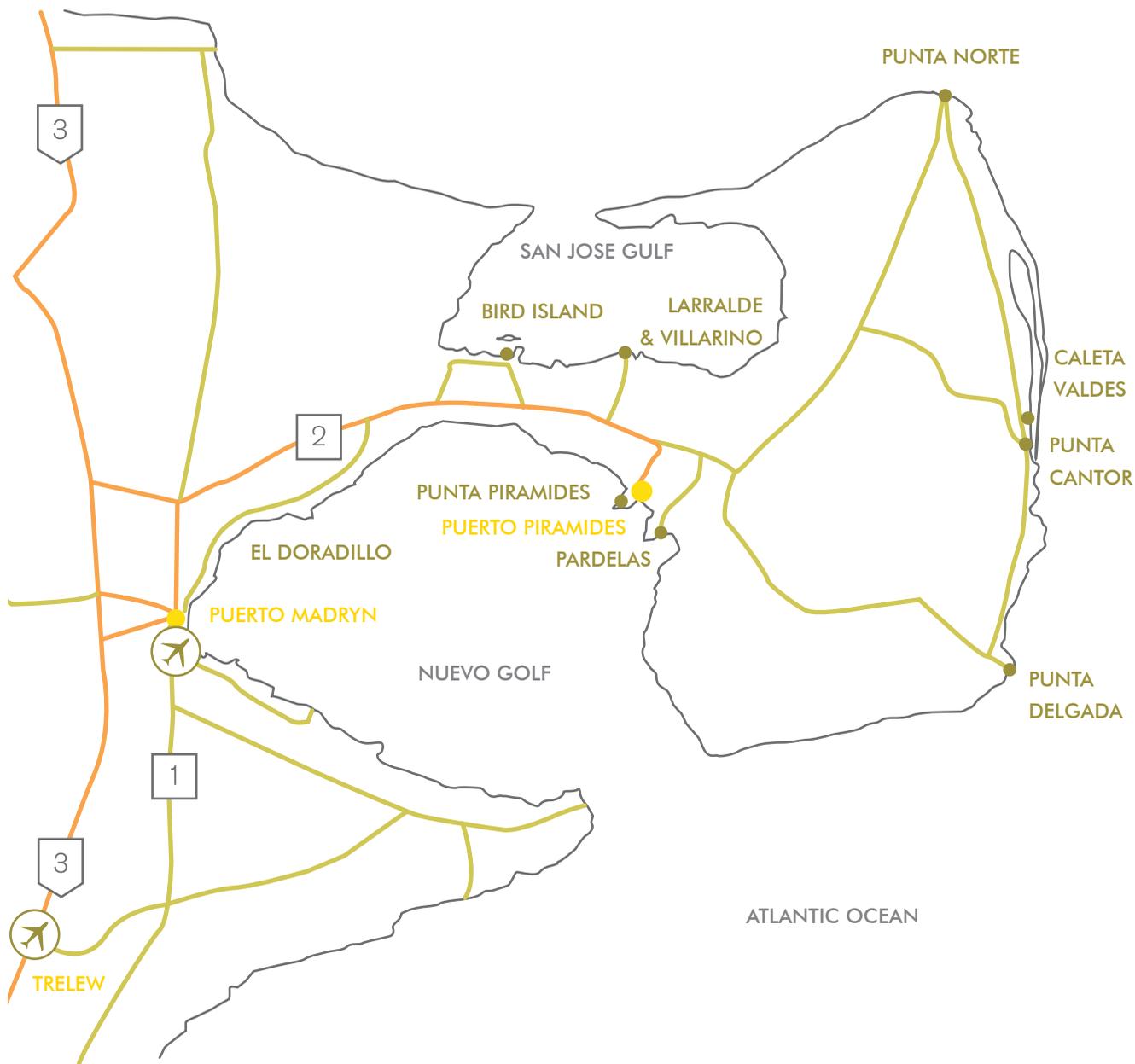


MAPS

OF PENINSULA VALDES



2. PENINSULA VALDES



LOCATION

Latitude: 42.35 (S)

Length: 64.17 (W).

