

IN THE NAME OF WILD

by

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Start [00:16.2]

End [53:23.9]

Interviewer: [00:16.2] We would like to know the background of how you got over here, and how did you start off. Where did you come from? How did you choose to come over here? [ROMINA: How we chose Chaltén?] What are you doing? Did you start with this or something else?

ROMINA: [00:27.9] We are from Córdoba, which is in the center of the country. And we came over here because some friends of my husband, Demián, commented us about this town and that there were fiscal lands being delivered due to the bordering issue with Chile over those years. So the Santa Cruz administration generated a development project, based on touristic business.

[01:00.4] And we were in Córdoba studying Tourism and Hospitality. So we saw it as a chance of start developing ourselves, to begin our family, because when we met Demián already had land over here, and we decided to move over. We married in Córdoba and just a month later we came to Chaltén. And we started with our family to develop here from the ground up, from zero.

[01:30.3] A young married couple, we arrived here in 1988, in Chaltén. And we began with our first enterprise that we developed, which were cabins for tourism. But starting very small: just one cabin. And then the project began to grow, and we finally added this gastronomic business as a support to the cabins.

Interviewer: [01:58.2] And nowadays you may perhaps have people working here, in the waffle house, such as your children?

ROMINA: [02:04.3] Actually my children are ... We have 4. Valentina, 16; Juan Cruz, 15; Martina, 11; Sol, 8. Valentina actually helps us out with another business, which are touristic maps. Demian builds them up, and my brother does the design, who also lives in Chaltén. Because once families move over here,

[02:30.3] they begin to bring over the rest of the family behind. So, Valentina, helps us out with the distribution of the maps. But yes, they are family business. We all work in everything. We do have hired people, that work with us, that have already been around for years living in Chaltén, and other by season.

Interviewer: [03:00.4] And how did you begin with waffles, which perhaps is not so common in Córdoba? Perhaps you had a market or gastronomic picture beforehand.

ROMINA: [03:10.2] Of course. The waffle was born because when our vacations were very long, because tourism up to 5 years back, was only January and February: what happened then with the entrepreneurs from Chaltén is that we migrated to our birth cities. And upon that migration, we always we used to (before reaching Córdoba) going through to Bariloche to ski, and rest. Our vacations were in the snow.

[03:42.0] And Bariloche has a development on waffles, it's always had that. Because of the culture they have. So we said, it would be cool if in Chaltén we would bring over this product, and we only added it up: in the beginning we made a pilot test with ice cream and chocolate shop and we added waffles, and that ended up mutating into waffle house alone which is what worked most. We modified the initial product into what passengers were looking for.

[04:10.8] So after a long walk they would want something quite abundant. Not only to have a snack but to have a complete meal.

Interviewer: [04:20.2] And you mention that there are some cycles that people sometimes go back to their places of origin, [hand in front of camera / Laughters] did you have a period in which you went back and forth and later on established here during a longer time?

ROMINA: [04:41.0] In the beginning, during our first years here we always went back to Córdoba let's say some four months. Over time, the season became longer and along with that our businesses that went on developing and ending. So currently our vacation period is taking two months which we use to visit family and travel.

[05:11.2] But those are only two months because this fact of traveling a lot changes once your children start going to school. Our long vacation periods are in winter. So we travel during their vacation and they normally don't go to school for a month in wintertime to travel. And in summer time we can't move away from here.

Interviewer: [05:37.2] And that time that you take to stop, is that recent that you can take only two months or has it been several years already? You mentioned some change perhaps some five years ago?

ROMINA: [05:46.0] It could be nearly four years that we started with this long vacation period that goes along with the development of our businesses. It was a direct relationship. During the first years, it was all about saving up a lot for money because Chaltén has one issue. Since the lands are fiscal, very cheap, but what was very expensive was to build here.

[06:15.3] Comparing with the rest of the country, building here at that time was up to let's say: you should pay a single brick three times more over than in Córdoba. And the same applies to manpower. Very scarce and hence, high price. So, most of those of us who have businesses we learned to

build roofs, the floor foundations. The beginning of our business went along with our manual labor.

[06:45.3] Because at that time it was so expensive.

Interviewer: [06:47.9] Apart from the individual experience, if I could ask at a regional level, where there credits available to what you could find nowadays in Córdoba?

ROMINA: [07:04.7] Back then there were credits available with very low rates. But Chaltén had a problem. Since the land was fiscal, and you could only become owner with proper legal documentation, we couldn't access a big credit if you wouldn't build anything if you wouldn't go over with a property, and legal proof that would avail so to access the credit.

[07:32.6] So for Chaltén, I don't know about the rest of the province, but here that was a problem. We couldn't access the credit, because we didn't have that kind of proof of the land in which you were. We COULD access smaller credits which we could use once we already had something built.

[07:56.3] For instance, if we'd like to make the installations, it wouldn't be enough. But if we wanted money for let's say the beds, kitchen and so on, it'd be fine. For the furniture, up to there you could reach.

Interviewer: [08:11.1] Could you say regarding the timing of this progress, how at first you were migrants, and then you could consider yourself as well established?

ROMINA: [08:20.0] Yes. Most of us, the settlers in Chaltén, just now there's a generation of people here who are our children. In our case, we have 4 children. The first two: I went to Córdoba, so that they could be born over there. The following two I rioted and they were born in Chaltén. So that generation is the population born here. The kids that are 8, 10, 15, 16 years old.

[08:50.5] But all the rest, all of the previous we are all that have come from different provinces, countries. There are a lot of foreigners living here from back then. All the estancia pioneers are all European. And then this younger generation, in the last 35 years roughly since the foundation of the town, we are already a generation of local immigrants from our own country: Córdoba, Mendoza, Buenos Aires, cities.

Interviewer: [09:22.7] What was the challenge or obstacle that you decided to put up a riot and have your children born over here?

ROMINA: [09:31.9] I rioted because I reached a point in which I felt that I didn't belong to one place or another. Living in one city ... I arrived here at 22. And I could see that this town was very new and of passage, just a seasonal thing. Once the season was over, the town would disappear. So I felt that towards my children, for them it would be worse.

[10:00.2] Because their parents' being from Córdoba, well I should go over there to have them and come back. It would be like sense of belonging, once you already feel it's part of yourself. When you reach a point when you've lived the same amount of time between your original city and the one that you've chosen. So well, it was a sense of belonging also towards them. Because they were born here, they're Patagónicos. Despite their family ascendance comes from Córdoba, but they feel this town as their own. They begin to migrate from Chaltén to other places.

[10:30.0] Such as when they want to go over to study, they have to move away. So I felt that we've reached a point when we should stay over here and not even going to Calafate. I rioted and I had them right here in the room/ward (salita). Very naturally. [Laughters].

Interviewer: [10:47.9] Now a little broader question about Chaltén. There are a lot of people out of here that don't even know about Patagonia. Could you explain what it means to you, Chaltén and Patagonia?

ROMINA: [11:01.2] To me Chaltén, in our country, is like a little pearl. This being aside from all the great natural sites all over the country. It is a weird case, because it is like a mini city inserted inside a National Park. So all of us inhabitants we have to permanently do this work of

[11:31.7] recognizing that as we are inhabiting, we're invading the National Park. Because you can permanently see that when you decide to have a pet, how to take care towards the NP. Insert tourism as the one and only economic development. All the impacts that they generate towards the NP. What makes people come over here. So I think that visitors that arrives here, sees that.

[12:00.7] It's a small town inside the PN itself. You walk 100 meters and you're inside a forest. Beyond whatever else we provide as services. Nowadays we have everything. In the beginning, by midnight the lights would go off. You wouldn't have any fuel. You would have gas, but only in canisters (not through the pipeline). So the development happened during 10 years suddenly and we are a mini city but that we always try to

[12:32.4] understand that we are very related with the PN. Many newcomers, we notice, that they want everything: internet ... And this was not at all like this, and I think that they added value that Chaltén has is that it can maintain itself as wild (agreste) as possible, from now on, despite the inevitable development it will have. So that it doesn't transform into other towns as they already exist in Argentina, near national parks, such as Bariloche, Ushuaia.

[13:01.7] They're something else. If you speak over here with tourists coming from back in time during years and they suffer when they noticed that we paved the streets. They suffer when they see that internet has come. They suffer when they have mobile connection. Before, you came over here

and you were disconnected with no choice, by obligation. And you lived a different kind of vacation.

[13:30.6] So I think we make a difference in that sense. It is still wild (agreste) Patagonia, with services but we always try for them to have a certain limit. To maintain that style.

Interviewer: [13:40.5] From the door of your business outwards, you could see that some services are provided, but all that happens in the background, are there recycling circuits, meaning about the challenges of being inside of the park? For instance, products that you should or shouldn't use of what people consume at the tables. How is that processed?

ROMINA: [14:16.2] For years now already, in the last 5-6 years, we've had a problem which is that the garbage has gone over the limit. Because in Argentina, only recently we have this challenge of separating in situ and recycling. Chaltén has always been innovative in this point but with the tourism boom, it grew very exponentially and the touristic business: we didn't give companionship that policy that the town already had, as if in a estancia.

[14:47.4] Typically they would recycle organics, non organics, how we would treat the garbage. Five years ago it all collapsed. All the garbage that was mixed up together and generated: it turned into chaos and so it was that the state along with the community to separate in origin and then place the garbage, whatever it was: glass, plastic, pet, and we achieved

[15:20.5] a reduction in volume from November to March included which is outstanding [terrible... (Terribly good that is)]. So the old settlers were used to do this, and there is a policy, that fortunately the state is supporting this of promoting a centre for people to bring over voluntarily however much they can accumulate of residue. And now there will be a municipal and provincial initiative where all the garbage that you wouldn't separate will have a cost.

[15:51.0] This is something that has never happened before in Chaltén. And in this way it would change. In this way we would interpret ... **Interviewer:** Is this a law project or ...] It is a law project... It is a law. Consider that Chaltén is very young, it has only one year as a municipality, one year that it has had a town council, so just recently are the norms being created. But from this year on, we will begin to pay for whatever residue we generate. So the commitment will be linear: from the neighbors of course, but mainly by us, as the merchants.

[16:24.9] And if you're taking out a certain number of bags of garbage and you're going to pay a specific amount of money, it would be more convenient to separate in origin, take it over voluntarily, or they pick it up for you with no cost, and you would only pay for whatever you don't separate and mix up. So one finds oneself in the obligation to ...

For instance for us, in the matter of composting organic food [non processed foods, not necessarily farm grown] it is plenty. So if we wouldn't have our own compost it would be brutal.

[16:51.9] [**Interviewer:** With or without worms?]

ROMINA: [16:54.5] We have WITH worms. But, there are people that have it without worms because it is so much what you generate that it becomes a lot of work of composting. But fortunately, from the state they are doing a good companionship with training, picking up your recycled garbage with no cost at least for now. So it's all about changing people to make a click. And the tourists that are coming from outside, and they already have their chip included and they separate glass, plastic.

[17:23.4] We have to adopt this format.

Interviewer: [17:30.1] We've talked some amount of Chaltén's history. Could you tell me about the town's origins?

ROMINA: [17:35.2] The town begins in this area of the National Park Los Glaciares, North area, in a first moment as a centre for National Park which had a small inn, that is located where nowadays is the Information Centre. And they took care of guarding the area. In that first time they were only a few park rangers. And they already had, repeatedly, groups of expeditions, of mountain climbers,

[18:07.7] who would come over. Firstly because of Cerro Torre. The famous crossing of the 50s. It was a climbing that was very discussed (polemic), and they always came, mostly Italians to climb Cerro Torre. Because they didn't have any goal proof of everything that they did with their escalating achievements. And Torre was a Mecca to try themselves.

[18:36.3] So they arrived and they were received either by pioneer estancieros like Madsen, and other nearby estancias. And National Parks worked as host and controlled all those little movements that were being generated over those years, the 1950s. It was a very small amount of things, but still all of them foreigners. Along the years, we had the conflict with Chile. We are very close.

Interviewer: [19:04.8] What was the conflict about?

ROMINA: [19:05.4] The controversy was about a famous roped escalation that some Italians and Austrians, which ranks as the Torre Polemic, that they arrive but aren't able to take pictures of the summit. Because the camera falls, one of the climbers passes away, but the rest gives faith that they had arrived to the top, but in the climbing world by that time it isn't believed so.

[19:40.3] So a huge polemic over this appeared in this first attempt to reach Torre's summit. It's quite a complicated tower to climb because at the end of the climbing you have an

icy mushroom. So you combine what is rock climbing and ice climbing, what is the peak. So that polemic is very famous: climbers continue to come over, not only European, but from all over the world, but the click is by the year prior to 1985, which is when the town is established, because there is a conflict with Chile,

[20:11.1] of supposed advances from their side, and on the road to Laguna del Desierto there's a shooting and one of the Chilean carabineer dies. In that conflict by both countries is that Santa Cruz proposes to establish the town with a promotion of installing populations from all over the country, to settle a national reference in the area. Because our connection with Chile,

[20:43.1] at this time is only through a frontier passage that exists, which opens in November and generates a connection with a very small town from the other side, which is Villa O'Higgins. In the middle you can't find anything, just lakes, hills and forest. So with this promotion by Santa Cruz in 1985, which by decree they establish the town, a whole new policy is generated by the province to send over 35 people at that time: teachers, public services, police officers, gendarmes, a public structure which at that time was a crazy thing to do.

[21:29.1] Nobody understood this at all. Because it all happened so quickly. And then, if this was founded by 1985, in the 1990s a policy begins to, through newspapers and radio, comment about this town. That there was being support for development of touristic businesses, or farms.

[21:58.8] And how would the state help you out? Giving you fiscal lands, many at that time you could find available lands such as this one: 3000-4000 square meters, an hectare so that you could develop your business. With your commitment that you would invest in the building of your business and they would go along with the symbolic value of giving land away. What we paid, those of us who came over at that time, was very low price for land.

[22:26.2] And then is when the development of tourism begins. But at that time the tourism was quite scarce. Argentinians wouldn't even get to know Chaltén. I remember that when I came over I knew up to Puerto Madryn and Bariloche, but from there downwards, it was really wild (agreste) Patagonia.

Interviewer: [22:46.3] You've said some amount of people coming over to stay. Could you tell us about the diversity of people who come??

ROMINA: [22:57.3] As profiles you have a common factor which is that everyone that comes here has an entrepreneurial spirit. Because it's a very vertiginous town in its working rhythm when the season is ongoing. And then it's a town that when you're living during the year it dies. It looks like the wild west. People disappear. Businesses close. So you live as if in a ghost town. This generates that the group of people that we live in Chaltén,

[23:32.3] we are quite special. All very active. I believe. We always look for activities. Despite that we live in a remote place, far away from everything. Because the closest thing, as cities go, is Calafate. It's like that we generate activities from the town so that we don't fall short with anything that we should need. So my children have sports of any kind that you could look for: hockey indoor, basket, girl soccer,

[24:00.7] boy soccer, rock climbing, adventure schools, French language, German language, English language. So we ourselves, as the same inhabitants have remained alert so that it doesn't become a still place: as if we would only come over to work and nothing else. We would have our season and then we just wait for it to come back. It's a town with a life of its own. Despite tourism which is what allows these movements to happen: the working season.

[24:33.3] I believe that is this kind of people: entrepreneurial, that like the wind, people that don't miss the sun. [Laughters]. And people that we know that we have work to do, fortunately, that we do OK, that we can progress, and do business. Later on, when the years go by we can also travel and become tourists ourselves. We all have that profile. When we have less work,

[25:00.2] we become tourists and travel. A lot of people moves over to town by the time when this town was in constant construction. When the first hotels were built. And the big undertakings brought a lot of people to build and then they saw it as a chance to develop. And that was a good thing as well. Because people from other countries, or other cities from Argentina came as builders, craftsmen,

[25:31.2] carpenters, and they managed to stay over, and then develop their own touristic businesses. Some kept on with building and others didn't. And they're truly well, happy, living OK, loving the town.

Interviewer: [25:47.7] And the tourists?

ROMINA: [25:48.3] And the tourists I believe that our major segment has always been the international kind. It was first the world that got to know about us, and then the Argentinian. We are to the local tourism like an annex to Calafate. Calafate has bet very much for many years in the promoting of Calafate. And we added up as an annex, since they promote us very much as a day trip.

[26:20.9] So if you come one day over. And at a first time it was striking that the town opposed this: What do you mean by full day Chaltén? Our destiny entails so many more days. And along time, that visitor who came over for a day ended up coming back a lot of days. So, thank you Calafate: they did a huge promotion because when you arrive to Chaltén and you actually realize that it deserves more days because you always have this climate: a lot of wind, rain, some sunny days; so you need several days for all the trails you can take over.

[26:58.8] And considering that this part of the National Park is freely available. You don't pay for an access to Park. So the tourist is distended, awaits for good climate to walk. So you need more than a single day. I believe that right now in Argentina they began to know about us and understand that they can come over for several days. You do need to be a tourist that enjoys walking and accept that Patagonia is like this. A wild (salvaje) climate. A lot of wind. And I believe that right now, the Argentinian is

[27:30.3] beginning to know us.

[27:38.9] **Interviewer:** Can you tell us a little more about the wind? It's really hard to describe the wind with the camera, can you tell us some stories about powerful winds and how you manage to live with it.

ROMINA: [27:56.0] Yes. Plenty. [In English by ROMINA: I think that if you don't like the wind you must go.] [Laughters]. [ENGLISH: Many couples: the lady didn't like the wind and ran away.] [More Laughters]. [English: It's a problem. But ... Goes on in Spanish] For example, the winds are extreme. We've got to the point of having winds that have shifted houses from one place to another. [English: Some little houses, have moved from one place in the morning to the other. Yeah.]

[28:25.3] [And all the town just go to keep the house there.] [Spanish: Sí!] Roofs, [on the days that the wind is very strong, and you must have a look on your roof. Then all the town, on this roof keeping out [?] All the time.] It's very strong, and it's a factor which has always existed. They would always tell you: to live in Chaltén you have to like wind.

[28:55.6] Or you can't be affected by the wind. Because those of us who live here notice that the very windy days: [we note that the tourists that don't like the wind is terrible.] Terrible!! The zest, nerves, anger, and it's the wind [says with surprise and wonder]!!! We say: welcome to the land of wind.

[29:25.2] Our children live with the wind. You go out and it's the wind. You walk with wind. There are no hairdressers, well one. But you can't comb your hair because of the wind. And it's an extreme wind. Always. The whole year. There are very few the days that are without wind, and then we praise to the Pachamama. [Laughters]

Interviewer: [29:55.5] You mentioned about a general spirit of activities, of what people like to do, the ones that are established here. Would you say that there is any kind of communal spirit?

ROMINA: [30:11.0] I believe so. Yes. There is a communal spirit but we think there isn't. It's been 20 years that I've been living here and I believe that we all think that there isn't a communal spirit. This saying of: small town, big hell. A small community generates that we all know each

other. So a conflict that wouldn't be a conflict in a city because there's so many people and so many bigger and more serious conflicts,

[30:40.8] over here a small conflict is a very big conflict. So it produces all these series of frictions and fights of settlers that we've known each other for such a long amount of years. But I believe that there is effectively a sense of community because when the town had to revolt for any kind of specific issue, such as residues, works that are down communally, the town has united and we have all participated,

[31:12.0] beyond the fact that you may speak with one and not with another, at those times we all participate. You can notice in the massive activities that our children do. So there IS a sense of community and belonging. We live in a small town. So it's part of that kind of folklore of having a rhythm of a small town. This thing of knowing each other with everyone. The teacher is a neighbor, your neighbor is your client [smiles]. We're very few.

Interviewer: [31:40.6] You mention massive activities, and on another hand you mentioned the wind. Are there any things that you do out of season outdoors? And this being with all participating together with the wind to confront upon?

ROMINA: [32:07.1] No. Everything outdoors that we do, such as climbing, go for a stroll, do crossings: we do them. Yes, one thing that we can't do ... For instance, those who play soccer: you can't dream over here to be professional player. [Phil laughs and Romina too] For example, my son is now going to Córdoba, and wants to play soccer. But not in Chaltén, so he migrates.

[32:37.3] Over here you can play soccer inside the gym. Otherwise, the ball just flies away. No. Impossible. But for instance, indoor hockey, because outdoor is out of the picture. All outdoor is related with walking, climbing, people who live here is already used to climbing with wind, no problem. And the activities done in summer, like fishing,

[33:07.0] camping, some lake activities that are done but suspended if there's too much wind, almost all the time. Sailing when the wind is strong is impossible. But everything else as sport teams is indoor. We're already used to this working this way. There's no other way.

Interviewer: [33:32.3] and regarding the different possible activities outside, you mention lake activities, if you want to do trekking: how do you measure if it's OK to go out or not? Or do you just go out in any wind condition?

ROMINA: [33:45.9] Going out is under any wind condition. With the exception when tourists are alerted when they arrive. In Chaltén you have the four climates, the four seasons, in a single day. We can be just like this, and suddenly the wind stops, the sun comes up, heat, so what do we tell to visitors? This is extreme [far end, ultimate] Patagonia. So they come over to walk to a place where THIS

is the ideal weather. It would be a blessing if it were to change,

[34:16.3] to a better, sunny, but with mild clouds, calm. So that you could walk easily. So, what is recommended is to go out. And you should take caution in the higher places, since you're going to be more exposed. Well, with the weather forecast we could check and you could reach up to a base camp. You can measure this and come back. But the assumption is that you can go out. There have been tourists that have needed to sit down to move forward. And they come back totally fascinated. ``Oh! The wind!!! We thought we would fly away.'' And it's like a magnet feature.

[34:48.2] The wind became an extreme alluring icon.

[**Interviewer:** You've got no other choice.] [ROMINA: You've got no other choice!]

Interviewer: [34:54.9] We spoke about all the support for business, by the state and so. Are there any kind of obstacles, be them structural, financial, unforeseen situations that has made it hard to develop? Maybe you've had ups and downs.

ROMINA: [35:15.7] No, such as hardship what most of us that came in the beginning we didn't come over ... We weren't business people that were already bringing money. No kind of capital to develop. So the obstacles were that the money that you could gain working in Chaltén for others who already had some kind of business, it was made it possible for you to develop. So at the time we saw this as a deterrence of not having an inceptive capital to invest from the start but it was also something

[35:56.6] attractive for families which we were mostly young and we could live on that. So this would mean to go on at full capacity (a todo pulmón) and gave it all a certain flavor, which perhaps arriving with capital, have your hotel, have cabins, have a bar/restaurant ... We saw this all as a positive thing, which was to give value to everything that the town was capable of. And it was a genuine income,

[36:24.6] that returned from what we were investing. So our investment went along, beforehand, with our own work. We started working with other partners, that today are partners. But for what we worked at the beginning it was related to the first travel agencies, the first hostels, the first means of transportation, which were already in town, and were very few. You could spare some fingers from your both hands if you were to count at that time. And those of us who came over then were working for them. And that money was what allowed us to save it and re invest that into our lands. To me that had a great [``terrible''] added value,

[37:00.2] which is the lesson that we could pass on to our children who now live a different situation.

[37:08.6] [**Interviewer:** terrible meaning for them ``fantastic'']] [ROMINA: Of course!!]

[37:12.4] [**Interviewer:** So the balance is] ROMINA: Highly positive!! Because we always remind them that this wasn't just done [snap] with some money that was in a safe, in a bank account. Our families from home did help out a lot, because from Córdoba they noticed what was going on here, with the wind. By that time there weren't a lot of supermarkets. You couldn't find any vegetables. There were no place where to buy. You had to travel. We used to have a gravel road, so arriving to Calafate meant a 6 hour trip.

[37:41.6] So our families, all the way from there, our parents used to send us supermarket groceries: ``hoping that our children are doing well'' [mimics crying]. That is inserted in our family history, and I think it made us to be a united family, well established. We give value to a lot of things, despite that we can enjoy nowadays because we are already noticing the gains [frutos]. Today we are able to travel, we can share with them other things, which

[38:10.3] at that time, if we were a 20 year couple already with children, it would have been quite hard to begin with. We came alone and well, and that's how it began. Putting the body in during plenty hours a day. When we weren't working, we worked on the land. We built up the floor together, because Demián's brother is an architect, so we would tell him ``we don't have enough to pay the workforce, tell us how to make the floor ourselves'' and there we went to do it.

[38:42.3] [Blender] And those are added values which when the tourist comes over they have no idea. But one can say, ``well, that is what one ...'' It's something that's there, but tacit.

Interviewer: [38:51.4] Could you do the floor with the two of you, or did you need some more people?

ROMINA: [38:53.3] No. We did it just the two of us, because the first cabins were small. Later on we went making it all bigger. So we made them together, the two of us. It was either buying the material and do it ourselves, or not doing anything at all. ``Nooo'', we said, ``let's do it, come on, we're young, we can do it.'' Demián did all the roofs, of all of our the businesses. He studied Tourism and Hospitality, but at the time he was a carpenter's assistant. Because it was a matter of doing anything you could have handy [changa: informal labor].

[39:20.3] Or any kind of little job that would appear, we would do it. So since he was carpenter's assistant, you learned the craft. And he did it. So that is the added value. So he looks up and notices that he made it. And that's very good.

Interviewer: [39:37.8] That actually shows another side of the wild world, I can relate that one feels that as a normal thing. Now a broader question. People can understand Patagonia as a wild place (salvaje), would you see it in this way, or differently, what would you like to say about this? What do you think?

ROMINA: [40:00.1] I believe so. That it still is a wild place (salvaje). Because it has a lot of condiments that haven't been lost. We are like a little development inside of that wild Patagonia. But if you walk 300 meters away in one direction or another you realize that it is still the Patagonia from the 1950s, that those early pioneer met. We've generated a mega development in a town that is only 120 hectares.

[40:30.2] But if you go away 300 metres, or 18 kilometres into a countryside, and you say ``no, I'm not in Chaltén, this is a totally virgin place.'' This National Park has quite a narrowed down circuit for trekking which make it possible to do a seven day hike, but in a very short and controlled space. If you move outside that area, of places that are rural/rough (agreste), and through which you can access but with a guide, or with some assistance, and they are totally savage and with no transit.

[41:05.4] We have provincial reserves, which aren't part of National Parks, towards Lago del Desierto, which are totally rural (agreste). So I think the WE are, yes, inserted in Wild Patagonia. Despite the touristic services that we all have in Chaltén. In 35 years we achieved a touristic tier that has everything to offer but you move just a bit away and in the forest, and in the countryside, you can experience the Wild Savage Patagonia. Certainly!!

[41:31.5] **Interviewer:** Is the wind wild?

ROMINA: [41:40.2] The wind IS wild! YES!!! The wind is like a DEVIL here!!! [DEMONY!] Totally damned!! There are people who can stand it. There's people that have left Chaltén because of the wind. Because you can see these flags, they're here one day and they fly away. So the kids that work here already know that due to the wind, if you'd like to have flags you have to be willing to run after them.

[42:09.8] I believe that the wind is the major point to take into consideration in this town. For instance, Calafate DOESN'T have this kind of wind. The tourists come over from Calafate, and Chaltén flies, and over there it's just the sun, birdies, butterflies. Over here you can't find a butterfly. Because poor butterfly it would fly away. So over here the wind is a factor that the tourist that comes over says ``wind!'' You arrived to the land of the wind.

[42:43.5] If you notice, there are businesses that are called ``the winds gathers us'', they're several that relate to the wind because it's a factor that stands out and you need to accept it as soon as you arrive and intend to stay.

Interviewer: [43:01.3] What does ``el viento los amontona'' have, because it's the first you mentioned?

ROMINA: [43:04.7] That's a girl from Córdoba, an architect, who came over to work in one of the first pizza places in Chaltén, and then she made her own souvenir house. It's right around here on the main street. Now she's working with

a friend of her, also from Córdoba. The concept is that we're all gathered up here as similar people between us. Special people.

[43:32.7] To live a great deal of years over here.

Interviewer: [43:36.4] About Patagonia, reaching now some closure, I'm not sure if we as Argentinians have the idea of Patagonia. We normally just say the South. Do you think that over here, or in general, there's a Patagonia concept? If so, what's it about?

ROMINA: [44:05.5] Us Argentinians, we have a concept ... ? I, Romina, I began to assimilate the idea of Patagonia because of my relationship with the tourists that came from abroad. I DID NOT have a concept at all for Patagonia. No. It's a bit like that the foreigner gave me that concept, of Patagonia. That far away place, that is attractive, and is liked, and that they value so much. Notice how many brands, very well known,

[44:36.5] from a respectful point of view, I believe. Because the relationship between those people and this land is of total respect, to value, and take care of. I think that the Argentinian doesn't, no. But those of us who live in these places, the foreigner themselves go on delivering us that concept, that we take in and say ``yeah! we're here! In a unique place, to take care of, very valuable''. And now I believe that the Argentinian tourist, ourselves, from our working place demanding it to be respected,

[45:11.7] That if they come over they should take care of the place, that they SHOULD VALUE. That coming over to Patagonia is really ... There are tourists that have to save a lot of years of their life to reach these places. And for an Argentinian to have the accessibility to reach over here they have to see that as a highly valuable thing. Take care, enjoy, promote correctly. So I think we're in that process. But I think that naturally we didn't use to have that concept for Patagonia.

[45:39.0] Because abroad they say ``Patagonia: uh!'' We've traveled now quite a bit and when we arrive some place and we say that we live in Patagonia. ``Where?'' Chaltén! Fitz Roy: ``uuuuhhhh''. Everyone knows about it.

Interviewer: [45:55.3] When you travel, do you visit places that are not related at all, to New York, or how do you choose, is there a relationship between living here and where you chose to visit?

ROMINA: [46:06.9] Yes... We've started to chose what we don't have here. That is sea and sun. **[Interviewer:** Got it] So when we travel we try to go to countries that are in summer. So we only travel with bikini, and sunga, and we go out. [Laughter]. So we've gone a lot to Brazil, we got to visit Greece, I don't know if there's any Greek ancestor but we LOVE Greece! We've traveled with a lot of friends from town

[46:38.2] with whom we all travel together, and we rent big houses and we enjoy the sun in community. And then we travel and visit friends that are living abroad. Córdoba is always a visit, but we get there in winter too. But in these years we've tried to look for places that are different to ours. So that the kids can get to know something else. To give them, considering that we live in such a small community, that they have the chance to

[47:08.1] get to know these places. We were raised in Córdoba, a city, I did an international exchange to study abroad, Demián has also travel a lot. **Interviewer:** Where to? I went to Tazmania Island, South Australia, for a year. So we are little dog feet. **Interviewer:** And Demián? And he started to travel after we arrived here. At one point he was about to go to live to Italy, then he didn't, and he ended in Chaltén.

[47:38.4] And then he acquired the taste for traveling. But we try to ... We like Brazil a lot. The North. To rest assured with heat when we can travel, which is in our winter. Then we have a lot of friends who live in Italy or family in Spain . So we go over and visit, and make a mixed family. We try to spend in traveling. We think that is our major saving, as long as it's possible.

Interviewer: [48:09.0] Now to finish, you've told us a bit about Chaltén, could you make some kind of evaluation, or prognosis for the future of the town?

ROMINA: [48:19.0] I could tell you how I imagine ... That we are reaching our peak performance. That's what I'd like to think. Just now we're under a discussion about many people that come over to work for the season, they've tried to stay in Chaltén, and now there's a serious problem which is the lack of lands, fiscal lands. They're over. They're some remnant lands,

[48:50.6] but don't have anything built. So we're in a debate as a town as if it should grow or not. If National Parks has to give another 130 hectares so that this town grows up to the double. So as a town that discussion is going to be a huge challenge. Because there is a lot of need for people that live by the rent and haven't been able to access any land, but yet at the same time we say that

[49:20.8] the town's going to transform, duplicating it's population. Duplicating the amount of tourism. Is it a convenient thing that this happens in Chaltén? Just a few kilometres away? Would it be best that it should be some bit further away? A close by town... That would live out from this natural resource ... But will Chaltén continue to be the same? I believe that that discussion will be interesting, there will be varied positions, but Chaltén will remain the same. As it is today.

[49:50.0] Perhaps there could be a development nearby but at a distance of no less than 20 kilometres, that would already be another town, with other features. That would live out

from this resource. But this wouldn't grow in size. Because I believe that part of the appeal of the little town is that it is a mini town inserted in the National Park. With the invasion that we are generating now as a city to the National Park, I see it quite harmful that this becomes bigger...

[50:20.3] That natural reserves would be taken, with a prevision that they should remain as are, with an invasion of our own development. At it's time it was cool, we were fortunate to arrive at a time that they would tell you: ``how many land do you want? 3000 metres, an hectare, how much?'' Now the situation has changed and it's like there's an over population. So I believe that duplicating the town would be harmful in a certain way.

Interviewer: [50:50.9] I'm under the impression that there's a micro climate socially and geographically... I've been told that there are a lot of guides that instead of living in town are living in a separate place. Is this so? How does that work? In campsites?

ROMINA: [51:14.8] Yes. Most of them live in campsites. Because the problem for the last 3 or 4 years is on the habitat type. Since it gives so much money to rent your property by day, then with all these new portal, like booking, airbnb, for everyone it is more convenient to rent it to the tourists. You already know that from October to April you can have it available. What happened?

[51:42.5] All the people that we need, migrant seasonal workers, that arrive by October to work: they don't have where to live. At a time, National Parks had campsites that were rural and free that ended up being canceled because since it was such a boom of people that came over to work, they looked like mini populations of guides. It lost the concept of rural campsite, for the tourist, and they got closed. And the only remaining campsites in town are those that are for rent,

[52:12.1] and they're private owned. Many guides live there, because the problem is that they're charging a single room house 20.000 pesos per month (nearly 500 dollars). There's no salary for these kind of jobs that could afford that monthly cost. And nonetheless, people rent their homes because these portals allow so. So we're in a transition of a big problematic habitat situation.

[52:40.9] We need people to come over to work, but they don't have where to live. So they may have commented that. Now we're going to see, because municipality understood this situation and they are trying to regulate properties that are for rental, that people shouldn't go crazy, that they should put proper prices to what is possible, but I wouldn't think that this would be solved by this season, but rather in the following.

[53:13.7] Would you like to add something else?

ROMINA: [53:18.2] No.

Interviewer: [53:23.9] We typically do an hour, we know that you're busy. We really appreciate!!

Milena 1.WAV

Start [00:01:09.0]

End [02:03:50.9]

MILENA: [00:01:09.0] I'll be the only one carrying a microphone? I hope to not say too much nonsense [bullshit].

Interviewer: [00:01:15.2] We hope that you do! The looser, the better. We don't want a prepared script.

MILENA: [00:01:25.3] I was just saying that. I always improvise. Because I think that's what people want. Not that you're reading a trick-guide and always say the same thing. I never say the same.

Interviewer: [00:01:39.1] Over here I shitfaced! ...

MILENA: [00:01:40.2] [Laughter]

Interviewer: [00:01:45.8] Over here I had sex ...

MILENA: [00:01:48.9] [Laughter] I won't say that.

MILENA: [00:02:13.5] Oh. I didn't tell you ... The map! So if you continue the trail ... We are here. And we are going up to this point. If you continue the trail there is another longer trail that goes to Paso del Viento. Paso del Viento is a place where you can access to the ice cap. The Southern Patagonian Ice Field.

[00:02:44.4] Maybe you heard about that. We have a very very big ice cap. With the Northern Patagonian Ice Field, it's the third biggest mass of ice in the world. First it's Antarctica, then Greenland, and then the Southern and Northern Patagonian Ice Field. Well. From this point we are going to see Laguna Torre, and also Laguna Capri.

[00:03:14.4] I don't remember exactly if these two legs also. But it's a very big panoramic view. It's a very open place. And it's really nice. We can also see Viedma Lake to the other side. If we are lucky we can find some fossils on the trail. So we can see them and let them at the side to leave others to see them.

[00:03:48.8] But we are not going to take them. Because it's part of the National Park. I have a place where I always put my ... My fossils? ... When I find them, to show them to people, so I'll show you. OK? Let's go.

MILENA: [00:04:23.5] Oh what an embarrassment. Well, as I said, it's not allowed. It's 100, the tax [the fine], if we take fossils.

Interviewer: [00:04:39.9] Do you often go to fossil sites? We have gone, in the last two years, to four. The last one

we went to, there [...] were actually bones. Of the size of your legs.

MILENA: [00:05:00.9] Wow!!! ... This is parabella. If you touch it, it's a very oily plant. We use for medicine too. It's good for haematoma and well the trout, the stomach too. I make some creams. With this.

[00:05:28.1] For pain. Muscles. It's a good thing.

[00:05:44.3] This is the pitío [Chilean flicker (*Colaptes pitius*)]. Do you hear the noise? This is a wood pecker. It's white and with some black lines.

[00:06:14.6] This is fifío. There are many birds, really nice birds.

[00:06:34.9] I don't know if they are ripe... They are not ripe! It's very sour right now.

[00:09:10.9] This is neneo [*Mulinum spinosum*, (neneo, hierba negra, hierba de la culebra)]. Mothers-in-law pillow!! ... Well it depends on your mother in law. Not all mothers-in-law are like this. I'm lucky.

Interviewer: [00:10:18.6] Mine is cool. And I have a baby, 5 months now.

MILENA: [00:10:18.6] Oh!! So little! I have one too. 7 years old in just a couple of days. Satia. He's a boy. And we've been together with Ben for a short time. I had been alone for two years. Until I found Ben.

[00:11:02.0] So we're thinking about having another one.

Interviewer: [00:11:15.1] Could you tell us where we are in the world?

MILENA: [00:11:23.1] Oh look. In paradise. I don't know. I can't say. We are just right here right now. Look at this condor flying around us. We are in the perfect moment. In the perfect now.

Interviewer: [00:11:56.4] Those are very big.

MILENA: [00:11:58.0] Yes. Can be three metres from wing to wing. That's why it's very difficult for them to start flying. And so the condor's nest are always in vertical places like there, and the other side. So they can just jump and fly [glide]. And it takes two years for the babies to start flying. They spend two years with their parents.

[00:12:32.6] So they have only one egg every two years. They can live like 70 years. They are very long lived.

Interviewer: [00:12:45.4] So paradise, what is that called. What is the town called?

MILENA: [00:12:51.7] It's called El Chaltén. El Chaltén means the mountain that smokes and it's the word that the Tehuelches, or Aónikenk, gave to the mountain, to Fitz Roy. Because, well, it's a particularity that it's always smoking on the top. Because the winds that come from the West carry a lot of moisture and so when the wind goes to the top and passes to the Supercanaleta,

[00:13:27.9] there's an ice channel in the West face of Fitz Roy, so all of this moisture gets colder and becomes into clouds. And so it's always cloudy or smokey on the top of Fitz Roy Mountain. And so Fitz Roy is the name of the captain, a Beagle Captain, from Darwin's expedition.

[00:13:55.2] When Perito Moreno came here he gave this name, in honor of this person, Fitz Roy.

Interviewer: [00:14:12.4] People outside of Argentina are not familiar with Benito Moreno, the father of Argentina's National Parks, can you tell us a bit about who he is for the sake of people who don't know?

