

**A Matter
of Fact**

Southern Chile

Non-Fiction Text Study

Short and Long answer questions
Comparison question
Transactional Writing



Hank Gaskell recalls a surfing trip to Southern Chile



After my second trip to Southern Chile this past July, I have absolutely fallen in love with its simple way of life. More and more nowadays, it seems there is so much going on that it's impossible to get ahead. Chile doesn't know or care about that. Life there is content to just continue rolling at a steady pace, no one is ahead and no one is behind. Everyone is family. Our crew did a good job stepping back from our busy day-to-day lives to emulate the Chilean way.

5

10

This is what an average day from our adventure looked like. We would wake up early, overlooking a beautiful dark-green wooded hillside that slant steeply down to the sea. Seals, birds and dedicated fisherman all share schools of *merluza* and baitfish as the morning fog blanket rises from the swell lines. Breakfast is bread, eggs, avocado and tea. Otto enthusiastically passes around his *mata* gourd. Then it's time to round up all the rubber hanging around the fireplace and pile into the car.

15

The countryside is how I picture the American Northwest's Highway 101 looking a hundred years ago. Giant trees, deep valleys, farms and small fishing communities make up the scenery. Curve after curve reveals yet another left-hand point break with doubtless potential. We pass on the first three or four, until we find the right one for the day. Malia, the recently graduated biologist, quickly finds curious intricacies in the diverse roadside flora at each stop. Teaching the rest of us about stamens, petals and sepals never fails to enthuse her.

20

25

When it's time to hit the water, Ramon leads the way. Each time he suits up, his giddy smile and surf stoke is infectious, no matter what the surf looks like. Luckily for us, it looked pretty damn good! Southern Chile is a land of perfect lefts and we trade set waves all morning. For about 100 yards, Eala, Otto and Ramon fly down the line linking long floaters, deep carves, Larry laybacks and the occasional pit. Being the only regular footer on the trip, my backhand snap was as fine-tuned as it's ever been.

30

The sights you see surfing here are breath-taking. Strong southern winds whip out to sea around the point but we sit just inside where it's calm and glassy. The light on the ocean is sparkly gold and the hills are endless waves of green forest. The barren sandy shore stretches nearly a mile before it reaches the next point, which most likely hosts another reeling left hander.

35

When hunger and thirst set in, we reconvene at the car for lunch. Eala is smiling ear to ear. I've known the young Hawaiian Buttons-look-alike for a long time now, but the more I get to hang out with the kid, the more impressed I am. Beneath his curly 'fro lies a calm coolness. He's so comfortable that nothing seems to faze him. We towel off and strip our suits to lay them by the fire. As we huddle around warming our fingers and toes, we share more bread, avo and cheese. The crew jokes and laughs, discussing the session's sickest rides, best falls and where our muscles are beginning to ache. By the time our suits are half dry and we've all re-applied a thick coat of sunscreen, it's back out there! Same as before, until our shoulders are so sore we can't bear the paddle back out. It's hard turning your back on the incoming walls of water, but the sun is going to set soon anyway...

40

45

Lonely Planet guide to Patagonia

Trekking in Patagonia is a highlight for many travellers to South America, and it's never been easier than from Argentina's 'trekking capital', the village-cum-fledgling-city of El Chaltén. Whether you prefer to rise late and dawdle the afternoon away next to picturesque tarns, or enjoy getting fully tooled for a week-long epic out on Hielos Sur (the Southern Patagonian Icecap), Chaltén has it all.



5

10

Laguna Capri

Length: 3-4 hrs rtn

Difficulty: Easy

Highlight: Several stunning viewpoints

Often overlooked for more famous walks, the trail to Laguna Capri is an easy introduction to trekking in Patagonia. Ascend the trail at the northern end of town, and quite soon you will arrive at a viewpoint facing north along the scenic Rio de las Vueltas. The trail turns westerly before arriving at a junction; a short distance down the right-hand track is another viewpoint where, if the weather is clear, you can catch a great view of 3405m Monte Fitz Roy and surrounding peaks. Return to the junction and follow the left fork down to the lake which will appear either deep blue or slate grey, depending on the sky. Dally awhile, imbibe something fortifying and skip back to town the way you came.

15

20

Laguna Los Tres & Piedra Del Fraile

Length: 2-5 days

Difficulty: Moderate

Highlight: The best views of Fitz Roy and surrounding glaciers

This is an overnight walk that can optionally be lengthened by several days to include the beautiful Rio Electrico valley. Follow the Laguna Capri walk and take the right fork towards Fitz Roy. After several hours, you'll arrive at Campground Poincenot where most people stay the night – though if crowded, try the smaller climbers' camp on the other side of the Rio Blanco. The best views of Monte Fitz Roy are just after dawn, so start early for the steep climb up to Laguna Los Tres, an exquisite glacial lake towered over by Fitz Roy and its attendant peaks and glaciers.

25

30

Piedra del Fraile, in nearby Valle Rio Electrico, is an easy half-day journey from either campground and makes for an interesting circuit. Stop for lunch by Glacier Piedras Blancas before you reach the small campsite and *refugio* (communal mountain shelter) of Piedra del Fraile. Camp (or splurge on a bunk), then rise the next day and enjoy a challenging day trip up to the climbers' camp of Piedra Negra. The truly adventurous can ascend a snow slope to the sharp ridge of Paso del Cuadrado, which offers incredible views of the rarely-seen northern side of Fitz Roy and the Aguja Pollone. Spend another night in del Fraile (after a well-earned beer or bottle of malbec) then retrace your steps back down the valley, either returning the same way or walking out to the road in two hours. You can then return along the other side of the river, or just stick your thumb out – hitchhiking is not uncommon in the area.

35

40

Questions

Re-read extract 1. Answer the questions below.

1. In your own words, summarise Gaskell's reasons for enjoying Chile from lines 1 - 13 (2)
2. Identify an example of descriptive language used to describe the landscape from lines 14 - 19 (1)
3. Identify four descriptions of the ocean from lines 27 - 36 (4)
4. Analyse how the writer uses language and structure to convey his admiration of the nature landscape. (8)
Support your views with detailed reference to the text.



Re-read extract 2. Answer the questions below.

5. Identify an example of descriptive language used to describe El Chaltén (1)
6. Identify two benefits of the Laguna Capri trail from lines 15 - 21. (2)
7. Find four facts about the Laguna Los Tres & Piedra Del Fraile trail from lines 27 - 42 (4)
8. Analyse how the writer uses language and structure to persuade the reader. (8)
Support your views with detailed reference to the text.



9. Compare how the writers of Extract 1 and Extract 2 present ideas of the beauty of nature
Support your answer with detailed references to the texts. (12)

10. Write the words of an interview between a journalist and a tourist visiting to Patagonia. You could include:
 - impressions of the landscape and country
 - views on the tourist experience
 - views on differences between Patagonia and home(25)

OR

11. Write an informal letter as a tourist visiting Patagonia to a friend back home. You could include:
 - views of travel and experiences in Patagonia
 - impressions of activities available
 - ideas about how to make a trip successful(25)