The village is 1.430Km from Buenos Aires, 2.392Km from Salta in the north, and 1.829km from Ushuaia to the South.

Area: 3625 km²

Length: 63 km

Width: 97 km

MORE TOURIST POINTS NEARBY

Punta Tombo: 221 Km. Dique Ameghino: 218 Km. Gaiman: 185 Km

Ciudades cercanas
Comodoro Rivadavia: 490 Km.
Viedma: 477 Km. Rawson: 152 Km. Trelew: 171 Km.

Puerto Madryn: 104 Km

Aeropuertos más cercanos: Trelew y Puerto Madryn.

DISTANCE FROM OTHER

ATTRACTIONS

Cataratas del Iguazú: 2656 Km.

Mendoza: 1600 Km.

El Calafate: 1.418 Km.

Bariloche: 966 Km.

Esquel: 644 Km

2.1 GEOLOGY

The Geography of Peninsula Valdes is characterised by the presence of high cliffs with extensive shoals, sandy and boulder beaches. Small bays and numerous islands complete the picture of our coasts.

The coasts are formed from sedimentary rock, by which process, over millions of years, different strata were consolidated and today represent a great showcase of our past, especially its marine life, as can be seen from the large number of marine fossils which formerly roamed these seas. Among the most representative we can find oysters (*Ostrea Maxima*), pecten, mellitas, turritelas, shark teeth, even some fossilised crabs

and fossilised bones of birds and mammals that inhabited these waters.

This area has a high geological value, which is why Peninsula Valdes was declared a World Heritage Site, to protect and preserve the Tertiary profiles, which make up our shores.

The coast of Puerto Piramides has arrived at its present form today due to erosion caused by wind, rain water and gravity. It is characterised by deep canyons, jagged cliffs and deposits of stones (boulders) on some of our beaches.

Because of the erosive action of the sea on the cliffs, shoals (abrasion platforms) have been formed. Due

to the action of the sea and the wind, we get the sandy beaches of the bay of Puerto Piramides, and in the Bay of Pardelas, a pebble beach can be found. The natural limits of the Bay of Puerto Piramides are defined by two points entering the Nuevo Gulf, with towering cliffs.

Another feature of the area are the vast expanses of sand dunes, which are constantly being formed by the abrasive action of wind on the rocks over millions of years.



2.2 CLIMATE

The maritime climate characteristics make annual temperature variation relatively small. The annual range of the average monthly temperature is 10 °C, with monthly averages of 18°C (64.4°F) in summer and 8°C (46.4°F) in winter.

General aspects of the climate of the peninsula are the same that characterise the climate of the northern Patagonia region, modified locally by interactions between the atmosphere and adjacent water sources.

The variables measured by the CENPAT are based on data from the weather station in the city of Puerto Madryn, a city for which the climate of Puerto Piramides has variations in rainfall and sheltered from winds.

WINDS

Predominate in Patagonia and are generally from the West. Puerto Piramides suffers Southwest wind blow and

is completely exposed by its geographical location.

During the winter North and Northwest winds are wetter because the anticyclone is located over the Atlantic Ocean. During the summer, northerly winds have more of a continental influence as the anticyclone runs to the west and in consequence, becomes drier.

Another phenomenon that occurs in the Nuevo Gulf during the summer is the sea breeze effect. The increase in solar radiation and low water availability in the soil causes large thermal amplitudes

i.e., a marked difference in temperature between the continental coast and the waters of the Nuevo Gulf.

Winds from the SW and W blow for about 38% of the time in summer and more than 50% in winter. In spring and particularly in summer, we see an increase in the frequency of winds from the east and northeast.



Check the forecast at www.cenpat.edu.ar



2.3 THE VILLAGE

Puerto Piramides is the starting point for all those activities you want to take part in, starting with “breathing fresh air” until what will become the most spectacular memories of your trip.