MILENA: [00:14:29.4] OK. Perito Moreno was a ... Perito means like an expert, a technician that ... He made the border between Argentina and Chile. And he came here with an expedition to do these limits, make these borders. After that he

[00:15:00.1] founded [established] the National Park. ... He gave to the National Park. The government tried to ... He donated. To make the first National Park. And so, well, he came from Spain. And he was an explorer.

[00:15:30.1] He came here but he didn't arrive to El Chaltén. He came to the area, and he had a very hard time in Río La Leona. He had to fight with the female lion. We call them pumas [Mountain lions].

[00:15:58.5] So he donated his name for the river La Leona, in honor of this wild moment with the female lion.

Interviewer: [00:16:39.0] Do you live here throughout the year?

MILENA: [00:16:39.7] All year long you mean? Yes! The winters are very lonely. I don't know why all the kids are born after winters ... You understand? You don't have many things to do ... So people are busy. At home.

[00:17:09.4] Yeah. All the boys are born in spring, in summer. After the winter. Nine months after the winters.

[00:17:29.7] Well. As busy as it is in the summer, it's as solitary in winters.

[00:17:47.8] Sometimes I go in my bike in winter, nobody. It's like ... We call it Death by Bike [La muerte en bicicleta]. The death is right in the bike. Because there's nobody around.

[00:18:08.6] I like this la muerte en bicicleta. It's very nice.

[00:18:15.3] You can't even find a cat around.

[00:18:18.4] Well, the thing is that if you love nature you can go outside anyway, you can skate in the lakes, you can skate in Capri Lake, or also there's a lake in town. Now it's a little bit dry. It's a good thing.

Interviewer: [00:18:47.2] How is the climate through the winter?

MILENA: [00:18:49.7] The whether is ... Well, this winter it was very cold. And so, it's 10 or 20 degrees below zero.

[00:19:13.7] So yes. I have to go to Comodoro [Rivadavia]. I had to travel a few days. And I left my home. And when I came back it was everything frozen, my plants ... Died. So yes, it can be very very cold.

[00:19:40.9] And many people have problems in their homes because the water tubes get frozen and so they have to repair.

[00:19:56.9] It also snows. This winter it snowed like it October. I remember it was like 15 centimetres.

[00:20:18.4] And well, you also have a social life. We meet with friends, and do music or you can go to the indoor boulder. ...

[00:20:37.7] There's an indoor wall. Climbing indoor, on the wall.

Interviewer: [00:20:49.5] Is it really windy in winter?

MILENA: [00:20:51.5] Not at all. Because it's more windy in summer. Because we have two different centres. There's in the West, a very low pressure area, and in the steppe in summer it's high pressure area. So the warm air is lighter than cold air, so the wind comes very fast and use this place.

[00:21:28.8] That's why ... Lost ways in the mountains because of snow, or rain, along the forest, and then goes dry and fast to the steppe. That's why it's very dry and very windy in the steppe. It's more windy in Calafate than in Chaltén.

Interviewer: [00:21:49.5] Is it?

MILENA: [00:21:51.1] In the steppe I mean. Well, it's also windy here. But a little bit protected by the forest.

Interviewer: [00:22:02.2] It's not windy today but yesterday and the day before ... We got a taste of what it really feels like here.

MILENA: [00:22:09.8] Wow. Yes. I don't remember yesterday. The day before yesterday I went to Laguna Torre, and it was very windy.

Interviewer: [00:22:20.7] Someone told us it gets so windy that it can ruin houses.

MILENA: [00:22:25.4] Yeah! Sure. A friend found a kayak in his yard. Oh, a kayak, OK. Now I have a kayak. Because it was blown away from some other person. And he asked everybody: I found a kayak in my yard, who is the owner? And nobody answered, so ... He has got a kayak now. ... So funny.

[00:23:10.1] Also you have to be very careful when you are building a house here.

[00:23:19.0] I have a friend that lived in a caravan. I live in a bus. I live in a bus. Because here it's not easy to have a place to live. And so my friend, in one day I remember, in Christmas or something like that, he went out for a party and when she got back home, she found her caravan dropped. Because of the wind.

[00:23:51.1] So you have to tie all the time. All things.

Interviewer: [00:23:59.4] Are the visitors probably surprised and annoyed by the wind?

MILENA: [00:24:07.9] Yes. I don't know. If you always have wind, after that you adapt. All the noises and all of these things.

MILENA: [00:24:52.8] So you know about these trees. We have notofagus. These are ñires. It smells like cinnamon.

Interviewer: [00:25:09.6] I love this one.

MILENA: [00:25:12.0] No! Don't tear them off! You can smell them like this.

Interviewer: [00:25:15.8] My wife's a landscaper and I'm used to doing this. I'm sorry.

MILENA: [00:25:22.0] This is ñire. These are notofagus, the family. So we have a lot of notofagus here in Patagonia, ñire, and ... Smells like cinnamon.

Interviewer: [00:25:42.5] A hundred dollar fine! I don't know but it's possible.

MILENA: [00:25:44.9] Also, this is, we have from the same family lengas too. The thing is very ... Look, this is lenga, the leaf is very different than the other one. And doesn't smell like ... But it's from the same family as you saw before.

[00:26:17.6] This one ... No. It doesn't smell the same. This is lenga and we have also other that are guindo, or

coihue, that ... These trees change the leaves' colour and loose the leaves in winter. But the others, guindo or coihue, keep the leaves in winter. Very green.

[00:26:52.2] And also we have the same family in New Zealand. The same trees. As notofagus. So we can say that because of that, in the beginning, the Earth was together. The Earth was Gondwana.

[00:27:24.2] Gondwana. I like this name. And also we have some animals, like marsupials, in Patagonia. In the North of Patagonia. Patagonia starts in Neuquén more or less, until Tierra del Fuego.

[00:27:50.6] So we have same animals and trees more or less. But well, this marsupial that is called ``monito de monte'' (little monkey of the bush) but it's not a monito. Monito means monkey. But it's kind of ... Looks like a rat. I don't think it looks like a monito. But it's very small, with big eyes, big nose, and has a pouch.

Interviewer: [00:28:30.0] How big is it?

MILENA: [00:28:29.7] It's very small. And the tail is like this. But it's not usual to see them. I've never seen one.

Interviewer: [00:28:41.4] They come out at night?

MILENA: [00:28:40.4] No. They live in Bariloche. ... Also near there: Villa La Angostura.

Interviewer: [00:29:03.7] That place is incredible!

MILENA: [00:29:04.8] It's in the North [of Patagonia]. It has some lakes around. There's a place that has a trail [route] that is called Siete Lagos. You can go around this trail and see all the lakes around. And so, this animals only eat a kind of flower from there.

[00:29:27.8] I knew that in Chile there are three different kind of marsupials. But I don't know their names. We were together with New Zealand, and then split. And the continents: it's very very similar the land. With lakes and glaciers (in NZ).

Interviewer: [00:29:54.2] The land here reminds a bit of Tasmania. Yeah!

MILENA: [00:30:04.5] I love this rock that you saw there. Everybody, when they see this rock standing on there on the cliff ... You know the movie? Coyote and corre caminos ... [The road runner!]

Interviewer: [00:30:32.3] That one on the edge over there. Very precarious.

MILENA: [00:30:34.5] Did you see?

[00:30:46.9] Well, these are ... We have many flowers around here. I don't know if we're going to see orchids, but we have orchids. This is a plant that we have everywhere. This is achilleas milenrama, means achilleas is from Achilles. It's a very good plant to relief your immunity and melinrama means a thousand on a branch.

Interviewer: [00:31:22.7] You know a lot about the medicines of plants.

MILENA: [00:31:25.5] I like. Because I use ... I do tinctures, and creams. This plant is very good for everything.

Interviewer: [00:31:40.7] Another aloe vera.

MILENA: [00:31:44.2] Well, that's the story, that's why it's called achillea, because he took this plant to cut the blood and they put it on the ankle. [?....]

[00:32:00.6] It's a very good thing for women. When in period time.

Interviewer: [00:32:08.4] We have something similar for that back home. Nedal?

MILENA: [00:32:12.2] Maybe it's the same.

Interviewer: [00:32:16.5] It looks different. So we have something different. But not sure what it's called.

MILENA: [00:32:26.0] Because I know that in Europe they have the same. Maybe it's another colour but it's the same plant. Milenrama also, or achillea. Achilleas.

MILENA: [00:34:18.3] Are they used to walking?

Interviewer: [00:34:20.6] Yeah, quite much.

MILENA: [00:34:23.2] And you?

Interviewer: [00:34:24.8] I used to be a maraton runner.

MILENA: [00:34:27.3] You?

Interviewer: [00:34:28.9] Well yeah, not professionally, but yeah. I did the distance.

MILENA: [00:34:34.1] How much? 50K?

Interviewer: [00:34:36.7] Marathon. That was 42K.

MILENA: [00:34:38.9] Ah. With Ben we did a 50K race.

Interviewer: [00:34:43.0] That's ultra.

MILENA: [00:34:44.2] Ultra. Whatever. I don't know.

Interviewer: [00:34:45.8] That's what I am researching. How did it go?

MILENA: [00:34:49.6] Very well. I was not even prepared but since I always walk.

Interviewer: [00:34:54.2] Not very prepared? That's cool.

MILENA: [00:34:55.7] No!

Interviewer: [00:34:56.9] That's my style.

MILENA: [00:34:58.2] I love to run, and so since I'm always running, always on the move, I always go out for a run. It's like my meditation. And that was like a year ago. Not last winter but the one before I was running everyday. I was in a sort of family crisis, and my family in general, not mine alone, and uh. I had to burn, burn karma, I don't know how to say it.

[00:35:34.4] And I went everyday for a run.

Interviewer: [00:35:36.8] That's very clear.

MILENA: [00:35:39.5] And it did me so well. Running is the best. And we ran with my brother too. So well, ...

Interviewer: [00:35:52.5] Was it a season thing or do you still do that?

MILENA: [00:35:54.7] What, in my family?

Interviewer: [00:35:58.3] I mean about the race? The ultra?

MILENA: [00:35:59.0] Ah. I did that because ... I just met Ben in USA. I went over there. I needed to do a trip alone, a different movie. And I went over there alone. And I went to climb. And I stopped at a hostel (in) California. We met there. And he invited me for a walk. So I said OK.

[00:36:28.1] In the beginning I resisted a bit, but then I said it was OK, let's go. And we went for a walk and we were fleeting. He was doing the Pacific route. Three months he had already been walking already.

[00:36:56.2] And well, we finished Lake Tahoe and right there in Lake Tahoe we got caught by a bear, a small one, but well... So that day we didn't know what to do. They invited us to sleep over at a hotel with a bunch of friends of his. We went there and then we met other people.

[00:37:22.9] We ended up at their homes. And all the time with new stories. And they invited us. They were going to run a marathon. And Ben said: I want in! And I got in too. So we ended up running that marathon which was awesome. And we worked as volunteers, so that we didn't have to pay. So well, the race started and I had went to the bathroom. And when I came back everyone was already running. So I began

last, but well, I reached up to Ben,

[00:38:06.1] that was resting, and we went along and ended together the race.

Interviewer: [00:38:13.1] Before this race you had never ran any race?

MILENA: [00:38:17.1] Only one over here, but a small one. They're very calm.

Interviewer: [00:38:21.8] A 10K?

MILENA: [00:38:22.4] The ones over here were 30K. But trail, which is different.

[00:38:33.9] When I ran I always ran in mixed, and I came out first, I mean we came out first. But it's because it's something that I always do. Without ... I'm not even prepared. But, ...

Interviewer: [00:38:52.9] So you might not have a specific training ... But you do have a base training.

MILENA: [00:38:52.9] Yeah, that's it. And a runner friend that runs here would tell me: no, you have to start running, and so on. And well, I was already running. But I didn't do it as a ... Like as if I wanted to win. I didn't care about that.

[00:39:10.8] I wanted to go and do the lap over to the Huemul in a day. So I had told Ben that we could do that. And it's, in total, 70K. So I said, well, nothing. That other trail went very well, at no time I felt breaking down or anything. It was like always, just super conscious. And (nothing), we went up walking, at a good pace, and we went down as fast as we could. But well, trying not to break anything either.

Interviewer: [00:39:53.9] Very nice vibe.

MILENA: [00:39:55.7] So that's it. It's like going with a certain rhythm, and over here there are so many scenes to do along a day, which I would love to do. Because I used to climb mountains. Over here. And after my son was born, I decided not to. It's a lot of risk. But I never felt that adrenaline that I felt when I went to the mountains, until I started running.

[00:40:25.9] So well, I said, this is something that I can do and doesn't require that I expose myself, at most I'll get some blisters.

Interviewer: [00:40:37.7] Well, there are different types of races, right? Races where people go to extreme cold, or extreme heat, but in the mountain, it's ...

MILENA: [00:40:45.2] Well, I'm not even interested ... I mean in those races that are eco adventures and what not.

300K ... We can stop for a while here. So that's it. Super enthusiastic.

Interviewer: [00:41:07.1] They could even make a race over here ...

MILENA: [00:41:07.8] Yes. It's that they do races over here.

Interviewer: [00:41:11.0] Yeah?

MILENA: [00:41:11.8] Yeah. The one that I mentioned. But it's ...

Interviewer: [00:41:15.9] Oh, but I mean more distance?

MILENA: [00:41:16.7] 30K. 20K by bike ...

Interviewer: [00:41:26.1] That one that you mentioned about 70K lap was great!

MILENA: [00:41:28.2] Well, and I've got a runner friend, we once came to Pampa de Las Carretas running, and he would tell me: no, boluda, you've got to enter. They wanted me to race with them. ... No!

Interviewer: [00:41:44.5] Who tells you these things? If you get a good sponsor ...

MILENA: [00:41:45.6] They say that they gain decent money.

Interviewer: [00:41:50.3] That's why I'm saying.

MILENA: [00:41:49.7] Oh whatever. ... I competed when I was little, in sport climbing.

Interviewer: [00:42:01.2] In my experience, you can notice how things grow, and opportunities appear, and suddenly, as of a comparison in graffiti. Some 20 years ago it was super illegal, and the kids that have been painting the last 15 years, at least in Latin America, at first it was a sort of almost criminal activity, until they started saying: hey, this is great!

[00:42:38.3] And they started hiring them, and so on. Not everyone, but some. And I'm under the impression that with ultra something similar is happening. At first people did it just because, in free time. And later on, people began to win, and others would come over and offer promoting.

MILENA: [00:42:55.5] If you get a brand ... I need some new pants.

Interviewer: [00:43:00.0] What I mean is to stay alert to timing, because I see that these kind of things happen in USA, and it seems likely that it'll happen here too. The matter is that sometimes one can't know exactly when.

MILENA: [00:43:11.1] Well, this guy that I was talking about,

he's ran a lot of races. Cuatro Refugios, the Tetra. I'm awful at riding a bike. So I can run whatever you want, I don't get tired. Perhaps I'm not so fast when I start, but once I got warmed up, I can stride. But by bike I'm awful. I'd need to learn better.

Interviewer: [00:43:38.4] How much do you weight?

MILENA: [00:43:41.3] I don't know. ... When I'm heavy I get to 48 kilos.

Interviewer: [00:43:48.9] That's the least that my wife has been. She's around 52, and she says that when she's in her worse shape is when she goes down. So 52 is like ideal.

MILENA: [00:44:03.0] Does she run?

Interviewer: [00:44:04.1] No, not at all. She used to play tennis. But she's in good shape, eats well, good humour, you know that stress can put some fat into you. But among runners in general it's said that the lightest, the better.

MILENA: [00:44:23.0] Well, yes. The matter in my case is that I've been a climber my whole life. So to me the weight is important as well. When I'm at my thinnest, is when I can climb the hardest. But I try not to get to entangled with all that.

Interviewer: [00:44:45.1] Yeah, sure.

MILENA: [00:44:44.7] At one point I was very strict. But you go over board.

[00:44:59.2] Gorgeous [overhearing]. I like this word. ... So you lived up in USA until age seven?

Interviewer: [00:45:03.5] Yeah.

MILENA: [00:45:04.3] And that's why you're fluent...

Interviewer: [00:45:07.8] Well, we are from Córdoba, I'm suspicious that my local tone moves over to English, (despite proper pronunciation)!!

MILENA: [00:45:18.1] Well, I'm still learning to talk with Ben.

Interviewer: [00:45:21.4] Yeah, that's the best way. That's how I taught my wife.

[00:45:30.0] Did you notice the stripes over there? Nice!

MILENA: [00:45:44.8] Look! The mountains there: it's snowing. The forecast from Laguna de Los Tres and it's snowing there maybe. The other day when I went to Laguna de Los Tres, I remember then that I said: the snow catches us but here it didn't snow.

[00:46:14.2] So it's 1200 metres, Laguna de Los Tres. So it's high.

Interviewer: [00:46:23.8] Mic check. Good!

MILENA: [00:46:33.0] Ah look. It's a dinosaur... Look at this fossil [joking]. Cows maybe. Or a horse...

Interviewer: [00:47:09.0] More of a horse than a cow...

MILENA: [00:47:14.9] Yes.

[00:47:15.8] Anemones... Are already gone.

MILENA: [00:47:44.1] Quechua is from Europe, France.

Interviewer: [00:47:58.8] Quechua and Patagonia are both international brands... Hopefully they donate to local organizations ...

MILENA: [00:48:15.1] Well Patagonia, the owners of the brand, he was one of the climbers that did the Californian route in Fitz Roy, in 1969. They came with other climbers, Douglas Tompkins, I don't remember the other names.

[00:48:39.6] And they made a movie. And also ... Look, these are geraniums. And they made a very good movie. They came like escaping from the Vietnam War, because their parents them money to move. And so they went doing surfing, in the coast of California up to Argentina.

[00:49:15.7] So all Peru, Chile, they were snowboarding and climbing and when they arrived here they made the first ascension of this route. The South face of Cerro Fitz Roy. The Californian route.

Interviewer: [00:49:40.9] On the subject of Patagonia, do you think that ... Well, you meet a lot of international visitors, do you think that the idea of Patagonia, the image of Patagonia that Argentiniens have and the one that international visitors have is similar or different?

MILENA: [00:50:24.1] Oh. I think it's quite different. Because the thing is very subjective. Because all the things that you're going to see are going to be inspired or conditioned because of your life, your culture, all of your [subtleties?]. So Argentiniens, we have a very different culture than International people, so

[00:50:55.1] maybe the Argentiniens think ... It's like a Patagonian dream. Everybody ... If you ask in the North of Argentina, they think that Patagonia is like a dream. Because of the mountains, the whether. And also because this big pics inspire you.

[00:51:23.1] When I came here my first time I was very young and the road was gravel. And the small rock was like this, very very difficult to come here. We spent three days from Bariloche to El Chaltén, because it was not very easy to

drive here. And so we had to repair the wheels seven times.

[00:51:57.5] And the gas tank twice. We came here in a Falcon truck, very old and so, that happened.

Interviewer: [00:52:10.4] What year was this?

MILENA: [00:52:12.1] 1999. 20 years ago.

Interviewer: [00:52:18.0] So El Chaltén has changed a lot since then.

MILENA: [00:52:21.5] Yeah. A lot. It was a very small town, well, it's founded in 1985. Almost 34 years old, in October it's going to be. Because well, the government decided to establish the town after a conflict with Chile. We have like a

[00:52:50.4] commission in the Dessert Lake, with the military and they fought each other and they killed, they shot a carabiner (Chilean), and died. So the government ...

[00:53:18.6] They decided to make like a place. But before that they came here many different climbers to make the mountains. So the first time that someone reached the top of Cerro Fitz Roy it was a team, a French team, in 1952. So all the expedition was very very heavy, with a lot of stuff, and a lot of food. And horses and well, all the other kind of other style.

[00:53:54.2] And well, now climbers come that can do all the Fitz Roy range in 5 days. Like ... Two years ago, Tommy Caldwell and Alex Honnold they are very famous climbers in the moment, they did that, in 5 days.

Interviewer: [00:54:17.4] And so the town in the last 20 years. What is different about it? Can you give me some examples?

MILENA: [00:54:26.0] Well, in the beginning we had few people living all year around, and so ... [Hi!] We don't have a hospital for example, we just only have like a centre. Like a healing centre. We have a school.

[00:54:54.9] Primary school, kinder-garden and also high school. But we are just a municipality, for two years now. This change's a lot about how is the organization about the town, it's now that the decisions are from the town.

[00:55:22.2] Not from Río Gallegos, that is the Capital. This changed a lot. How the management ...

Interviewer: [00:55:32.6] Yes. Are there many more tourist facilities?

MILENA: [00:55:39.7] Well. We don't have very good signal, wi-fi signal, we don't have a bank, and so sometimes it's kind of Chaltén facilities are ... I don't know.... Also it's a good thing in one point is that you come here and you

have to forget about the telephone and the communications, and so

[00:56:10.5] you can be like in an island. Very far away. But sometimes you need to be communicated with people and ... I don't know.

Interviewer: [00:56:24.1] Are there many more visitors, are the numbers going up?

MILENA: [00:56:28.2] Yes. It's rising.

[00:56:46.0] It's very different when I came here the first time here, it was... You could walk. I was staying in La Chocolatería, that is: you remember the bakery, in this street, and it was all the roads were gravel. Until 2008.

[00:57:13.4] In 2008, from this moment we have constant growth.

Interviewer: [00:57:22.7] To make it more accessible then?

MILENA: [00:57:24.0] Mmm. You remember we spent like 5 or 6 hours from El Calafate to arrive here to Chaltén, and now it's 2.5 hours. It was double. And spent three days to come here and when I came the first time ...

Interviewer: [00:57:43.9] What year?

MILENA: [00:57:43.9] 20 years ago, 1999.

Interviewer: [00:57:54.6] The years of Friends!

MILENA: [00:57:50.6] And so it was very different.

Interviewer: [00:58:08.3] Are there garbage cans around here?

MILENA: [00:58:11.2] No.

Interviewer: [00:58:13.8] Well you know, what's funny ... That's a joke, but in some ways this place reminds me of Tasmania, but another place it reminds me of is the European Alps. But if we were in the European Alps, we'd be drinking a beer maybe there. And to get from the town to here, there'd be a chair lift.

[00:58:41.4] And maybe right over there a five star luxury hotel ...

MILENA: [00:58:44.5] Yes. The thing is that we're in the National Park. It's a problem also for us. Because we don't have a place to live. Because the National Park is just around the town and so now we are waiting for the treatment between the state, the National Park so the National Park is going to give us for the state, land to build.

[00:59:10.9] So I'm waiting for 11 years to have my own land,

to buy. But it's ... Still waiting.

Interviewer: [00:59:19.1] And don't you have illegal occupiers (ocupas)?

MILENA: [00:59:20.6] Also that. But it's not very convenient...

Interviewer: [00:59:25.7] What would be the pros and cons ...

MILENA: [00:59:27.7] We don't have a place to live. So there's a lot of people that is using places, land, that there are nobody's living there ... Because we don't have a place. So now ...

Interviewer: [00:59:44.5] So where do they live when they come over here to work?

MILENA: [00:59:48.4] I live in a bus. Because I don't have a place. And I build my home. It's a very comfy place. We live for free in the bus.

Interviewer: [00:59:57.5] And what about the figure, which is popular in Argentina, of usucaption (usucaptio) [usucapión]? *Paying taxes for a free land...

MILENA: [01:00:01.2] No. Here it's not done.

[01:00:05.1] Well, there are some people that are living at places from the state, and now they have the option to live there. But if you are asking for land, and after that you are occupying a space... It's not a good deal because you have to wait for a long long time, maybe the police are just going to send you some

[01:00:33.5] like withdrawal order, [orden de retirada]...

Interviewer: [01:00:39.1] Does that become a conflict then between businesses and the Park? Yeah, because you only have business owners that own places but the employees have no existence. Sorry on the answer ... My bad.

MILENA: [01:00:50.2] Yes. It's a very bad moment. But well, we are going to cross fingers ... Because after Chaltén became municipality, we have more options or more chances to have this option that the government is trying to hand more land from the National Park.

[01:01:26.6] They are in treatise to have twenty hectares from the National Park. They are doing a deal.

Interviewer: [01:01:42.4] I read that a few years ago there was a ... Town at the edges, I think it was sold... Is that right?

MILENA: [01:01:55.1] Yes. Andreas Madsen.

Interviewer: [01:01:58.1] What was that like?

MILENA: [01:01:59.9] Aaaahh. Yeah. Well, they decided to move this place. It was part of the free camping and so, many people, I lived there for a while. When I came in the first moment, when I came in my tent, I lived there for a month or so, just to visit Chaltén.

[01:02:32.1] And also in another moment I lived almost one season, like three months, in tent also. But in another place. Because they closed. The National Park, the rangers closed Madsen because of that. It was full of people, full of garbage also.

[01:03:02.0] And so they are not giving us an option to live. So people live in the camping for season ... And well, you have to adapt. Anyway: if it's windy, if it's cloudy, if it's rainy, snowing, whatever. Well, that's the option. If you don't like you can go.

[01:03:31.5] So it's like this place there are no options for people that couldn't live. If you couldn't live here you have to move, because it's very very raw [crudo].

Interviewer: [01:04:13.2] I mentioned usucaption. You can grab in Argentina a terrain, build a house, and start paying taxes. So even if you are not a legal owner, after a certain amount of time passes by, five or ten years of doing this ...

MILENA: [01:04:38.8] Ten years.

Interviewer: [01:04:40.4] Then you become owner of the place.

Interviewer: [01:04:43.7] Squater's right.

Interviewer: [01:04:47.0] So I asked if it's possible here and she says it's not here.

MILENA: [01:04:48.6] No, yes. It's possible, but you have all the town against you. That's the thing. Because you know that ... The people that are living in some places, they haven't got owners. The owner is the state.

[01:05:12.1] Yeah, at one point [in Spanish] I didn't have where to stay. And I put the bus in a place that the mayor told me to, and it turned out it was a neighbour's. Because he had never changed ... Never fenced. So I went and spoke to him, and told him that the mayor had told me to come over here, because I had no other place to go, and so and so. And added that I wanted to buy the land.

[01:05:40.4] He said: no no, stay there, since he hadn't done anything there anyway. So it's all like ... He has a house that the state provides him, and so he has where to live. They gave him a terrain and he didn't do anything. So it's better for him that I'm there. So they're not going to take him out.

[01:06:00.9] But to me, they haven't given me land yet. So it's like ... But it's terrible this situation. And a short time ago I went to a meeting, ... We're going to stop over this small forest. So I went to a meeting convened by the major, because the previous one was an old ... He didn't do much.

[01:06:27.0] His wife did his job but didn't have a formal position. And on top of that had resigned. But was the one that took the decisions. Well, he died. Now, the person that is in charge, who is much more competent, and well, we're waiting to see what happens. Because the state is swindling/compromising [transando] with Parques over some 23 hectares that are 3 kilometres away from here.

[01:06:55.8] Did you see where the gas station is? Over the highway, over that side, 3 K from there, there are 23 hectares. So what's going on? Parques wants Punta Banderas, which is in Calafate, in Lago Argentino, to build up a touristic side, a base camp for Parques.

[01:07:25.6] And so they're intending to swindle/compromise [transar] with the state. If the state gives them ... That's a done deal.

[01:07:35.5] We're going to stop here.

[01:07:40.4] So the state, [in Spanish] is giving to Parques that land in Punta Banderas, in Calafate. So Parques is giving 23 hectares, imagine that Chaltén is between 22 and 25, it's the same thing. So that's what they told us. Just wait, this is going to pass. And perhaps in the next elections ...

[01:08:12.4] I would like to take it off [the mic] to go take a pee. Right?

Interviewer: [01:08:20.0] Could we stop for a bite here or is it too soon?

MILENA: [01:08:25.3] We're close to the Pampa de Las Carretas. What time is it? It's 2:10 pm. If you want we can eat now. Whatever you prefer.

[01:09:28.7] Oh, [looking in backpack] my sunscreen broke.

Interviewer: [01:10:15.9] Take care of not putting any glass on your face.

MILENA: [01:10:15.9] No no, it's OK, it's plastic.

[01:10:50.0] So you're a sociologist? My dad too. He did pedagogy, and then studied a masters degree on sociology. [goes on, but not audible ... Mic away].

[01:19:25.0] On again [Mic in place].

[01:19:47.3] I took it off because I went to pee.

Interviewer: [01:22:13.1] Is it very steep?

MILENA: [01:22:14.3] Yes!

[01:23:12.4] Should we move on?

Interviewer: [01:25:35.3] Did you have a lot of celebration last night [New Year's Eve]?

MILENA: [01:25:36.7] My kid is sick, so we just watched a movie on Netflix: Avatar. It's great. I hadn't seen it. So we saw it in Spanish, and Ben with the translated subtitles. All the other way around. ... My little boy: I want to sleep with you guys.

Interviewer: [01:27:30.0] Was I coming over in a wrong direction? That guy kind came a bit harsh...

MILENA: [01:27:30.0] Actually it's the one that is coming up that has priority.

[01:27:41.7] Ratón Pérez. It's a mouse! (Tooth Fairy).

Interviewer: [01:30:20.8] How are we on the road?

MILENA: [01:30:20.8] We are close to Pampa de Las Carretas. There we should have a flat place and then go to ...

Interviewer: [01:30:38.1] And the way back is the same, right?

MILENA: [01:30:38.1] Yeah! We are always going to check how we are. If we can continue or not... Because we also have, after the fork, we are going to take the trail to Loma del Plieque and we have one hour until the place where we can decide if we continue... We'll see.

[01:31:22.9] Also, if it's cloudy, it's going to be cloudy there anyway too.

Interviewer: [01:33:04.3] Like The Lord of the Rings right?

MILENA: [01:33:04.3] It's a cool movie, right? [...]

[01:34:02.6] The water master in Avatar, the series, it's about the elements.

[01:35:58.1] This is a chingolo. The noise ... It's a bird. A little small birdie.

Interviewer: [01:37:53.5] How far is that water source?

MILENA: [01:37:58.2] We have water. It's a little less than an hour. But we are going to find some streams in the way, close from here. But I prefer to go further because of the cows.

MILENA: [01:40:38.3] And what are you researching? About

marathons ... Oh, ultras.

Interviewer: [01:40:43.7] Two main things. One, is the mental side, motivational, that people are doing this a little bit more and one thing that you mentioned was that since I've lived the same experience by my own, is that if you're in the city you get silence, and here even more,

[01:41:18.8] that I see that as a form of meditation. Keeping yourself emotionally, psychologically in another kind of wave, of tune, of synchronization. That's one side. And the other is about the technical side, in the sense that this trail was done in some way by somebody. And so, what are,

[01:41:46.1] all the things that need to be done so that it's possible that people can go over here. And how is it possible to keep it going. So, for instance, you can consider Mount Fuji in Japan, maybe there's an ultra there that has 1500 or 2000 people. And then in USA, you've got Western States, and only 400 people go. So they make a lottery among I don't know how many people.

[01:42:10.6] And so, check out how all those mechanisms work. So if I would to isolate only two elements of research it's about the internal, individual elements of why people do it; and then, how do they do it. A leading idea that I have in mind, that goes over both, is that for anyone that's interested, and manages to do anything in ultra marathon, they have to make some kind of artisan work,

MILENA: [01:42:48.6] A inner alchemy.

Interviewer: [01:42:48.6] Both inner and outer. If you run 50 K, with no prior training, you normally need to have ran some distance as to get to the thought that you're into it, and that you feel like having some chance to end it. I know what I'm getting into. Or I don't know in what I'm getting into but I can take the heat.

[01:43:07.5] And that happens both on the inner side, as in the other way, I know how the trails are, I know the dangers that I can encounter, a bear could appear, maybe everything is under control in the US, with police, people stopping in the street, or in a Park. So seeing into how every person manages to trace a certain thread.

[01:43:29.8] And at the same time, that happens at a certain scale. Because you've got what every person goes on into adaptation, but when a lot of people are doing the same things it's expected that there would be some common elements. So how does that work so that it happens at the scale that it is today.

[01:43:54.7] And each time that you speak with someone new, new questions appear.

MILENA: [01:44:00.5] Nice! I believe that there's something that must happen to us on the collective subconscious, that forms a general web that awakens other antennas. ... And

for me, I assume that I'm addicted to physical activity. If I don't do any physical activity I get depressed.

Interviewer: [01:44:34.6] I actually suggested the opposite. I thought myself as addicted and wanted to check what happened if I left it.

Interviewer: [01:44:42.7] Production issue. I'm not filming enough. Wait for me a little bit more.

MILENA: [01:44:56.1] OK.

Interviewer: [01:45:31.3] I understand that you climbed Mount Fitz Roy three times.

MILENA: [01:45:38.0] Yeah. Ben told you?

Interviewer: [01:45:42.2] Yeah! When was the first time?

MILENA: [01:45:49.3] In 2009.

Interviewer: [01:45:49.9] And what was that like?

MILENA: [01:45:52.8] Incredible. It's like ... we were talking about that I have to admit that I'm a physical training addict. Well, if I don't do sports or ... I get depressed. So I already know that so I have to run or whatever. So if I'm working I'm in a very good mood. I have to do something.

[01:46:30.2] I started climbing very young, when I was 15 years old. Then I climbed, well it's part of my life, so after I moved to Patagonia... I moved to Bariloche and also to El Chaltén, and I started climbing mountains.

[01:46:54.8] But in the beginning I was climbing like rock climbing, bouldering, and small rocks. And then all of these mountains are climbable but it's a hard challenge to do these mountains. You have to be very prepared. It's not only physical. Just your mind has to be very very prepared because maybe you go and you couldn't come back.

[01:47:27.9] So, it's kind of like maybe you've heard about that The Way of the Warrior... [El Camino del Guerrero]. So we are going like to war. Because you know, you are afraid but you have to go with your mind relaxed and knowing that maybe you'll not come back. But the state of freedom that you feel on the summits is amazing.

[01:47:59.7] It's like well, I didn't find other similar after I started running in the mountains. And I don't know, I feel this adrenaline. Like you've made a lot of effort, and you feel with your mind clear and with a lot of oxygen. And so I feel very happy too. To find these things that you are running and you are just seeing all the landscapes and well, now I'm motivated to run on the mountains.

[01:48:38.7] And not taking many risks as is when you are climbing. Because climbing is very dangerous. I mean the

alpine climbing. You have many moments that you don't know what is going to happen. Because sometimes rocks fall and sometimes you have to cross ...

[01:49:09.5] a glacier, and there are many many crevices. Or the snow, the avalanche, whatever. Or the storm can happen in a rash. And also, sometimes the wind can carry you to the top. This is very dangerous because the ropes can twist and you can have a problem.

[01:49:41.0] It's a very good thing if you can do it, it's very very nice. Life is ... You're going to choose other ways, so ...

Interviewer: [01:49:56.5] How many times have you climbed Fitz Roy?

MILENA: [01:50:00.1] I climbed three times. I reached the summit and I made also a fourth time but we didn't reach the summit because we were in a bad storm. We arrived almost to the summit and it was very very windy and the ropes go like this [showing] and so we ... It was a very stressful moment. Many rocks fell, and so we were like just dodging rocks and so we spent one night there,

[01:50:39.3] and the other day we decided to come down. So in the way down we saw the Californian route and so there we decided that the next time we'd use the Californian route. And this is my last time that I went to Fitz Roy.

Interviewer: [01:51:00.1] What year?

MILENA: [01:51:02.2] In 2011. And after that I got pregnant.

MILENA: [01:51:09.4] I guess that something, my body, my nature, my biology says: OK, you have to stay here. I'm here.

Interviewer: [01:51:22.8] Where else have you climbed in the world?

MILENA: [01:51:27.9] I was climbing in Spain, Peru, Chile, and also in the States. But in the States some in the Washington Colon [?]. And the Third Pillar of Ghana [?], in Yosemite Valley. And well, not very ...

[01:51:56.7] The mountains are not like this. Like here you have many risks, because you are going in glaciers, some crevices, more conditions ... You are playing in a ... All the time you have to take decisions, if you're crossed, if you have to ... In the glacier,

[01:52:27.5] Everything is not about when you are climbing. Sometimes it's when you are going down. A lot of the accidents happen when you are going down, because you're more tired and so, also other things can happen. Like [x], well, people die in the mountains.

[01:52:57.3] I don't want to become melodramatic. But well,

Interviewer: [01:53:01.9] You're laughing, so that's nice.

Interviewer: [01:53:04.1] Thanks you sharing that.

Interviewer: [01:53:06.2] So how common is it for people, for tourist coming over here, do half of them rock climb, and half of them track? Or what is the common activity for most tourists?

MILENA: [01:53:18.8] Well, many alpine climbers come here for climbing the mountains. So this town is new, among climbers, because people came over here. The Italians came here, the French came here. In 1937 a group of Italians came and they made the first attempt to Fitz Roy and they made the Italian opening [Brecha de los italianos].

[01:53:50.4] If we see Fitz Roy I'll show you in the picture. They made like an ice channel. They made like four, five pitches. And they arrived there but they couldn't reach the top. They had to go back. And after that in 1952 came back a French team, Lionel Terray and Guido Magnone, and they reached the summit. They were very very brave men.

Interviewer: [01:54:24.3] That's the name of the street that I told you about.

MILENA: [01:54:35.1] They came here and spent months. And they were only with a rope like this and pitons with pitons with pitons and ...

[01:54:47.4] When I went for my first time to Fitz Roy, I went to the Supercanaleta and non-stop style. So we started the day at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon from Eléctrico River and this day we just walked until the base, and we climbed all night long the Superchannel, without rope,

[01:55:14.7] with ice sacks [?], and after that we just started climbing with the rope on the rock. It's 1000 metres more, and it was ... Takes from the bottom to the top, and the bottom again, 26 hours, all day climbing. And we didn't sleep. We just had one rope, and one pizza portion, one apple and one alfajor.

[01:55:46.7] And water, a little. No sleeping bags. A crazy moment, and so when we reached the summit in the day, we went down, rappelled down, and when we were walking on the glacier I remember that I was hallucinating just dreaming awake.

Interviewer: [01:56:14.1] Dehydrated...

MILENA: [01:56:17.7] Well. Also we didn't sleep for I don't 40 something hours. And so when we arrived to the base camp we made a soup, and we used others' sleeping bags because there were no people there, so we stole the sleeping bags for a while. We slept a little and then we went back to Chaltén.

[01:56:40.3] We went back to Chaltén and so ... It was like: well, I was there. When we were there on the top: Oh, we are wishing to there, and then Chaltén is there, so ... We

wished to go there, to Chaltén. It was amazing. Because, well, humans, we are like this. Always we are trying to go for the carrot that is in our front, not here.

[01:57:07.2] So I'm trying now to enjoy the moment. Not following the carrot. Just enjoy life.

Interviewer: [01:57:18.8] That's something that I use in my work. That we're always following a carrot.

Interviewer: [01:57:34.1] You're incredible. Thanks for sharing that.

MILENA: [01:57:38.9] I feel sometimes that I don't like to tell people that I climbed Fitz Roy because I'm a little bit shy. But well ... It's like ... I feel like it's my other life. After I became a mom I don't want to take some risks. It's very very different now for me.

