

# ST. THOMAS AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL



**PATAGONIA FRONTIERS  
DESIGNS AND LEADS  
WILDERNESS EDUCATION,  
LEADERSHIP, SKILLS AND  
SCIENCE PROGRAMS.**

## THE PROGRAM



Patagonia Frontiers designed and instructed a nine-day Winterterm Program for the 2017-2018 school year for a group of 16 St. Thomas Aquinas students and two teachers.

The Winterterm Program of Studies in Patagonia allows the school to advance their student's education in unique and awe-inspiring ways. It is an opportunity to widen student's learning horizons, step outside of the traditional instructional atmosphere and pursue areas of intellectual interest that challenges their minds, supports their passion and transforms their perception of learning.

Student curriculum included observation, identification and interpretation of landscape and how it is shaped through physical geography, aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity, and the regional, national and global significance of old-growth forest and pristine watersheds. Each area of focus included leadership opportunities, cultural exchange, and personal and group development and reflection. The 9th through 12th grade students backpacked to the pristine study area and tent camped.

## CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

- Physical geography
- Aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity
- Cultural Outreach
- Leadership Skills
- Teamwork

# PROGRAM ITINERARY

Students hiked and explored an untouched and largely unknown part of wild Patagonia following our signature route - The Gaucho Way. The route follows traditional trails used by the Gauchos, Chilean cowboys who are friends and neighbors.

On horseback, they herd cattle to market and return to their homesteads with flour, sugar, yerba mate and other sundries. The Gaucho Way denotes both their passage through the mountain landscape and their distinctive, gracious culture.



## TESTIMONIALS

“ I never imagined we could combine academics and the outdoors this successfully.

“ I thought I was coming to learn about science and it turned out I learned something about honesty and myself as well.

Patagonia Frontiers brings 30 years of wilderness education, knowledge and experiences.

**Day 1:** Depart on overnight international flight from U.S.A. to SCL, Chile.

**Day 2:** Arrive Santiago. Domestic flight to Balmaceda Regional Airport (BBA). Private transfer to Puerto Bertrand. Overnight tent camp in Puerto Bertrand.

**Day 3:** Boat shuttle to Patagonia Frontiers Wilderness Ranch. Orientation and preparations. Half-day hike 5 km. to overnight at Salt Licks tent camp.

**Day 4:** Continue trek 9 km. to overnight tent camp at Cacho Ranch. Academic orientation to curriculum topics.

**Day 5:** Trek to Northern Patagonia Icefield. 12-18 km. (7-11 mi.). Student groups rotate through stations addressing the Solér Glacier moraine transect study, the role of trees and old-growth forest in healthy watersheds, and an introduction to Gaucho homesteading skills. Overnight tent camp at Cacho Ranch.

**Day 6:** Student groups rotate through stations addressing the Solér Glacier moraine transect study, the role of trees and old-growth forest in healthy watersheds, and an introduction to Gaucho homesteading skills. Overnight tent camp at Cacho Ranch.

**Day 7:** Complete trek with return to main ranch. Program debrief and evaluation. Celebratory dinner of traditional Patagonia Asado (BBQ). 12-16 km. (7-10 mi.) Overnight tent camp at main ranch.

**Day 8:** Boat shuttle to Puerto Bertrand and vehicle transfer to Balmaceda Regional Airport. Domestic flight to Santiago. Begin international flight.

**Day 9:** Arrive final destination.