Puerto Piramides is the only tourist village within Peninsula Valdés. It is 104 km from Puerto Madryn, an hour by vehicle from the airport or bus station there and almost two from the airport and bus station in Trelew.

There are nearly 400 permanent residents in Puerto Piramides, make their living from tourism which, year after year, brings visitors wishing to take advantage of the only whale watching port in Argentina.

Its extensive beaches, which gently slope towards the sea, are protected by natural enclosing walls

of cliffs which mark the limits of the plateau and drop into the small coastal valley where the town of Puerto Piramides is situated.

The name comes from a certain conical pyramid formation, found in places like Punta Piramides Reserve.

The rocks around Puerto Piramides contain deposits of fossil invertebrates, which have been dated, in some cases, as being up to nine million years old.

From the point of view of travelers, lovers and connoisseurs of nature in general and the Peninsula in particular, we recommend a stay

of four days and three nights, to gain optimum benefit from all that the area has to offer and to enjoy it to its fullest.

A prerequisite of visiting Puerto Piramides, is to accept or be willing to learn to enjoy nature and tranquility; advertising, television, formal clothing and all the necessities of city living are not what Puerto Piramides is about.

2.4 PUERTO PIRAMIDES

The village of Puerto Piramides has only three streets, so it is not possible to get lost and it is easy to move about in. Amble along the streets, see the people and speak to them, get to know them. You can be assured of a warm welcome wherever you go.





→
 OLD ENTRANCE
 TO THE VILLAGE
 (TO ROUTE N° 3
 BY GRAVEL ROAD)

-  DEL NOMADE
-  WHALES WATCHING
-  KAYAK & TREKKING
-  DIVE & SNORKELING
-  SANDBOARD
-  MOUNTAIN BIKE
-  RESTAURANTE
-  SOUVENIRS SHOP
-  ATM
-  PUBLIC PHONE
INTERNET ACCESS
-  GAS STATION
-  BUS STOP
-  TOURIST INFORMATION
-  HOSPITAL
-  POLICE
-  MUNICIPAL HALL
-  SCHOOL
-  GRAVEL ROAD
-  PAVED ROAD

BY FOOT TO THIS BEACHES:
 PIEDRA GUACHA,
 LOS MOLINOS,
 LAS CUEVAS Y
 PARDELAS

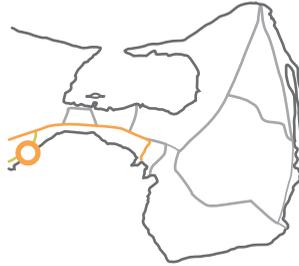
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3. AROUND THE PENINSULA

Puerto Piramides is the ideal place to use as a starting point to see the Nature which is on offer throughout the peninsula. From here you will find breathtaking sites, beginning with Puerto Piramides itself and its sea lion colony (6 km from the village at Punta Piramides), Pardelas beach (12 km), Caleta Valdes (75 km) and more. Enjoy!

PLAYA EL DORADILLO

The Doradillo Beach is part of the beaches near Puerto Madryn, and is included in the Peninsula Valdes Protected Natural Area. It is located in an area where the isthmus that connects the peninsula at the south end to the rest of the continent, begins, forming an important area within the Nuevo Gulf of shallow and calm waters.



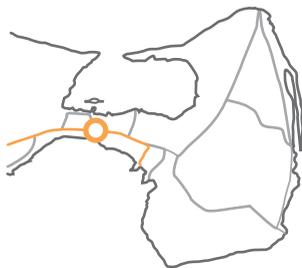
El Doradillo extends from Punta Arco to Cerro Prismatic and has the great attraction of being one of the few places in the world from which you can sight southern right whales from the coast. They congregate there during the reproduction and breeding season that is between May and November.

El Doradillo is a protected natural area, which covers an area of several kilometres.

During the whales' breeding season, is forbidden to go into the sea. It is an unmarked area which protects whales at an important time - that of the first few months of the calves' new lives. These beaches are invariably chosen by whales with their newborn calves. While the waters of the two bays that form the Peninsula Valdes are a great "maternity ward" due to the calm waters, many of the mother whales choose to have their calves in El Doradillo. Often, from the coast, over thirty whales and their calves can be seen at any one time. We find it so hard to put into words how amazing and moving it is to be so close to a giant marine mammal, sometimes a few meters away from the beach.