Interviewer: [01:58:09.8] Me do become a little more conscious about how we spend our time.

MILENA: [01:58:17.4] And also this, that I told you at the last, to enjoy life like the simple things. Just to have ... Play with my son, or just drink some mate and go outside for a simple walk. But I feel like, in my veins, I need activity. I notice about that so I try to be more calm, and maybe

[01:58:55.4] I run in the forest, and gives me calm. And so ... yeah. It's a balance. Don't be crazy, don't be ... very very quiet. I couldn't do that.

[01:59:20.0] So we started studying yoga teacher. To be more ...

[01:59:39.8] We met with Ben in Yosemite, ... No. In Bishop, in hostel California. And so we went for a trekking around. He was doing the PCT [Pacific Crest Trail].

[02:00:09.2] So he was doing this. And we met there and we went for ... I shared with him a little part of the trail and so we met with a bear at a moment. So we decided to just not continue. And so we met with some guys

[02:00:34.7] that they invited us to their house. So we were sharing with this guys in Lake Tahoe, and they invited us to a marathon. Like an ultra marathon. And so we went. It was very cool.

[02:01:10.3] A very good thing. The carrot! It's a good metaphor.

[02:01:27.6] I remember when I was there in the Fitz Roy summit, I wanted to stay at home. Like warm. And why do we do that? It's like: we're so stupid, the humans sometimes. Trying to push ourselves like: reach the summit! And then when you're on the summit you want to stay at home.

[02:01:55.7] It's funny.

[02:02:03.4] Three years ago a really good friend, like my bro, like my brother, died in Fitz Roy.

Interviewer: [02:02:11.7] I'm sorry.

MILENA: [02:02:11.5] Yes. He was very young. And he was always like laughing and smiling, and when people asked him: why are you going to Fitz Roy .. You know that you can die there. ... Well, I'll do it before I die. And so we have some good phrases from him.

[02:02:37.0] After that it's also like a slam ... No. Like a slap in the face.

[02:02:55.0] Because also, we were climbing one week before that. Cerro Solo.

[02:03:04.2] Look from here. This is Pampa de Las Carretas. This is the place that I told you. In a few, we're going to find the fork. To go to the ... This is Loma del Pliegue Tumbado. The hill.

[02:03:31.2] There is like a rounded ... But in the right you have a more clear hill. We're going there. The one on the right.

Interviewer: [02:03:49.6] You were saying that before your friend passed away, you were climbing there the week before...

MILENA: [02:03:50.9] Yes. We went to Mermoz. It was a very good climbing. But I noticed that my head changed. A lot. Because it was my first climbing after I'd become a mother. And so I was like: oh, like all the time looking around, and I don't want to walk like this ... I was watching around.

MILENA 2.WAV

Start [00:00:01.8]

End [XXX] ---

MILENA: [00:00:01.8] It was a very nice climbing. When we went near the top, many condors went around... **Interviewer:** [00:00:08.3] How old is your son? **MILENA:** [00:00:10.0] Seven years. **Interviewer:** [00:00:12.5] Does he climb? **MILENA:** [00:00:14.5] Yes. He climbs. **Interviewer:** [00:00:17.4] How did you learn to climb? From your parents? **MILENA:** [00:00:21.6] Not me. I started climbing ... My family called me the cat. Because I always climbing trees, my grandma's wall, in the yard.

MILENA 3.WAV

Start [00:04.5]

End [04:52.5]

MILENA: [00:04.5] The way down is easier.

[01:15.6] I think that wild can be very very very ... Deep. A deep word. I can feel like my soul. It's very wild. Because I feel like my instincts as I'm a woman. I feel all the sensations very ... In my skin.

[01:46.0] I feel very connected with nature because we are connected with the moon and with the cycles. And I also feel like I am free. And I always try to follow my feelings, my instinct. So, to be like

[02:15.5] this kind of world. If I feel like my soul is wild, and also I can say other things about nature. About where I am living. In a wild place, that you can touch the wilderness very close from where you live.

[02:39.1] And so, this kind of life is very wild.

MILENA: [02:54.4] Yes. We are in a wild place. Not very very touched by men, by humans I mean. So as soon you go further, it's more wild. Because you don't have ... Very ... It's not very accessible. By cars, or other things.

[03:32.5] It's also because this place is wilder than other places for climbing because you don't have many exits. If you go for climbing, you have to go back the same way. Nobody is going to just rescue you like an a helicopter.

[03:58.7] We don't have any helicopter.

Interviewer: [04:02.0] You don't!? You have to walk back?
[Laughters]

MILENA: [04:02.8] No. Yes! I mean. When some wrongs happen, sometimes we can ask for the military's helicopter, but we don't own a helicopter.

[04:26.5] And so, this is the different thing with the Alps, or I don't know, the other mountains in the world. Because they have more accessibility to rescue people. And here the rescue team is voluntary and also, when something happens, we have to go by foot.

[04:52.5] Or sometimes, if we are lucky, we can find the helicopter from the military, or sometimes ... Well, from Chile. Whatever. But we have to ask. I don't know if I answered the question.

Rodrigo - lav.WAV

Start [01:18.2]

End [50:54.5]

Interviewer: [01:18.2] Would you like to begin by introducing yourself? What is your name, where are we, and where are we going today?

Rodrigo: [01:39.3] My name is Rodrigo. We are in Chaltén. We are going to Lago del Desierto. I am from Chaltén.

Interviewer: [02:24.6] He's not here, no need to look at the camera. Have you always lived here? Did you come from elsewhere? A personal biography. Which were the reasons why you reached here.

[03:33.5] He understands everything, so don't mind about translations. And upon where to look, you can speak naturally to me. I want to know myself.

Rodrigo: [03:49.2] I've been living in Chaltén for some years. I am from over here, down South. I am a biologist, by profession. And I am an environmental interpretation guide. Now we are going through the road from Chaltén and we'll be making several stops to tell you about the interpretation of the place and show you about the biodiversity and the place's geological history.

Interviewer: [04:22.6] How did you study biology and what attracted you over here?

Rodrigo: [04:26.8] I started because my father worked his whole life in a fauna area at state level, and from my youngest years I would go along with him to work and I liked it naturally and just out of affinity I chose that path. I like to be outdoors, and I am curious. That's mainly what thrust me towards the profession.

Interviewer: [05:03.8] In the biological sense, is there some kind of magnet that brought you over up to here?

Rodrigo: [05:08.1] Yes. Many. The nice thing about being over the mountain side [Cordillera] is that in this place that is so South, is that it's like a small island of biodiversity of what we have in Southern Patagonia. It has always been understood that this area is a place with no life. This is not very accurate, but if you compare with other places more North, perhaps it is more poor.

[05:50.3] So this island in the mountain is a sort of oasis, with attractive points relating to the the environmental and geological history of the area.

Interviewer: [06:19.6] Why did we stop here?

Rodrigo: [06:20.3] Due to the geological history we can see things that are not apparent. 32 Million years ago all of this was covered by sea. Before this place existed, this was all covered. Later on the mountain grew, because of the crash between tectonic plates.

[06:59.6] And with the range's growth the sea began to recede. The range exposed it's history and here are hints that this was sea. This is a [showing] mould, not a fossil, of an extinct animal, a mollusc: an amonites. They're animals that existed when the area was sea. And this is the sediment in the sea.

[07:43.3] Even if it's a very small dent, it's very old.

Interviewer: [07:55.0] Does that suffer erosion?

Rodrigo: [07:56.3] No. That remains. It does have some erosion with a lot of wind and water, but it's a sedimentary rock that is quite solid. The matter to consider is the human influence, machines. We've identified some but once in a while they disappear, or another one appears.

[08:17.3] A lot of times, when people know that they exist it's like a trophy that they want to take home. It's quite common that they take them away. In fact, in places where it's known that there are a lot, people go and take them and put them on their own sidewalks. There are sidewalks with amonites. And yes, it's quite good eye candy but the nicest things is that they remain in place and see them under the real situation of the area, and imagine what this used to be.

[08:50.6] That makes it prettier, more fun, more natural. But well, we are human and we always poke our fingers in wherever we want.

Interviewer: [09:00.1] Mano en la lata, Mano en la naturaleza. [Yes. Chuckles.]

Rodrigo: [09:37.7] Now we are going to access a viewpoint over the Laguna Condor.

Rodrigo: [14:36.5] This is Laguna Condor. It's a river's corner (curve). It's a shallow.

Interviewer: [14:57.9] This view is amazing.

Rodrigo: [15:03.7] This lagoon is very used by birds. Aquatic birds. They come over here to nest. And migrating birds that migrate from the range to the steppe, or the other way around.

Interviewer: [15:36.0] Is that a wild horse?

Rodrigo: [15:36.7] No. There are estancias, and there are cows as well. They are ...

Interviewer: [15:58.3] So pretty!!

Rodrigo: [16:01.8] Just a moment.

Interviewer: [17:35.4] OK, Toby, this is for you, I just said to the camera as I was filming. She is the one logging the video, so every single clip that we shoot, she catalogues, and she loves horses. So she'll be happy to log this one. We'll know it's horse, in Argentina, in Patagonia. Otherwise it takes a long time to find footage among the files.

[18:47.7] We're doing two documentaries. Feature film and an interactive documentary. Jules is the programmer.

Rodrigo: [19:31.2] Black neck swans [cisne de cuello negro]. It's Río de Las Vueltas. And this is Laguna Cóndor. Which is an overflow (reflow, dam) of the same river.

Interviewer: [21:16.6] Is the black necked swan endemic here? Only from here?

Rodrigo: [21:25.4] No. They are from here South. They have quite a wide distribution in Argentina. But in these areas they migrate. In summer they come to the range area, such as flamencos, and when it gets cold they go to steppe lagoons. More North, but mostly to the steppe all the time.

[22:07.0] And horses, like the one we just saw, are in some places, as cows. And they are one of the biggest problems in matters of conservation of natural spaces. They have feet and bodies that are very big for the forest regeneration system.

[22:37.9] In those places where there are a lot of cows, or a lot of horses: the renewable in trees don't prosper. There's a great mortality for small trees and other plants.

Rodrigo: [23:40.4] All this area goes down. Here we call this environment maginen, a wetland. Most of the trees that you can see in the low are of the ñire species.

Interviewer: [24:21.3] Is this a bird sanctuary?

Rodrigo: [24:56.7] Yes. It's a good place. There's a lot of refugee sites for birds. There's forest, water, food. Which is what's missing in other places in the South, in the steppe mostly. Where the terrain is very wide open.

[25:19.9] Can you notice in the lagoon, there's movement, there are fish. From the 1900s they began to bring fishes from North America and Europe to seed different watery bodies into Patagonia. Nowadays, all continental watery bodies in Patagonia have species from the salmon families: trucha arco iris, trucha marrón, salmón chinoc.

Interviewer: [26:39.0] This is a reserve but it's administered by the province of Santa Cruz. Did he say that in camera? Let's ask later. Car vibrations can create distortion in the recording.

Rodrigo: [27:53.6] One feature of this whole area, which is a provincial reserve, is that it's lacking a lot of work on the natural area. Much research is needed on the behaviour of exotic species, work on controlling, there's no strict control as of Parques, which they do.

[28:27.4] It was only last year that a plan to control the area was made. It's a comprehensive document which evaluates the natural resources and plans the managing for all activities.

Interviewer: [29:25.9] The road, you've noticed, that is sometimes under worse conditions? And they recondition it once in a while?

Rodrigo: [29:30.0] Yes. The boulder passed this season quite a bit. Other seasons it's very uncomfortable to pass through.

Interviewer: [29:44.6] How often?

Rodrigo: [29:49.4] Every two weeks. But other years they could do it just twice overall in a season. And it was one hole after another. By car, in a small one, you can't ... You take too much time. Or you totally break it.

Interviewer: [32:06.6] Does the road go all the way to Chile?

Rodrigo: [32:14.7] No. It ends in Laguna del Desierto. In Laguna del Desierto you can go over by boat or walking. There's a trekking, at the North side of Lago del Desierto, towards Chile. And then you need to catch a boat and just then you reach Villa O'Higgins, Chile. So you arrive by foot. Because the limit is before arriving by boat.

Interviewer: [32:51.2] So from the further part of the lake you can actually walk to Chile. It's a hike for sure.

Rodrigo: [33:00.1] Did you notice that there's a lot of bikes that go through here? With baggage. It's that they make the connection between Chaltén and Carretera Austral, through Lago del Desierto.

[stopping by malfunction, noises] [never happened before, something electronic should've happened] [battery's OK]
[checking manual]

[44:09.3] The fuel channel has been blocked ... Lights are OK.

[48:37.2] [alarm related problem]

Interviewer: [50:53.0] Should we ask for a lift by phone?

Rodrigo: [50:54.5] There's no signal.

La Quinta - lav.WAV

Start [01:49.1]

End [46:28.9]

Interviewer: [01:49.1] We normally start with people stating their name, a presentation of profile, what you do and where we are. Could you tell us about that?

PATRICIA: [02:02.6] Yes, my name is Patricia Halvorsen. We are in Estancia La Quinta, in Chaltén, Santa Cruz, Patagonia. Currently we have a touristic business, but the story of our family began many years ago. By the end of the XIXth Century, when from Norway Halvor Halvorsen comes over here. From then on,

[02:33.4] our story begins in the area. Halvor Halvorsen was my grandfather, he came to populate to Argentina in 1905, and he comes to populate the area of Lake Viedma. From then on, the family has uninterrupted presence in the area. We are the oldest family of the area.

[03:04.4] Our children are the fourth generation.

Interviewer: [03:09.6] As for activities, you are a communicator about the history of the area, is that so?

PATRICIA: [03:12.9] Yes. I focus on writing about Patagonia's history exclusively. Many of the topics on which I decided to write were due to questions that the guest presented. For instance, they would say: the tehuelches [aboriginal population] don't exist anymore. They're extinct. And I would say, yes they are! There are a lot of descendants from tehuelches. But we haven't seen any! They would reply. The matter is that they don't live as they used to years ago.

[03:42.7] They have mixed up and I give them an example all the time, it's a bit funny but it's true. I have 4 viking grandfathers and I don't go around with a helmet with horns. So, at that moment I wrote a book called ``Masked Identities'' [Identidades Enmascaradas] which is the cross between the tehuelches and the foreigners, with the immigrants.

[04:10.5] And in this way, other topics become developed. And well, with so many questions, we organized everyday History Talks, under the name ``Encounters with History'', where we tell them about the evolution in the area from the arrival of the first white man, until today.

[04:35.7] [Translating]

Interviewer: [05:20.0] You mentioned mapuches?

PATRICIA: [05:26.6] They are in the North of Patagonia.

Interviewer: [05:30.1] And how do you develop this activity? Did you use documentation to get informed about the area?

PATRICIA: [05:37.8] Yes. I work mainly with documents and that is what it makes more complicated. Because with people that write poetry or fiction, I always say: Isn't that great? You get inspired in the calm of your home, with a coffee, you reflect and suddenly you can have a success. And I spend my time going to museums, archives, looking for information at different places,

[06:07.3] and so we need to take a lot of time. Right now, some days ago, we placed our last book. I say we, because it's a co production with a person from Tierra del Fuego. And it's the story of prostitution in the Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego territories. We took five years for that one researching.

Interviewer: [06:31.1] The title has quite an impact to it because upon sunlight they are not so visible. And finding that kind of things and spread the word is ...

PATRICIA: [06:41.0] Yes. Here, maybe because we have such a long trajectory in Santa Cruz, but everything is easier. Because actually for the great surface (Santa Cruz comes after Buenos Aires in size), so it's second in order of importance size wise. But not in population. So when we speak about this,

[07:11.1] there were very few people around this immense geography. Something that happens a lot of times to me is that people come and say I am such and such. So maybe I don't know him, besides I am very bad to remember a face, but if it's a last name from people historically from Santa Cruz, I would tell them quite soon: you're from Río Gallegos, you are from such place, and they would respond, ``Oh yeah!''.

Interviewer: [07:36.2] And how could a connection be made between that space distribution and the population so that you can work more easily? How do you get that?

PATRICIA: [07:48.9] It's hard. It's very hard. Specially because in the first period of populating the territory, the area that is going to work in cattle, in the beginning, later on all of the province of Santa Cruz is going to do work with cattle. But the more productive side was from San Julián towards the South. So it has been an area that has dominated very easily.

[08:18.3] When I have to handle myself more North I always have to look more to the maps, more the lots of land, and the population comes later, because the Northern area of Santa Cruz arises when they find petroleum. So it's like there are two separate historical moments, and it's much easier to deal with the first. But, nonetheless, we do it all the same.

Interviewer: [08:46.0] [Translating]

Interviewer: [09:17.9] The question I have is about the

broad set of topics that you've worked with. Is there a rupture between the time frameworks you have dealt with based on their accessibility? Or do you work over a certain range of years backwards and forwards?

PATRICIA: [09:41.0] It depends on the topic I am working on at each time. But in general I go both sides. Because sometimes the stories fire me off towards different points, and many times I am in a story that is quite ... For instance, right now I am working on the 50s, which is a period I seldom do since I accustom to go further back, and I find people and I say: Oh, look at this, this person was over here. One gets to navigate so much in those times, that

[10:12.7] suddenly you find acquaintances that you have never met! But they result familiar.

Interviewer: [10:21.5] Would you know, as you mentioned before that you focused more on the arrival of the white man, have you seen historical records of the previous time?

PATRICIA: [10:36.0] No. Because before that there were only aboriginals, and they are no written accounts. So that's an archaeological competence.

Interviewer: [Translating]

Interviewer: [11:23.0] So I see that you have several topics that you have been handling, have you found relationships, differences, what has pointed you towards one side and another?

PATRICIA: [11:33.8] There are always relationships. Many times I use for a new research some material from a previous one. Just to comment, many years ago I wrote a book that has long been out of print, which was ``Among the turn over rivers and the continental ices'' [Entre los ríos de las vueltas y los hielos continentales],

[12:00.8] and a lot of people said that it was a book about my family? And I would response that it wasn't. It's a book about the pioneers of the area. Because this area was really very populated. There is a chapter that does correspond to my family, and I like very much the pioneers quotations. My grandfather left written material behind, and so in that book I quote, for instance,

[12:30.2] when he arrives by accident. And he arrives in a boat that sets fire, when they are entering to the Strait of Magellan. He arrives in 1895, the Panama Channel didn't yet exist, so all boats had to access through either Cape Horn, or the Strait of Magellan. When they're about to enter to the SM

[13:00.6] the fire sets by spontaneous combustion. The coal that they were bringing over from Swansea and they were taking it over to San Francisco. So, what a ride right? ... Up unto arrival to the West Coast of USA. And well, upon that incident, the captain tells them that they should change

course and try to get towards the Islas Malvinas, to ask for rescue.

[13:30.9] Fortunately from the Islands they see them, they go rescue the whole crew, and Halvor Halvorsen, my grandfather, is going to leave an report of his arrival to the Islands. Among those things, he narrates, as it was very naturalized at the time, his visit to the brothel. That bibliography is what I used again in the book I just mentioned.

Interviewer: [14:01.0] [Translating]

Interviewer: [14:38.5] I am under the impression that perhaps one gets to speak to a broad public, such as we've been with guides, business people, and there's a much more recent idea of history of the place. Well, they would say that before there were no streets, the town was founded in such year, and that's actually ... The vast amounts of periods to be established are several.

[15:09.2] Perhaps this could be a question for you to extend a long time. What would you say about that?

PATRICIA: [15:15.4] The town is a very young one. It has the age of our oldest children, 33 years old. Practically speaking, for a town it's almost recently born. Besides that it has a very peculiar formation and very different from other towns in the same province and in the whole of Patagonia.

[15:43.6] Because actually it's going to be established to vouch for the sovereignty in the area due to a conflict we had with Chile. The conflict was born in 1965. The town is established in 1985. And just in 1995 the arbitration will be pronounced in favor to Argentina and Lago del Desierto, that it's definitely from Argentina.

[16:14.7] A lot of times you can hear that thanks to Chaltén was that Lago del Desierto is Argentinian. Well, actually the story doesn't go so much that way. Because town were never precedence for sovereignty, due to a simple reason: they wouldn't exist. So, the precedents WERE the pioneers: the people that already lived here. And they were many. What happened is that by the time of the conflict, some because they'd died, others because they sold land, and others because they went away,

[16:48.5] the population shrank severely and actually over time there wasn't a state policy to continue vouching the town settlers. Already by the conflict we were only two families, by that time. We were one of them, and the other were the Sepúlveda.

[17:21.2] The town already has a generation of its own, with a whole new gathering. Of course they have a whole generation that was born there but before that, people of my age or older, from before of the town foundation, we are literally four. Two are Sepúlveda grandchildren, Antonio Rojo and myself. The rest is all people from outside.

Interviewer: [17:49.4] I'm going to ask you something about Antonio Rojo, [translating]

Interviewer1: [18:47.6] How long has her family lived here?

Interviewer2: 100 years [This is based on her grandfather coming over, lost in translation before but can be read above. Anyhow, (palmface), perhaps I could've double checked that with her and ask the question anyhow. Not sure, I am still learning to interview in two languages, sorry for these kind of omissions.] Even above 100, so it crosses through three centuries. [PATRICIA assents ...does she understand?]

Interviewer: [18:55.8] Why did her family come here?

PATRICIA: Because of the accident that I commented about. That my grandfather was working in a boat [going all the way to San Francisco and with no Panama Channel yet build.]

Interviewer: [19:30.7] [Translating] [PATRICIA assents]

Interviewer: [19:37.6] Are you happy that you ended up here?

PATRICIA: [19:41.9] YES!! OF COURSE!! [``YEAH'' she adds in English!!]

Interviewer: [19:48.8] I remember a name. We've been asking permission to Parques Nacionales for each place where we go to film and interview. At one point they said that over here we should be fine to film as long as you are OK with that. And they also said that we should ask Antonio Rojo. Could you tell us about this? To film over here in the outdoors section.

PATRICIA: [20:26.0] No. Over here he has nothing to do. He's my neighbor. I can tell you some more just so that you understand the relationship. But here he has no part. When my father died, I was very young, I was three years old. And my mom married my neighbor, who is Antonio Rojo. But they live next doors and it's another estancia that has nothing to do with this one.

Interviewer: [21:02.6] [translating]

Interviewer: [21:20.8] There's a certain geography, for what you are telling us, about how the people that have been arriving, and how they've settled. Could you say that in some sense there's some kind of separation that Chaltén is over there and the pioneers are perhaps more on this side? You mentioned four persons. Two here, and two others are close or further away?

PATRICIA: [21:43.8] No no. Actually the first settler that was over here was in 1900, was a German called Fred Otten. And was located exactly where Chaltén is. So, no, settlers were all over the area. Even until the North section of Lago del Desierto.

Interviewer: [22:09.8] And given the situation that we are in Chaltén and we can take a taxi over here. Do you feel

that it all belongs to a single place or that they have separate histories and spaces?

PATRICIA: [22:19.5] History is marked by periods. If we consider the time of my grandparents, it was just the neighbor next to you, or just across. Everyplace was in allotment that belonged to a family. Also, by that time families were large, because everyone had between 4, 5 or 6 children. I remember when

[22:50.2] they opened the first school in Chaltén, well it was a great event. Because it was a nascent town and such. So it was an important and pleasant moment. And at that time my oldest uncle was still alive. He would say that all of them families together were more than triple the amount. Of course! Because everyone had 6 children, as minimum. And there's pictures of the whole families, all in order, in formation.

Interviewer: [23:18.5] There was no TV.

PATRICIA: [23:20.5] Yes. It was another life style. Some days ago they asked me. What would my grandparents had thought that this place became touristic. I believe that they would've never thought of such a thing. Because it was a different time, life was seen from another perspective. It was a very sacrificed life.

[23:50.2] All parameters and measures were different. It's the same now with historical revisionism, which is a trend. Many times history is judged with our parameters. And that really is not possible.

Interviewer: [24:19.1] How do you see the progression in history from that once rough life towards what it is today with tourism? Also considering that perhaps not so many people are aware that this place is declared a Natural World Heritage Site.

PATRICIA: [24:42.8] I believe that to us the presence of the town alleviates our life. Because in other times, even when I was a little girl, at estancias you would receive everyone over. People that were just coming by and they we had never seen in our life and they came to sleep over and eat.

[25:09.2] And if a car would break, the whole town's activity would stop to fix it, so that they would be able to leave. That was always that way. There was no other way. So, when we would go to town, as a little girl I had a fantastic time, because besides of the bad roads and so, I didn't suffer that because that was for my parents to worry, not me. So for me it was all great.

[25:40.4] But all the purchases were to be done prior over the coast. Because that's where the towns were. Nowadays you need some butter and you go over to town. You need to see a doctor and you go over there. If you need to run an errand and you have available official legal establishments, or wherever you may need in town next door. So, it's an

important factor for development, and also with these changes over history, everything has also reversed.

[26:13.1] Because many years back, the majority of the province's population was in the countryside. And now it's the opposite. Most people are in towns and the population has decreased in the countryside.

Interviewer: [26:31.9] I see a lot of things that have been growing, progressing, changing. There's two time marks that we notice which are the establishment of the town on one hand, and on another hand, the declaration of the site being World Heritage. Do you feel that in any way this has limited life in any way? Or has placed obstacles to what you would've liked to do, or how you used to do things?

PATRICIA: [27:04.0] No no. Not at all. I don't think there's any obstacles because of that. They're evolutions, phases, and so. Actually notice that the colonization takes shape long before to the establishment of the National Park. Because that's only by 1937. So from then on we try to live together.

[27:35.7] And we help quite much too. You might have noticed that nowadays recycling is in vogue. So when we walk around outside, I'll show you some tips of things that we've been recycling over time, and it's all the trend of saying that on a given day in town people are gathering such and such, and

[28:08.0] we've been doing that week after week, our whole lives. And that's when there was no one around here. It was just the family. My mom would teach me that when I ate a candy I should throw the candy in my pocket. So everything is a matter of education.

Interviewer: [28:30.3] Does she have the chance to work along with the Park administration ...

PATRICIA: [28:47.0] Yes. That's what I just told you about.

Interviewer: [28:56.3] I believe that the angle of the question has a certain purpose that I would try to re phrase. There are certain time marks that may result clear to you along time and space. For instance in 1937 the Park begins as such, but we haven't heard of any other person with this awareness. So that shows us, correct me, that there's some nearby situation in this.

[29:25.9] Perhaps you even have a close agreement with them. So, is this exactly so, is there a fluid communication or simply something that is imposed by Park making rules...

PATRICIA: [29:41.1] I'll tell you about the beginning of this subject of Parques. One of the promoters [difficult breath! Enough to highlight] arriving in the 1930s is the salesian de Agostini. He was a house guest.

[30:04.8] I am one to put together all the letters, and old things in existence that I can find. For instance when

Parques Nacionales was beginning, and didn't even have yet an establishment with roof for the park rangers, nor information center, National Parks people would let us know that they would arrive and they also stayed over to sleep and so. And not only that,

[30:33.8] by that time there were no bridges as today. So they would also go over to pick them up, over to the river coast, they would cross them over, bring them... Oh, to me the old letters, I'm fascinated with them. Actually, since everything keeps on growing,

[31:01.0] of course we see the rangers, say hi, and they come and go. But before, since there was very little people, it was even a higher degree of contact. Because there was only one ranger. There wasn't even a butchery shop. So who would deliver the meat? We did. There has always been a back and forth with PN.

Interviewer: [31:30.3] [Translating]

PATRICIA: [32:09.3] Let me give you a current example, when there's people that go for a hike and get injured, or that someone needs to be rescued by horse, well we give the Park some horses. So whenever they need something, if we have a pair of horses well, ...

Interviewer: [32:37.5] World Heritage was covered? [Yes] What are estancias, both in general and this one?

[33:10.4] Also, I'm under the impression that you manage to link the past with today, but also there's a public that is interested

[33:48.6] so that you can make presentations every day. Could you speak about that?

PATRICIA: [33:55.7] About people coming over, in general when foreign guests arrive there's a percentage that wants to know how we live, what are our customs, why we are here. And one thing calls for the other.

[34:26.1] There's a niche of cultural tourism, that in our case has been widening naturally. Because we have our business for some time now, and so, as we did before, so people would come over and ask all sort of things. Concerns tend to be alike, because they're all related to the same geographical space.

[34:54.3] So it got to a point in which I would need to put this on schedule because it's the fifth time that I say this in a single day. So it came up by itself. And regarding estancias. It's normally in Patagonia, pastoral allotments of nearly 10,000 hectares. They can be some to be a little less, and many times two or more lots can come together to form a bigger one.

[35:37.1] That is the unity which is an estancia. And it's committed to livestock. Nowadays they are a trend because

with this wordplay in Spanish, that is so rich, many times the word ``estancia'' is used as a fantasy word. So they use the name ``Estancia whatever'' to a weekend country house, or a slightly bigger area.

[36:04.2] But actually, what an estancia actually is, is a cattle estancia.

Interviewer: [36:12.1] Is there anything specific of this one you'd like to mention?

PATRICIA: [36:17.1] No. Not too much compared to others that exist and have existed in the province. It was born with ovine cattle, and the only difference with some is that for some years we have changed sheep for Hereford cattle.

Interviewer: [36:46.7] [Translating]

[37:02.9] Inscribed as Natural World Heritage Site in 1981, that was before Chaltén become developed. Did the inscription prompt the building of the town.

PATRICIA: [37:44.2] I'm not aware of any relationship between the inscription as Heritage Site and the town establishment.

Interviewer: [37:45.9] Have both time points impulsed people? Or were people happy about the inscription?

PATRICIA: [37:57.0] Actually the people that used to live before were us alone. On the town establishment ... Well, yes, of course. The rest was like ... Not that we wouldn't give it any importance, but it's natural for us. So it wasn't such an impact, that would produce ...

[38:26.7] We're used to take care. All the time.

Interviewer: [38:34.3] [Translating.] [Rephrasing question] Was UNESCO's labeling beneficial to the town's establishment.

PATRICIA: [39:04.8] No. There's no relationship. No no. Because actually the town's establishment was because of the border situation. And actually Parques Nacionales opposed strongly to such establishment. Anyhow, the national government established it all the same, even despite the opposition.

Interviewer: [39:35.7] [Translating]

PATRICIA: [40:03.5] [Invites to the talk and mentions interesting topics along and offers more for afterwards.]

Interviewer: [40:21.0] From a cultural and historical point of view, the image of Patagonia for many North Americans, Canadians, and European, has been of an empty land. What are your thoughts, accurate, false?

[40:55.7] [Question to Spanish]

PATRICIA: [41:19.3] We actually have a very vast surface. I wouldn't risk to say how much, but the population density is extremely low, really extreme. It is concentrated in cities, but it also has a lot to do with the possibilities.

[41:50.6] It's the same with the activities. For example, you can now see that we are near Chaltén and that's why I'll use it as an example. You'll see that right now there's a lot of people due to tourism. This diminishes absolutely in winter. There's very few people. So, people arriving has a lot to do with these working periods.

Interviewer: [42:29.4] A question about the wind. A possible description? To give people an idea, for those who couldn't come.

PATRICIA: [42:50.5] The days in which we don't have wind, this is very graphic ... We had a week with no wind. With beautiful days, with heat, the cows, the cat, were with there tongues out, very heated. And the guests were so happy. So they would say: is this normal?

[43:18.7] We have all sorts of things. We have splendid days, and in general in Patagonia there's wind. Sometimes a lot, sometimes there are bursts that go above the 100 kilometres per hour. And well, it's part of our weather. For those who aren't use to it, it's annoying, or weird. And suddenly they could say:

[43:49.8] well the estancia is located in a very convenient place. That's why it was decided to locate it over here, it's protected and also from a water current coming from the mountain. Two basic conditions to settle. So a lot of times guests would come and the day is great, and I can't understand why they're coming back. So they'd say that in town there's a lot of wind. Of course. Because they're in the river's canyon. So,

[44:24.4] that's where all the wind gathers up. But we don't always have so much wind. Even if it's very frequent.

Interviewer: [44:38.3] Is there a favorite memory here of living as a child? Or what does the landscape mean to you?

PATRICIA: [45:14.2] I always say that if I would be placed in different spots with my eyes blind folded, I'd recognize the place by its smell.

Interviewer: [45:48.8] [Translating from before] Asking permission to take shots outside.

PATRICIA: [46:28.9] Of course!

Pipa - lav 1.WAV

Start [01:07]

End [1:52:26]

PIPA: 01:07 All here there are climbing routes. This is pretty high, it is 120 meters. We call that multi-pitch. Because you can make different stations. Now we're going away to a shorter one.

Interviewer: How long have you been climbing?

01:30 25 years probably.

Interviewer: 02:45 Are there any mountains near Mar del Plata?

PIPA: Yes! Near Mar del Plata, where I am from, there are some mountains, and climbing: very good climbing.

03:12 Now we can see the Fitz Roy range and Torre behind, which is the little one here. The one with the mushroom on top, that's the hardest peak in the area, even if the Fitz Roy is higher, Torre is harder. It has an interesting climbing history.

Interviewer: Have you climbed it?

PIPA: 03:35 Yes, I've climbed it. Two times a couple of years ago, 4 years ago.

Interviewer: Why did you climb it?

PIPA: [Laughter] I don't know. There is no answer for that. [pause] Why not? Yeah.

Interviewer: How long did it take you to climb?

PIPA: 04:05 Well, it depends which side you climb. This is the east side but behind is the west side, which is actually a great adventure actually to get there because you need to look at the range to get to the ice field so that takes like two/three days to approach, then climbing, then coming back the same way. And then you need good weather window for that.

04:44 One time I climbed it I needed a traverse over all this range, like climbing and un-climbing a peak behind this one. Climb all the white peaks in the background and then Torre. So it was something different. All the range.

Interviewer: Have you climbed Fitz Roy as well?

05:08 Yeah. Fitz Roy is a bit easier, uh?

06:12 Just yesterday it was cold, the temperature lowered

quite much. Now it raised a bit. It fluctuates a lot here. You can have snow in January, and be hot in the same month. Not humid at all, very dry.

07:42 Well stop around here.

Interviewer: And so how long have you lived in Chaltén?

PIPA: 08:11 Now 13 years. About that.

Interviewer: And what made you come over here?

PIPA: Mountains!! [Laughter] Yeah! First time I got here I just came for a bike trip from North Patagonia down to Ushuaia. Just came into here and saw the peaks and said: I want to climb this one, one day.

08:38 And then I came back and I climbed it and then I stayed.

Interviewer: Has it changed a lot since you've lived here?

PIPA: Yeah!! Absolutely, yeah. It's more houses, more people living, more tourists coming, more climbers! It's pretty crowded right now. It began to become famous after some movies, you know, more information and a good guide book about climbing stuff. Yeah, and a lot of climbers. All overcoming here.

Interviewer: And I guess, do you get ... I made an observation, and there seems to be a lot of trekkers and climbers, and a lot of people here who are just to eat. Or just to enjoy the scenery. What do you think?

PIPA: 09:25 No. More hikers I would say. There is not much to do for people that don't like to hike. I mean, sometimes they come but they stay a day and then they leave. But, yeah. I think that those people stay more in Calafate or even in some other places in Patagonia. So the ones that get here are more hikers or climbers, yeah.

Interviewer: How did you learn how to climb?

10:06 I took courses, like everything. First I started rock climbing. Because where I was born there are rocks, no ice at all. So I started rock climbing and then you climb a little bit you want to go higher. So I went up to somewhere in Patagonia to do a mountain, an easy one. Then I took an ice climbing course.

10:33 And then I started going higher, and then I started skiing.

Interviewer: What kind of mountains to you begin with?

PIPA: In Bariloche you have Lanín, which is the easy one.

Interviewer: That's the easy one? One side of Lanín.

PIPA: Yes, the normal route.

Interviewer: Because the other one is quite difficult, right?

PIPA: 10:54 Sí! The South face is here in Argentina are the hard ones to climb. All the North faces are easier. Then Tronador in Bariloche is another option. There are some big ones. Even here. If you want to start in mountaineering there are some options. Like this peak here, Eléctrico it's an easy one to start.

PIPA: 11:57 Do you want to start? We can begin putting the gear on.

12:22 First we're going to put the harnesses on.

Interviewer: 13:35 We have a friend who is an ice climber. We interviewed him for this project.

PIPA: 13:44 Glaciar or waterfall ice?

Interviewer: Waterfall!!

Interviewer: 15:06 How much is your feet size?

PIPA: 15:06 41... Depends on the type of climbing the shoe size you're going to use.

PIPA: 15:57 Helmet on. It should match the size. It should be tight. You can adjust it. It shouldn't be extra tight because it can be uncomfortable.

Interviewer: 16:56 Have you climbed other places in the world?

PIPA: 16:57 I've been in Europe. All over the Alps: France, Austria, Italy, Germany. In the Dolomites. And then there is like a little town called Larco?, that is very famous for rock climbing.

Interviewer: Is it different climbing here than in those places?

PIPA: 17:21 Like ... Technically speaking it's about the same. Here is there a lot less infrastructure so it is like the Alps a hundred years ago. So the approaches are very long. The forecast is not that reliable as in the Alps. So that makes for an interesting climbing here, more challenging. You also don't have either Fitz Roy, nor Torre in the Alps.

17:50 So these peaks are unique. Specially Torre. Like the West face is famous all over the world. Because it's all ice climbing, and like the strong winds that we have here make like mushroom-ice, tastes like lime-rice? It's very soft ice, so it is very hard to place anchors. The ice (croups)? came off so it's quite exposed to climb.

18:19 So you need to look for tunnels, that the wind makes into the ice actually. Somehow you are climbing inside a tunnel, which is crazy. Crazy landscape. And you go there, inside.

Interviewer: Two years ago for this project we were in the Dolomites. We were in Valgardena? I grew up in Italy and I spent all my summers there.

18:57 So I probably have walked some of the trails you've been at. The rock there is very different than it is here. How do you feel about this rock, what is unique about this rock?

PIPA: 19:11 There is a big difference between the rock that we have here that is volcanic and it's older, and the other one we have up there in Cerro Torre and Fitz Roy. That's granite. That's the rock that we are looking for climbing. This rock is kind of soft, so it's not the best rock we can find.

19:32 But for training or sport climbing it's good. And in Dolomites, the formations, the peaks, the needles are very nice but the rock is also soft. It breaks. It is quite exposed to climb there. But every rock is interesting. To climb different rocks is like climbing in different places. So the climbing itself is different. The places where you place your protection, I mean, how you feel about climbing there, how exposed you are is different. Every rock, every place is different.

Interviewer: 20:14 When people normally go to mountains they use their eyes, sense of sight is everything for landscape. When you climb it's the sense of touch.

PIPA: 20:24 Even in the States there's a place in Utah, called Fisher Towers, it is very soft rock. Even the anchors you place come off. It's super hard to climb that, but people like that, to get that feeling.

23:40 Well, generally speaking there are two different kinds of climb. We have here all that is set up, so this is called sport climbing, with anchors. It means that someone came before us, placed the bolts, and on top there are two that make a relay station. So it is quite safe in terms of safety.

