

POST CONGRESS TECHNICAL TOUR

The Copahue-Caviahue geothermal system is located on west to Neuquén Province, Patagonia Argentina. Copahue Volcano presents a small acidic crater lake and two acidic hot springs. The latter feed a river system, Upper Rio Agrio, which discharges into the glacial Caviahue Lake, with a north and a south basin that overflows in one arm through the Lower Rio Agrio. This is an extreme environment characterized by wide ranges of temperature, pH (<1 to 8) and heavy metals concentration. In these extreme conditions a great microbial diversity, including chemolitho-autotrophic bacteria, archaea, heterotrophic bacteria, yeasts and filamentous fungi was found. This area is a very interesting system as source of microorganisms with potential applications in mineral processing but also in heavy metals bioremediation processes as it can be seen in some papers which will be presented in IBS 2009.

PROGRAM

Friday 18th

The trip starts early in the morning from San Carlos de Bariloche going first to Villa La Angostura (78 Km) and then taking the Seven Lakes Route. This route connects the national parks of Nahuel Huapi and Lanin. On the journey the views are of lush valleys, snow-capped peaks and jewel like lakes.

The lakes are the following; Lake Nahuel Huapi in Villa La Angostura, Lake Espejo (Mirror), Lake Correntoso (Swift), Lake Escondido (Hidden), Lake Villarino, Lake Falkner where there is a 20m waterfall and finally Lake Machonico. After few hours you arrive at San Martin de los Andes, a charming town of chalet style buildings prettily set on Lake Lacar, where you can have lunch and rest. The total distance from Bariloche to San Martin is 190 Km.



Then, the journey continues to Caviahue following National Route N°40 (418 Km) expecting to arrive at in the evening to check in the hotels in single or double rooms or apart.

Saturday 19th



Caviahue

Site of celebration, was the name the Mapuche people gave to the valley where they stopped to gather on their way to the hot springs. Within the Copahue Provincial Park, the nooks of Caviahue hide streams, cascades and prehistoric monkey-puzzle trees, spread in a vast prairie that borders the western bank of the homonymous lake and reaches the base of the terraced mounts that are part of the volcanic mass.



In the winter, the ski resort guarantees the quality of powder snow without long lines at the lift, In Caviahue, the Andean mountains give shape to a peaceful spot, merged with a nature refined of picturesque sights that invites to relax.

Activities in Caviahue will depend on weather conditions and include:

Las Maquinitas and Las Máquinas

This is an outing you can do by snow track or bus from Caviahue (11 Km). There are small pots, abundant air holes, and several hot springs of singular importance.



The sound provoked by fumaroles and air holes in this sulphurous water lagoon has given the name to these hot springs where you can feel the earth puff.

Rio Agrio Cascades

Within an araucaria forest where lengas and ñires add to the beauty of the place, you can reach some of the seven Rio Agrio cascades on foot: Cascada del Gigante, Cascada de la Culebra Cascada de la Virgen, etc. The water pH is near 2 and brown-reddish ferric, hematite and sulphur deposits on the banks of the streams can be observed.



Sunday 20th

After breakfast the returning trip by bus begins expecting to arrive to Bariloche approximately at 5.0 p.m. with time enough to take the plane to Buenos Aires. Total distance 535 Km.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Total travel fees: 350 U\$S double pax and 400 U\$S single: including transport, accommodation, meals and excursions during the two days of staying.
- Deadline to reserve a place: 1st June 2009
- Minimum of 15 persons is required to confirm the trip and maximum of 30 persons
- Ski practicing and spa bath are not included in the fee. Adequate shoes or cloths for ski sports can be hiring in the village.
- If you are interested, please, ask for more details to the following e-mail addresses:

agiaveno@uncoma.edu.ar

agiaveno@hotmail.com