CARLOS AMEGHINO ISTHMUS



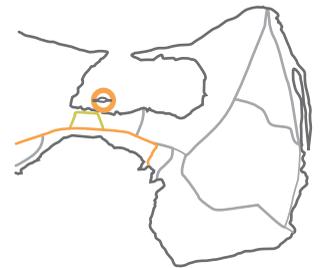
The isthmus is a narrow strip of land, 35 kms. long, connecting the Peninsula Valdés with the rest of Argentina and is the start of your voyage of discovery.

Situated within it is an Information Centre, which provides the visitor with all the necessary information to begin their adventure. The exhibitions will equip you to understand the complex and delicate relationships between wildlife communities, geography and Man, who is, without doubt, the main agent of change in the environment.

It has a complete exhibiton of Patagonian terrestrial fauna, including species such as the guanaco, rhea, mara or Patagonian hare, armadillo, bobcat, red fox, gray fox, rufouscollared sparrow and mockingbird. You can also find out about the marine species concentrated in large rookeries along the peninsula. The rooms exhibit data and some remains of the various species of marine life: elephant seals, sea lions, orcas, whales, dolphins and birds such as penguins, white-breasted cormorants, gulls and South American tern.



BIRD ISLAND



At the same place you'll find the junction that leads to Isla de los Pájaros (Bird Island), a reserve created in 1967 and so called because it is an important nesting area for migratory and non-migratory species.

Technically, this is not an island, as at low tide this plateau portion is joined to the mainland by a geomorphologic feature called Tombolo. We can say, however, that this isthmus has great biological value, because it is used as a breeding area for ten species of seabirds and shorebirds and others which also frequent it in smaller numbers.

It is a very special place, perhaps even a bit mystical. It is clear that Bird Island inspired Antoine de Saint Exupery in his book "The Little Prince"; he even drew it in one of the first pages.

The ranger station has a small interpretive centre equipped with a pair of powerful binoculars to see the birds that fly and nest in this amazing piece of land of not more than 1.5 hectares, up to 800 meters away.

Some of the species that can be seen are: Great Egret, Kelp Gull, Flamingo, Rocker Shag, Crested Duck, Terns, Neotropic cormorant and Magellanic Penguin. The best time is from September to April.