24:05 But if we talk about climbing Fitz Roy the situation is completely different. We won't find any of these. So it is more like an adventure climbing and we need to place our own protection. So we use this kind of thing and we could track climbing. There are xxxx? and xxxx?, that you place in a crack and then they became stuck there and then if you push you can take them off and bring them back.

24:32 Of course this is not as solid as a bolt but it is what we use for climbing on Fitz Roy range. So alpine climbing with this stuff and sport climbing with this stuff here. ... There are two different types of climbing. When you start

from the very bottom and you need to get to the top is called leading, it's what I am going to do right now.

25:00 So I need to go up, place some protection with these bolts, then get to the end and come back down. Once a rope is on the top, we are going to be climbing what we call top roping. So it means that there is no potential fall, because the rope is already on top. So you will be climbing on one side and I will be belaying you on the other side. So top roping and leading. When you lead you can fall and if you fall you are going to fall a couple of meters but of course, all the material we use is prepared for that.

25:32 Like the ropes are dynamic so they are going to absorb the energy of a potential fall. So, once I set the rope above I need someone that breaks. That's what we call the belayer. So I need you to belay me.

26:11 So as belay device we are going to use this one. They're are different types. This is called ATC. So the idea is just to pass the rope through and by making friction you're gonna stop me eventually if I fall. So we use the ATC, a karabiner, and we are going to connect this to your harness.

26:35 So basically, you are going to use one hand on the breaking side, and one hand on the climbers side. And there are two situations: when you need to give slack and when you need to take slack. So let's practice that.

28:48 Now I am going to get to the top and I need the rope to be tight and you lower me down, little by little.

30:23 If the angle between you and the wall is bigger, if I fall, *[pack]* I can bring you against the wall.

30:50 You have to let the rope loose when I go up so I can move freely. More rope.

33:49 Take! [...] So I can come down.

36:46 *[Shoe trying]*

37:12 The hardest part is trusting in all the material, because it's all about that. When you need to hang over and I need to bring you down, that can be a little frightening.

Interviewer: We did some indoor climbing wall once.

PIPA: 37:40 But with rope or just wall.

Interviewer: So maybe you remember a little bit.

PIPA: Right now try to focus more on your feet. Where you put your feet.

38:28 We also use this, which is chalk. We put this back behind in case your hands are sweaty.

40:17 Follow the rope and un-clip once you get to each point.

41:00 You will always be secured to the rope so if you fall it will not be a big fall for you.

41:29 Kudos [Autumn]!

42:47 Untie!

45:19 Right hand! Yes!

48:18 Be careful with those plants. They are spiky.

Interviewer: So when you're climbing, do you put your hand to the spot where you want to move your legs next?

PIPA: 49:14 Depending on the wall and how steep the wall is, is the technique you're going to use. These kind of walls are vertical or even like it's a positive slope. You want to move your feet first. So feet, two or three steps and then hands. If it's overhanging it is difficult, it's different. You need to reach with your arms, and you need arm push. But,

49:43 This kind of wall is all on your feet.

50:03 Let's see Benji now.

50:55 No socks on. Be careful with the insect, it's a tábano. The shoe should be very tight, toes cramped.

53:01 When you reach the end, to the express, you un-clip the rope.

55:45 Make a deep breath and relax.

57:56 Another breath and check for options, you can reach with your feet.

59:34 Hardest part all done!!

1:00:29 Now you can release the rope from the clip. And come down.

1:01:17 Now you can come down, I'll do that slowly. No hands! Only feet.

1:02:03 Just hang from the harness. Trust!! And lift your feet flat against the wall, walking.

1:03:20 Hurray!!

Autumn up!

1:04:18 The shoes are only for when you're going upwards. Otherwise they're so tight you just remove them. [Moving on to other angle of the rock].

1:06:26 It's important to breathe. Most routes have ideal places to rest, and then go on.

1:10:05 Handholds there! [To Autumn] Match your hands. Good!! Just relax!

1:13:27 Well done!! You can come down now. A: Drop? P: Yes! Walking

1:16:23 Claps!!!

1:17:23 (Pipa cleans the 1st path to build the 2nd one)
1:21:18 (Coming back down)

1:24:22 Benji 2nd time up (preparation).

PIPA: 1:25:57 Use the flat part of shoe to smear against the wall.

1:26:58 Short steps and hips away from the wall, that way you create friction.

1:28:07 All these wall have rating. The first one was 4+, and this one is 5+.

Interviewer: How high does the rating go?

PIPA: We use the French scale: 9C. It changes all the time.

1:28:30 Two years ago it used to be 9B. So now it's a bit harder.

Interviewer: What makes them higher? What changes, type of rock....?

PIPA: Type of handholds you have. How negative the wall is. How long the wall is.

Phil: So if it's a French scale, it depends how much fun you have on top. [Laughter]

1:29:02 (Benji ready to go up 2nd time).

Interviewer: 1:29:27 Benja has Pearl Jam on his back now!! (where the chalk is)

PIPA: 1:33:15 Few places for hands. Lift your legs quite a bit. And place them wide open.

1:36:11 Adherence step there. 1:38:07 Esa!! 1:38:35 Breath! And finish.

1:39:02 Just another try!! Then it gets easy.

Interviewer: 1:40:55 Buena!! Just a short distance. You're getting paid! Benji: Enjoying it!! [Laughs]

1:41:39 Listo!! Joya!! Just hang.

1:45:11 Benji celebrates getting back down and tired.

1:43:19 Where are you running the project? Besides here in Patagonia.

Interviewer: Belize, Tazmania, New Zealand, Dolomites, Galapagos, Japan, Okasara Islanda, all the sites in Canada, one more to go. And then after here to Island, and most likely Vietnam, and two sites in Africa. Maybe Tanzania. And Madagascar. Depending on the political climate. Five year project, three and a half years into it now.

1:45:30 (Autumn up again 2nd time!) 1:49:12 **PIPA:** Nice!!

1:50:01 I studied under a Bachelor in Environment Management, and I liked sociology and anthropology. In Tandil, at UNICEN.

1:52:26 Yes!! Excellent!!!

1:55:17 [Today I am going to a needle (aguja) called Aguja Guillaumet, in the range of Fitz Roy.]

Pipa - lav 2.WAV

Start [12:45]

End [22:10]

[Pipa goes up to get the rope out of the clips] [Talks of substitution techniques][It's 11:30]

Interviewer: 12:45 What does ``the wild'' mean to you?

PIPA: 13:11 I think that the wild (savage/salvaje), considering mountain activities, is what describes Patagonia. In some way Patagonia still is wild (savage/salvaje) in the sense that there is still very little information about what one would like to do, and climbing in Patagonia is rebuilding what climbing involved from a long time ago: a lot of research on the target,

13:38 the climate conditions, which are very variable, information on the routes, information on the access that have a lot of variation. In that sense Patagonia involves the wild (savage/salvaje) of climbing, with a certain degree of accessibility, because they are still some places that are more wild (savage/salvaje) in Antarctica, but Patagonia has a nearby town, it's easy to get over,

14:02 but the climbing up there is still wild (savage/salvaje).

Interviewer: Regarding Patagonia, you've given some attributes, and yet Patagonia seems to be somewhat unknown inside Argentina, and people from abroad have impressions. How would you present Patagonia to a local and foreign public?

PIPA: 14:28 I believe that foreigners have more knowledge about what Patagonia is than Argentines. For Argentines, Patagonia has been represented by the area of Bariloche, that is, North Patagonia. Little by little Argentines are getting to know this part of Patagonia. And regardless of the most well known spots like Chaltén, Calafate, Ushuaia, there is a lot of parts that are totally wild (savage/salvaje).

15:02 There is all to be discovered. All to be done. Actually over here, in terms of climbing, there are still mountains that don't have names because they haven't been climbed, simply two days of walking distance away. If you would try to find such a situation in other parts of the world it would imply a much larger effort.

Interviewer: 15:26 Could he introduce himself, who he is, what he does?

Interviewer: Name, job, could you also explain your influences to come over here, whatever that may imply, from

your childhood up to how it developed, and how it changed for you to end up living here.

PIPA: 16:05 My name is Juan Manuel Raselli, they call me Pipa. I wasn't born in Patagonia. I was born in Mar del Plata, Buenos Aires Province. I think my first contact with nature was there, with my parents, not actually climbing but in the fact of going out to the mountain, or to the beach and do camping in places that had some wild into it.

16:34 And I believe that it then where the sense of adventure was born. And climbing always represented that: adventure. So I began rock climbing, then I started to going higher into the mountains, to travel to that. To do some ice climbing, to undertake courses, and try to get a solid preparation in that, and then I tried to link that, the sports-side, up to a way of life and being able to create some income with that.

17:01 and being able to be in permanent contact with nature. And I started working in the mountain, then I began to prepare as a guide and I believe that's the way I ended up in Patagonia. Because I began to come as a sports person, wanting to climb these mountains, and then to work on them. And now I believe that my sport aims are complete but I have other aims as a guide: to take other people to learn about places over here.

17:33 And they're not very easily accessible. And trying to go over there in a safe way. So, that's why I got prepared as a guide, and I got the complete level guide [GM International], which also gave me the chance to travel to other places in the world.

Interviewer: Do you normally teach children to climb? How often?

PIPA: 17:58 It is not very common to have children. It is more common to have families who introduce their children to climbing, and that I did have. Locally, in Chaltén, theres a climbing school for children, and from kindergarten they go out to the mountain. The teachers take them over to walk, they recognize the climbing places, they know the climbing places' names and the routes' names.

18:33 And I believe that this will change in the next generation. It didn't happen to my generation, but I believe that in the next one there's going to be a very good basis of children with a relationship with the mountain.

Interviewer: Is it good for children today to learn how to be outdoors and how to climb?

PIPA: 18:53 [Laughter] Yes, I absolutely believe that. It's another way to live, relating to the mountain since you're a child. And all of these challenges that the mountain puts onto you at any level, from being able to go through a route up to planning a trip, or an ascension. There's the trick.

Interviewer: 19:21 If there is one lesson that mountains of

the world have taught you, what is it?

PIPA: 19:32 I believe that it would be to live simple. I believe that in the mountains everything reduces to that. All is so simple that at the same time it can become complicated, because we're so used to complicating things that when we have the simple answer we refuse to accept it. But I think that when you're in the mountain, even more so in hard situations, in which I've been, of life or death: survival and simplicity.

Interviewer: 20:01 Earlier, before climbing you explained a difference between sport climbing and alpine climbing. Would you like to elaborate more?

PIPA: 20:10 I like everything. I learned to live with all mountain' specialties, from skiing, to climbing. I believe that all is so specific that they're children that would only do sport climbing and they find it hard to go to the mountain for a walk, because they have the sport climbing very very easy, by car. But the essence of the mountaineer is in everything, in being able to combine all the activities.

Interviewer: 20:45 What is your most memorable climb through Patagonia? More challenging, or a story about it?

PIPA: 20:58 I believe that the climbing that brings the most memories is the one from Cerro Torre, which I did a couple of times, but when I went through the West Side making a crossing that has not yet been repeated, and climbing a mountain that had not been approached before, it was several days, and I could share the moment with my brother and a friend, that was my biggest challenge and the one that gave me the highest satisfaction. 21:25 Sometimes, in climbing the satisfaction doesn't come from the difficulty level but rather in something that actually represents something important to yourself. And I believe that that climb combined the both things.

Interviewer: 21:35 Do you feel, emotionally, anything different about going with someone as close as a brother? More risky ...? More positive in some sense ...

PIPA: 21:44 No. I believe that the important point is to choose your climbing partner and being able to know him completely, not only in a technical aspect. But rather all the emotional side, and how to react right there when your up there. But you can also get that with a friend, a fellow climber, with whom you share a lot of time climbing together.

22:10 It doesn't have to be your brother. Obviously, I think it's easier and perhaps more gratifying, but I have had very good feelings with friends, while climbing.

Laura - lav 1.WAV

Start [00:00:50.8]

End [01:51:44.5]

Interviewer: [00:00:50.8] Well, this is the map from the area. We are here in Chaltén. We are next to part of this National Park, which is Los Glaciares National Park. As you see there are different trails, starting from town. The idea for today is to go to Torre Viewpoint, on Torre Trail. The Trail starts from here, from the town, so we start walking.

[00:01:20.5] And it's going to be about 2.5 kilometres to reach the viewpoint. On the way we have different viewpoints and today is a very clear and nice day so we will see Fitz Roy range and Torre range. It normally takes about 1.5 hours to reach this point and then we can return through the same path. Well, there are other options.

[00:01:49.4] Or some other short hikes, like Condor's and Eagles. I don't know if you researched about the hikes and options. If I should I explain to you ...

Interviewer: [00:02:02.5] No. That's good. That's perfect! Sounds great! Good to go.

[00:02:33.3] [Small talk. Money, pipa climbing, mic, walking direction.]

[00:06:36.3] [Small talk. Places and people we've seen. Laura is also from Córdoba.]

Interviewer: [00:08:53.9] How long have you been here?

Laura: [00:09:05.6] Fourteen years. I came for the first time because I was studying tourism in Córdoba, and I came with my family on holidays. We knew the owner of a lodge, El Pilar, on the way to Lago del Desierto. So I spoke with them and they said it was OK. There's a lot of work here in summer.

[00:09:35.4] So you should come. And I came the next year alone. And I fell in love with the place again. And then I met my boyfriend, my husband here. And well, every winter we go on holidays somewhere but now we can say that we live here. First years were just a few months here. And then Córdoba, and other places but now we go maybe for one month or two months for vacations. And then we return.

Interviewer: [00:10:09.0] You said that you studied tourism?

Laura: [00:10:13.8] Yes.

Interviewer: [00:10:17.8] Maybe you know about other people, with other jobs, do you know NGOs over here or in Calafate? Like conservationists ...

Laura: [00:10:30.3] Yes. There's an organization here in Chaltén. It's called ... Well, it's a big one, but some members are here. It's called ``Ambiente Sur'' [South Environment]. And they worked in this place for two areas, that are protected. One is here, there's a lagoon there. And the other one is the shore over the river. To protect those areas.

[00:11:02.5] This is the Andian Club. There's an indoor wall.

[00:11:37.3] [Small talk to contact them.]

Interviewer: [00:12:13.2] Are Calafate and Chaltén different from each other?

Laura: [00:12:16.7] Very different, yeah!! Both places are ... Well, the same main activities, in tourism. But Chaltén is much smaller and more oriented in mountain trekking and Calafate [x] a lot in the last years, because it's in a very open area, and it's not like Chaltén that's surrounded by the National Park.

[00:12:44.2] So that's like the limit of the town. In Calafate, well, the expansion was huge. Actually nowadays there are close to 40,000 inhabitants in Calafate. It's very big. And well, the main attraction is the National Park but there are more options for those who don't want to walk. In Chaltén it's mainly trekking. Not many options by car or in town.

Interviewer: [00:13:17.1] So a different type of visitor.

Laura: [00:13:19.1] Yes! Normally people go to both but there's a lot of people that go just to Calafate and don't come to Chaltén. Or some people come just for the day, to Chaltén, by bus.

Interviewer: [00:13:36.5] They come to climb Mount Fitz Roy and then they go back.

Laura: [00:13:39.9] [Laughters.]

Interviewer: [00:13:54.7] 40,000 people you said.

Laura: [00:13:54.7] Yes! I heard that number a few days ago and I couldn't believe it.

Interviewer: [00:14:01.7] And that's throughout the year, even in winter?

Laura: [00:14:03.7] Yeah. Calafate became a bigger city so, well, it's not so limited as Chaltén, with the activities that in winter it's not impossible but it's not the same to try to do a hike, or climbing in winter. The activities in Calafate, even in the Perito Moreno Glaciar it's running almost all year around.

[00:14:32.5] They close just one month I think and there's

tourism in low season of course, but there's tourism all year around. Chaltén is changing in the last years, and more places are still open in winter. But most of the restaurants, hotels, cabins, are closed in winter.

Interviewer: [00:14:56.2] So you live here in the winter?

Laura: [00:14:59.0] Yes. I have a daughter, two year old. So, well, in the last years we are staying more here, and just travelling in winter just to visit family and in vacations. But we don't work much in winter.

Interviewer: [00:15:20.6] Does it get very cold in the winter?

Laura: [00:15:23.6] It's cold but it's not extremely cold. Some days could be like 10-15 degrees below zero, but only a few days. And we can get snow in town but in the last winters just for a few days. Actually there's

[00:15:45.2] a very small ski lift, for people in town, next to the town. And this year they couldn't put it because there wasn't enough snow, in the mountains. But here in town ...

Interviewer: [00:16:04.5] And is the wind better in winter?

Laura: [00:16:07.7] Well the theory is that in winter there's less wind but you can still get very strong winds. But normally it's in summer that we get more wind because there's something about the pressure, the ocean, the high pressure centres, between the ocean and the coast, in summer there's more difference so this is more attraction for the winds. And in winter it's more stable. But we had strong winds in the last winters.

[00:16:38.1] But it's nice, it's very calm. Very relaxed. The days are shorter.

Interviewer: [00:16:44.8] Yeah, we've been lucky for the last three days. The first day that we arrived the wind was so strong. It was difficult just to walk.

Laura: [00:16:59.0] Yes. We've had very windy days in the last week.

Interviewer: [00:17:06.0] Someone told us that during very windy days a kayak showed up in their front. It just came from somewhere.

Laura: [00:17:18.5] [Laughters] A lot of things blow away in a windy day.

Interviewer: [00:17:32.5] We live in a small island, 4,000 people. So we like quiet.

Laura: [00:17:47.0] Yes. Well. It's like the style of the town because there are no high buildings but it's expanding and growing.

Interviewer: [00:18:16.7] How often do you [x]?

Laura: [00:18:25.9] Well, in the last years, that I have my daughter, I don't work as much as I used to. I used to work like 25 days a month. But not anymore. My husband is also a mountain guide. So, well today for example we are both working but this is a short day for me. So, it's OK. Otherwise, we don't work at the same time. So,

[00:18:52.9] just a few days a month in the last years.

Interviewer: [00:19:00.9] [Question inaudible]

Laura: [00:19:03.2] The most popular hikes are this one, Torre, and Fitz Roy Trail. So, ...

[00:19:59.4] There's a view of town from there so we can stop.

Interviewer: [00:20:19.7] [Comment]

Laura: [00:20:19.7] Yes. Just to walk the day hikes here on the trails I like, lighter boots, otherwise it's too hot.

Laura: [00:22:08.4] Have you seen those?

Interviewer: [00:22:11.4] Not here! But we have them back home. [Maybe we can stop over here, or maybe too windy?]

Laura: [00:22:37.1] Well, once we get into the valley it's going to be less windy. Normally it's more windy here, next to the town. This is a good view of the town. And then we are getting into the valley, and we will see the river, and in a few minutes more we start to see the mountains. So here you see how the town is surrounded, over here by the National Park, and two rivers: Las Vueltas, and Fitz Roy River on the side that we're going to see from the hike.

[00:23:06.4] This is the newer part of the town. There are a lot of new constructions. Well, the town, I don't know if you know about the origin of the town. [We always like to here your perspective.] Well, the first buildings are from 1985 when the government decided to establish a settlement close to the border. At that moment, there were some problems, some tension with Chile to define the border in certain points, and this was an area that was at that moment not defined.

[00:23:41.3] So, in a way to establish a settlement close to the border, the government took this land that was National Park, and established the first official buildings in the area. Well, at that moment, the area was already known by climbers and explorers from all over the world. And from that moment, the government encouraged people to come here, to establish here,

[00:24:14.2] from that moment on. Gave the land to people who wanted to come here. So people started to build, and to offer more touristic lodges, restaurants, and started to

grow. And in the last 10, 15 years with the port in Calafate, and the road that was paved, tourism increased a lot. And it's the main activity here. And trekking and climbing is still the main attraction of the area and the mountains.

[00:24:50.4] The town is growing very fast, and we can see that in each lot there is two or three houses. It's a problem that we have in town that there's no more land around, so each lot is building one or two houses, and there are some houses on like skis, to move. And people also living in trailers, and

[00:25:20.7] well, some people are coming in summer to live, in winter they return to their places. But a lot of people is establishing here and well trying to live in this place. So it's a problem that we have here that there's no more land here in town, but a lot of people is asking for land. So the government is ... Well, trying to find a solution for that, to expand the town somewhere.

[00:25:48.5] But, well, there's still no decision.

Interviewer: [00:25:53.5] And so they haven't put a limit on the amount of people that can live here?

Laura: [00:25:58.4] Well, no. For the people who want to live here no. Because there's a lot of work here. And the hotels and the restaurants need people to work. So there are a lot of new places opening, and well, people is coming to work and live here, specially more in summer, but well, all year around.

Interviewer: [00:26:22.8] So to apply for land you have to be a resident, to live here for some time?

Laura: [00:26:28.0] Yes. There's no strict rule about that. For example I'm applying for land for ten years. And I'm still waiting. For some people it's faster, for some people it's slower. But yeah. First of all you have to live here. That's compulsory.

Interviewer: [00:27:04.4] Is land expensive?

Laura: [00:27:06.3] Well, if you get the land from the government it's not expensive at all. They charge like the taxes. The real price of the land is not expensive, but then if you want to buy from another owner, because once you get the land it's yours, and then if you want you can sell it... If you want to buy to another owner, it's really expensive. The prices are crazy.

[00:27:36.5] Because there are not many available.

Interviewer: [00:28:57.1] Food can be expensive here too, compared to ...?

Laura: [00:29:01.8] Yes! It is because everything is coming from at least 3,000 kilometres, by truck. So yes, it's very

expensive and specially the fresh: vegetable, fruits, it's quite difficult to get here. Now in summer there are more trucks coming and places more full of options. But in winter, potatoes are [a nuisance?]. Apples!

Interviewer: [00:29:32.6] The internet seems to be all over!

Laura: [00:29:33.5] Yes! It's very slow because it's satellite. We don't have the wire, the optical fibre. The connection by wire. So yes, it's very slow and there's only one company that offers internet.

Interviewer: [00:29:54.5] Has it been getting better?

Laura: [00:29:56.9] No. Well, yeah, it's better than six, seven years ago. Yeah. But now more people is using internet. All places are offering wi-fi. So the connection is not enough for everyone. But I heard that another company is going to bring internet through another connection, so should be better.

Interviewer: [00:30:35.7] Yeah. This morning, one of the reasons we were late is that we had to send some paperwork to the National Park Administration and it was urgent and the internet was dying. It seemed like it was dead everywhere.

Laura: [00:30:54.1] Yes! The same happened at home. And yesterday I spent like one hour trying to send ten pictures.

Interviewer: [00:32:17.7] It's warm today.

Laura: [00:32:25.4] Yup.

Interviewer: [00:32:32.8] [Inaudible far away.]

Laura: [00:32:40.3] All the hikes in the National Park, there's a sign with some of the rules, and the explanation of the trail. The trail that we are going to do today, is this one. We are going to reach Torre View Point. And the trail is going all the way to Laguna Torre, following this river there's a way out of the lagoon, it's called Fitz Roy River. It's the one that you crossed at the entrance of town, here with the bridge. So up to this point, it's going to be 2.5 kilometres.

Interviewer: [00:33:41.0] Warmest day!!! [Like summer.]

Laura: [00:33:41.0] Yes! And with no wind, that changes everything. Because it's normally the wind that you feel like colder.

Interviewer: [00:34:06.7] As guides, you normally don't use canes?

Laura: [00:34:08.7] Sometimes. I always take one on these day hikes. If I go on a longer expedition I take both. With a big back pack, or on steep trails, yes. I use them.

Interviewer: [00:34:28.4] So there not just for beginners...

Laura: [00:34:30.5] No. Not at all. No no no.

Interviewer: [00:34:32.2] Because I brought two poles and I thought that the last time was so difficult, that I didn't know beforehand, so I didn't bring them over. And I thought this one was easy but I think already would have been good to bring them.

Laura: [00:34:45.3] Yes. It's not only for beginners. I find them very good for the knees. Specially going down. Or with a big backpack, if you twist an ankle or whatever, they give you more stability.

Interviewer: [00:35:03.0] I had them for the mini trekking...

Interviewer: [00:35:29.1] This is a busier trail than Plieque Tumbado...

Laura: [00:35:37.2] Yes. Plieque Tumbado I think is a great hike but it's not so popular. No matter what people come to this one and Fitz Roy. And also these two hikes are connected in a loop with camping areas. So for the girl with a big backpack, she was camping and she's coming on these hikes. Plieque Tumbado is ... You can go on the same hike, the first part, to Vuelta al Huemul, to the Huemul circuit.

[00:36:12.3] But, these two hikes are the most popular.

[00:36:24.5] And this is the highest, of the seasons. And it's a sunny day.

Interviewer: [00:37:21.1] Where do visitors come from when coming to Chaltén?

Laura: [00:37:26.3] Well, from all over the world. A lot from Europe. And from the States and Canada. In the last years more from Argentina. But it's still a very expensive area to come. But now it's more expensive to go abroad, a lot of Argentinians in the last years started to come to this part of Patagonia. Depending on agencies,

[00:37:55.1] some agencies are more specialized in Americans or French or German. I work a lot with people from the States, for example.

Interviewer: [00:38:10.5] That explains why your English is so good.

Laura: [00:38:13.8] Well, many years speaking in English everyday ...

Interviewer: [00:38:24.0] Benji mentioned, I understand a good 90% Spanish, because I speak Italian. I want to thank you for speaking English.

Laura: [00:38:38.4] No problem.

Laura: [00:39:34.8] Would you like to use my walking pole?

Interviewer: [00:39:37.6] Sure!! Thank you so much!

Laura: [00:40:27.3] So as you see in just a few metres the vegetation and the environment changes a lot. We get more into the forest. The forest in this part here of Patagonia is a very narrow area, close to the mountain range on the west side of the continent. And the reason is the amount of precipitation coming from the Pacific Ocean.

[00:40:53.2] So this is the natural forest from the area with two species: lengas and ñires. Both are notofagus. That's the name of the family of those trees.

Interviewer: [00:41:07.0] When you have a moment can you show us which one is which?

Laura: [00:41:13.2] OK. Here these are lengas, but ... When we have both next to the trail I'll show you. There's a very small difference in the leave. Both are very similar and both are [desiduous?].

Laura: [00:42:25.0] This is a nice shot from here.

Interviewer: [00:43:12.4] It's also very bright today.
[Yes!]

Laura: [00:43:24.0] You don't wear sunglasses?

Interviewer: [00:43:24.9] No. It'll make it difficult to [film?]. And the same with sunscreen. I try to avoid it as much as possible. I'll do a hike one of these days without a camera.

Laura: [00:43:50.1] Yeah. The sun here is very strong. Normally you don't realize because with the wind you don't feel it so hot, but the sun for skin and eyes is very strong.

Laura: [00:44:13.6] Just a few metres more and we get to the viewpoint.

Laura: Gandalf's stick!! [Some fans in the area: Rivendel!! ...] Well, yes! Actually where the movie was made has a resemblance, the forests in New Zealand, are from the same family of trees that I pointed out: notofagus. So they are similar.

Interviewer: [00:46:33.3] Someone explained, when the Earth got separated, it's the same tectonic plate broken ...

Laura: [00:46:38.9] Yes! So they travelled and adapted differently in each place, but with the same origin.

Laura: [00:49:21.8] Great view from here. This is our first viewpoint. From here we can see both ranges: Fitz Roy on

the right, and Torre on the left. Now the summit of Cerro Torre is in the clouds. We are going to the saddle there, to the lower part. That's the viewpoint and that's the highest point along this valley. There on the left is Cerro Solo. The one with a glacier on top, and crevices.

Interviewer: [00:49:52.7] Have you ever climbed Fitz Roy?

Laura: [00:49:54.9] No. I like climbing, but I'm not so technical.

Interviewer: [00:50:06.4] You know, we often find ourselves in beautiful mountain landscapes and I think I enjoy the peace, and the relaxation of being around the mountains, much more than I would ever enjoy the challenge of being on top of it.

Laura: [00:50:27.9] Yes. I think the attraction of those things is the challenge, but then don't know how much, ... When you're doing it is enjoying and how much is the stress, the challenge, being tired.

Interviewer: [00:50:43.2] The more the stress, the more you enjoy I think.

Laura: [00:50:47.0] Maybe at the end you enjoy it or some seconds on the summit you say: Wow, this is great. But yeah.

Interviewer: [00:50:57.4] A woman the other day has climbed Fitz Roy 3 times, and she's like: your idea is to just get there. You're down here and you want to get up there, and when you're up there you just want to get back there.

Laura: [00:51:11.0] What's her name?

Interviewer: [00:51:11.0] Milena. [Ah, yeah.] She was fun. We sure are lucky that we got the weather, a sunny day like today.

Laura: [00:51:27.5] Yeah. Great day, and I love when there are some clouds, more than just blue sky.

Laura: [00:52:8.7] Look at the condor there.

Interviewer: [00:52:17.0] Is it Córdoba's provincial animal ...?

Laura: [00:52:19.5] I don't know but there are a lot there in Sierras Grandes.

Laura: [00:52:46.8] Did you take pictures yesterday? The sunset!!

Interviewer: [00:53:14.3] April, take your headphones off, it's not safe.

Laura: [00:53:14.3] A puma is running straight to you... [A

condor!]

Interviewer: [00:54:23.6] How did you decide to become a guide?

Laura: [00:54:27.0] Well, when I finished high school I didn't know what to study, and one option was tourism. I liked photography, tourism, I didn't know, and well I thought that tourism was a good option because I enjoy travelling, knowing different cultures, and more that part than the agencies. So I studied tourism in the beginning in Córdoba.

[00:54:57.5] I became a touristic guide and then I came here. First year I worked at an office, selling tours. And no. I was crazy there in the office. Wanting to go out. Jealous from the guides coming from the hikes. And I said: No, I want to do that. So then I did the mountain guide course, to become a mountain guide, and be able to guide here. So yeah, I really really enjoy it.

Laura: [00:55:40.7] It's a good way to be in nature, exercise, and work at the same time.

Interviewer: [00:55:46.7] Yeah. You don't need to go to the gym.

Laura: [00:55:52.1] In season that's impossible.

Interviewer: [00:55:55.5] You have to find a way to do LESS exercise.

Laura: [00:55:56.3] Yeah!

[00:56:03.0] It's a very demanding job but it's just for the summer months. And then we have long holidays in winter. So it works very well.

Laura: [00:57:00.4] Have you seen the porcelain orchids?
[Yes! Beautiful!!!!]

[00:57:27.1] They'll remain just for a few weeks more and then, they'll be gone.

Laura: [00:57:54.1] Did you already know this area?

Interviewer: [00:57:56.8] I came to Calafate 15 years ago. But not Chaltén. It's incredible.

Laura: [00:58:05.8] Well yes, 15 years ago the road was gravel. It wasn't as well known. Except if you were a climber.

Interviewer: [00:58:13.3] Well, I did know about here, but we had been driving from Córdoba. It was crazy the amount of kilometres we had drove, and it was not only a matter of time and driving a gravel road, but you can't be sure that you'll make it through without being left stranded. So at the time we decided not to come over. But I'm sure it was a totally different thing.

Laura: [00:58:36.5] Yes!

Interviewer: [00:58:45.5] You say that a lot of people come for hiking, and climbing. Is there more of one or another?

Laura: [00:58:54.8] I believe it's more of a massive thing for people to do the hiking, over the world. But even so, climbing is becoming quite a trend in the whole world. In cities, with indoor walls, there's a lot of people climbing nowadays. That's what my partner would tell me, he's a guide as well, and it's impressive the amount of foreigners that come over with their own climbing equipment.

[00:59:25.4] Perhaps they're not going to climb a peak, but they do manage to do some sport climbing near town. It's becoming more of a massive thing. But even with these mountains, they're not for beginners.

Laura: [01:02:51.5] So one of nine kilometres to the lake. We're doing two and a half. But the first one is very long, because starting from the hotel...

Interviewer: [01:03:04.7] Do you know how much is the vertical distance?

Laura: [01:03:09.2] 250 metres. But there are like little hills. Up and down.

Laura: [01:06:59.5] So look at this rock. As you see, the surface is very polished. Well the glacier was passing on it. And this is a rock originally from this mountain. There were other rocks that were travelling with the glacier. But this means that the glacier was right on this rock. There are like scratches, striations on the rock, on the direction that the glacier was moving. Passing and carrying all this valley.

[01:07:29.6] That's why the shape is rounded around these mountains.

[01:08:03.6] I can notice that there was a good amount of people camping over here. [Is it dirty?] Because of the big backpacks.

Interviewer: [01:08:12.5] Perhaps that's for free now and later on ...

Laura: [01:08:14.7] It has always been free and the entrance to the Park is also free. Some years ago, Parques Nacionales tried to charge a fee, but it's very difficult here in Chaltén because the Park is so near to the town, so where would they charge? In the header of the trail? People would walk through another place nearby. In the highway? Can't do so either, because it's a provincial road. And there's people who come to the town and don't come to the Park.

[01:08:42.5] So there was a little fuzz there with people from Chaltén and they decided, for now, not to charge. It's the same National Park that does get charged to see Perito

Moreno Glacier.

Interviewer: [01:08:59.7] I was going to comment on that. When I went to Perito Moreno, 15 years ago, they wouldn't charge anything. And I even got to camp inside the Park. In the bay, almost in front of the glacier.

Laura: [01:09:08.7] Yes. The campings are for free. You don't even need to register. But if they begin to overflow, perhaps at some point they do demand that you register.

[01:09:33.3] En Calafate, the camping area is in Lago Roca. It's not right next to the Glaciar as before. When it all became more massive, they decided to remove that camping section. Imagine if with the current amount of tourists, if they'd all camp there ... And also, before there just used to be a path to see the glacier. There were wooden board walks, and then there was a coast trail. Just a small path. But with the current amount of people it's not allowed anymore.

[01:10:08.2] So they made the metal footbridges, walkways.

Interviewer: [01:11:06.8] Is there erosion around trail a problem here? Could you explain from the start stating the word erosion, to avoid my voice from the recording?

Laura: [01:11:08.1] Yes. It is. It's a big problem.

[01:11:44.3] Erosion is a big problem here in the path. And the rangers are working a lot. Almost everyday checking on each trail, and trying to keep only one trail, one path, but well, it's still a big problem. Specially on the steep parts of the trail with all the people walking it's very difficult to control it. There are some parts, some paths on this part of the park that people came from an organization,

[01:12:26.0] from the States, to work. And to teach the rangers how they work in their country, to avoid erosion, and to make the steps and to work on that. So yeah. The rangers are very concerned all the time about that. In the park there's still no limit of the number of people walking everywhere. But maybe in a few years if the amount of people increases, in some parts they will start to control.

[01:13:03.2] To try to keep it with less people to protect the damage on the trails.

[01:13:15.1] Well, if you want to ask more specifically about that in the National Park Office, here in Chaltén, the guides that work on this, some of them speak very good English. Some of them are very very involved with this thing and they can explain what they are doing.

[01:13:40.6] I know there's a program of volunteers to work on the path. They are asking for people to work in the park as volunteers for one, two, three days. Because the number of tourists is increasing a lot, and they are just a few guides working and the amount of kilometres they have to

cover is a lot.

[01:14:14.7] So they started with this program this season.

Interviewer: [01:14:27.1] We find that National Parks are very tourism oriented and some are very conservation oriented. So, in your opinion, do you think in this case what are the NP priorities?

Laura: [01:14:46.5] I think that they have a very good balance between the touristic activity and conservation. Because they control a lot and they are very concerned about nature and conservation, but at the same time ... They are not closing trails or they are not preserving this areas that are very popular.

[01:15:25.2] But they do have some areas that are very protected. And it's forbidden to go to those areas. But I think they have a very good balance.

Interviewer: [01:15:44.3] Are they open to community input and feedback?

Laura: [01:15:56.2] Yes. The NP in this area is our back [yard]? So there's a very good relation between population and the NP. Actually the workers from the NP go and help if there's a fire near town, and they work together a lot. They organize lectures for kids. They take them to some hikes. And they are very involved with the community and the culture of the place.

Laura: [01:17:23.0] If you have time you should go to the visitor's center. I have a friend working there. I can tell her about the program and maybe she can ask somebody to talk with you, and ...

Interviewer: [01:17:42.1] In dealing with them ...

Laura: [01:17:45.8] Ah! The official part!

Interviewer: [01:17:47.7] For permits and fees and insurance [Yeah!]

Laura: [01:17:57.9] Maybe you are communicating with somebody in Calafate, or Buenos Aires...

[01:18:19.6] That's one thing about being here next to the Park. That we work together a lot. We are friends with the people, but work in the NP, and we help each other, and it's not like in other parts that the community is one thing and the enemy is the Park.

Interviewer: [01:18:49.1] Has it always been like this? Or have things changed over the years?

Laura: [01:18:54.5] No. I think that in Chaltén it was always like this. The park and the community trying to work together, to make the best for everybody.

[01:19:17.9] There's a big problem for example with the dogs, going into the park. Because the town is next to the park, there are no fences. So the dogs are almost everyday going to the park and the rangers bring in the dogs back. And of course there are some problems of being so close. But in general we get along very well.

Interviewer: [01:19:47.9] How are dogs a problem?

Laura: [01:19:51.4] Dogs are a problem because a lot of people have dogs outside of the house with no fences. So the dogs are running everywhere, going around and getting into the National Park, chasing birds, chasing native animals. With all the diseases of the domestic animals. So,

[01:20:23.1] the Park doesn't want the dogs going into the territory.

Interviewer: [01:20:39.1] In a recent trip to Japan in a very remote island, with a lot of endemic bird species and they had a [x] problem there. Settlers brought a lot of cats with them to get rid of mice. And then ...

Laura: [01:22:23.7] On this hike, before getting to the viewpoint there's a place where we can drink the water.

Interviewer: [01:22:35.3] It's one of the things that we can do easily where we live.

Laura: [01:22:50.4] Luckily here, we still have good water in the mountains.

[01:23:24.9] From here we have like 15 minutes up and we get to the viewpoint. It's the steep part of the trail. So you'll stay here and wait for us? [Yup!]

Interviewer: [01:24:54.3] They wanted to grow beavers over Tierra del Fuego...?

Laura: [01:24:54.3] Yes. They wanted to use their skin, and then they didn't adapt to the weather. Now they are pandemic. I even heard that they crossed the Strait of Magellan. So they're already on Chilean side. Even to same parts of continental Patagonia. It would be a problem because, since they are nocturnal it's very hard to see them and hunt them. And the forests die all in the surrounding area.

[01:25:52.9] It's not like the places from which they are native, where the forest is adapted to them.

Interviewer: [01:29:17.3] The viewpoint is 15 minutes from here?

Laura: [01:29:17.3] Yes. It's very close. Just 500 metres in distance but a big elevation gain.

Laura: [01:31:25.9] There's a mountain film festival in February in Chaltén.

[01:32:14.0] Have you seen the Calafate with the fruits? These are all Calafates. But I can't see the fruits on these plants.

[01:32:42.0] This is the Calafate. But the fruits are ... They must be very dark color. There's a legend that says that if you try the Calafate you will come back to Patagonia.

