argentina Aerolíneas or FlyBondi. Cars can easily be rented through online travel platforms like Booking.com, or on-site at the airport.

Luxury accommodations include the five-star Llao Llao Resort, 15 minutes from Bariloche, the El Casco Art Hotel, and Alma del Lago Suites & Spa, which provides stunning poolside views of Lake Nahuel Huapi. Airbnb also offers a great deal of accommodations for two-bedroom places with free parking.

Most national park fees range from \$15,000 ARS to \$30,000 (\$20 to \$40 CDN) and must be paid in cash. Most markets and smaller places request cash, accepted in Argentinian or US dollars.