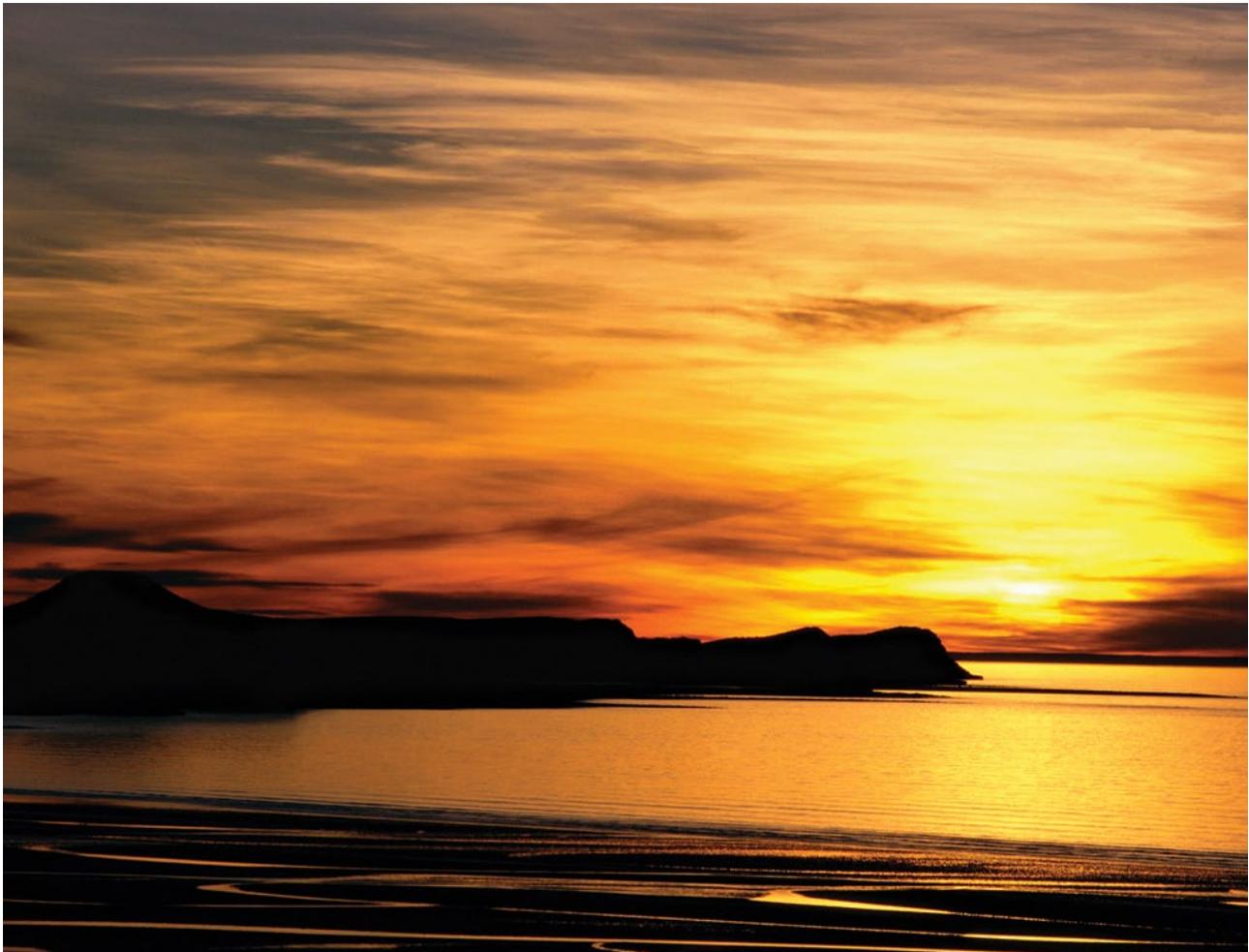
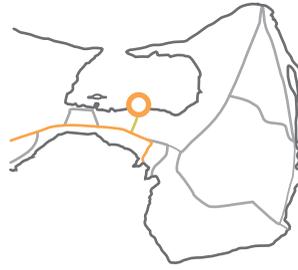


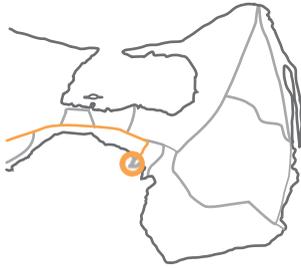
RIACHO, LARRALDE AND VILLARINO

In the San Jose Gulf we find these villages of coastline fishermen and shell fishers, comprising about 200 people.

The more important is in the Riacho, which has a school, but people are also living at Bengoa, Bird Island and Larralde, in very basic conditions, but within a natural environment that overflows with energy and balance.

The bivalve shellfish extraction began in the 1960s, and has developed in different forms over the course of time. Harvesting is done manually, through the work of shell fisher divers and by gatherers who access the mussel beds at low tide.





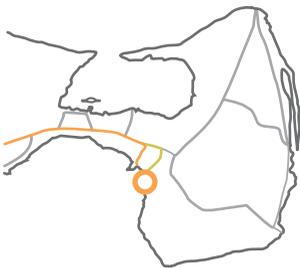
PUNTA PIRAMIDES

Founded in February 1974, has an area of 132 hectares.

This reserve is made up of low cliffs which have developed in sinuous forms, alternated with tiny beaches with boulders; the soil is sandstone and clay, with some fossil elements. The vegetation is scrubby, as is the rest of the steppe. Between late December and April, this reserve becomes the largest breeding colony of sea lions on Peninsula Valdés, gathering different animals in the area like Punta Alt, Punta Loma and Las Charas.