[01:33:12.5] Maybe you can try the ice cream, it's very good. There's an ice cream shop in town.

Laura: [01:39:18.3] That's the little stream where it's possible to take water to drink. You can take some shots.

Interviewer: [01:39:37.9] It gets suddenly colder.

Laura: [01:39:37.9] Yes. In the shadows.

Laura: [01:42:19.1] It's very common to see in the forest, some trees with some branches or the tree itself fallen because the wind is very strong. And the wood is not so hard. Normally the trees are dead inside and the bark is alive so then they break easily.

Laura: [01:45:22.1] There are some years that it's full of those. And now is one of those years. Don't touch them because they produce a kind of allergy on the skin.

Interviewer: [01:47:59.3] Trail erosion! Are there environmental callings in the park?

Laura: [01:48:05.1] A very big risk is the fire. We never had a big fire here like there were in Torres del Paine, in Chile, which is quite close to this area. Same kind of environment. They had fires that were for like one month, burning all the area.

[01:48:31.4] And it's a big risk. That's why fires are not allowed, in the Park. If you're camping you have to take a stove. And if a fire starts it's very difficult to stop it. The weather is very dry. There are no routes. No access to get to many parts in the Park. So the rangers are very concerned about that all the time.

[01:49:02.1] Checking in each place, we ask guides with the radio if we see something. Some people camping... Making a fire or whatever. We always call the rangers. And I know they stopped some little fires but we never had a big one. I think that's another big problem in the Park.

[01:49:31.4] And then well, the rescues. If there's an accident in the mountains the only way to take the person down is with a stretcher, walking. So they need a lot of people for that. Normally you need, depending where, about 30 people helping. So, rangers, volunteers, mountain guides, people from the town: when there's an accident,

[01:50:01.5] a group from the mountain club from Chaltén, they organize themselves and they go with a stretcher and

with all the technical gear they need to take the person down. One thing is here in the low parts of the mountains, and then sometimes it happens that there are accidents in the mountains, so that's a big thing.

[01:50:31.4] Sometimes they can get a helicopter from Calafate, from other parts, but normally you have to go with a group of people and bring the person down with a stretcher. It takes many hours, and of course a big risk for everybody.

[01:50:56.7] Well, we are getting to the viewpoint, we are going to stop here for some minutes.

[01:51:44.5] This is the highest point along the valley. Then the trail to get to Laguna Torre, it's going down and then quite flat to reach the lake.

Laura - lav 2.WAV

Start [00:00:22.0]

End [01:26:41.5]

Interviewer: [00:00:22.0] When we were in Galapagos, we learned that Darwin's finches now love chips. They have reached a new stage in their adaptation: junk food.

Laura: [00:07:08.9] [After saluting] That's a friend, who's mother of two, little kids. And this season she started to guide again.

Laura: [00:08:36.1] So are you visiting other areas in Argentina? Or ...

Interviewer: [00:08:38.1] Only this area. But of course Buenos Aires, we have to go through it. We also thought about going to Tierra del Fuego too, but it was not enough time.

Interviewer: [00:10:12.3] What are the impressions that visitors have of the mountains here?

Laura: [00:10:19.0] In what sense?

Interviewer: [00:10:22.1] Do they feel that their expectations are met?

Laura: [00:10:30.2] Yes! When visitors see the mountains here a lot of them, I've heard a lot of times, people that travel all over the world and they say: This is the best hiking day I ever had. Well, specially with good whether. When you can see the mountains.

[00:10:58.2] The whether is part of the environment here, of the landscape: we have glaciers, and we have these mountains with snow and glaciers and seracs, because of the whether conditions, so if we had sunny days everyday ... It's impossible to have the glaciers here, so sometimes the whether is not so good, but well, still the experience in general is always good.

Interviewer: [00:11:33.3] We have learned just from first hand experience that not many people, or at least in Canada, have a clear idea of what Patagonia is like. Some people think that it's all mountains, it's all empty.

Laura: [00:11:51.0] Yeah. In general people think that Patagonia, they're thinking the forest, the mountains, but this is just a very small part of the whole region. Patagonia, most of it, is like the way coming from Calafate. Very flat, very arid. And the forest and the mountains is just here.

[00:12:23.0] Even in Argentina if you say Patagonia, people

think in the forest, the lakes.

Interviewer: [00:12:38.3] Even the estancias near the coast line.

Laura: [00:12:38.3] Sure. The largest part of Patagonia is that: steep. But I think there are great things in this area. Like, have you seen Perito Moreno Glacier yet or not?

Interviewer: [00:12:53.6] Not yet. By Monday.

Laura: [00:12:55.3] OK. You'll be in front of a huge glacier, driving a car, stopping and from the parking you can see the glacier. That's something amazing. And well, here you have the town, you walk five minutes and you're in the middle of nature, no pollution. There are many places where you can go without crossing people. Very close.

[00:13:25.5] It's very pristine. You can drink the water from the mountains.

Interviewer: [00:14:27.7] One of the things that we've found is that, compared to other parts in the world, that are just as beautiful, but the trails and the mountain area here, has not been developed. So often you're just ten minutes away, even in the mountains to a cold beer. Or an ice cream.

Laura: [00:14:57.6] Right. Yes! Or a road. Lift.

Interviewer: [00:15:08.9] Are the people who would like this would be like that?

Laura: [00:15:14.8] Well, actually people in town in the last weeks was very concerned because there's a project in most of the National Parks to develop the activity, to develop tourism, and to give concessions for hotels in different natural areas. Maybe in some parts it's great because you need more development but here, next to the town is not necessary.

[00:15:53.3] Still, the National Park Administration is ... The idea is to keep nature. And to keep pristine areas. So I hope it remains like that.

Laura: [00:20:22.6] Have you seen these little fruits before? It's chaura. It's eatable. Like a little apple. Maybe not as good as your croissant, but ...

Interviewer: [00:20:42.3] Is that a Calafate berry?

Laura: [00:20:43.4] No. That's chaura. Not so tasty.

Interviewer: [00:22:32.2] You said most of the visitors are from Argentina, North America and Europe. Have you seen any changes in the number of people coming from China?

Laura: [00:22:48.0] Yeah. In Chaltén we get many Japanese groups. They like trekking a lot. They go camping, some of

them. And in the last years I've seen more Chinese. I know there's a lot of Chinese that go to Calafate, more to the car easy tours. But in the last years I've seen more trekking groups.

[00:23:19.6] Chinese, Koreans.

Interviewer: [00:23:25.6] The places that we go to have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of Chinese tourists over the last few years. And some places, changing the local economy, and the form of touristic activities available. Given what I know it makes sense that there are more in Calafate.

Laura: [00:23:58.1] Yeah. Of course to come here is for trekking so I saw many groups that are not prepared for trekking and they just go to the regular tours to see the balconies at Perito Moreno Glacier from there. The boat tours around Perito Moreno Glacier and the other glaciers.

Interviewer: [00:26:09.9] Do you have to be a local in order to be able to guide a group?

Laura: [00:26:13.1] In the National Park there are different categories to guide different activities. Tourism guide for some of the very short guides, and the Perito Moreno Glacier for example. I mean the balconies. Mountain guide or trekking guide for these hikes. And to go to the glaciers. And high mountain guide, the international certification, to go climbing for example, or skiing.

[00:26:47.3] And each National Park, well, you have to take an exam to be able to guide in that National Park. You have to take an exam about well flora, fauna, the trails, names. Then once you take the exam then you have to pay every year for that certification for the permission. But there are guides from all over the country guiding here.

Interviewer: [00:27:22.1] But not from outside the country.

Laura: [00:27:24.0] Well, to work like working in other countries is the same: you need to be Argentinian or at least with a residence to be legally working. Otherwise you are working illegally if you're not from that place.

Interviewer: [00:27:42.6] Let's say a group of Americans brings their own guide from Colorado.

Laura: [00:27:49.3] The guide from Colorado can't work in Argentina without the working visa. Or the residence in Argentina. It's not the trekking or the mountain part it's the legal part of working in the country.

Interviewer: [00:28:16.6] Something tells me that you're not surprised.

Interviewer: [00:28:20.7] It's not that. Whenever we go to places that are so international, I'm always interested in where the money goes and where it stays. And so, if a group

of American tourists arrive for the day in Calafate and bring their own tour guide, and then they go back home, there isn't a single cent that remains here, right?

Laura: [00:29:02.6] Yeah.

Interviewer: [00:29:06.0] As far as the guiding goes it doesn't happen.

Laura: [00:29:08.7] Yes. That happened the first years that the tourists from Calafate started to come here by bus, just for the day. So the tourists were just coming for the day maybe stopping, eating something in the restaurant, and then returning to Calafate. And a lot of people from the town was like upset with that kind of tourism but I think that is the way to, well, know the place!

[00:29:38.8] Many people came for the first time like that. And said: Oh, Chaltén is a good place to come and stay more days here. So then they came again. And stayed here in Chaltén. Because sometimes when you buy the tour they offer Calafate and not Chaltén. So people stay in Calafate for four or five days and they came just for the day. And then they say: ah, there are hotels here; it's a good place to stay.

[00:30:06.1] And maybe, specially Argentinians, maybe then they come again and stay in Chaltén more days than in Calafate.

Laura: [00:31:30.2] Are you seeing all the holes from the woodpeckers? The woodpeckers looking for the worms inside the trees, inside the bark.

Interviewer: [00:31:47.7] We have a [x] woodpecker at home that during mating season, or at least this is the dominant explanation, no one has the real science: the males like to peck to make noise and so they find a noise means [Houses!] roofs, all sort of things that are incredibly loud.

Laura: [00:32:28.0] That can be the explanation, because there are no worms there. Why are they pecking?

Interviewer: [00:32:34.1] They're just doing it to show off. It sounds like a machine gun. Like they find something metal.

Laura: [00:32:45.9] Do you live in a city or in a natural ...?

Interviewer: [00:32:50.8] We live in a small island. So we have ten acres of land and so we are essentially living in rain forest. It's really quite. So when the woodpecker does that it really shakes you to your feet. Suddenly you go from absolute quiet to a machine gun.

Laura: [00:33:21.1] That can be scary if you don't know that it can happen.

Interviewer: [00:33:55.4] Have you trekked, hiked in the rest of the world?

Laura: [00:33:56.6] Yeah. Well, in other parts of the country. In Mendoza, in Córdoba, there are nice mountains. In Tierra del Fuego. And well, I went once to Bolivia. I did some climbing there. Some mountain climbing. Perú as well. Spain. Canada must be nice.

Interviewer: [00:34:42.0] It's different. I often find it less approachable. It's such a big country, so underpopulated. With little time and there are not many trails. The ones that exist can be very solitary. And so we need to be prepared for serious dangerous wild life.

Laura: [00:35:35.2] I was going to show you the leaves you asked. The lenga and ñire. The difference. [showing] The lenga's leave is very regular, vein and curves. It's like a heart. And this one is the ñire. Very similar but very [sharp?] on the side. Both change colors in autumn and then they fall.

[00:36:12.4] And normally the lenga can grow very tall and straight and the ñire is more like that one, lower and normally at the bottom of the valley. The lenga is the one that grows up to the timberline. And up there it grows like a bonzai, very low.

Laura: [00:40:45.0] I don't go very often to cities. But I realize that in cities people don't look up. They just look down, cell phone, they don't care what's happening around.

Interviewer: [00:41:03.3] Have you found that people are more immersed into their phones?

Laura: [00:41:18.7] Well. Yeah, in a way, with the pictures. But there's no connection here. So ... That makes it ... Much better. But in front of Perito Moreno there's cell phone signal, so I'm sure you'll see a lot of people with cell phones in their hands, or talking. I'm very happy that there's no cell phone signal. Only in some points and in some summits in the mountains.

[00:41:50.3] But actually it's very good. Because it's safe here, to be able to call from the cell phone. But that's great. Yeah, you see people listening to music, some people with high [loud] music. But it's nice that you're outside of the ... [Unplugged.] Yeah.

Laura: [00:43:14.0] And the cell phone thing is something new in town. I think we had for the first time like 6, 7 years ago, cell phone signal in town.

Interviewer: [00:43:25.6] Has it changed life in town?

Laura: [00:43:27.8] In many ways. Yeah. Well, communication is very important. And it can be very useful for many things. To communicate with your family, to be in touch with friends, makes things easier in many ways. So,

that's the good side. Many years ago it was very common to have in all houses

[00:43:59.4] the paper and the pen next to the door. Because here it's not like in the cities that you have week and weekend and people is busy during the week and is free on weekends. Here maybe you go for a dinner with friends on Monday and maybe you're working on Sunday. So it's very common to meet your friends any day. Just go and visit them. Now with a cell phone you ask first if they're at home.

[00:44:34.7] A few years ago it was just going, knocking on the door.

Interviewer: [00:44:38.4] I imagine that the arrival of internet must have changed tourism ...

Laura: [00:44:46.7] Yeah. For sure. Well, now all the reservations are going through the internet. You have all the websites to book hotels and to know about the place, to investigate. You don't need to go to a travel agency, to ask for all the information there. You can do it from your home.

Laura: [00:45:44.5] But it's funny to see some people that they want to be in a very remote area but they want to have very fast internet. There are some contradictions. People say: oh, there's a lot of people on these trails. Well, we are well known over the world. It's one of the best places for trekking in the world.

Laura: [00:49:29.0] I like to be able to reach my daughter in town.

Laura: [00:49:58.5] There was a project many many years ago to build a dam for electricity, a little one. For the electricity of the town. Like 15 or more years ago. It was a much smaller town. But the project, I don't know why, didn't continue. And well, that's part of the dam they were going to build.

Laura: [00:50:32.8] It's not connected, the electricity. It's coming from an engine, a fuel engine generator. Yes.

Interviewer: [00:50:54.8] Has sewage waste been a problem?

Laura: [00:50:59.7] Yes. It's a problem. Because the people from the town is very concerned about that. So we don't want garbage around, plastic bags everywhere. And a lot of people from the town agreed on recycling part of the garbage that is possible to recycle of course. So the town is always working on that.

[00:51:30.1] It's difficult because we are far away from all the places where they get the garbage to recycle. But well, a lot of people, at their houses, it's not compulsory but most of the people, at their houses, throw the compost in the garden. The organic part. And we separate the plastic, the glass, and paper. And we take it to the place in town where they take it by truck.

[00:52:06.6] Then the rest of the garbage is going to a place just a few kilometres from here but it's thrown with no classification or anything there.

Laura: [00:52:26.2] That means that we are getting to the town. The windy valley.

Interviewer: [00:52:43.5] And what about the pipeline from the sewers?

Laura: [00:52:46.9] I don't know how it's called. The system. Sewers. Yeah. All the fluids are going finally to the river. So the treatment sometimes is not enough. And the problem in town is that it's collapsed. Because the town grew so fast that all the infrastructure is not enough now.

[00:53:35.3] It was built a few years ago. But with not such a big increase of the population and the touristic buildings and the hotels. So in summer, once in a while we have problems. The idea of the project is to take

[00:54:02.1] the gas, the generator, outside of the town. There's an idea with the National Park to take some land from the National Park to pass all the services there. But well, yeah, now, in summer specially it's a problem because the town is collapsed.

Interviewer: [00:56:24.4] Now we're going to ask for you to respond in Spanish.

[00:57:25.0] Is this a wilderness in your opinion?

Laura: [00:57:31.2] Yes. This is a remote area in many senses. Considering in first place the whether. It's very changing, all the time. You have to be prepared for all possible conditions. We are used to saying that you can have all seasons in a single day. It can change very quickly. Nature, as we've seen along the day is very SALVAJE [savage, wild], very natural.

[00:58:04.4] There are very few modifications, and the little that you can see is what we see along the way, some signing, some few camping areas that the National Park allows. So yes, I believe that this is an area very remote.

Interviewer: [00:58:22.4] So, if I asked you what does wild mean to you, what would you say, what is wild? You can explain between the languages if you find similarities or differences if needed.

Laura: [00:58:47.8] Let me think about it.

[00:58:57.8] [In English] Well yes. I think wild is ... Patagonia is wild. [Goes on in Spanish] This place has a lot of virgin nature. Very ample places to go through. You can choose what kind of adventure you want, and the experience that you want to have. I think it's open to a lot of possibilities.

Interviewer: [00:59:29.5] The word wild in English, and the word salvaje in Spanish. Do you think they mean the same or different? [Responds in English]

Laura: [00:59:50.0] Well I like actually more wild than salvaje. Salvaje I think in Spanish there are like some bad or not so nice things about that word in Spanish: salvaje. So I like wild.

Interviewer: [01:00:08.6] What are these things?

Laura: [01:00:12.1] Salvaje it can be the way that it's like not so good culturally. Yeah, not so controlled for example.

Interviewer: [01:00:33.1] What do you find of positive in the English word, wild?

Laura: [01:00:41.2] I relate more wild with nature things. With nature, with wild life, wild animals. Maybe I have only part of the concept and I am missing part of the concept you have in your language.

Interviewer: [01:01:03.5] It's OK. We're interested in your opinion. Salvaje perhaps is close to savage. Which is similar.

Laura: [01:01:25.2] I think in Chaltén, people living here must be wild in a way. You have to be able to adapt to different things in town. Being a small town, not so many things, not so many options. Talking about options of food, of buildings, the way we live, the activities that we have. This is my job. This is my dress for working. So you need to be a bit wild to live in town.

Interviewer: [01:02:01.3] So this place is inscribed by UNESCO World Heritage for it's natural characteristics, natural heritage. Is their cultural heritage here?

Laura: [01:02:13.6] Well. The culture in Chaltén, or in Calafate as well, I think is a mixture of the culture from Argentina. Because people that is living here, we are all coming from other parts of the country. So, culturally speaking I think it's a mixture, but we all share the passion for the mountains and for nature. I think that's the only way to survive in this wild place.

Interviewer: [01:02:46.4] So a sign like this, does that take away from it's wildness?

Laura: [01:02:52.9] Well yeah. In a way there are some things in the Park that the first time that you see those things it's like a bit shocking. But I think it's necessary. I think it's important to find the balance because it's a wild place but people from all over the world, we are talking about thousands of tourists coming so you need rules. And you need to control it. You need to mark trails. Otherwise the erosion and people camping and doing whatever they think is good doesn't work very well.

[01:03:31.3] So, I think it's part of that balance that we have to find.

Laura: [01:04:02.6] Thinking about wild things. My address in my ID, my first in Chaltén from 2006 is a campsite number. So my ... [people ask for directions] That's why you need signs.

[01:04:43.2] So my ID is Campamento Madsen #26. That's wild. Once I had to present my ID and the girl was asking address and she thought that I was on a street. And she asked for a floor. No no, no floor. Just on the floor.

Interviewer: [01:05:14.2] So you lived in Camp Madsen. [Yeah] Please tell us what it was like.

Laura: [01:05:20.1] Well, those were the more wild years of the town. Many years ago there was an area called Campamento Madsen, where a lot of people that came for the summer to work, we were all living in that area, just with a tent, with a place for the stove, maybe some benches to sit.

[01:05:48.4] It was next to the town and most of the guides were living there. So to find a guide the agencies were going to the camp site and asking for the guides there. Climbers staying there in that free camping area. And well, that was one of the things that disappeared with all the growth of the town.

[01:06:16.7] And the controls from the National Park. Because the NP said: No, OK, this is not good, a lot of people are living there, no restrooms, no infrastructure, and they said that it was not allowed anymore. Wild years.

Laura: [01:09:43.9] I couldn't stop thinking in the netflix series Wild Wild Country. The story of Osho. My mom used to have books by him, well, everything he says is very nice and all. But the whole story how they leave India to search for a place in USA, where they could make a totally isolated community, with their own rules, and all their way of life.

[01:10:34.5] But of course, next to a small town in USA, Antelope, I don't recall the region. And all the friction with the locals, with government, it all goes out of control. Osho ends leaving in a plane so that they don't put him in jail.

Interviewer: [01:11:21.7] Sloterdijk is a reknown philosopher that has been proclaimed one of his disciples, he wrote a trilogy on nature called Spheres: bubbles, foams, and another one. The first about relationship in the maternal womb, and about relationships formed as dyads.

[01:12:16.2] Third sphere is about man and environment. A savage reading, a very long text. But if Osho is interesting that's a nice pointer.

Laura: [01:13:00.0] In the documentary it's not focused on what they profess, but on what happened. They even accused

them of having poisoned the whole town. They had guns.

Interviewer: [01:13:39.1] A little bit like the bad meaning of wild. As in wild west.

Laura: [01:13:41.1] Yes!

Laura: [01:16:50.6] This soccer field is not very popular. We have an indoor gym. Near the school. And kids can practice hockey, basket, soccer. Even today that you see that it's a wonderful day but it's windy. To sit down with a baby and to say: let's go for a picnic; we can't do that many days in summer.

Laura: [01:18:35.3] You can see a lot of types of buildings. That house there, ready to move it. Here you see a container. The green one is a container. You have this dome here. That's going to be a house. They still have to put the windows.

Laura: [01:19:09.9] This is the house of the guy that makes those domes. He makes them to sell them. So his house is a dome.

Interviewer: [01:19:31.1] Do they have separations inside?

Laura: [01:19:31.1] Yes.

Interviewer: [01:20:33.3] Are there people living in those as well?

Laura: [01:20:35.9] I think they are building them but yes, they will. It's so expensive and so difficult to build here that they use all the alternatives.

Laura: [01:21:24.0] So that's a typical shape of cloud, that's called a lenticular cloud. Like lentils.

Interviewer: [01:22:12.2] Does the season suddenly begin one day and then another suddenly finish?

Laura: [01:22:13.6] Well, the season is extending a little more each year, and those who are coming a lot are the photographers. In April, which used to be a dead month, now in autumn the photographers are coming a lot. In that world, a place becomes popular, in vogue, and now Patagonia is a trend. And the autumn is very nice, the leaves change colours, the days are shorter. They like to shoot at sunrise and sunset, and the days are much shorter. So in April there's plenty of photographers. But later on, in May, June, you could walk the entire day and see 10 people, at the most.

Interviewer: [01:22:56.5] Could you say that in winter there's zero people?

Laura: [01:22:58.9] I'm not sure if I could go as far as that. But very few people. All the hotels close. There's just one or two left open. And the restaurants the same. In July, which is the winter vacations for the school children,

everyone leaves away.

[01:23:22.5] Nowadays people are staying more permanently, and there's more activity in the Casa de la Cultura, they do activities. The climbing wall of the Andean Club [Club Andino] is crammed. Because everyone is there, climbing. There's a movement of going to ski, for the people that live here, the locals, the mountain guides that are experienced in ski, and they take the chance to go to ski.

[01:23:55.6] It's very calm.

Interviewer: [01:24:01.5] Do they ski here?

Laura: [01:24:01.5] Yeah. They have to climb, walking, with your skis. And then the snow conditions ... You don't know what you're going to stumble upon. You have to know how to ski very well. You need to rely on the whole rescue team: the shovel and all that in case there's an avalanche and that you can come out of the situation with your team mates.

Interviewer: [01:24:30.1] Does Northern ski exist over here?

Laura: [01:24:32.8] It's not popular, in Argentina. And here I'm not sure there's anyone that does that, or if they have the equipment.

[01:24:54.5] Perhaps in Ushuaia there's much more snow. It's more humid. Here it's not humid, so when it rains it's not much. In Ushuaia the mountains are low so you can access. It has a ski centre.

[01:25:19.2] Over here you have to move far away to find snow.

Interviewer: [01:25:36.5] Pipa handed us over there because we had little time. This side is too easy he said, just to start. And then we would joke about this side being easy. It was hard on the other side!

Interviewer: [01:26:40.9] Is that another entrance?

Laura: [01:26:41.5] Yeah, that's right. It's closed street. Not private. We could have used that road. It should be a public road. There's my daughter! Amalia.

Evangelina - shotgun.WAV

Start [00:02.5]

End [41:48.9]

EVANGELINA: [00:02.5] We never formalized an NGO: we do have an intent to do so, but until now we haven't got there yet. [Laughter]. Or we haven't focused. I can tell you: I am already working with Anfibio, PhD, my daughter. But yes, it would be something that we would like to materialize in an NGO. And already without being an NGO, we work with an NGO which is Ambiente Sur, in Río Gallegos,

[00:32.5] where they work with the Patagonian urban reservations, and we are working as a network with other urban reservations through out Argentina and Chile, Santa Cruz, Tierra del Fuego. So we have been working, so what you mention about which actors intervene is in the whole of these countries.

Interviewer: We are shooting, we can start.

Interviewer: [01:32.4] The questions with which we would like to begin are about how did you come over here, present yourself, your academic and professional profile, as of your interests growing up, how did you decide to study what you do, how did you consider coming to live here in Chaltén.

[02:04.4] My name is Evangelina Vettese. I was born in Quilmes, Buenos Aires, and at age 9 I decided to study Ecology. A lot that had to do with this was a talk that was given at school, by an ecologist. And at that time I was mesmerized by nature. I always had that feeling: of coming close to nature. I lived in a neighborhood

[02:31.0] the garden in my home was full of fruit trees and so, but I never had the same feeling of living savage or Sylvester nature as I could find here in Chaltén many years later. But since that time I realized that it was what I was aiming for. So I finished my studies at school and began to study at La Plata University.

[03:02.9] I went through the bachelor's degree in Biology and I went through the ecology orientation. 2010 I graduated. 2011 I came to live over to Chaltén [Laughter], thanks to my partner Rodrigo, who is also an ecologist. We came together along with my daughter. When I arrived to Chaltén I had that feeling of being able to come near nature. We lived in a house that

[03:32.3] had the lagoon right over the corner, and today it is the urban natural reservation that I've been talking about. Of course, being in such a place, like Chaltén, that is very small, all the development is so sudden, and you can start seeing how the urban steps over the natural. And having lived in a place where the natural is practically

extinct,

[04:00.3] in a very populated neighborhood in Buenos Aires, we started to traction. One of the first things to do was to ensemble a group of volunteers to work over that urban reservation... Which became an urban reservation afterwards. In the middle of all this I am also studying, making my PhD career in Biological Sciences, working with the forest's biodiversity, the native forest from here, in Patagonia, Santa Cruz.

Interviewer: [04:31.8] What is ecologically unique about this area?

EVANGELINA: [05:00.5] The most characteristic feature of Chaltén may be species that are also represented in other regions of Patagonia. A lot of endemic species, proper from this place. Some species like the huemul, some types of orchids, several kinds of bumblebees [abejorros mangangá],

[05:35.8] Overall, one outstanding feature from Chaltén as a town, is the fact that it is inserted into a ecotone, a transition between the forest and the steppe. So this delivers much more biodiversity because it has a repertoire of flora and fauna that is intermediate, with elements from both parts, of both ambiances.

[06:02.5] You could add up both rivers, Río de Las Vueltas, and Fitz Roy; with their riveras, which also give a different additional biodiversity. From the ecological point of view you get high quality water, landscapes, species, and the ecotone.

Interviewer: [06:29.7] Rodrigo commented that there's something that happens both in the water as in the terrain, that there's a lot of flora, as much as fauna, coming from the outside, and there's a competition: and that the non native species are gaining a lot of ground. Do you see this too? Do you see some part that is still being able to maintain itself alive? Because you are studying the forest. What could you comment on that?

EVANGELINA: [07:01.1] Yes. In aquatic ambiances as in terrestrial, all over the world you can find the phenomenon of biological contamination. It's unstoppable, that's what it seems like. And it's the arrival of species that are not originated from one place, they are the exotic species and they normally tend to grow exponentially, and that is when they become invaders. A lot of times, that establishment of invading species

[07:32.3] generates a receding of the native plants and animals. It's a contamination of a once pristine ambient, that in Patagonia at least is happening from the beginning of the 1900s, when the ranchers arrive with cattle: sheep and cows, and pastures.

[08:01.6] From that time on, that was the boom of exotic species. And yes, there are other species that become

endangered of extinction. They already are some that are endangered already, like the mara patagónica, which is a kind of hare, a huge bunny. It's not here, we can't find them here, and they used to be around this area, for instance.

[08:30.2] Also the mangangá, a bumblebee, native endemic and with other bumblebees their population is decreasing rapidly. We haven't seen any in years. So it is a big deal, and many times it becomes difficult, even impossible to stop these exotic populations.

[09:03.1] Phil and April: Preservation Policies and Conservation, whether the Park is effective.

Interviewer: [09:23.3] We have been discussing how much the Preservation Policies are being effective, be it in a positive or negative way, or even with no effect. Also considering that it has been a long time since it was declared National Park, almost a century [EVANGELINA: 1937.], yes, 80 years.

[10:02.9] And also it has been 30 years since it became Heritage Site. So has National Parks played a role, or not? And other institutions, and other regulations.

[10:18.2] In my opinion the role of National Parks has been key for the working of the town itself, Chaltén. Even despite the urban area of Chaltén is not part of the National Park, it is completely surrounded by the Los Glaciares National Park. The policies by National Park are simple, clear, they move forward and there are observable improvement on communication, the huemul has been very well managed.

[10:49.7] They have many points to be highlighted. It's not enough. A lot of times you can find that it is not aligned with the rest of policies around the province, nation, and not even considering the municipal level. Bit by bit, there's an intent to work together, but the dialogue is not very open. So those are big problems to be resolved.

[11:22.5] And many times, when it's a touristic area, the struggle among the economical and the touristic promotion wins over conservation or sustainable tourism. And we are just going through that path. They sometimes seem to be incompatible.

[11:52.9] Translating to April.

Interviewer: [12:25.9] Can conservationists, policies, and tourism coexist together?

[12:52.6] Cows and conservation... Do you have observations on what has happened and what can be done?

EVANGELINA: [13:22.7] Historically, in Argentina and the world the production is much more valued than the development and process... The ranchers nowadays in Patagonia is not but one example of the advancement of big extensions of territory that became completely modified by the invasion of sheep, in

the beginning,

[14:03.8] and cows later on, in the first 20, 40 years of the century. The best territory had been used for pasture, and were already wasted, steppe needed by that time re seeded again, because erosion was moving forward.

[14:31.8] Production was not working out, so then there is a movement over the forest, with cows. Just then, and with pastures, to maximize development. Ranchers also undertake the killing of pumas, and guanacos too.

[14:59.3] The ranchers, with a very negative view, over the local fauna, as competition. So it's not only about the erosion by sheep, the introduction of cows with pastures into the forest, also the eradication of guanacos, and pumas, and foxes, and with state politics that supported those kind of killings, that moved on top, so that cattle could improve, that big investments don't go lost. So it is a very historical process.

[15:39.5] It is very rooted in a culture that prioritizes the rancher over the local fauna and the ambient.

[16:02.0] Translating.

Interviewer: [16:37.9] Are they wild cows? Feral ones?

[17:21.7] Is there a certain amount of cows that do not belong nowadays to private owners and have become salvage?

EVANGELINA: [17:40.4] Yes. The ranchers and cows exist prior to the creation of National Parks, so when the Park was created it is allowed for owners and local population to go on with their activities, in this case livestock, always under certain standards, for example the amount of weight supported, the number of animals, the dimension of the area they are going to use for pasture [permiso de pastorear-pastaje].

[18:12.3] A lot of times that is not complied with. There are several cases in the history of Los Glaciares National Park of a persecution of those who do not comply and there is a lot of impunity, the landowners have a lot of power.

[18:43.6] So either they don't follow the rules, with fencing to contain the cattle, and there is no maintenance. So what was once a respectful thing ends out not being so, and by another hand, in the Los Glaciares National Park I know that there is a case of wild cows, that have remained there as bagualas,

[19:14.7] that go around freely, with no owners. But that is not in this area, it is in the area of Península Avellaneda, that would be where Lago Argentino is, more North from here, sorry: South. And in this area there are some cows bagualas, but not inside the National Park but in the Lago del Desierto reserve, it is very clear there that the owner does not own them, he has stopped producing, and they

remained feral.

[19:51.9] Very close to the lake. So there are very specific cases that are close, others that seem not to have owners but have, and others without owners.

Interviewer: [20:15.4] I have a book here about Chaltén, it's brand new and the author was here for some time. It's a long and dry book. [EVANGELINA: I don't know about it.]

Interviewer: [20:47.7] In one chapter, he makes an argument that cows, were taken out of the park so that the park could appear wild to all the tourists. And I am wondering what your thoughts may be.

[21:15.4] [Benji Translates]

EVANGELINA: [21:39.9] Let me see if I understood. The way that cattle has been handled, there are several techniques. And whatever is on the production side is very extracting, up to an extreme. National Parks aims for a sustainable management in relation to the pre existing activity which is livestock. If National Parks would seek to do conservation exclusively, which is not the case, because the Parks were not created for that, they have tourism, culture, and local populations,

[22:25.4] Considering that National Parks don't have a single function, of conservation; then they need to make conviviality out of tourism, conservation, taking care of the local populations inhabiting from before the creation of the park. In case it would only do conservation, probably they would extract the cows, and this would not only make the appearance of the landscape better, but rather would improve the condition, the place's quality.

[22:52.9] My research analyses specific spaces in the forest, of unsuccessful sections [relictos], of ñires, of *Nothofagus antarctica*. Ñire grows in the ecotone, in general, and these sections, are forest-like inserted into the steppe, away from the forest. So I study the diversity of plants and birds, and the structure of trees, and the rings of growth both in these sections [relictos] compared to the surrounding area.

[23:24.6] And of the most relevant issues, what you can see the most, is the fact that where you can find cattle, everything gets ruined, the plant composition, the exotic are the only that are abundant. Even in the forest, the cows hurt the forest because they scratch against the trees,

[23:54.9] so they generate less growth. And they eat the X, or stomp on the regeneration, so they are forests that do not continue their natural cycle. Because the seeds fall down, but don't ever [or with a lot of trouble] grow back again. To replace the dying trees.

[24:23.5] Normally these sections [relictos] are surrounded by estancias. And they also use the firewood. So everything that is related to cattle, generates decreases in the

landscape and the ambient conditions, it's not only about what is in the sightseeing, for image.

Interviewer: [24:54.6] I am always happy when we have an ecologist.

Interviewer: [25:19.8] Is there any practices that she's working on now in the area? Projects, and then that.

Interviewer: [25:43.3] There is a wide area of involvement here, on what you're doing. You spoke of several topics. Is there something you would like to add of your activity or your interests?

EVANGELINA: [26:09.0] I work at school with the science clubs. It's an extra curricular activity, at all school levels. Here in Chaltén we have only one school for each level. Through projects that are presented to the Education Counsel at provincial state level, the projects get approval year by year, moving forward with the science club.

[26:38.9] Students are invited to participate and since I am into education, I have been able to participate in several projects. One was related to didymo, which is the exotic invading algae in rivers: that was with the nocturnal school. So with the adults we could work a lot on that issue and build up a map, with geo referencing in the places where we could find didymo, even before than National Parks would recognize their existence.

[27:12.7] So even despite these initiatives, there was not much more later on to get more support to try to diminish or stop the impacts of didymo locally. But even being so, the information is available and is current.

[27:36.3] That was one of the projects. And the other projects were in the primary school, with the little kids. We worked on the natural urban reserves here in town, to acknowledge the place, it's value, the biodiversity, of birds, of plants.

[28:02.8] These are at least the ones in which I have been participating actively. And one can notice a great deal of interest by part of the studentship, as well as from the families. So it is interesting and nice to give forward. Not only looking for information but rather trying to reach people and that the information becomes vox populi, that we can all manage the same information, to value and take care of the environment, from which we are so close, all of us here living.

Interviewer: [28:33.8] There is a question on a wider scope, since this research spans over a period of five years, and studying the situation all over the world, to consider specific points: the big title of the project is In the name of the savage, wild.

[29:03.1] Wild in Spanish can be ... [EVANGELINA: Sylvester!] somewhat incomplete, with not a single clear

meaning. If you could grasp the meaning in English, could you tell us what does it mean to you? And if there's anyway to distinguish between wild and wilderness, if there could be any subtleties. [EVANGELINA: Wilderness?] Wild!!

EVANGELINA: [29:31.4] In Spanish I would translate that into savage, or Sylvester. Because savage sounds like something that is aggressive or violent. It has that connotation.

[30:00.4] Sylvester instead sounds more like something that is more remote, truly natural, pristine, and without intervention of the human hand, without the human population's touch over a space or a species. Because, if I should look up for a contrast, I would go over to the domesticated, or to the urban perhaps.

Interviewer: [30:32.6] Considering Patagonia, we have a contrast between what outsiders may consider as Patagonia and the local people. Do you have a perception that foreigners and locals see this in a different way, and if they consider it wild?

EVANGELINA: [31:01.6] [Time for thought, reflects.] In my view, I understand that foreigners and visitors can find Patagonia wild. And some part of this has to do with the great extensions of land with no urbanization of any kind, apparently pristine, apparently silvestre.

[31:33.0] The reality is that there is not one single forest in Patagonia, not even a single piece, not even an hectare of steppe that hasn't been populated, or used by men. Be it by burnings, mining, so if we get strict about the pristine, of what is virgin: Patagonia is not virgin.

[32:00.2] In very remote areas it perhaps may be. In the heights of the mountains, but in wherever place you could visit, as tourists and foreigners do, ... Not at all.

Interviewer: Let's narrow the focus down from Patagonia to Parque Nacional Los Glaciares. Are there areas,

[32:31.8] in the park that you consider wild? ... Beside on the mountain tops.

[33:00.3] [Benji Translates]

EVANGELINA: [33:16.6] There ARE areas in the Park that are wild. There are remote places inside the Park, without accessing into the high mountains, which does not imply that they are completely silvester, with no human intervention.

[33:44.5] One can feel in a totally desolated area in many places of the National Park. Which does not imply that it hadn't had a history of anthropic usage in that space.

Interviewer: [34:16.4] Do people belong in wild places?

Interviewer: Maybe she went over this: Is wilderness marketed?

[34:44.6] Do you bring people here ... ? [Benji: Yes! (afterwards: MASSIVE FACEPALM!!!!, sorry!!!! What a rookie.)]

EVANGELINA: [34:53.9] Maybe. Because perhaps what is savage, remote, one could consider a marketing strategy, touristic. But despite that, people, visitors, will leave with the feeling that they were in a remote place.

[35:19.3] This even happens for us, when we go for a stroll through a path out of season, it would seem that you're unique, that there is no other person around for a very long distance. And this happens even leaving very few meters away from town. Very close around you can feel very isolated, completely immersed in nature. That is a real feeling.

[35:49.4] ... Despite that the space ...

Interviewer: Phil mentioned in another question that despite all the obstacles, even when it is not easy to find anything properly wild, the idea of being inside of nature: do humans belong to the wild?

EVANGELINA: [36:25.1] Well, when I mentioned that you can feel alone, that is actually without any other people around. But totally immersed in a world, in a nature surrounded by many species, many living creatures. Be them the plants, that convey a whole bunch of things, of sensations, and the animals that inhabit that space.

Interviewer: [36:54.4] Maybe a final question of what is the wildest place that she's ever been to?