The sunsets from Punta Piramides are all unforgettable. It is one of the few places in Argentina where you can watch as the sun goes down behind the sea. It is also a must for those who want to capture beautiful moments with their camera and their spirit, during the whales' season.





PARDELAS

Pardelas, a beach which is 15 km from Puerto Piramides, is excellent for those who love fishing, snorkelling and diving. To reach it, start from N°2 Puerto Piramides' National Route until you find a signpost on the right side which says "Pardelas 11km". From there follow the path that leads to the beach. It is also accessible from Puerto Piramides by trekking along the beach over the wall and through the dunes of Pardelas.

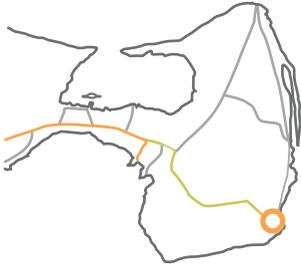
It is ideal to go at any time, even when the port is closed. You can take a trip to the beach and watch whales from the shore, with a unique sunset. Or, in the summer, enjoy the crystal waters, practice snorkelling and, if you dare, jump from higher sea cliffs.



Médanos de Pardelas

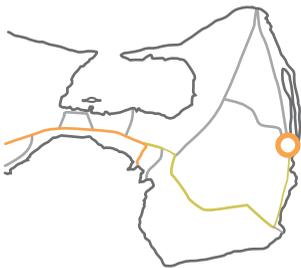
Off the coast, you can see the Islet of Pardelas. It is a large piece of sandbar which surfaces 200 meters from Punta Pardelas, and can be seen from Puerto Piramides, despite its distance (just over 6 km). It is about 80m x 40m and appears to be solid in water. It is one of the most common places for diving in Puerto Piramides, because you can be out of the wind, whichever direction it comes from. The Islet always looks beautiful in any sunset photos you make take.

On whale watching and fishing or boat trips, the captains have to be very careful, especially when there is an extraordinary high tide, when the islet is completely covered, leaving only a stain on the water.



PUNTA DELGADA

The Punta Delgada Lighthouse is located 71 km from Puerto Piramides, in the southeast of the Peninsula Valdés. The ranch was built as the headquarters of the Argentine Post and as Argentina Navy casino. Ten years ago, it became a country hotel and restaurant. It has an area of 7 km of coastal land and its beaches have the highest concentration of elephant seals. The beaches can be accessed only after lunch in the restaurant, accompanied by guides.



CALETA VALDÉS (VALDES INLET)

The Inlet is formed by a wall which follows the contours of the Peninsula Valdés coast for about 30 km. The northern part is closed, and the mouth of the Caleta is in the south, where it enters the water of the Atlantic Ocean, forming the cove Valdés.

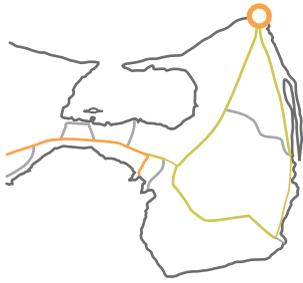
The sea sediments build up continually, with the result that the mouth of the inlet is becoming increasingly narrow. In recent years the sea deposited approximately 1400 tons of boulders per day.

During the nineteenth century, when the mouth of the creek was much wider, boats could travel up to 5 kms. up the inlet to load wool from the ranches or to take refuge from storms.

Today, because the Caleta is much shallower, it would be impossible sizeable vessels to enter it. In 1905, a storm wrecked the schooner Lolita, which, during a storm, missed the entrance to the Caleta by a few metres and was shipwrecked. If you look towards the sea you can see, at low tide, her anchor and the mast.

From the viewpoint, and following the walking paths marked by the Estancia La Elvira, you'll be able to watch and read about the flora and fauna, predominantly elephant seals, penguins and (from September to December) orcas.

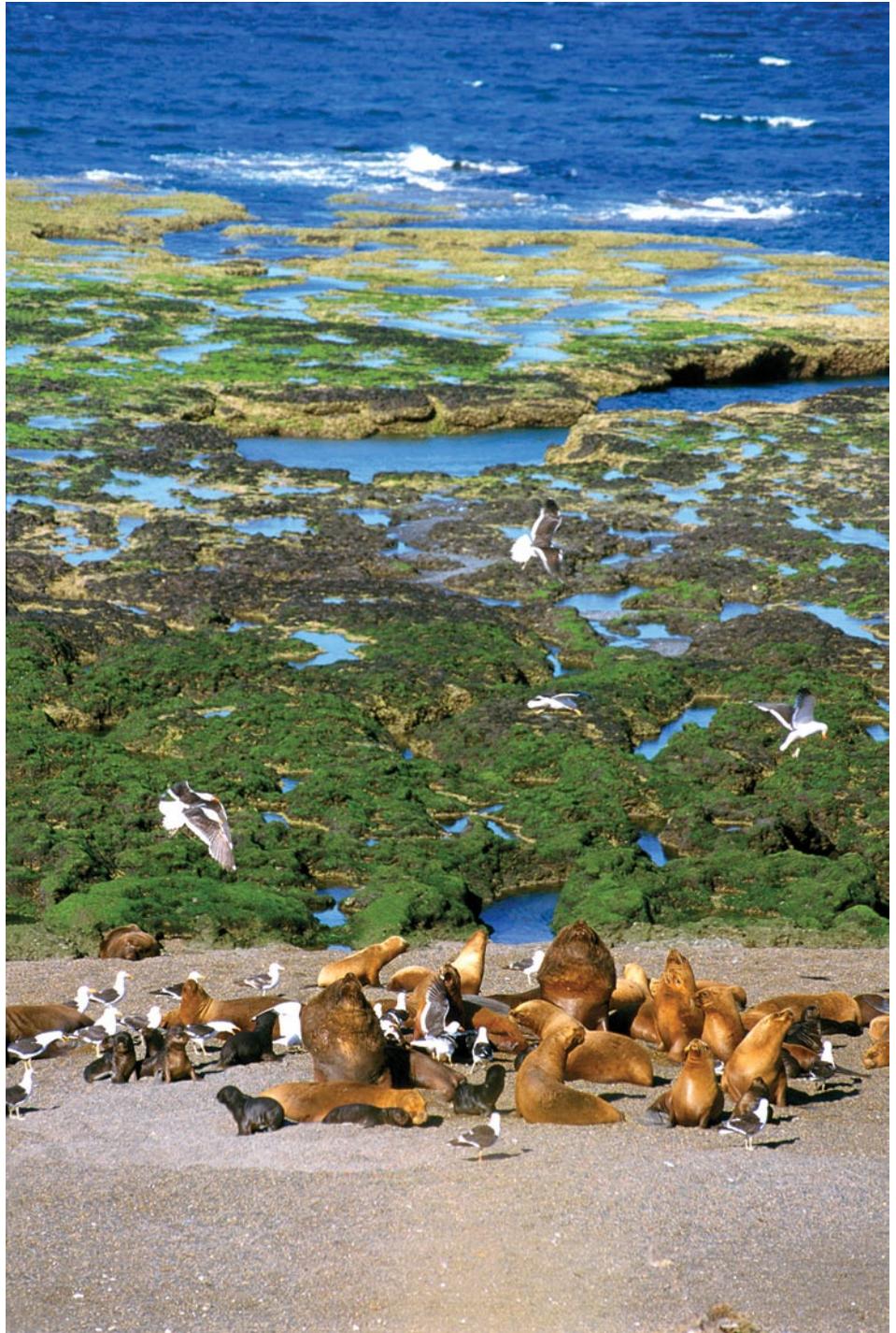




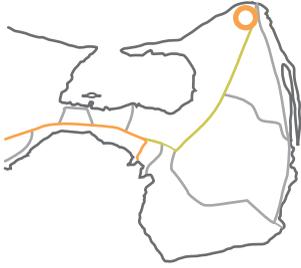
PUNTA NORTE

The Elephant Seal colonies found at Punta Norte and the rest of the Peninsula Valdés, are the only world colonies on the mainland. The colony at Punta Norte is accessed via Route No. 3, almost 75 miles to the northeast of Puerto Piramides. There is also a sea lion colony with a good number of specimens which return from feeding at the sea in late August to give birth to their young, remaining until April or May, before returning to its marine activities.