EVANGELINA: [37:15.8] That's difficult. [Thinking]. I've been in the Parque Nacional Perito Moreno, it's relatively nearby here. And however it has been intervened by livestock, and it has a history of anthropic use,

[37:44.8] one can feel truly desolated. It's known that there are no people for many kilometres around. And perhaps it is not the most inhospitable but perhaps it is.

Interviewer: Perhaps one last question on the wind. If you were to describe to someone, what the wind is like here, someone who has never been here before, how would you describe the wind to people who've never been here before?

EVANGELINA: [38:15.0] It's difficult to describe the wind for people who haven't lived it. Because, they will not imagine it. Even if you tell them about it. You have strong storms of wind, when you narrate about it, it would seem that you're exaggerating, that it's a lie what you're saying. But yeah, you can feel it in your whole body.

[38:47.4] It blows your legs away, [Laughter]. You feel very vulnerable. Or having to put a lot of strength just to maintain on your feet. And grab yourself onto something. The wind is a phenomenon very characteristic of this place. So it's part of this place's identity. It's a thing that

even if it can bore you, [Laughters] to live in such a place, when you can connect with the wind, it's a splendid feeling.

Interviewer: [39:20.0] Is there anything that we haven't asked that she would like to share with us about this place and this ecosystem?

EVANGELINA: [39:54.4] I can tell you a bit about what it's like to live here. [Laughters]. To me I get to have the label of ecologist [ecologista] in this Chaltén society. The [activist] ecologist [ecologista], as a difference to the science person [ecologista], which are two similar but different concepts, it's easy to label as an activist.

[40:20.7] Many times, when the work is voluntary it would seem as if you would have other interests in the eyes of the people that live with you. Because since Chaltén is so small we all live together with many people with in-numerous different interests along with each other. But one thing that I would like to point out is the fact that, at least from my point of view, I understand nature as something that is perfect.

[40:50.1] Perhaps the only thing that I find being perfect in the world. Over here, in this part of the country, Pachamama, it's a very interesting and important concept. And Pachamama is not the nature alone, and conservation, and leaving a place intact.

[41:19.6] It is rather our society living along in the natural space with respect, without ... As I interpret it, being able to establish a conviviality. And that both parts, the human and society as much as what is natural can be in good health, enjoying it, and with respect: in equilibrium. There is the difference between the ecologist as activist and as scientist.

[41:48.9] It would seem that the soil is supreme and, in my point of view, where I see it as a global thing. Society has a very important value, culture, identity, and the contact and relationship with nature. That equilibrium is what I aim for. From my actions.

Rodrigo - lav 1.WAV

Start [[00:02:37.5]]

End [02:03:56.4]

Interviewer: [00:02:37.5] Where did you study biology?

Rodrigo: [00:02:48.7] Universidad de La Plata, Buenos Aires.

Interviewer: [00:02:53.6] What kind of biology? What interested you?

Rodrigo: [00:02:56.9] I research on fishes. Specifically on fish, but I also work in other conservationist projects as well.

Interviewer: [00:03:17.1] That explains the snorkelling.

Interviewer: [00:03:38.0] You have to be quite brave to dare that over this side. Right? Because of the cold.

Rodrigo: [00:03:43.0] Yes. Well, it's more of a fright than the actual thing. You can be under water quite a long time. We can be up to an hour sometimes. It's cold anyway. But you can still enjoy it.

Interviewer: [00:03:58.4] What kind of fish are in these rivers?

Rodrigo: [00:04:06.9] Currently we can only find salmonids, exotic types: brown trout, rainbow trout, and Chinook salmon.

Interviewer: [00:04:20.8] Chinook!

Rodrigo: [00:04:34.2] The brown trout and rainbow trout were seeded a lot of years ago in all of Patagonia. And these populations have succeeded, and the Chinook salmon arrived by itself up to here.

[00:05:03.5] The Chinook salmon is produced in Chile in the Pacific Ocean. And due to a bad control of the breeding places they have began to colonize other systems in the Patagonian watershed.

Interviewer: [00:05:24.2] Are the populations healthy?

Rodrigo: [00:05:33.1] Healthy in which sense?

Interviewer: [00:05:38.7] In numbers.

Rodrigo: [00:05:41.1] Yes. They're stable. But naturally there were other species, native ones, that now are not there anymore. All the fishes you find today are exotic and they have displaced the native species.

Interviewer: [00:06:07.0] My wife is a landscaper, and she always comments on what is native. Does this generate some kind of problem in the difference between the flora and the fauna?

Rodrigo: [00:06:17.2] Yes. Here the main problems relating to conservation of these natural systems are the exotic species, flora and fauna, and the bad control on the use of land. Be it for producing, which historically had been only about sheeps and cows, and now tourism is added.

[00:06:48.8] So they are like the different edges of a problematic situation to handle the system. There are a lot of species of exotic flora that are detrimental due to the fact that their reproductive system is very quick, and the same goes with the fishes. All of the invading exotic species, both flora and fauna, have that ability. To reproduce very fast.

[00:07:22.3] They have a wide range of commodities to grow in a site. To feed from something. So they spread really quick. And more so in these systems, which are very poor. And the native species grow so slowly here.

Rodrigo: [00:08:55.2] My partner arrived yesterday, and she told me that if you have time and interest: we are working with a system of reserves in town, urban reserves, which are of very quick access. If you want to visit any of these and she can tell you a bit about them, there's no problem.

Interviewer: [00:13:05.3] Do you visit the glacier?

Rodrigo: [00:13:08.0] Yeah. I go when family comes over, or friends that haven't been to the area. Are you going or have gone already?

Interviewer: [00:13:18.6] On Monday we're going.

Rodrigo: [00:13:27.5] Are you doing mini trekking? Or by runway?

Interviewer: [00:13:32.3] First boat, and then mini trekking.

Interviewer: [00:13:39.4] On that subject, we're still looking for kayaking, independent preferably, if he knows anyone ...

Rodrigo: [00:14:18.8] Kayak La Leona? Did you speak with Kayak Santa Cruz?

Interviewer: [00:14:26.9] I found Kayak Santa Cruz, do you know them?

Rodrigo: [00:14:30.0] Yes. I've got their phone. Eduardo's his name. Nice guy. Works with small groups in Calafate. So it's a good option.

Interviewer: [00:21:27.3] Can you film under rain? [Go pro

can handle anything. Except for sound.]

Rodrigo: [00:23:02.4] Do you want to take some shots from the viewpoint?

Interviewer: [00:23:09.1] Yeah. Sure.

Rodrigo: [00:23:23.0] Later on it all goes away.

Interviewer: [00:24:47.8] That [house?] is amazing!

Rodrigo: [00:26:22.2] It's possible that the hill gets covered. Because there's a [wind?] coming from back there and perhaps it won't be visible in the whole day. It's a good opportunity to take shots right now.

Interviewer: [00:26:30.9] I was noticing the colour of the water. Is it possible that it got more clear? I saw more of a milky consistence the other day.

Rodrigo: [00:26:35.7] Yes, it's possible. Also, depending on the lights, on the position of the sun, it changes a lot. But, if it has been raining a lot above, then the water gets dirtier, because it drags more sediment. If it's not been rainy then it stagnates and the sediments fall down. Well, not stagnated ...

[00:27:03.2] So the water has two things. The sediment which is soil, minerals that are in the water; and then the glacier has a sort of colloidal substance, which never decants, just like milk. When you pour a glass of milk you know it has water, but none of the components, such as fat, fall down. The particles remain in their own place. The glacier water has that, a lot of colloid. So that's what gives the milky colour.

[00:27:48.4] Also depending on the light you can see it differently, more green, or more light-blue. But this one is quite transparent.

[00:28:03.2] That seems to be snow. Because it's so cold...

[00:28:29.1] Did you here about the reserves?

Interviewer: [00:28:37.4] Yeah, I didn't translate because Phil understands everything. It's quite probable that we will.

Rodrigo: [00:28:53.7] It's a volunteer work that is very good ...

Interviewer: [00:28:58.0] We were actually looking for something like that. Today we are actually planning a visit to Los Huemules if we could go by on our way back. We'll check that out later if it fits. Perhaps having a talk with Evangelina could be more important.

Interviewer: [00:30:56.2] It's so awesome! I love the wind!

Rodrigo: [00:30:57.4] The mic fell.

Interviewer: [00:31:04.8] I like the wind. But I don't want to get sick.

Interviewer: [00:31:17.0] Como una playa tropical!
[Laughters]

Rodrigo: [00:31:32.4] The air is very cold.

Interviewer: [00:34:04.1] Do we have cell phone signal along the road?

Rodrigo: [00:34:04.1] No.

Interviewer: [00:34:06.3] Someone told us that sometimes at certain points you could get lucky.

Rodrigo: [00:34:10.4] Well, in the last straight section of the road you can get some bit. Later on, as far as I know, you can't get any. Do you need to reach somebody?

Interviewer: [00:34:38.5] Not an essential thing.

Rodrigo: [00:34:40.4] You do have Lago del Desierto with a land line.

Interviewer: [Discussing Evangelina. Great option!]
[00:35:52.4] Seems good to reach Evangelina! Perhaps we can talk with her sitting at some place nearby us.

Rodrigo: [00:36:20.4] Sure thing. Just let us know.

Interviewer: [00:36:43.7] Does she work in conservation?
[Yes.] Genial!

Interviewer: [00:38:37.0] Do you think that conservation and ecotourism are coexisting?

Rodrigo: [00:38:59.1] If they can or if it happens?

Interviewer: [00:39:04.2] All of that.

Rodrigo: [00:39:08.8] In Argentina in general everything happens quicker than what is possible to handle in a place. There's a lot of information, and a lot of sectors have the will so that tourism can be sustainable in conservation. But in truth, the economical projects move forward very quickly and endanger the places' sustainability.

[00:39:49.8] We are in a situation in which the places are taken care of only because they are so big and haven't received too much people, yet. But it is possible. We can only hope that over the years we can keep the place in good shape.

Interviewer: [00:40:22.3] When they ask about here, they are not only referring to the country, but rather here where you

have to work. Perhaps it's all the same, but if there's anything else ... That's totally welcome.

[00:40:56.0] Is ecotourism just a concept or is it something practical for tourism?

Rodrigo: [00:41:15.6] In a practical sense it would depend on each business, how they consider their own responsibility to the real ecotourism. That's my personal viewpoint. It is possible to undertake actions, concrete and direct ones on a certain topic. But in general it's a name that is more of publicity, or by marketing than a real thing.

[00:41:49.6] Because tourism is more massive than ecological.

Interviewer: [00:43:09.3] Around the world, Patagonia as a clothing brand has made this region very famous. Many people think of Patagonia as a dream Paradise with ecotourism. What are your thoughts on that?

Rodrigo: [00:44:05.8] It fits quite tightly to reality because Patagonia as a brand sells natural things, such as this. We have great extensions of land or sea without many people. And I believe that it's the most attractive notion of the area. You can travel through roads where you don't cross any towns, where there are no visible activities.

[00:44:42.1] And that has a lot to do with the name or the brand that Patagonia has.

Interviewer: [00:45:33.4] So Patagonia the brand has been around on this region... Has the brand created something around this location ... ? They sell adventure and clothing.

[00:47:33.7] I am trying to prepare the question, perhaps with an example outside of Patagonia.

[00:47:54.7] I can think of an example in Patagonia. The clothing company brands their clothes and everything to explore. That is the spirit of their clothes. Any outdoor company try to sell the idea of an adventure. This idea of wilderness.

[00:49:04.4] But is there any association about branding and place making? That's the tricky part for me.

[00:49:25.0] Here's a simple question. Has the company done anything good for people, invested, contributed in the area here?

Rodrigo: [00:50:24.6] I believe that they were very clever in adopting the word and the concept so that they can profit from it, and I'd say that there's a bit of a give and take situation. That it's been useful to both sides.

[00:50:55.7] To the area it's also useful to have the same name than a successful brand that is well known over the world and has a lot of matters of environmental

responsibility and so that helps to strengthen the natural concept and of the region by itself.

[00:51:16.2] I think that it has been useful.

[translating]

Interviewer: [00:52:04.3] Would you refer to this area as Patagonia or Santa Cruz, or otherwise?

Rodrigo: [00:52:16.9] Yes. Yes. Of course, clearly. But Patagonia is so extensive that sometimes it's a matter of confusion, from where does it begins and ends. At least in Argentina, when you speak about Patagonia, if the people are from the North, they'll think about Bariloche. When we talk with people from other parts of the world that come over to visit Southern Patagonia, they think more likely about Southern Patagonia, over Northern Patagonia.

[00:52:59.9] That's my understanding.

Interviewer: [00:53:16.0] Just to add up to the Argentinian meaning. To me, Patagonia is estancias, and nothing else. No tourism associated, for me in Patagonia.

Interviewer: [00:53:45.8] Most people in North America in general, I think would never think of Bariloche or even the sheep. They would think of Tierra del Fuego, the glaciers, the mountains. And perhaps mountains could include Bariloche too, but not as a town. More as of a picture, without details.

[00:54:44.7] Also, it depends who you speak with, how they take advantage of the idea of Patagonia. For example, when we emailed, and I sent you a Netflix Special, that was on Francis Mallman. The guy has restaurants around the world, and he totally sold this idea that what he did was a Patagonian technique, and he has the Patagonia spirit.

[00:55:10.6] That is because he's been abroad and he knows what he's referring to.

Interviewer: [00:55:44.3] Do you have any notion of how the aboriginal populations were before colonization?

Rodrigo: [00:55:51.4] Yes. The last aboriginal settlers were groups of people that followed food, and fed mainly by guanaco. They made everything with guanaco, they fed, clothed, made their houses, their tools for hunting. And they were more related to the steppe and with the limit of the forest, more than inside the forest. The forest wasn't very used by aboriginals.

[00:56:32.1] There are places that have been identified as used by these populations, they are more closely related to the steppe.

[00:56:54.1] I stopped because this area is interesting. They made it a as an historical reference site of an incident

that happened in 1965, between Chile and Argentina that had a small war. Thanks to, or due to that confrontation, Argentina decides to establish Chaltén, as a town.

[00:57:56.3] It's not something that we attend to much, but still...

[00:58:12.5] This is a recent commemoration. It wasn't actually made in this area. The conflict wasn't actually here. It was more inwards. There are versions that the confrontation wasn't very much as it's stated. Not as much of a frontier problem, but rather a personal argument between the carabineers (Chilean) and gendarmes (Argentinian).

[00:58:37.8] You know how history works. It's always told by those who take some advantage from it.

Interviewer: [00:59:59.2] The anniversary from this 1965 event was a commemoration that was made only recently with the plaque that dates from 2003. So it wasn't even a problem that happened exactly here but rather closer to the border.

Interviewer: [01:00:45.8] Here it states [reading] what shouldn't happen between two brother countries.

[01:01:27.7] [Translating: A Chilean carabineer was shot, and then assisted by an Argentinian but still died.]
[Reading plaque. The Chilean had a risen flag, and then as a sign of respect the Argentinian flag was put back again.]

Interviewer: [01:04:45.5] Amazing about Santiago de Chile was the museum to commemorate those disappeared during military regime. Probably the best ''Museum'' that I have ever seen. Right next to Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Memorial.

[01:05:32.8] And Buenos Aires, for a short visit, I loved it. It's a great, different kind of city, than most cities that I've ever met.

Interviewer: [01:06:33.2] ¿Qué es esto?

Rodrigo: [01:06:33.2] A historical estancia center.

Interviewer: [01:07:40.5] What are the main environmental threats that the Park needs to deal with?

Rodrigo: [01:07:55.9] One of the most menacing threats are natural. They are related to men, of course. Which are the interactions between the native species, of flora and fauna, and the exotic species that are entering ever more, and are modifying the place. As much as this happens all the time, in environments that species move around, and the environment reaches equilibrium, that is one of the threats.

[01:08:31.4] Another menace is the use of land under no control, both be it by tourism, as by division of lots, and economic endeavours.

Interviewer: [01:08:55.9] Has tourism already grown out of

control?

Rodrigo: [01:09:10.0] I don't think that it's out of control. Because there's nothing drastic yet happening. But there are times, short ones fortunately, in which there are a lot of people in certain places. And there's no control in relation to the amount of people. And when there's a lot of people, the largest menace is fire.

[01:09:40.5] Being in the forest, us as humans, we have as a nice idea to start a fire, place a tent, sleeping in the mountain. But unfortunately, due to ignorance, more than malice, there are eventual situations in which people start fires in places that are extremely dangerous.

[01:10:11.1] I don't see an out of order situation yet in the area.

Rodrigo: [01:10:33.8] The rain was coming from another valley. Fortunately it's not here. Yet. But it is getting cold. Right? The temperature is going down.

Interviewer: [01:10:58.9] Where there cattle here in the area?

Rodrigo: [01:11:03.0] Yes. There still are cows.

Interviewer: [01:11:36.2] He haven't seen. Except for the wild cows. Are these cows privately owned and managed?

Rodrigo: [01:12:05.3] It depends on each countryside... They used to be only a few big fields. Then they started to get separated into lots, and become sub divided. But there was already a cattle production. And nowadays what we can find is that some fields have their animals and they handle them. And in other fields they stopped paying attention to the animals. So there are some area that have baguales.

[01:12:31.8] They are sylvan cows. They are a problem for the area. Because they stomp. And it produces forests that don't get to have a good regeneration.

Interviewer: [01:12:46.4] Are they a plague?

Rodrigo: [01:12:46.4] Not yet. Because there's no uncontrolled amount but one animal alone in the forest ruins everything. Because they are very heavy, very big, they break everything.

Interviewer: [01:13:44.7] Do the rangers control this due to the harm they make?

Rodrigo: [01:13:55.6] Not explicitly by National Parks nor, in this case the jurisdiction is of the province. It's a provincial reserve. They don't take it as a strict decision to kill them, but they do suggest, from the Forest Administration, that they should be removed or do something about the animals that hang loose.

[01:14:24.8] There's a waterfall here. Would you like to shoot?

Rodrigo: [01:16:03.6] It doesn't have much water today. It's used to having more strength. Well, it has a lot of moss.

Rodrigo: [01:19:37.5] They call this place the Jump of the Ring. This place has a story. I know one of them at least. I am not sure if it's real. It says that a man proposes to her girlfriend here and she answers no. And she takes the ring and throws it away. So there's a ring in the stream. Jump of the Ring.

Rodrigo: [01:23:20.2] Over here there's an older forest, taller.

Interviewer: [01:23:57.4] You've been here for three years, and you studied over in La Plata, but you're from Patagonia. More from the North?

Rodrigo: [01:24:03.1] I've been 8 years here. I was born in Río Gallegos. And I studied in La Plata.

Interviewer: [01:24:27.5] How did you decide to move to Chaltén?

Rodrigo: [01:24:32.8] Because I've been coming since I was very little to travel, trips, vacations. And they offered me a job when I was still living in La Plata. And it was a professional job so I came over. The job that I had in La Plata was as a waiter.

[01:25:22.1] And I worked in the area of Environment, in Chaltén's Municipality.

Interviewer: [01:26:10.9] Was this road made in 1995?

Rodrigo: [01:26:15.1] Yes. It was opened in 1995.

[01:26:36.5] This is an estancia. Río Toro.

[01:26:56.4] It used to belong to another estancia, and the family owners decided to convert this sector into a conservation area. They don't want it for cattle nor tourism nor anything. So among other decisions they decided to wire up a fence around the estancia, because they don't want any more cows inside their land. And what they did was to design a fence that would be friendly with the local fauna.

[01:27:32.0] That's why underneath it has that gap so that the little huemules, which are not so high, so that they can go through, and the adult huemules can jump over as well.

Interviewer: [translating]

Rodrigo: [01:28:21.4] And the fence project, with the design and supervising over it, it was Evangelina and I who did

that. It's not that we designed it, it's that there's several types of design and we chose this one. We consulted specialists on huemules. And that's a good example of the rancher [estanciero]. Because most of the estancias that make a fence, there are seven string wires, and with barb wire in the top. So that's super aggressive for the fauna, that can jump the fence.

[01:29:02.2] A lot of times they get entangled. Guanacos most of all. They get hooked and die in the fence.

Interviewer: [01:29:32.4] [translating]

Rodrigo: [01:29:43.5] And over here it's normal to see the hill but I think it's too cloudy now. Right?

Interviewer: [01:30:13.5] I think that's a guanaco. Could you tell us what a guanaco is?

Rodrigo: [01:30:23.4] A guanaco is from the family of the camels, lamas. And it's originally from here, South America. And in Santa Cruz, in the steppe area they are very common, you can see them along the highway. They're sylvan.

Interviewer: [01:30:46.6] [translating] You can also use that same word to say that someone is tricky.

Rodrigo: [01:31:12.2] Over this area already the river comes clean, and only ... The river is born in Lago del Desierto, which is very near, and it has already changed its colour. The water isn't milky anymore. It has no sediment. And it's transparent. This area is all used for fishing. It's an area of reproduction for the Chinook Salmonids.

Interviewer: [01:31:43.7] I'll shoot a bit. It's very clear water. What colour are guanacos?

Rodrigo: [01:31:55.7] They are brown, and white.

[01:32:29.4] See. A guanaco. [showing]

[01:33:07.0] Just another month more and this is a spectacle. Full of salmons. Do you know the Chinook Salmons? They're these creatures of this size. They're gigantic. People go crazy, you know?

[01:33:29.5] I go through the river in snorkel to make a recount of population and to look for spawning chambers. It's a lot of fun.

Interviewer: [01:33:38.8] And whatever they take from over here do they use them for gastronomy in the country?

Rodrigo: [01:33:44.4] No no. When the salmon arrives here the meat is very bad quality. Because it comes from the sea, which is 500 kilometres away, and since the moment that they access the river they don't eat at all. Doesn't feed anymore. They are like five months without eating, so they cannibalize, they auto consume, and once the spawn, they die.

So it's almost rotten.

Interviewer: [01:34:05.7] Once they spawn?

Rodrigo: [01:34:07.7] They reproduce only once and die.

Interviewer: [01:34:20.9] So some reproduce and go back down the river?

Rodrigo: [01:34:22.3] No no. They come from the sea. Lay their eggs. And they die. The small fishes are born, live a short time in the river in fresh water, and begin to descend and reach the sea. They stay three or four years at sea, eating, and they come back up to reproduce themselves. And die.

[01:34:39.7] A life cycle that is very crazy.

Interviewer: [01:34:46.3] And once they spawn ...

Rodrigo: [01:34:49.9] Then they remain some time in the area, and they all begin to die.

Interviewer: [01:34:52.8] How many eggs can they lay?

Rodrigo: [01:34:55.1] Thousands! That is depending on their weight. [Anyone could do that!] All for a screw! (Todo por un polvo!). The amount of eggs depends on the weight of the female. But well, less than 10% of the laid eggs are those that come back to the place later on. So the mortality rate is gigantic.

[01:35:29.1] It's quite cold!!

[01:35:35.4] That's snow up there. This kind of cold is coming from that snow up there. [showing]

Interviewer: [01:36:31.5] With these lenses [circle/round polarizer] you can shoot all the fishes inside the water! I can see the fish as if there wasn't any water. Like they're floating in the air. But it has to be 90 degrees (to the sun).

Interviewer: [01:37:11.9] [translating to Rodrigo]

Rodrigo: [01:37:11.9] Wow. That's so nice!

Interviewer: [01:37:13.2] That's my fish filter. If you use the filter to one side you can only see the reflection of the water, and on the other side, you see no reflection at all, just what's underneath.

Rodrigo: [01:38:13.8] Did you know that fishermen use polarized sunglasses? So that without the reflection you see them much better. When I'm working on that I use them.

Interviewer: [01:38:41.6] Are they flamingos?

Rodrigo: [01:38:41.6] Yes. Yes. The other day didn't we see some? No, we just commented about them. We saw the black neck swans. But we didn't see the flamingos. Now once we come back we'll check if we can find them in the lagoon. They're normally quite far away but with binoculars, sometimes we can get lucky.

Rodrigo: [01:41:57.8] We're going to see a waterfall. El Salto Argentino [The Argentinian Jump.] [I'll put some more cover up on top. It's cold.]

[01:43:43.4] This waterfall is the physical limit for the Chinook Salmon to reach the river. So they move no further from here.

[01:43:56.8] But there's no bear that eats them over here...

Interviewer: [01:45:24.5] Is that an orange over there?

Rodrigo: [01:45:24.5] Yeah. That's a piece a plastic. It's been there for a short time. The dirtiness... I have to come over with my suit and take it out. I have to go walking. The trick is that I have to come with someone else and take a safe rope.

Interviewer: [01:46:40.2] How do you ...

Rodrigo: [01:46:39.7] Reach over there? I just use a full body suit. The thing is that to reach up to that point, I have to walk, with my neoprene suit and a special set of fishing boots, to walk with a bit more comfort. It's not easy to walk over these places.

Interviewer: [01:46:59.0] Because of the moss...

Rodrigo: [01:46:59.0] Yeah, and a lot of rocks. The current throws you over.

[01:47:09.0] And if you get into the current you're going to get hurt. But you can get out quickly. And with the [frog legs?] in the river... You can do whatever you want. But you can get hurt all the same.

Rodrigo: [01:49:25.1] Phil, you could bring a bear from Canada and place it there. So that they can eat the salmons.

[01:54:10.8] [Whistling]

Interviewer: [01:55:44.1] Can this be a romantic go away? Or is it already worn out?

Rodrigo: [01:55:45.9] Yes! Of course! It's great. It's a nice place.

Interviewer: [01:55:52.9] In Córdoba you can go to the river but maybe that's not the vibe over here.

Rodrigo: [01:55:57.8] No. People over here ... The road

from up to the lake and the lake it's very used by people from town. More than the trails in the mountain. Because it's something that's more familiar. You can arrive by car, come down with your children. Or if the people are too old and can't walk, it's a good spot to come to.

Interviewer: [01:56:20.8] Like in Córdoba that you can come over in summer to take a bath.

Rodrigo: [01:56:24.8] Well, not that much.

Interviewer: [01:56:30.0] But seriously speaking, if you do snorkel, perhaps those who are bold enough ... Perhaps I would have done it, but we didn't manage to form a group.

Rodrigo: [01:56:37.0] Yeah sure. It's fun.

Interviewer: [01:56:37.0] So there's people who does the snorkel, they brace up.

Rodrigo: [01:56:40.4] Yes. Yes. Yes. I won't say that we go out everyday but we do have groups. Now we have reservations made for these days all the same. The matter is that there are splendid days like yesterday, that you can have a really great time. And other days, like today, or worse, when you have a good time but the situation is about what happens when you get out of the water.

[01:57:05.2] That's what makes the difference. Because if it's very hot, you take off the neoprene, and you can easily stay in the beach with a shirt on, and shorts. But in a day like this one, you take off the neoprene and you want to be covered with feathers, right on. But it's fun all the same. It's great.

[01:57:28.4] Having the chance to go underwater over here ... It's with a suit. When you have a very hot day over in town, we get into the river. All the neighbours, into the water without any suit. And the little kids are quite hardened.

[01:57:43.1] I can't swim without a suit. There are some kids that get into the water and swim for a short while. To me, the cold leaves me with no air.

Rodrigo: [02:02:36.8] Did you see the waterfall?

Interviewer: [02:02:36.8] Yeah. Does that connect with this river?

Rodrigo: [02:02:38.1] Yes!

Interviewer: [02:02:45.0] Beautiful! Have you been up there?

Rodrigo: [02:02:51.2] [not following, trying to speak in English] Other hills. The rocks are not good here.

Interviewer: [02:03:07.8] Soft!

Rodrigo: [02:03:09.6] Yes!

Interviewer: [02:03:28.9] The leaves are so green. Like a lime green.

Rodrigo: [02:03:50.6] Do you run?

Interviewer: [02:03:53.0] Sometimes. Why?

Rodrigo: [02:03:52.9] Because of the backpack.

Interviewer: [02:03:56.4] You?

Rodrigo: [02:03:56.4] Sometimes. I train a bit.

Rodrigo - lav 2.WAV

Start [00:00:59.3]

End [02:03:37.4]

Rodrigo: [00:00:59.3] Here's a monocular, in case you want to see.

Rodrigo: [00:01:17.1] I have a monocular, and two binoculars.

Interviewer: [00:01:26.4] Gracias!

Interviewer: [00:01:41.9] Do guanacos like the forest, or [a pire?]?

Rodrigo: [00:01:45.0] They're only in the steppe.

Rodrigo: [00:02:39.6] It's frozen.

Interviewer: [00:02:53.2] Oh. The waterfall is frozen! [Looking through monocular.]

Rodrigo: [00:05:04.4] [Igniting engine ...] Ah. You were all afraid. I was afraid. ... What a moment!

[00:05:30.9] It was a burnt fuse. I felt stupidly happy. Because it was a stupid thing. I reviewed the fuses, but I was nervous. I didn't check on them properly. And later on Ezequiel looked at them too,

[00:06:00.9] he thought it was all fine. I didn't have any spare ones anyhow. I saw him yesterday. He was sure it was about the alarm. Aside from believing I couldn't do anything else the other day.

Rodrigo: [00:08:19.9] This is the last stop before the lake. We're very close.

Rodrigo: [00:15:37.2] Do you know?

Interviewer: [00:15:42.2] Oh! What is that!?

Rodrigo:[showing] [00:15:49.8] [abrot?] [abrojo]

Interviewer: [00:16:02.9] Did it hurt?

Rodrigo: [00:16:04.5] No. It doesn't hurt.

Interviewer: [00:16:05.7] It's so cool!

Rodrigo: [00:17:29.4] I was just showing to the girls. It's abrot [abrojo], it's a fruit [fruto] that gets entangled in animal's hair to disperse. Inside they're full of seeds. [Cool]. When you're walking they stick to your pants.

Interviewer: [00:17:52.6] That's their means of reproduction.

Rodrigo: [00:17:54.4] Of course. Of dispersion.

Interviewer: [00:18:21.3] Any chance that we see the chocolate flower?

Rodrigo: [00:18:22.6] It's still in blossom period. So yes. I saw a one blossoming the other day in the lake, some two weeks ago. I would think they still should be some.

Interviewer: [00:18:35.9] Does it have a short period of duration?

Rodrigo: [00:18:36.5] Yes. It depends on the place.

Rodrigo: [00:19:54.1] They don't sting. [No worries.]

Interviewer: [00:20:21.2] Do find a lot thrown around?

Rodrigo: [00:20:21.9] Garbage? Yeah, a lot. I can't understand how people can throw a bottle through the window. But it happens.

Rodrigo: [00:24:39.4] This is the end of the road. Over that way the road only follows up to the Gendarmería Post.

[00:24:58.2] Over here there's a kiosk where they sell food.

[00:25:51.5] This is the river. And the idea now is to cross a hanging bridge, and hike through a trail that goes over the left margin. And we have options for trail ways. Over this side and this other one. Over this side there's a little more of vertical challenge. But you get the best view of the lake, and you can see Glaciar Huemul.

[00:26:20.7] So the idea is to get over up to, to make a short hike, get to a waterfall that's great. The road is just like this, very calm, over this way. And this way is a more level trail. We arrive to a beach, but we don't have a view to the Glaciar Huemul. And the view of the lake is a little more narrow.

[00:26:43.2] Both walks are, going at a calm pace, half an hour to get there. And the same back. If go quicker we can arrive sooner.

Rodrigo: [00:28:33.7] What does it seem to you? It's very calm.

Rodrigo's Acquaintance: [00:34:57.5] All cool? How's it hanging?

Rodrigo: [00:35:00.2] Just hanging. Doing a little job [changuendo].

Rodrigo's Acquaintance: [00:35:04.2] Under water?

Rodrigo: [00:35:05.8] Now we're walking. Luckily. Because it's quite cold. But OK. All cool.

Rodrigo's Other Acquaintance: [00:35:09.2] Hey!

Rodrigo: [00:35:20.5] Happy New Year! How did your year begin? Nice

Rodrigo: [00:35:44.1] Are you eating now?

Interviewer: [00:35:45.0] Yeah. I'll have a hamburger.

Rodrigo: [00:35:49.3] Before the walk?

Interviewer: [00:35:49.7] Yeah. A little risk.

Rodrigo: [00:36:32.6] I brought tea and coffee so we can have something hot later. I prefer to go without much.

Interviewer: [00:39:48.7] ¿Dónde está el lago?

Rodrigo: [00:39:51.5] Some 100 metres away.

Rodrigo: [00:40:01.3] Did you see trouts? Fishes?

Interviewer: [00:40:06.7] Yes yes.

Rodrigo: [00:43:40.7] This road goes to the North border. It crosses the whole lake. And you have a lot of places along the road where you can stop by. And with nice views. Over this side you can arrive to a beach that is very nice and is level. Over this side it's descaled. Whatever you prefer. Over this side is a better view.

[00:44:18.7] You can see the Spignani range, the glaciers. That's the one I recommend. It's more descaled. But a bit.

Rodrigo: [00:52:55.9] Ready for a nap or should we go?

Interviewer: [00:52:58.8] Siesta!

Rodrigo: [00:53:21.7] Would you like to use a cane?

Interviewer: [00:53:23.3] Thank you!

Rodrigo: [00:54:37.0] I use it at a 90 degree angle.

[00:55:29.5] It's best not to use the strip. Because sometimes you can fall down, and you entangle with the strip and you hurt your hand. [I'll let them know.]

Rodrigo: [00:56:40.9] If you go one by one, it's easier because the bridge doesn't move.

Rodrigo: [00:57:27.8] Moss. Don't touch! Because any people that touch it, they draw, they make faces.

[00:58:13.0] The environment is very different to the one

that you saw in the trail to Torre, or during the prior transition that we did. Here it's already a more humid place and it's represented with a lot of moss, there are ferns, which are plants from humid places. The trees also have a different shape. The forest is bigger. From over there up to here we saw shorter forest, and the limit between steppe and forest, which is ... Well we don't see that anymore. Here it's only forest.

Rodrigo: [00:59:30.8] All this, they call it old man's beard [barba de viejo]. That's the common name [vulgar/popular]. And it's a very peculiar variety, because it's a symbiosis between a fungus and an algae. It's called lichen. And it's only represented in places where there's no contamination. It's a good bio indicator, of environmental quality.

Rodrigo: [01:00:43.4] As of species, those representative of the forest, there are two dominant species of trees. The ñire, and the lenga. They are from the same family, which is Nothofagus, Nothofagaceae. And this is the ñire, that you can tell because of its leaf. And the lenga... This is ñire too. ... We'll look for a lenga. This could be one.

[01:01:20.8] No. This one is ñire too. ... This one too.

[01:01:33.2] I'll show you the difference when I find both together.

Rodrigo: [01:02:19.2] Did you meet any Calafate? The plant. Did you eat it? [Yes!] I think it's not yet ripe. ...No. Acid. Not ready.

Rodrigo: [01:03:19.3] Here's the example. This one is a lenga. The shape of the trees are very similar. But this one is a lenga, and this other is a ñire. And the difference is in the leaf. Because the border of the lenga is rounded, and the edge of the ñire is like a saw shape. The species are very similar.

Rodrigo: [01:05:22.5] These are orchids, yellow ``wand'' (phalaenopsis) [vara amarilla]. One particularity of these orchids, here in Patagonia is that they're in the floor. Not on the trees. Which happens in more jungle spaces. They normally live on top of other species.

[01:06:34.9] A face! This is something that they do with fingers. That's why it says: Don't touch.

[01:08:56.7] And this is the lake. You can notice some whirlpools over there in the back. Sometimes they become into big swirls and they lift up.

[01:09:41.0] The landscape, in general over here in the valley of Lago del Desierto, is repeated all over the area, of glaciers. In old times, this used to be covered by glaciers, and when the glaciers moved backwards, they generated rocks to detach, and moraine marks.

[01:10:03.0] In this case, we can see big boulders spread

around the area, which are due to the drag by the glaciers, and also due to the detachment because of the inclination.

Interviewer: [01:10:31.1] Has anyone ever lived here?

Rodrigo: [01:10:35.6] Yes. The first settlers of the area were ... Well, I'm not sure if they were the first, but there have been families, that are still in town, of generations that have lived around here. And in Punta Norte as well. With cattle.

Interviewer: [01:10:59.6] How long ago was that?

Rodrigo: [01:11:00.7] In the 1900s there were people.

[01:12:37.9] How are you doing? Fine? Hamburger good?

[01:16:21.9] That is the Glaciar Huemul. [showing]

[01:16:47.2] We can make a stop.

[01:18:48.8] What happened? ... Oh. Because of the rain? My idea was to reach to a waterfall that is not far away, but whatever you prefer. If rain begins here it starts just little by little. So inside the forest we'll be fine.

Interviewer: [01:20:25.7] How far away is the waterfall?

Rodrigo: [01:20:28.0] 200 or 300 metres away. [going on]

Rodrigo: [01:23:58.8] No? OK.

Rodrigo: [01:30:13.7] From Chaltén it looked like it was going to be a good day. In the morning ...

Rodrigo: [01:31:55.1] Yes. I like to associate the concept of wild with nature. I understand that enjoying or living in the wild is enjoying the good things that an environment can provide us. And also to live upon the adversities that each environment has. And each living creature, each individual being in each space, could thrive over those adversities, and benefit from the graces of each place.

[01:32:38.3] So I associate the word savage (salvaje) with being able to subsist in a certain location.

Rodrigo: [01:32:53.0] I do consider Patagonia to be savage. Considering that it's all a little bit more complex, because if we're talking about the same thing again there are a lot of adversities, related to the whether in Patagonia. It doesn't gift you anything at all. So if would compare with human beings, surviving in Patagonia without any services, like gas, light, it would be much more difficult than in any other place where there are a lot more benefits or matters more at hand to benefit from.

[01:33:40.5] So I do see Patagonia as a savage place.

Rodrigo: [01:34:31.1] At least over here in the area, on our life time over here, which is more or less new, I believe that the cultural construction is totally linked to the environment, and to nature. We can't generate or form a cultural identity of a place like this one, because we can't forget where we are,

[01:35:00.3] because each time that we go out we have to carry a backpack with clothes, coats, cover, because of the rain, as I am now. With hot water. So I think that Patagonia's cultural construction is totally linked to nature and to its own savagery.

Rodrigo: [01:35:43.1] I believe that it does belong to the savage places, but one of the requirements for a place to prosper with its nature, is that each person that comes to live to these places has to be able to appropriate with that identity. And it's the only way that I can find that society can pursue with urban and demographic growth, and of different human endeavours.

[01:36:19.2] Along with nature. Because when you get to know where you're at, and begin to appreciate the surroundings and love it all, is when ... It's the only way of taking care of it. So I think that yes, there is a connection.

Rodrigo: [01:37:15.8] This kind of waves is not normal in the area. There are waves by wind normally. But these are waves like currents.

Interviewer: [01:37:28.5] There's either a strong rain or snow above ...

Rodrigo: [01:37:29.2] Maybe there's a wind over there that's dragging things up.

Rodrigo: [01:40:38.3] In autumn the whole forest turns into these colours: yellow, and ... I am not sure if you've seen videos of the area, before the leaves fall. It all looks very very nice.

Rodrigo: [01:42:04.4] Can I take a picture of the group over here?

[01:42:35.4] Facebook, instagram, blog?