It also is the area where the spectacular orca attacks on sea lions, using their unique hunting strategy of self-beaching, takes place between February and April.



SAN LORENZO RANCH

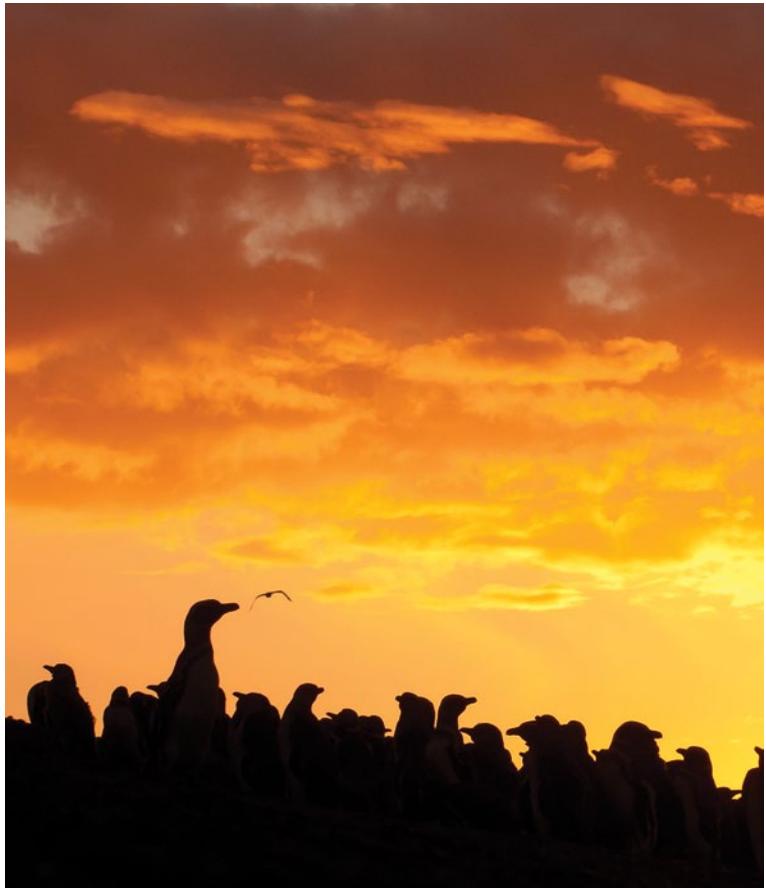


The ranch is found to the northeast of the Peninsula Valdés, lying on San Matías Gulf, bordering nearly five miles of coastline. The area functions as a multipurpose reserve (allowing sheep farm in sectors) and has a management plan prepared in accordance with international guidelines on the subject. It has shrub steppe and some herbaceous vegetation. One of the main attractions is the large colony of Magellanic Penguin, which is especially easy for tourists to approach. It also has on its shores a small colony of elephant seals and was one of the places where sea lion colonies were exploited between 1918 and 1960. Currently the reserve aims to preserve all the species that live there.

The ranch has developed from its origins as a livestock farm. Between the years 1918 and 1960 colonies of sea lions were exploited in order to harvest hides and fat. The first was used in leather industry and the fat turned into oil for industrial use. After this activity was banned, the ranch has been used exclusively for sheep breeding.



Ask at frontdesk for the entrance fee.





INFORMATION

If you want to be aware of what is happening right now at peninsula, visit:

eco-lodge.blogspot.com

For more information about the lodge, visit:

www.ecohosteria.com.ar



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