[01:42:56.0] We have a new site, a blog. We're going to start generating content. So if we can add any content from your project... That would be nice.

Interviewer: [01:43:42.5] Asking about working and earning.

Rodrigo: [01:43:50.5] Enough to be happy.

[01:44:06.3] Because for people working in tourism here ...

[01:49:21.8] Is that very heavy? To walk!

[01:49:55.1] And three days ... Sure!

[01:51:26.1] Coffee or tea? Right inside the car or outside here.

[01:53:27.1] What would you like? Tea, chamomile, mint, chocolates, ...

[01:55:28.2] Mate (cocido)?

[01:56:29.2] They saw by flight. And they saw nothing, and said, this is just a lake. Like as if there was nothing in the area. That's what I had understood.

[01:57:28.3] I never knew the actual difference. I think that you say it's cooked because you use boiling water. Simply yerba mate inside a sock. Since tea is done with boiling water, they call it mate cocido.

[01:58:03.1] Because regular mate is drank with hot water, but not to the point of boiling.

[02:01:11.1] Uruguay. And I though it was a joke. But they go around in motorcycle with a thermos. [Laughing]

[02:03:28.3] To a lot of people it's kind of disgusting to share the straw [of the yerba mate]. Which is quite disgusting. We're just used to it.

Interviewer: [02:03:36.1] They just saw that I shared with the people next to us.

Rodrigo: [02:03:37.4] Yeah. And you didn't know them. So it may look a bit weird.

Rodrigo - lav 3.WAV

Start [00:52.0]

End [02:15.5]

Interviewer: [00:52.0] There's a saying: You can't be angry and drink mate at the same time. Are you familiar with that one?

Rodrigo: [01:05.3] No. I haven't heard it.

Interviewer: [01:23.7] But it's not nonsensical, right?

Rodrigo: [01:23.7] No.

Interviewer: [01:27.3] That's because it's like tea time. But in a different way. Anytime of the day you can drink mate. Just be calm.

[01:38.3] Does it have caffeine?

[01:38.3] No. It does have some kind of stimulant.
[Mateína?]

[01:48.3] But it's not like coffee?

[01:48.9] Yeah, it is a bit.

Rodrigo: [01:52.6] She's asking if you can use mate for energy?

Interviewer: [01:56.0] Yes. That it has theine or something alike.

Rodrigo: [01:58.8] Mateína.

Interviewer: [02:08.7] What kind of plant does it come from?

Rodrigo: ... [02:15.5] [inaudible] It's a plant that ...

[Wikipedia: Yerba mate is a species of the holly genus (Ilex), with the botanical name Ilex paraguariensis]

Pedro - lav.WAV

Start [00:29]

End [40:38.7]

Interviewer: 00:29 Could you please tell us who you are and what you do?

PEDRO: I wish I would knew who I am. But, my name is Pedro Svarka. I am a glaciologist. And what I am doing now: I am retired. I am 75 years old, but young in spirit. So I am still active, and even despite X I am still doing what I can do

[01:01.1] because I can't walk too much but if I can organize and I am still trying to do what should be done here, and what people are not interested in doing.

Interviewer: Thank you. [Switch Chairs for setting]

[01:41.4] The one reason why we're here is to understand and to experience and to learn about Los Glaciares National Park. Which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Can you tell me what is the value, UNESCO calls it an ``outstanding universal value'', what is the outstanding universal value of the glaciers in relation to UNESCO sites?

PEDRO: [02:19.6] That is, you should ask UNESCO [Laughter].

Interviewer: I am asking an expert in glaciers.

PEDRO: Well, this is one of the few places in the world where you still have ice except in Antarctica, and Greenland and other glaciers. But here is one of the very unique places in the world where you still don't have much contamination, or where tourism has

[02:48.4] not influenced as much as in many other places in Earth, like in Himalayas, the Alps, or Alaska. You have probably observed that you here you have glaciers where you can access by boats and by road, but there are very few places ... Of course this is growing too ... The boats tourism,

[03:20.7] they are going into the branches and in front of the glaciers or close to the glaciers, but otherwise you have quite a lot of protected areas where there is no influence of human beings and as you may probably read now [X?] is seen in the Chaltén area, walking in the trails of the tourists. So,

[03:48.6] it means that somehow places are being [covered?] because before there were animals, there were more sheep, and so on. And one of the things that I think that UNESCO has selected this place is because at least what concerns the glaciers, the Glaciar Perito Moreno is the only one, it is very unique one in the world because it's the only one

[04:13.1] that produces damning, not periodically but, so ... For a while it is not cyclic. It comes by years, or two years or four or six or sixteen and so on. Even if not so regularly recorded. So this damning and the rupture, the break event of the natural ice damn

[04:47.4] is really a unique, spectacular phenomenon in the world. There is no other at all, no other one. And for instance there is another hovering glacier in Alaska but it is [damped?]. It means that it is calving into sea water.

[05:12.0] Or ocean, or whatever, into the fjords. And then it's happened twice until now, as far as I remember. So no people could see it now. When you have seen this event which I have seen for the first time in 2016 during all 48 hours, when it is taking place there

[05:37.8] the rupture of the ice damn, until it finally collapses. So this is ... You must see it to be amazed or admired of this nature. So, I think this is one of the reasons which may make UNESCO consider this as a heritage site.

Interviewer: Thank you for that. Now, we are dealing with people who are probably going to be viewing the images that we have taken and the images will show different glaciers.

[06:10.3] Can you tell us how many distinct glaciers there are in the Park?

PEDRO: [06:21.9] Well, first of all I don't take much of the ... I will consider the glaciers of the whole area, of the whole South Patagonian Ice Fields. In the area of the National Parks, there are basically (I should not make it X), the difference between our glaciers and others is that these are calving in a lake, and they're so called fresh water calving glaciers.

[06:48.3] You may not be used to this because in the North, in Canada, they are not so many, or in Alaska for instance. They are mainly calving into the fjords or in the sea. And they are called tide water calving, because they are influenced by the tides, you know? Well, there are many different ones, here you also have non calving glaciers, but the major glaciers, the big glaciers

[07:19.1] like Upsala, Viedma, or (I am going North to South) which needs to be called by the local name, you know? Then you have Glaciar Upsala, the second in size, comparing to Viedma. Then we have Glaciar Moreno. In between them is the Glaciar Spegazzini, which you have probably seen a few days ago. And other smaller glaciers.

[07:47.0] We also have different types of glaciers, like wall glaciers, hanging glaciers, there are different ... There's a glossary of glaciers, the different names of the glaciers. But the most typical glaciers here are the fresh water calving glaciers, which are the largest and it's very important because there are not so many in the world. I

don't know how many there are of this size. And they are very poorly studied.

[08:15.8] Tide water glaciers are studied because they are in the Northern hemisphere, or in Antarctica the big ones too. And they have more money investment to study these glaciers. Unfortunately here, there is very little investment of the State. First of all, the local municipality, and second the Province of Santa Cruz, and third of the state investment

[08:46.0] it's really incredible that this size and beauty and importance of glaciers as a fresh water resource or whatever, or for tourist resources, the scientific point of view, because glaciers are one of the best indicators of climate change. It is not so simple. These are the glaciers which are terminus on land.

[09:16.5] Which you can approach and walk without going by boat. They are directly linked to the climate, read in different X: X, dilation, ablation, but the glaciers which are calving into the water, be they into sea water or fresh water, they are also influenced by the water. Changing the water's physical parameters.

[09:46.1] And this is what we are studying now. And this is very difficult to study: the calving process, because what does the calving depend on? They depend on many many factors, but the calving also depends on the dynamics of the glaciers and the water. Because a big part of the glacier is influenced by the water. And so water has a lot to ... It's very important effect on the glacier dynamics.

Interviewer: [10:15.3] So I would like to learn a bit more about what you're doing now. But I have to ask you a formal question first. You mentioned size, but can you be more specific? For example, Glacier Perito Moreno, how large is it?

PEDRO: [10:31.7] Well, large you mean in the area? It's roughly 265 square kilometers, in area. And this doesn't change much because it's stable. Other glaciers are receding fast. And like Upsala and Viedma started to recede a few years ago very fast. And it is also that we are learning why.

[11:00.0] This is what also was very important how we learned from the Antarctic experience by the ice shift collapses. But going back to the size of the Glacier Moreno: it is stable, or relatively stable, because the glacier is neither retreating nor advancing. The Glacier Upsala is

[11:30.0] very fast or rapidly retreating, but it is now again in a stable phase. So because it is always calving, but it is not retreating. I mean, you have calving through the year because you can see the icebergs right in front of the Glaciarium in the lake, in front of Calafate town. So this is very important. The glacier always calves but it's retreating, and it depends a lot

[12:00.6] specially on the depth of the lake. And there are obstacles in the lake, like moraines and so on. Because the glacier is touching at certain point but there are either islands or moraines, sub water moraines. And then the glacier is pressing, and there is this thing there, but due to reduce of back stress, because if I push you and I keep pushing you at certain moment,

[12:30.1] if this obstacle you move away the glacier stretches, thins and breaks. And this is very important. And this happens when the glacier is entering ... First of all [x] it detaches from the islands or from the moraine, and then it accelerates.

[12:58.3] It's thinning and it's breaking. And this is, for instance Upsala is thinning rapidly, [x] up to 20 meters per year. Jorge Monty, the Northern [x] Tight Water Glacier, on the Chilean part, is the most Northern glacier of the Southern Patagonian Ice Field. You are always focusing on the Parque Nacional Los Glaciares. But it is a good given example. And Upsala is the second one in the velocity of the thinning rate.

Interviewer: [13:36.4] How is climate change impacted the glaciers?

PEDRO: [13:55.4] [laughter] I know that you know but it is not ... You might be surprised. As I said, first of all, I disagree with many climatologists because *What is Climate?* You know how the warning is produced for instance? Well, I guess that you don't know so, basically you want me to tell that [laughter].

[14:25.7] There are roughly, what NASA says, we are all the time more and more warm, global warming. But global means that you have to have stations certified by the World Meteorological Organization in different parts of the world. Now they have roughly about over 6000, 6300 all around the world, which have been numbered, like in Calafate Airport two.

[15:00.2] But there are no stations in the region of the glaciers. So, if I tell you that the temperature in Calafate is 3° colder than in Moreno, you'll not believe me. But, Glaciar Perito Moreno is influenced by an inner climate. And here we have a deserting climate, in Calafate. Precipitations per year is dry. You have seen today it has rained a little bit. Roughly it's in average 200 Millimeters per year.

[15:30.6] And when you enter today to the park, you enter the park and you immediately see trees. So there is very few places in the world that you see such a dramatic drop of precipitation in such a short distance. To give you an idea, on the top of the ice fields, on the top of the Parque Nacional Los Glaciares glaciers it is roughly

[15:59.0] the plateau would be at 1600 meters above the sea level, they have roughly 8000 Millimetres per year. And in

Moreno we have roughly 1500 Millimetres per year, and here we have at the entrance of the Park 200 mm!

[16:32.0] It's one of the most dramatic precipitations gradient in the world. There may be some other with more but this is one of the most dramatic. So, the importance is that there are no stations, they are just installing stations now, very recently. But to talk about climate you have to have 30 years of meteorological observations. And then you can talk about climate.

[16:59.7] So, there are no, according to my observations, or my measurements, we have a station installed by colleagues in Austria, at Moreno Glacier which is running without interruption already for 23 years. So we have still to wait 7 years: I hope I can see this. But until now, I can say that there is no warming trend in this part of the region.

[17:30.3] At least during this last period. Because I compared with Calafate's station and I see there is the mean [x] temperature is almost constant throughout the years. So there's very very slight variations in 0.2 degrees Centigrade which is within accuracy of instrumental measurements. So what I say, OK, the global warming exists but here we have a region.

[17:59.0] It's a regional climate. We don't have stations spread uniformly around the world, of the globe. There are also stations in Antarctica and of course the data which you are taking into account also consider the Antarctic stations, which have more than 30 years. So,

[18:27.2] they even calculate the algorithms for extent and so on. For Patagonia there are stations along the route 40, in Calafate, another one is in [X], another in Perito Moreno Town. So there are not long term stations. So in this part it is more important the dynamic loss of mass, due to dynamic factors. It's the adjustment of the glaciers to the dynamics.

[19:01.1] As I told you recently, the glacier accelerates due to some topographic features, they disconnect, and then accelerate and then they retreat and they lose mass. It is not due to climate, it is partly due to climate. But as I say, in order to [x] that these glaciers are affected by the global warming, I don't see this.

[19:31.2] Like in the Antarctic Peninsula, you have a very warm area, which is Peninsula Antarctica. And the rest of Antarctica it's not warming, it's even cooling!

Interviewer: [19:44.3] I was curious about climate change because often we go to places that are believed to be free of human impact. You yourself said this glacier is free of human impact. But typically there are not free of climate change, anthropogenic climate change impact. So in this case, you have no data to say that there is. So my question for you is: is it truly the case that this is one of the few places in the world

[20:16.1] that are truly free of human impact?

PEDRO: [20:19.3] No. There are not truly free because if you look at the numbers every year there are more tourists. I don't know if you compare to other places in the world. So I cannot say. It's still... First of all you have one effect which is important, which is the wind, you know? The tourism is concentrating into very ... They find already very selected places. You go to Chaltén...

[20:54.8] It's increasing hardly. But still not comparable if you go to the glaciers of Alaska or to the glaciers of the Alps, or The Himalayas. This is the problem of rubbish. It's really incredible. The rubbish of the expeditions. They are really serious problems. Also here, they are some concerns about: there are more and more traverses along the ice fields.

[21:27.8] And people have to take care of the waste. And this is of big concern. This is still, in my opinion, at much smaller scale. Not like in the scale of the tourism in the Alps. I don't know the numbers ... I know that in Peru, in the Peruvian Andes there is a lot of tourists too, much more than here maybe. I don't know the numbers. But here the places are very very well defined.

[22:01.6] You have all the lake. Very few people stay in the western part of Lago Argentino. There are no people staying in the Moreno Glacier. The only hotel which was there is not inhabited anymore. It's not working. We hope that it will stay like this. But it's only hope.

Interviewer: [22:28.1] So North from where I live, in the Yukon in Alaska, the [x] Santaolalla Mountains, the glaciers, there is no tourism. Almost zero. But, they have found evidence of, in the past, human habitation. So, has there ever been evidence here of human use or habitation? Even temporary? In the glaciers.

PEDRO: [22:54.5] No. As far as I know: not. But they found of course... Anthropologists have found in the region of Calafate. They are Indian paintings in the Southern branch of Lago Argentino [Brazo Sur]. If you go to Lago Roca there have seen several thousand years. But not like on the Western coast, in the fjords,

[23:29.0] where they have been living very closely to the glaciers. Yaghans, or other tribes. Local Southern hemisphere tribes.

Interviewer: [23:39.6] So, in English we have a word that cannot be translated easily in Spanish. In English it's wilderness. My question for you is: the glaciers that we were talking about, are they a wilderness? In the true sense of the English word.

PEDRO: [23:56.7] Yeah, but explain to me the true sense of the word.

Interviewer: [24:00.5] Uninhabited, unused, untouched, pristine ...

PEDRO: [24:04.8] Pristine not so much. In the glaciers there are people walking. For instance, in the Antarctica to be pristine [x] they had decided, the scientific antarctic research committee, there are areas where it wasn't allowed to fly over. So, what is pristine? It is wilderness. It is to a certain extent because now, at this time of the afternoon, there are very few people staying in the parks. In front of the glacier almost none, only park rangers [guardaparques].

[24:47.3] Well, also one problem is the pristine, or wilderness, because there are many wild calves still staying within the park. And this is a big problem. Because they were imported. They are not originary. Because a hundred years ago there were farms here, closer to the glacier. Not very close. But in the Southern part, specially in the area of Lago Roca, of course the animals ... I don't know how they ... Well, there were some also in the North part of Moreno. And horses too.

[25:18.8] Because somebody brought horses and they left them there, so this is also not pristine. I mean, pristine here is the puma ... I mean wilderness. A local is the condor, eagles ... But not calves, no horses. So, I mean human began ... I mean, you have in one farm which is Estancia Cristina which is very close to the glacier. Well, now it is not so close because the glacier is retreating [Upsala] very fast.

[25:53.5] But they are still close. You can go walking several hours there on the glacier. But there are only very few people, four cottages. People sleep there in summer, tourists, visitors. This is a very complicated question. I have been in Alaska in the National Park. I went close to Mount ... Close in the valley.

[26:22.1] Mount McKinley. I couldn't fly over McKinley unfortunately. I wanted. But the people are flying with the plane and landing and leaving: climbers and so on. I know in what area. When I was in Yakutat we charted a small plane and we flew on the [x] and other glaciers. [x] and I don't know which more. Which was very interesting. But they're flying many small planes around.

[26:51.4] Here it is not allowed to fly. I mean, planes fly but very high.

Interviewer: You're right. It's a very complicated question. And as you may have imagined, it's one that means a lot to me because I've spent the last four years of my research trying to understand if wilderness even exists.

PEDRO: [27:13.1] Well, me too. I think that it may be in Antarctica. I don't believe there would be any Northern part, which is in Arctic. Antarctica maybe because they are already very much concerned. Why? Because the scientists

try to get areas where there is no pollution because the ice cores are the most clear evidence of the human or anthropogenic impact.

[27:49.6] If you ask me, I know there are scientists which do not believe, they say that it is cyclic and so on. But in my opinion it is very very very clearly demonstrated from the Antarctic ice core, the deep ice core, which you've seen the graph here from the Epica, which is an excel available to everybody, that you went to 800.000 years backwards and they found on average 280 parts per million per volume, in the samples until 1850.

[28:20.3] And since then it started to increase after the industrial revolution, and slightly increasing and then after the 2nd World War, when the car industry began to grow and grow, and increasing amazingly. Now we are over 400, parts per volume per million. But that is more clear because in the bubble it's everything. It's CO2, Nitrogen,

[28:51.7] two other ... Methane, which are clear evidence of contamination from different sources. There is no doubt about that. But even the scientists don't believe this.

Interviewer: So you said half in hour, and I want to keep my promise. It's 29 minutes. I have one more question for you. And this is probably the most difficult. Because it's personal.

[29:23.9] You know these glaciers probably more than anyone. Why do you care? What is it that you are passionate about?

PEDRO: Well, first of all, I am not the one that knows more about: I'll correct you. I am the one who has been working most ON the glaciers until some years ago. And because today there is not a lot of information from the satellites

[29:51.0] but you must have the ground to [x]. But today I can hardly keep on reading on what they are producing, the people on the computer, with the satellite data anyway. But the question is why. Because I always remember I am geophysicist and geologist by my career or background, I'm not a doctor. So I'm not a PhD, I'm an engineer. I'm more pragmatic.

[30:20.4] I have learned a lot from very important glaciologists. I was very lucky to have really really good teachers, like my professor Charles [Sweeden?] in Cambridge from the British Antarctic said it was very tough but I learned the hard way. I spent the British Survey with a few seasons in Antarctica, and there was

[30:45.5] a really good lesson for me. Because in polar, the research there is such really one of the best. And he passed away and I owe him a lot. Also to professor [Luis Livoutrin] from Grenoble, and he told me 20 years ago: Pedro, study the water parameters, the physical parameters of water

[31:19.7] in front of the glaciers. So in the 1990s I was

the first one able to send a thermometer within, a very [x] one but spool, like a fishing one, and make it at the carpenter, with a nylon, and a hook to fish. Set a thermometer that went down in Upsala to 700 meters. And they found at that time, I was very scared to lose the thermometer, I found that the water below of Upsala (Upsala was not floating) it was almost 0 degree centigrade.

[31:51.7] Which is [x] on the surface. And it goes down to zero degrees, because it is a sublation melt water which comes below. These glaciers are tempered glaciers so they are zero pressure melting points. But the pressure melting points are reaching near zero degrees centigrade. So now we have ... we kept on studying with the Japanese colleagues which started to work in the 1990 here.

[32:18.7] And we owe them a lot because the Japanese came here from Hokkaido University and to Cuba, from different universities of Japan and also one could ask why did they come here to expend money so far away. Well, they were founded by the Minister of Sports Education and Culture. This is a fantastic example. We here do not invest. For me this was an example and a few years ago we went to measure in front of the three glaciers

[32:51.9] of Viedma, Upsala, and Moreno and we found extraordinary discoveries, or remain very important discoveries on water parameters in front and close to the glaciers. And how they impact. It was once highlighted as one of the best papers in the American Geophysical Union of that year in 2000 ... Two years ago roughly.

Interviewer: [33:25.1] So does someone who has never been to the glacier, what would you tell them is special? What would you say is unique that they should appreciate about the glacier?

PEDRO: [33:38.3] This is the most difficult question. This is a very personal one. Well, for me the nicest ... These glaciers, it's ice, green, trees, and blue. And it's unique. You are very close to the glacier. You can see the glacier almost alive because ... You have to wait! I don't know if you have seen calving, finally. Have you seen a calving or not yet? ... No!

[34:19.5] Well, you are unlucky then. But you should stay in Mirador and patiently until the last part of the day when you have to leave and then you would go very early at first and then coming back and you would see it. And this is really something so magnificent, so unique. I don't know ... One of the things that is important

[34:45.2] why study? Because there is no information on the glaciers. This is very important for many many reasons, as I mentioned at the beginning. From the scientific point of view, from the economical point of view, tourism, hydro-power, even if I am against. Because they haven't made a serious impact assessment study.

[35:13.7] I was never saying I was against but today, nowadays you have many alternative energies. I know that I am going out of the question you are asking here but I mean, 15 years ago I said this, that we could use this, but at that time there were no alternative energies so advanced. And today we have the wind, you have been here, you have seen which is always present almost.

[35:44.0] We have sun. In all Patagonia. And we have the Japanese, a joint project here in North of the province: Santa Cruz. There are working on the ... hydrolic electricity. No no.

[36:20.7] I have a lagoon right now [in Spanish]. You will edit it. Pico Truncado.

[36:49.2] Hydrogen!! They are already exporting, this is a joint project with Argentina and Japan. They made the first hybrid cars. The Japanese were here for 15 days. And finally they ended at Pico Truncado. There is a joint project with Argentinean scientists and Japanese. But they are producing energy already from hydrogen.

[37:22.8] And they built, Nissan built a big boat with containers to transport. ... [We will leave just on time]

Interviewer: [37:44.9] This is a scientific argument. But you said it's almost alive. How can something be ALMOST alive?

PEDRO: [37:55.5] Oh this is complicated. It is so personal, it's not ... It's subjective I know. People ask me when I first saw the ice: an ice rupture, or the ice dam rupture. I was impressed and I couldn't talk. I would suggest that everybody would see. There are thousands of people coming to Calafate to see, there are thousands there.

[38:19.6] We cannot stay at night and so on. But it's a phenomenon in nature which you see it here. You don't see it ... It's like an Aurora maybe in the North, or in the South. If you can get to see them, I got to see them only once and it was very North and very unique and very special I don't know why. In our station in Marambio. And they awoke me at night and I said don't disturb me.

[38:49.2] I was living in a tent. And then I went out and it was just unique. This is more ... The other one is every year, during the Polar Night. So it's difficult to say. When I go to the glacier, of course, but this is egoistic, no: I would like to not see so many people around there. [Laughter]. And talking. And people should be silent and just watching. And not shouting.

[39:21.1] Because this is ... Sometimes I was staying there because we work and we have permission, or a permit to stay there. In a late afternoon we've finished doing measurements, then I went for a few hours on the Mirador or close to the glaciers. And just listen to the glacier. And watch and listen and so: IT'S ALIVE ANYWAY!

[39:48.0] But I go against my designer of this thing because he says it's alive, it moves, it's almost in constant motion due to the gravity, but he doesn't cry, the cracks of course because it makes noise of course but he describes it like a glacier cries, suffers and so on.

[40:09.6] But this also again is subjective interpretation. But it's beautiful. Specially when you see it in a different light of the day. Like today, have you seen? We have the slight East wind in the morning. You probably didn't observe that. You could see all the mountains. Clear. And they are still clear now. But this part, if you were there, because we spoke by phone, there was sun. And it would have been probably a nice day today.

[40:38.7] And half away here it was cloudy. So there was a grain fall. There was no grain, it was hail! In Calafate at midday. On the glaciers you see during a day different colors, different scenes, different sensations.

Adolfo - lav.WAV

Adolfo - lav.WAV

Start [00:43.7]

End [43:23.2]

ADOLFO: [00:43.7] I'll tell you about this area and how it was populated. And then we can talk about the pioneers who were my grandparents. And then the development of all of town, Calafate, which was founded in 1927. My grandfather came 25 prior to the town's foundation. When he came over here there was nothing at all.

Interviewer: [01:16.2] We always begin with a simple matter, if you can present yourself with name, what do you do, and how did arrive to Calafate, coming from somewhere or how the history begins here.

ADOLFO: [01:44.8] I'll tell you the history. My name is Adolfo Santiago Jansma. Descendent by father's side from Dutch, and by mother's side from Croatian. We are now in the Estancia Nibepo Aique, inside the Parque Nacional Los Glaciares [PNLG] reserve. We are here because 108 years ago, a Croatian came over here, which was my grandfather, populating

[02:14.5] as many immigrants, mainly European, into the empty territory that all of our austral Patagonia. My grand parent came by horse, from the population that in that time was ... Well with the only available locomobility was by blood. There were no motors. So my grand father came by horse. The populating began from the east to the west.

[02:45.9] That is, from the Atlantic Ocean towards the Cordillera de Los Andes, where we are now. Behind of us, we have the Cordillera de Los Andes, we are backwards and to my left against the Cordón Perito Moreno, the Cerro that is in the middle is called Cervantes, which has snow. To my right Cordón Adriana. Behind that are the Continental Ices. And behind of that are the fjords of the Pacific Ocean.

[03:15.6] So we are very close. And right here the world ends. And comes the water of the Pacific Ocean. So my grandfather came by horse and kept moving forward trough each place he went through, and he could find a settler in each site. Once one could arrive and find a free space, what could you do? You would diagram a tentative map, with some referential points. By that time,

[03:44.4] this was National Territory. There did not exist any provinces as they do today. Where we are now it is the Santa Cruz province. It all depended on the National Territory. You would present at the closest Land Division. The place where my grand father did the procedure was in

Puerto Deseado, which nowadays is far away: 1100 kilometers, and we go by car, or plane, and it's far away all the same.

[04:15.4] Imagine what it entailed by that time to go over to the Land Division for a procedure by horse. Well, he arrived moving forward and three estancias before from the east up to Nibepo Aique where we are, they found a estancia where he arrived after doing a daily average of between 60-70 kilometers by horse. He found himself in a estancia, three estancias away: Estancia Alta Vista, that belonged to other Croatians.

[04:50.3] Tipicich Family and Trutanich. And well, I could figure, because I'm not that old, that in 1912 he said Hello, and they responded in Croatian and they spoke the same language, and well, he asked about lands to people who had already populated another estancia, Alta Vista, and they told him to keep on towards the Cordillera, that if there were any available land ...

[05:20.8] it would be further against the Cordillera. So well, he arrived and in the place we are now, it was the only land remaining available. My grand father, as many immigrants he arrived with no capital of any kind. He arrived with a will to work, just like the rest of immigrants of that time. So well, he found this land free and requested the lease for this land at it was custom, because all the land was fiscal property.

[05:51.0] The lease for 20,000 hectares. The 20,000 hectares included up to the limit with the Glaciar Perito Moreno. So all this that we have behind us up to the Glaciar Perito Moreno, which is on my left, and 12,000 hectares that are to my right. Since my grand parent didn't have a dime,

[06:20.2] this Croatian family offers him to give him capital: sheep, what was all that was used to populate Patagonia from 1870, and mainly this province of Santa Cruz, it all becomes populated with sheep. The first sheep that arrive come from the Islas Malvinas [Falkland Islands]. And right there is when that population began with sheep, and it continues. So they give these sheep to my grandfather

[06:50.1] and he formulates a partnership which one could call of capital-industry: the capital given by these Croatian families, Croatian like himself, and he would offer the industry, which was the work. He did 57 kilometers of fencing. He did all the houses that we can see today in this estancia. And when we brought together this partnership, this estancia became La Jerónima. Still today, some maps references this place with that name.

[07:25.2] The name was given because one of my grandfather's partner's mother [Trutanich] was Jerónima. That's why this estancia was called Jerónima. Well, my grandfather began building the whole settlement, the facilities, the wool production and the shearing of taking of the wool from the sheep,

[07:55.3] annually it was sent with carriages nearly 5,000 kilograms of wool. And they took it over to Río Gallegos which had the only port allowed to ship with boats to export mainly to Europe. That was done once a year, they took 20 days by carriage,

[08:25.6] they would do 20 kilometres by day, they are 400 kilometres. And on their way back, they would bring over all the food supplies and all the merchandise they would use throughout the year. So once a year, they would take the opportunity to go see the doctor, the dentist, do all that they needed to do. In one of those trips, up to Río Gallegos to sell his production, in the year 1924 he met another Croatian, María Martinich, and this my grandmother ended up marrying in 1925.

[09:00.4] From then on they had 4 children. The oldest son was Adolfo, that is why I'm called Adolfo: he was one of my uncles. He passed away by pneumonia when he was a year and a half. And they had three daughters: Radoslava, a Croatian name; Ángela, the second; and the third, María.

[09:30.6] The first was born in 1927; in 1931, the second; and 1934, the third. Radoslava was my mother. They kept on with production, and in 1936, my grandfather gets sick with tuberculosis, by that time there was no penicillin. So he goes to Córdoba, Argentina towards North where the people who was suffering this disease, they had a better climate.

[10:00.7] After that he doesn't come back. Already in 1936 my grandmother stays here alone with her three female daughters. The oldest was my mother: Radoslava, who being 9 years old, and with my grandmother not speaking in Spanish, would translate everything to her for her business. Even despite that she had her partners, who lived in the nearby estancia. In 1938,

[10:30.4] march 4th, my grandfather died in Córdoba, and my grandmother was left totally alone, and what all indicated was that a woman being alone, with no money, woman, with three female daughters, and her partners who had more capital, and being two men, they would buy her out. No. She ended up buying her partners' shares. In 1947.

[11:00.8] In 1947, when she buys, she had given her three daughters nicknames: Radoslava, deserved a nickname, they called her Niní; Ángela, Bebé; María, Porota. When she buys the estancia,

[11:30.3] she changes the estancia's name. Instead of Jerónima, she uses each of the first two letters of her daughters' nicknames: NiBePo. And Aike which in the native Tehuelche tongue means ``the place of''. The place of Niní, Bebé and Porota.

[12:00.4] That's why the pictures that you say in the museum, of the three daughters, as the guide should have told you, and there are some pictures with this background, it is in this same place. Later on, how does history continue? My

father, who is from Mendoza [Argentina] comes over to work to the land owned by the Menéndez and Brown,

[12:30.3] who had territory all over Patagonia, both from Chile and Argentina. And after going through 4 or 5 places to work, he's destined towards estancia Anita, which is the first coming over here through Ruta 15, it's a very big estancia. And one day he gets to know that over here in this estancia in the 1950s that there are three unmarried women, and he come over here by horse,

[13:00.2] and met my mother, he chose one. And he married in 1956. With that marriage, were born 4 siblings: Carlos, my older brother; Silvia, my older sister; I am the third; and Santiago named after my grandfather Peso, who populated the area; and the fourth, my younger sister, Gladys.

[13:32.3] Over time Niní bought the other sisters their shares in 1985. And then, this was always used as a agricultural endeavour. When we bought the shares from our aunts, and just my mother's family remained here, Niní, we started with tourism.

[14:02.1] with agro-tourism, in 1991. So, as families continue, both of my parents passed away. My mother in 1986, my father in 2008. I stayed over here with my older sister, and I am the one who lives here and I carry on with all the productive side and the touristic side of the estancia.

Interviewer: [14:34.0] Where are we? How is it possible to have a working farm inside the PNLG?

[15:01.3] [Arranging mic]

[15:17.6] In many parts of the world the farms are pushed out, but here we have a working farm inside the national park. How is it possible?

[15:36.4] [Benji translates]

[15:49.6] Well, since my grandfather came over in 1912, the National Park was created in 1937, 25 years later. In the National Park Law there are two areas very well delimited. One is the National Park area properly speaking; and another one that is the reserve of the National Park.

[16:20.2] Those of us who are considered settlers of the PN are those we belong here from before of the creation of the PN. We have gained a right because of being over here 25 years prior. So, inside the area of PNLG, which in the area we are is from the Glaciar Perito Moreno up to Río Frías,

[16:50.6] All the area that is in front, of the Cordón Moreno, Cordón Adriana, is the area of the PNLG properly speaking. In that area, there cannot be any kind of breeding exploitation. From Río Frías, to the entrance of the PN, that is the reserve. In that area, by law,

[17:18.8] exists the chance to develop activities in tourism,

with livestock, and there are even hunting reservations in other national parks ... Where foreign species have been inserted such as wild pigs. There are sawmills in some of the National Park reserves. So the law allows.

[17:51.7] The livestock allowed is only done in a extensive manner, not intensive with large amounts. So we for instance do, after state studies with the INTA [Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria], which controls all the pastures,

[18:22.5] since the National Park was created after the settlers there are species that are not native from here. This grass, which is chicory, is a foreign grass, seeded.

[18:50.7] This one is clover, also inserted, seeded. All these flowers, which are lupines, is inserted, non native from the park. The conclusion, after the studies, was that it is preferable undertake a controlled use of pastures, because left alone, the exotic pastures kill the native ones.

[19:30.3] So we regularly do pasture control. The people from INTA do it: with agronomic engineers, forest agronomists, who are those who control so that no desertification shall occur ...

[20:00.5] And in Argentina this exists in different National Parks. The conclusion was that it is preferable to work with cows rather than sheeps. Because the cow eats the grass, goes through it with their tongue, and cuts with their teeth whatever they reached with their tongue. If there's not enough grass, they can't cut it out.

[20:31.2] The sheep instead, eat like this, so it takes off the whole root. So it was decided that there should not be any sheep production, that is, at an extensive level. What my grandfather used to do had 12,000 sheep here. Now, you can find 150, only for the shearing demonstration.

[21:00.2] So that people can see the long century activities, using scissors, and to eat a sheep later in the quincho. So the controlled production on the agricultural side is considered based on studies, done by ourselves and the state, with INTA.

[21:31.4] Those are the specialists in all these kind of scientific research on pastures.

Interviewer: [22:00.8] It's hot [under the sun].

Interviewer: [22:30.6] I believe it was in 1993 if I recall correctly when you opened to agro-tourism, how has life in this estancia changed? How is life different?

[23:00.6] Benji asking [Adolfo corrects: 1990-1].

[23:18.5] When we began with tourism in 1990-1991, that is the season, we decided to make a transformation of the activity, considering the guidelines set by the National Park. And we became much more tilted towards tourism, rather than

cattle. As much as we changed the production from sheep to cow, the overall quantity decreased very much.

[23:53.9] So from the research done on pastures here, we could have 1500 cattle heads, but we only have 480. So the grass is over abundant. But it's important to, agreeing with the guidelines, it was preferable to have a rationalized pasture, controlled, to maintain the native species along with the foreign ones.

[24:30.6] From then on we started to do tourism. And what we offer the tourist is that they come to have an experience of a typical Patagonian estancia, of a Croatian that came over here when there was nothing at all. So, without consideration of the restaurant at the quincho, where the asado is eaten, the rest of the buildings are just the same as my grandfather had.

[25:05.3] The only thing that we do is to maintain them. The shearing warehouse is just as he made it. We have in tourism two products. One is the people to come over to lodge at the inn. And the inn is my grandparents house. The only thing that we did was, that since it had five rooms, we added five more.

[25:33.8] But the windows, are built with the same lenga wood that my grandfather used. The floor was made of lenga, and pinotea. So we sought for these materials in antique stores, and in houses under demolition. The furniture are the same old ones, only that we have considered the acoustics, and heat, so that tourists coming over can enjoy, without the cold of 80 years ago.

[26:04.6] Reality is that this first product is for people to come and enjoy as it was 80, 90 years ago. The house that my grandfather is the same than what the people in the inn can experience.

[26:34.1] With those modifications I just mentioned. So this people that comes over here and sleep two or three nights, go out over here. On Ruta 15, that comes from Calafate, up to here, which are 56 kilometers, the road ends here. So when one advances the 12,000 hectares inwards, you only get there walking.

[27:00.5] So we have walks, trekking, bicycle rides, horse rides. There are no vehicles, with the exception of controls, or logistics, that we use a vehicle eventually. Because we have the second product, aside from the inn, which is that people come to do horse rides of 4 or 5 days,

[27:30.1] sleeping in the posts that had cattle activity 50-100 years ago. They sleep there, use horses, with bilingual guides, if required, and sleep in each one of the posts and get to know places that are unique: glaciers that you can only reach by foot,

[28:02.6] that are inside the PNLG. So people have these days with vehicles that come over up to here. Another product

that we have is that people who are visiting Calafate can have a day in the countryside. We have a vehicle ourselves that brings the people over. And we do specific activities, rural.

[28:31.4] They arrive, we offer them a tea time treat. The bilingual guide tells them the estancia's history, about the National Park, and takes them through a walk to the Southern branch of Lago Argentino and Lago Roca, showing the local flora and fauna. They have a shearing demonstration.

[29:00.4] So that they can see the activity that was carried on for years during populating times. There is a try-out [prueba de rienda], which is the local skill [destreza criolla] between two horses, with two gauchos who run dodging drums, to show the skill of the horse [caballo criollo] which is the breed that has worked in Patagonia the most, even in Argentina overall. And later on is a short horse ride [cabalgata] of 45 minutes up to an hour.

[29:32.4] And it all ends eating the typical Patagonian sheep in the asador [grill], with salads made of our own garden. With house made desserts. Every morning we milk the cows and prepare the local dulce de leche, and home made flan, with our own milk. Milked be it December 31, Xmas, labor day:

[30:02.9] the cows get milked every day, and that is another activity that urban people have never seen. Of course that later on they go through the sterilization process, so that it goes through the conditions necessary for consumption. So if you have a milk and coffee you get it, or tea with milk, or the cakes, and the eggs that we use, with our chickens.

[30:32.6] So the idea, summing up, is that the touristic activity can live an experience in a Patagonian estancia, founded 108 years ago.

Interviewer: [30:52.9] Are you hopeful that this place will be still here, still as beautiful in 80 years from now?

ADOLFO: [31:15.1] Well. I am 58 years old. If I am going to live another 80 years I guarantee that this will remain as it is. I have two other daughters that are continuing the job. One is working with me, in Calafate who is in charge of all the human resources of the business. In this estancia 27 people work.

[31:46.2] She leads all the commercialization. We maintain, try to maintain all the buildings just the same as we had them 106 years ago. And we try to, and we living along with the National Park. We understand that it is the best choice that we could have had.

[32:14.5] As much as we have the right in the National Park law, to continue staying in place, we have to go on with the blood line of the family. So my grandfather came over, then my father, now I do, my children should go on, or my cousins, in the activity. We were the first to put even in winter, all this Cordón Cristal gathers a lot of snow and we have a

hydroelectric dam,

[32:50.6] with which we generate our own clean energy but it ends by the mid of December and we begin to use the Diesel motors. But right now we have made an investment to try to complete or at least advance in using totally renewable energies.

[33:20.2] To not use any more ... We already achieved during 8 months. Because the dam which comes from a chorrillo, we have this dam with a tube that takes water, with a 100 meter vertical fall, from where we take the water through the tubes, and in front of the shearing building, there is a small house which has the hydroelectric turbine that generates energy good enough for 8 months of the year.

[33:50.4] Now we are putting, next week, a series of solar panels so that in summer we can compensate that energy. And the idea is that in the short term we could not use Diesel fuel anymore. That it could be totally with renewable energy. So, stay calm that for another 80 years if I'm here this will remain as it is.

[34:22.9] Because there are no kind of developments, nor vehicles. All over here there is extensive tourism. So that you can get an idea: in the inn there's not more than 800 people over the year. So this is maintained with a very high degree of conservation.

Interviewer: [34:58.0] Some years ago, he did a project very related to what you are commenting on, that was about the technological possibilities so that people could remove themselves from the grid of services provided by the state, electricity and the rest of basic services, and it seems that this is quite covered here.

ADOLFO: [35:28.6] Yes!! Unfortunately, in our country the last administrations that we've had, over the last 50 years, they didn't worry about this when it should have been a concern. To be able to use this sun, the wind we have, and to use all the electricity with alternative renewable energies.

[36:00.4] And not to use petroleum. That only brings economic problems when the price of the oil barrel rises and the economies tremble. Here, thanks to God, we do all this with an effort that is totally private, of our own. We do not have any kind of support, be it from the provincial, national state. We create an hydroelectric turbine and solar panels before the administration of PN.

[36:36.2] [Team Checking wrap up]

[37:03.0] For some people in English this could mean salvage, or rural, silvester, depending on what you want to point out: be it the fauna, the flora, what is out of control, or what is natural, with it's own rhythm.

[37:43.5] Is this place wild?

ADOLFO: [37:49.0] Yes. I believe so. This is a place, even though it wouldn't seem so, rural, tough. Over here, in winter ... But well, this is contrasted with the nice it is: the calmness. Each one's consciousness, of what each one likes on this planet that we have. I am happy to be in these places. And there are people who love the city. And they feel themselves abandoned, alone.

[38:23.2] But I say that in these places you have everything. Just being here gives you a mental well being. But yes, they are rugged places.

[38:49.5] [Checking for any other question ...]

ADOLFO: [38:49.5] Have you already visited Perito Moreno?
 [Benji: Yesterday and the day before. Tomorrow perhaps.]
ADOLFO: Do you know about the history of the glacier's advancements?

[39:18.2] I can show you a video that I have, a photographic research that my grandfather had. He never saw the process of the advancement of the Perito Moreno glacier, that went over the peninsula and generated a dam. All of these river branches from the Southern side grown, because their natural destiny is onto the North Side. Lago Argentino and Río Santa Cruz, they go to the Atlantic.

[39:53.3] So the first advancement of Glaciar Perito Moreno that made the obstruction was in 1939. So, I have very old pictures in which all of this had not yet been flooded. I built up a video with a photographer with quite extensive experience and relevance in Argentina, who's made books and so on. And we built this to explain to tourists of what it was before.

[40:30.4] And how the floods came over. You can see the amount of trees, when the water is covering the trees. The different posts that my grandfather had established, once in one place and had to be replaced because the water would go over and take them away. At the maximum of the rising river branch of Lago Argentino along with the Southern branch, the difference was of 34 meters high.

[41:00.5] In some places, where it's flat, it covered up to 15 kilometers of pastures. In other places, where it is more of cliffs, that would be less. Here you can see perfectly well, over there in front up to where the water reached. Up to where you can see the borderline of the trees. Up to there is where the highest that the river got.

[41:30.5] So if you like I can show you this in video. I invite you over to my home to watch that, from 1919 to nowadays. Compared pictures from that mountain. Some pictures ... The father of all this is Pascasio Perito Moreno.

[42:03.6] But then the second that has went through this place the most was the Father Dagostini. He took a picture in 1929 from over up there, before any of the river risings.

And we compared that with a current picture from the same location. And we prepared all this to explain to people why ... Once you know about the breaking of the Perito Moreno, and for people to see the icebergs falling down, with all their thunder, but there is a whole explanation,

[42:39.0] and a lot of consequences, which were all from this side. Because on the North side of Lago Argentino has it's own drain in Santa Cruz. On the other side of Lago Calafate, you can see a little bit of that water that closes for two, three or four years with a growing water through this dam. When it brakes: that water goes away in a single day. It's impressive. So if you like, and see it, to know about the culture and history of the place you visited.

Interviewer: [43:23.2] I would love too see it. If we have time.

Luqui - lav.WAV

Start [00:39]

End [27:30]

Interviewer: 00:39 Could you tell me who you are, where we are and where we're about to go?

LUQUI: 01:08 My name is Luciano Bernacchi, I am one of the directors in Glaciarium, which is a Glaciar Museum. We are in Southern Patagonia, Argentina. Overlooking Argentino Lake, and we are near the National Park here, where the most famous Glaciar is, the world known is called Glaciar Perito Moreno.

Interviewer: 01:39 One of the key words of this project is this [...] So I will anticipate towards the end that I will ask whether the glaciers are wilderness in your opinion.

LUQUI: Well, it's part of it. [...]

Interviewer: 02:14 The first question is [...] if you could [...] tell me the reason for the glaciario being under UNESCO's World Heritage List. So, what is the outstanding universal value of the glaciers?

02:58 Why was it inscribed, and if you can remember when it was.

LUQUI: 03:02 I can check that, I don't remember. '81 I think. **Interviewer:** Yes!

LUQUI: So, Parque Nacional Los Glaciares [Los Glaciares National Park], one of the largest in Argentina, was declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1981, and it has that category, that status ever since, and they are few in Argentina, and the main reason being the importance and

03:29 the vastness of the networks of glaciers that are protected, together with their wilderness, forests, estepas and the whole habitat.

Interviewer: 03:48 Another thing that I want to ask to you is if you could describe your research, your work a bit more precisely, the kind of things you're involved with right now?

LUQUI: 04:07 Glaciology in Argentina is something that is still beginning. Let's say there are few people truly dedicated, you have to chance of chatting with our scientific director, Pedro Svarka, one of the most renowned glaciologists in South America, and he has been working in the area in Southern Patagonia and in Antarctica for over 40 years.

04:27 When we decided to build Glaciarium it was fundamental to have somebody of his caliber to help us with all his

scientific knowledge and rigor. So basically the whole point of Glaciarium is to bring to the general public the latest and most accurate information so they can understand the importance and how glaciers work on a global scale but of course with more detail of Patagonia.

04:57 And then something about what is happening now ... OK. So the Glaciares National Park is part of the Southern Patagonia Ice Field which is shared between Argentina and Chile, and a lot of the research is of the dynamics of the glaciers has been done specially starting to the '90s and scientists from different parts of the world: Austria, Japan, US, Canada, Argentina, and a few others, Swiss also, came here and worked in collaboration

05:29 to first of all what you need to do to study glaciers is determine its behavior, its status, and whether it is growing or whether it is receding. Most of them of course, just like everywhere else in the world, are receding. These classes are called outlet glaciers and as they bring ice from the core of the ice field need to lower elevations and they carve either into the ocean when they go to the Chilean side or into big glaciers which we have on this side.

05:59 So there are studies that research on the velocity, how much they move, and most important what is called the mass balance, which is basically comparing how much ice is forming one year, and how much ice is lost during that same time, in order to establish its behavior. Either it is growing or receding. Or stable. And we do have a few stable glaciers in the area, which is rather unusual but the vast majority are receding very fast, very quickly.

Interviewer: 06:25 So, you have been using the word behavior and as a social scientist it is a fun word to use. But, it's almost a perfect coincidence that the panel behind you in the very first sentence, which is my favorite sentence in the entire Glaciarium, ``The Glaciar seems to be alive''. Can you give me your thoughts on how

06:53 the glaciar can seem to be alive?

LUQUI: 06:57 Glaciers are very active and every change in systems, in nature, just like others, but the glaciers is something that at first site looks sort of like massive, almost insurmountable, because it is so big, and you think it is always there. But nothing is perpetual, they are actually changing all the time. And nowadays with the problems of climate change and global changes that are happening in our planet, glaciers have been used as

07:27 the cannon in the coal mine, because they show very subtle changes, they react very quickly, so they crack, they melt, there is a lot going on and specially on those glaciers that we have in the area that carve into the water, there's going to be activity and movement all the time. In most cases you can't see, but in these cases any person coming and sitting or standing by the face of the glacier for a half in hour so

07:54 it's likely to see this movement. That's why we say glaciers seem to be alive, because they're changing and they're moving and there's always something going on with them.

Interviewer: 08:04 That's fascinating. Thank you for that. There is a ... This is not a question, it's more like a comment. There's research done in the Yukon with indigenous populations who share with anthropologists in particular, and recall the stories of how the glaciers, who say that they hear the glaciers, that they glaciers listen to us.

LUQUI: 08:30 Ah, that's interesting.

Interviewer: 08:32 One of the many ways, this is a colleague of mine who has done this work: indigenous populations find that we must be respectful to the glaciers, that there are certain things that we must not do, we must not be loud. We must not cook with grease, near the glaciers. All the same ... And the glaciers respond through weather.

LUQUI: 09:03 That's interesting. That's something that we like here because there is no, I mean, the few indigenous groups of Patagonia never lived anywhere near the glaciers. I mean, near but there's no connection like you would find with any Inuit or Thule or anyone from the Northern Hemisphere. People in Greenland, even in Norway, of course the Alps, and most important in Alaska. And Canada.

09:28 These people were living very near in close relation with glaciers. Although in Patagonia we have a lot of ice, glaciology, the study of glaciers or even people venturing into the glaciers started only when mountaineers and explorers arrived in Patagonia 100 years ago. Not before that.

Interviewer: 09:48 Are there any science whatsoever, archaeological science of human presence even temporary in the glaciers?

LUQUI: 09:56 No. There is human inhabitation in Patagonia for 10,000 years in this area but all of it is more to the East and basically these people were hunters and gatherers that were chasing guanacos, chasing rheas, which is like an ostrich type of bird. And there was no reason for them to get close to the glaciers.

10:19 It was cold, harsh, inhospitable. They didn't have anything to eat there. So, you don't see any mention in the cosmography or rituals, or paintings or anything.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing that. Here is another panel on icebergs. It is important to me and my research.

Interviewer: 10:50 So I want to ask you a question about this. The language here is really unique. Sailing amongst icebergs is like navigating through sculptures, gorgeous statues. Now, we have... UNESCO has a list of cultural heritage sites and a list of natural heritage sites.

Cultural Heritage is typically full of sculptures and gorgeous statues and paintings, and things of that sort.

Interviewer: 11:26 The natural list is full of natural things. So here we have something that is pushing us to rethink that so I am kind of wondering what your thoughts are on the language here. Are icebergs statues?

LUQUI: 11:41 Icebergs are an essential part of the aftermath of glaciers, when they arrive into the sea or lake they calve, they break off, and that's how icebergs are born. And of course there are huge, they are of various shapes and they have been referred to in literature and history, of anyone exploring, specially the polar regions, the Arctic and Antarctica, down here in Patagonia we have icebergs in the lakes, and

12:10 they are truly nature's works of art. Because all of them are unique and none of them are the same and even if men wanted to recreate an iceberg they would never do such a good job as the natural thing.

Interviewer: 12:27 Thank you for sharing that.

Interviewer: 12:38 The opposite side would be that as well as this side is what Pedro talked about, that he doesn't feel comfortable with the poetic side, is ...

LUQUI: 12:54 It was just a challenge to, I mean, after all we are happy with what we have. The only thing is that the guy who did it, we had to police him all the time. Otherwise it would have been full of poetry and little fact. Now, on the other hand, if whoever it is, Pedro or a scientist would be to provide some information it would have been boring. And that's the truth. So I think we have a good balance and my job was actually to act as that liaison between the science and the guys who built it.

13:24 So, it's good. Most people find it enjoyable.

Interviewer: You're satisfied with the end result.

LUQUI: Yeah, yeah. It was hard to ... It was always something that becomes with a little more of this, less of the other... This one [panel] is the one with the Inuits. No, where were we? I don't remember what you were asking about this.

Interviewer: 13:50 How much time do you spend on any of this?

LUQUI: 13:51 Oh well. Many years, because I worked as a mountain guide, and helping research and I am always around ice. I spend 5 months in the year now in the Arctic or in Antarctica. And the rest of the time I live here. So, [laughter] have an hour away from the ice.

Interviewer: 14:06 So, here's a question that is ...

LUQUI: 14:10 I've seen glaciers all over the world, everywhere.

Interviewer: You know about you, not so much as a scientist even if you can separate that...

LUQUI: 14:18 I am not a scientist! Eh? I'm active more as a film support for scientists. I've never intended to undertake research myself.

Interviewer: So my question is this. How do you feel emotionally, personally when you are in the glacier. If you could just imagine someone who has never been anywhere near a glacier and you've spent a lot of time

14:43 on them, perhaps you have been in them: what's it like to be on a glacier?

LUQUI: 14:50 I think it's a very good reminder of how small we are as humans, as mankind, and it's you know when you're walking on a glacier, specially the large ones, you can walk for days of course, get into the middle of the ice to guide expeditions across the ice fields for two-three weeks, and it's a true contact with the harsh, unforgiving, sort of wilderness. Like somebody going and climbing a mountain,

15:17 somebody sailing a little sail boat across an ocean. It's that type of feeling that different people get in different ways. That sense of solitude, remoteness, you have to be self sufficient. So basically you're not in charge and you're just transiting this icy world, let's say.

[...]

Interviewer: 15:45 Do you have a favorite one?

LUQUI: 15:49 A favorite glacier? Well, probably this one here, simply because it's like my glacier. I've lived here for 25 years. So ...

Interviewer: So tell us about it. This one right here ...

LUQUI: I mean Perito Moreno. I mean like half an hour away. No, that's just a graph about temperatures.

Interviewer: Why is Perito Moreno your favorite over ... ?

LUQUI: 16:09 I've seen many glaciers all over the world and Perito Moreno is, because I'm used to live here, 45 minutes away a Calafate drive and you arrive to the glacier. It's beautiful aesthetically. It's surrounded by green Forrest, which is quite unusual. In other parts of the world they have glaciers in Polar Regions, high latitudes, don't have many trees, or you have them high above the mountain where it is above the tree line. In few places you have green and ice together.

16:35 Also it's stable. It hasn't been receding, so it's pretty much alive and here I am. And the [cherry] icing on

the cake let's say is this rupture that it produces every couple of years. It's a great arch that collapses, with a lot of water crashing through and it's an amazing show! So, yeah.

Interviewer: 16:57 So let's switch gear and talk about challenges, particularly with regards to conservation. What is the most significant challenge with regards to conservation that the glaciers are facing at the moment?

LUQUI: 17:16 So glaciers, like many other features of our natural world, are facing challenges in conservation. But unlike let's say wildlife or forest, where you can protect it locally, and you may be successful, you can't do anything locally to help a glacier. Yeah, of course, no littering and stuff like that. But glaciers are susceptible to change in terms of climate change and global change, so whatever ...

17:44 even if you're in South National Park, if temperatures rising or there is less snow, or things change in the atmosphere, that's going to affect the glaciers. So to protect glaciers you really have to think globally. And it's a big challenge.

Interviewer: 18:05 I've learned that... Sorry for going back and forth, I just need different angles to cut. I've learned when we went on the MarPatag cruise that there are still cows, feral cows.

LUQUI: Yeah, they're trying to remove them but yeah. That doesn't affect the ice but of course the forest.

Interviewer: However, because we were very distant from the guide when she was talking about that, we didn't really capture the full story. Do you know much about that? What is the situation about?

LUQUI: 18:36 Yeah yeah. So, the National Park Los Glaciares protects the glaciers but, as I mentioned before, it has a beautiful Southern beach forest, or antarctic forest as it's called. Which is our native forest in Patagonia and some areas of the Park suddenly have had the feral cows because they run wild for the last almost 60/70 years.

19:03 In the past, before the Park was created in 1937 they were neighboring estancias, where they had cows, and like everywhere in Argentina and some of them just ventured into these remote areas and they stayed there long after the Park was created. And it's very hard: geography, hard to reach places, so obviously cows began adapting to this mountain environment and they've been there ever since.

19:28 The last years the National Park is doing a big job in trying to remove them because feral cows, in particular here, they start eating young trees, they start scratching against the bark of the trees and the bark comes off and fungi come in the trees. In winter, when there's snow they start roaming even more so they are a big problem for the vegetation, the undergrowth and also for erosion, because our

soils here are very very fragile.

20:00 So it's [not a very?] good idea to introduce animals here and there and the cows have a bit of a problem here. Luckily they're not all over the Park and still the numbers are, lets say, they can be controlled or cowed, or removed... If they keep working on it.

Interviewer: Do you think in general, I mean in this case it seems the National Park has been very active...

LUQUI: Well, not really [laughter]. They just started a couple of years ago. We've been asking why they don't shoot the bloody cows for the last [ten-thirty?] years.

Interviewer: 20:30 In general do you think that National Park is doing a fair job in conservation, with regards to the glaciers?

LUQUI: 20:37 Yeah, yeah. The National Park is quite stable and it's a solid institution within Argentina. And it's actually one of the largest National Parks system in the world in terms of amount of more than 40 big National Parks. The 3rd National Park in the world was created here, after Yellowstone, and the second one I don't remember.

21:00 So, we're very happy with it. Of course, sometimes like many other things in Argentina, the lack of funds and appropriate gear or man power will affect so we always want things to work better, and we have to hope for that but they do a great job.

Interviewer: Sorry, did you say this was what number?

LUQUI: #3. Not this one eh. The Argentinean system and the first one in Argentina was in Bariloche, which is Northern Patagonia.

21:27 So that's called Nahuel Huapi. That was the 2nd of the National Parks in the World. Yellowstone came 1st ...

Interviewer: X came 2nd in New Zealand I think.

LUQUI: We're talking about 1890 something. Yeah, it's over there.

Interviewer: A challenge for Wikipedia. That's great thank you.

LUQUI: 21:46 What about Canada, when was it's 1st National Park?

Interviewer: It was 4th in the world. [...] A question on wilderness. First of all I am going to ask you if you believe that Los Glaciares National Park is a wilderness.

LUQUI: 22:22 Yeah, yeah. Of course. So Los Glaciares National Park is a true vast almost unspoiled because they're

some challenges. Wilderness and few places in the world can rely on the chance of walking, mountaineering, traversing glaciers for days and days and weeks. And stay in remote areas.

22:46 Certainly that cannot happen in Europe. In a few places in South America, of course. And you have Canada, has huge mountain areas. But so it's very really valuable and in very conditions in terms of conservation.

Interviewer: So you almost unspoiled...

LUQUI: 23:06 Well because we mentioned the cows before.

Interviewer: Are there any other ways in which, sticking to the glaciers, they are impacted by people around them.

LUQUI: No no. They're few people venturing into the glaciers. They're some commercial walks that operate everyday in Calafate on Perito Moreno, but that has no impact on the ice at all. And then anywhere else in the Park, 99,5 % of the surface of the Park is hardly visited at all.

23:35 You do have the old bandoneer or explorer. It's really hard core hiking, trekking expeditions and it is not just a little walk. To venture inside the Park away from the tourist areas you need to be proper full trained mountaineer, self-sufficient. There are no mountain huts. Inside there's no rescue service. So, I say, there's a reason El Chaltén area, which is Mount Fitz Roy, which is also part of the same Park, is a bit of a mecca for mountaineers from all over the world.

24:05 Because they have to find conditions that might be compatible to give an idea for Canadians of what you can find in Banff Island or places like that. Truly remote and harsh and demanding.

Interviewer: You spoke of the time you've been doing your work abroad in different places remotely, do you get a situation in which you're outside of your work environment and

24:37 just because of your leisure time you find yourself exploring in this harsh way that you mentioned?

LUQUI: Yeah. I mean my work and my free time sometimes blend in together as I enjoy being in the outdoors, I've worked in the skiing business, I've worked in the mountaineering business, and I've always had a relation with mountains and glaciers, so, I love visiting these places.

Interviewer: 25:03 Last question. We asked Pedro, there's a panel ... There are many different glaciers in the Park, if you could point out which ones, what they're called.

LUQUI: Would you like to do that in the ... Because the model is there, Patagonia Model. [...]

Interviewer: 26:07 And briefly explain which ones are visited most often, and the all important question about the size. Everybody kind of ... It's a factual piece of information.

LUQUI: Los Glaciares National Park has a few hundred glaciers, all protected. Most of them are part of this huge network called the Southern Patagonian Ice Field. We're in a room where we have a lot of explanations, models about this. And,

26:32 these glaciers, some of them, the big ones arrive into lakes. Lake Argentino and Lake Viedma, two monster sized lakes that are on the East of the Andes, and they receive all this ice. These glaciers are called outlet glaciers that flow into this lakes. From El Calafate which is the hub for visiting the area, people can go to the Northern area of the Park. There's a village called El Chaltén, where Mount Fitz Roy is.

27:00 For hiking, mountaineering. And the main glacier that the people visit there is called Viedma. Viedma is actually the largest in the National Park and the second largest in South America after the Pío XI which is on the Chilean side. Close to Calafate there are both trips, there are walks to do, and the most visited glacier is the Perito Moreno, which is still pretty big: 257 km². And also people can visit

27:30 Glacier Upsala, which is quite large, the 2nd largest after Viedma, and Glacier Spegazzini, which is not about the same as Perito Moreno, a little bit smaller. All the glaciers I mentioned calve into the water and in most cases they're easy to visit on all the nice excursions or in some cases people can go on their own. Such as the ones in Chaltén or Perito Moreno there's a road and all the infrastructure to visit these magnificent glaciers.

The two Spaniards - shotgun.WAV

Start [00:12.3]

End [55:11.0]

Interviewer: [00:12.3] Could you introduce yourselves, who you are, what are your names, what you do, and where we are right now?

Interviewer: [00:37.2] I always considered this interview to be different from the rest since you are not from around, but have been travelling and are now staying for the season here. So could you please tell us how long you've been travelling through South America and Argentina, your plans, how you've been able to work around over here and then go on?

HIM: [01:01.8] We are a Spaniard couple. I am from Cáceres

HER: [01:04.1] I am from Barcelona. We already lived together in Barcelona. We had our steady jobs, our flat, and after a year and half of planning, we left everything behind and we came over to destiny: the World. For one or another reason we flied over to Buenos Aires. And from there on we have been moving for three months along South America.

HIM: [01:34.6] More than three months and a half already. [Laughters] And specifically here in Patagonia for a month.

HER: [01:45.9] We arrived to Ushuaia by December 27th. And we're still here. [Laughters]. And we'll see how it goes. Because in this area, we now have over here South, at least until the end of February. Because it's when we have the reservations to make the O, in Torres del Paine. And that's what right now keeps us moving around this area, without moving further upwards.

HIM: [02:11.5] And also, to keep travelling for a longer time, and spending the least possible, so, we are working now at a hostel, doing reception desk, making breakfast, little things of that type. In exchange for lodging and food. So that's a way to keep on travelling without spending anything at all, at really getting to know around,

[02:41.6] culture, getting deeper into the local culture. And how people live around here. For example, in Calafate.

Interviewer: [02:54.9] Benji, could you translate a bit for us? [Benji: The sound is different! (since they're from the Real Spanish)] [Laughters]

HER: [03:40.1] [In English: People use to say that we speak really fast] [Phil: It's not the speed, just strange. I've never been to Spain.]

HER: [03:56.7] [In English: Yes, over here it is a bit contaminated. [Laughters] We change the verb tenses, or

``aquí'' instead of ``acá''. We are already adopting some these words.]

Interviewer: [04:26.3] UK English and from Canada and the States.

HIM: [04:37.8] Yes. You can realize this quickly once someone starts speaking.

[04:53.7] [Benji translates]

[05:30.4] Maybe you've got the reservation for Chile once you got to Argentina?

HER: [05:28.2] No. We did that from Uruguay.

[05:33.1] HIM [In English]: We got that in October. But it's very difficult to get a reservation for the whole circuit, the old one, the big one. So we wanted to travel North before because we have to go South to reach Torres del Paine. So we are staying here, and then in Chaltén.

[06:01.4] And using this volunteering [?] to keep our expenses low

[06:07.0] HER [In English]: Yeah, but this volunteering is not done because we have to go to Torres del Paine. In fact this is the third volunteering we do, here in Argentina. It's part of our travel. We are not like tourists that we are going to this place, take some pictures, do this track, and go there and there. Volunteering is not only a way to reduce expenses, it's a way to really live the place and to

[06:37.8] decrease the velocity of the travel. Because previous to this one, we have been for one month moving around. We did all the coast of Uruguay, we did Iguazú Falls, Buenos Aires, Ushuaia. OK, we need to stop. So, this kind of volunteering, this kind of help, or start working for accommodation and food gives us an opportunity to set a little routine.

[07:08.9] And to clean your clothes. To buy some jeans.

HIM: [07:15.4] [English becoming default]: At least we know that when you're travelling very fast you're going to reach a spot everyday. There's a moment when you're always taking decisions and whether where are we going to sleep today, what are we going to eat today. We have to buy this, to get this. And we have to go to that bus, that can get us to that city. And then we have to go on these planes... These things make you at least

[07:44.1] know that you're going to have a bed, food. You can also focus on other stuff. And for example we wanted to make a webpage and a blog. We didn't know anything about blogging or web design, but we wanted to do it. And we're really proud that 10 days ago almost, we launched it. And it's quite good I think. At least visually. It's quite good.

[08:17.9] We have to make a lot of content and so. But it's also a way of doing the stuff that you can't do when you travel normally.

Interviewer: [08:38.7] We get it. We were late to the experience. Travelling can be a lot more.

HER: [08:42.7] Now we are discovering. We are travelling. But we are not only tourists or travellers. It's different. It's a different experience. It's a different thing that you're looking for. And we like to establish in a place and discover more of the local people: what they do, and ...

HIM: [09:07.8] How do they live. What are the problems of the places that you see. Something so common, and that you don't usually see like an electricity bill: wow, this people pay these taxes or this one, or they have this problem with these companies. And it's a thing that ... You will never think about it. But when you live with a person from that place,

[09:43.3] and you talk everyday with them, you really find, and you can get the difference between your country and the places you have been, and places where you are staying today and it's like: this is really strange. For me this would be impossible in my country. And for him it's normal. Or is used to it. It's another way of knowing [about] the people.
[HER: Inaudible]

[10:16.5] And not only take pictures.

Interviewer: [10:19.5] So whatever you discovered from El Calafate, can you tell us what life is like here, from your perspective? Can you pretend that the people that are listening have never been around?

HER: [10:43.0] The biggest point that I have troubles with is the wind. You never think that the wind is a weather condition that really bothers you. And really affects you in your daily life. For example, we like going running. And we go to the coast, the coast area of the lake, and it's nice. You go running.

[11:11.9] And in one direction you run really fast, and it's really amazing. And then you just turn around and you have the strong wind in your face, and you don't move from there, in the place you stay. It's really terrible. Not even running. If you only go out for a walk. It's ``OK, this is a nice day, let's go to the coast'', and the wind is so hard that it's: ``fooh, I cannot stand that, I need to come back''.

[11:41.4] And this is a point that has really surprised me. The Patagonian wind.

HIM: [11:48.4] Actually, the climate here, it's amazing. It's really strange, because we are in the middle of desert but it's a cold desert, but there's the biggest lake in Argentina, that is just 100 meters away. So it's quite

strange how all those things can be together but it's true. And there's always wind but there's always wind coming from the same direction and it's like

[12:26.6] geographically and climate wise, it's a very strange, or very ... Authentic place. And once you discover Perito Moreno, which is like amazing, astonishing,

[12:55.3] it's even more ...

HER: [12:59.8] It's like things don't fit with the others. Like, it's all desert, but there's a big lake. You go to the Perito Moreno, and it's ``OK, it's hills with forest and boom!! A big piece of ice!! Why? I cannot understand this place''. But it's amazing. Because it's really different from everything we have seen, or that we have in Spain.

HIM: [13:27.6] I suppose that the first people who arrived here must be, should've been really confused by the place. It's like very hostile but at least ... But on another hand, it shouldn't have been so, because it's also: there's water, [HER: guanacos do it ...] It's strange. I think if someone likes nature,

[13:56.8] I think it's an amazing ... A place that you HAVE TO visit. At least for seeing all those things together. All that doesn't seem to fit together.

HER: [14:13.8] And about people, not only the place, and the whether. People who live here in general they are really amazing people and as well. And it's a safe place. You can go around, and people say ``it's getting dark, yeah you can go out, no problem''. Maybe for us, ... I don't know if this is in part because of being near Calafate, or maybe Argentinean people, or Patagonic people, we are not sure,

[14:44.6] they say ``Here, people or things don't run, only ...''

HIM: [14:53.3] The expression in Spanish is ``In Patagonia there's no haste, the only one running is the wind'' [En Patagonia nunca hay prisa. Aquí el único que corre es el viento]. The translation would be ``Here in Patagonia nobody is in a hurry, the only ones that goes fast is the wind''.

HER: [15:10.7] And maybe as your appearance ... There are some things that make us get out of our nerves, because everything is ``no, no, I'm going there.'' And maybe 3 hours later, it's ``OK, Calafate is not so big!! Where are you?''. It's funny but you learn to live with this thing. Life is relaxed.

HIM: [15:38.3] That's another point of traveling this way. You can also learn how the people is in a place. Because here, people ... I don't know if it's because of the whether, or everything, they live like this and they live in a relaxed way and they enjoy being together, and the same as for us maybe, it's annoying to talk with someone and say ``no, no, I'm coming''. And you wait for an hour and he

hasn't arrived yet.

[16:17.7] For them it's like something normal. And they don't get mad about it.

HER: [16:25.8] But you learn. And adapt. It's nice.

HIM: [16:35.6] And being in the hostel, you can see people from all over the world and it's funny seeing these stuff. For example, with Japanese guys, they're more obsessed with these things, because they're really correct. They want things as they ask for them. Which is normal. But sometimes it's funny to see the interaction between a Japanese guy and a

[17:05.9] maybe not only Argentinean, but a Colombian, or whatever and they are ``No, no, no, relax man, there's no problem. It's half an hour late, doesn't matter''. The Japanese is like crazy. It's funny.

HER: [17:25.0] [x] will come from o'clock to half past. OK, which hour? No, this range. Which hour? I don't know. Wait here, and they will appear. [Arrrrgh]. [x] We don't know ... Our point of view of this, we see the other people from around the world interacting with Calafate and Patagonia. It's nice.

HIM: [17:58.5] And as we have also been here for Christmas, and New Year's Eve, everybody from the hostels are together, we all have dinner for all of us. People were invited to cook their own dishes, and share with everybody. It was really, really funny and really interesting to talk with an Israeli guy, talking with a Korean guy, and

[18:31.8] sharing their points of view about everything. Or a French girl talking with Argentinian people. And then they all go partying. It was really nice.

Interviewer: [18:49.9] So your guests, what do they come here for? What are the things that they do here?

HER: [19:01.8] Normally people here is spending two, three, four days, and they are coming like everybody else to see Perito Moreno. And go to Chaltén, maybe. You can see as well people that, most of them, they're in vacations. So they have some days scheduled and they have to fit it.

[19:30.8] But sometimes they're not a priority, but they appear as travellers, like us. And they're relaxed. And [x]. And they're here like everybody else to see Perito, and Chaltén. It's another rhythm. And it's nice. We are ... Saying it's nice a lot [Laughter].

HIM: [19:55.4] And they also ... You can see there's also people who is travelling ... Us for example, through South America from South to North. Or ``I am going to South America or America in general from North to South''. And you can talk these places, the hostels, are like a way, a place to exchange information like the best travel guide ever ...

[20:25.2] because you can talk with people: ``No, I am coming from North, I've been to this point and this one, and another.'' ``Well, I have read that this point is dangerous, because of the ... Whatever.'' ``No, no, no. That was a year ago, but now it's perfect and you have to go not only to this point but to this hostel, and this restaurant and the owner's phone number is this: ask him

[20:55.4] and ..." it's the best way of getting information. Just interacting with each other.

Interviewer: [21:08.2] When people come here, when they come back, say they go to the glacier, what are their impressions of what they've just seen?

HER: [21:22.0] In general for everybody, us included, the glacier is like breathtaking. It's, I say: ``What is this huge piece of ice here?'' It's not like any other place. It's cold but it's not extreme. You are not in Antarctica. Wow. It's like, everybody loves it. I think nobody has said a bad word, or

[21:52.2] ``yeah, it's overestimated''. No no. Everybody is fascinated.

Interviewer: [22:00.6] And typically, what do people do when they come to the glaciers? Do they go trekking, do they do kayaking, go to tours? What is their typical ... ?

HIM: [22:11.6] You can do everything but ... [HER: The most popular ...] is just going in front of the glacier to see it from

HER: [22:28.8] the platforms! That's the cheapest option, depending on the traveller as well. The most common thing to see. And another really popular option that we did is the mini trekking. Or Big Ice, depending on your budget and what you want to do. That is going and walking on the glacier. We really recommend that excursion, because it's ...

[22:56.2] When are you going to walk on a glacier of this kind?

Interviewer: [23:00.4] So we have done it. But can you pretend that we haven't and can you tell us what it's all about?

HIM: [23:10.4] Yeah. You go on a walk and near the glacier you approximate the glacier and there the guides can they put some crampons to walk on the ice and you actually go over the glacier, with guides that tells you where to go, because it can be dangerous at some point. And they teach you about the

[23:40.3] ice formations, and the [HER: Geography of the glacier]. And all the things that appear on a glacier like Perito Moreno. It's also a strange one. And after that you enjoy with your group a glass of whisky. With glacier ice of course.

HER: [24:10.8] That's something nice of the mini trekking that I like: is that you first get to go to the Park. To start the trekking on the glacier, you take a boat. And you cross the channel, or the lake, in front of Perito. For me it was amazing, because you come from the South(West). The glacier is here, and from the bus you start seeing the glacier far, but in different spots. You're like ``Uy, the glacier''.

[24:40.2] But they don't bring you closer to the glacier. You stop before. And you go to a dock to take a boat. And you haven't seen the glacier. ``I know it's there''. And then you get into the boat, and the boat goes. And in the moment that you take over a piece of land, you see the glacier, but differently in the boat, in it's highness.

[25:09.0] For me it was a really magic moment. It was like ``Oooohhh!'. Everybody goes outside (the boat). Everybody goes to that side of the boat, that is like, ``OK, I am a bit afraid that the boat is going to turn around.''. But for me that moment was amazing: the first sight of the glacier. In fact it was the same ... We took the boat, and the first sight from the water, from behind. I think it's a nice way to discover

[25:44.6] a place of this kind. And after that they explain to you about some things of the glaciers because it's so particular, Perito Moreno. Because it's not the biggest. It has particularities. And the walk. That is amazing as well.

HIM: [26:10.3] Also, a thing that makes this interesting is seeing everybody that goes there really enjoy it: is seeing that the glacier, IT'S ALIVE!! You can hear it. You can see it moving. You can ... Witness how an enormous chunk of ice breaks and goes to the water and everybody is

[26:46.1] like afraid of the noise. And it's crazy seeing that stuff moving. And then really seeing that this is happening and this is ALIVE!! Yeah!

Interviewer: [27:10.3] Sometimes it seems that there may be too many activities, that it's gone very touristic, everything around Perito Moreno. And one might be inclined to think that if there's a cheap option, such as going to the runways [pasarelas], maybe it's not so important? Would you say so? Or could you describe it, or recommend for people NOT to go, or GOING?

HIM: [27:40.9] I think going to the runways [pasarelas] to those platforms it's an amazing way of seeing the Perito Moreno. It's also a cheap option. But I don't think it's bad, or ... There's a lot people of course. But the experience would be good anyway. [SHE assents in agreement.] You have a really amazing view of the Perito. You can witness what we said about the ice

[28:12.0] breaking. Of course the experience is different if you do this, to walk over the glacier. But you can get the essence of the place even with this walk over the platforms.

HER: [28:35.4] In fact, it's like that the mini trekking is an extra. Because the experience with the Perito: only in the platforms is amazing in itself. Because it's an amazing place, it's an amazing view. And you have a lot of kilometres of platform. It's not like you arrive and there's a viewpoint and a platform for everybody. No no. You can walk. You can spend, not the whole day, because it's too much, but a lot of hours there without getting tired of the glacier.

[29:06.5] Mini trekking is very popular and it's highly recommended but it's an extra. It's not, if you don't do the mini trekking you are not going to experience or enjoy the glacier. No no no. The platform itself it's a good experience for everybody.

Interviewer: [29:25.2] Have you guys been on the MarPatag boat?

HIM: [29:32.5] He haven't been, we have sold it for customers. But we haven't been there. Actually the people is really happy about it. You move around other glaciers, from all around. And you can also see the icebergs [témpanos de hielo], ice sticks.

[30:00.7] And it's also a different way if you don't want to walk so much, and you want a nice experience to actually see the glaciers and not even just Perito Moreno, but you see all of them: two or three.

HER: [30:16.4] And we were told that Glaciar Spegazzini, I think, has more ice falling than Perito. Perito has but it's a lottery. And we were told that the other ones have a lot. In fact the other glaciers some years ago, there were options for mini trekking. But the other glaciers are decreasing with the years.

[30:44.2] And now it's not safe. And they have stopped this kind of activity. So you can only see them by boat. And I am pretty sure that they should be spectacular as well. And specifically for this phenomenon: the falling. But we cannot say more because we haven't done it.

Interviewer: [31:11.0] I'd be very happy to hear from you, do you think that the glacier is alive? It's one of the things that interests us. If you feel that you need to answer this in Spanish because it's more philosophical, please do. Could you tell how you felt that it was alive, in your experience?

[31:44.3] HER [In English]: It was like been a while waiting for an animal with something. I don't know. I know there are deers here, or a bear, or whatever. And you stay expecting like ``Oh, it's here, and it's moving''... The sound. Not only the fallings. You are looking and you here the cracks and really all this ice is being pulled towards you. And,

[32:18.7] in a different velocity than we do. But you know

it's here. It's like ...

HIM: [32:28.4] It's like seeing an enormous mountain and knowing that the mountain is moving two meters a year. It's actually quite a long distance for that immense ...

HER: [32:44.5] Wasn't it like two metres a day?

HIM: [32:47.6] [Whispering: No.] Well, I don't know.

HER: [32:49.4] But it was a crazy number. Like: really? It's moving at the velocity?

HIM: [32:53.8] And when you walk over it you can hear water flowing down, and in the middle, and you can hear the cracks. And it's like: Oh, there's so much strange, so much forces here, pressures, and the water flowing and erosion and all this is happening here without ...

[33:26.9] anybody, any men doing nothing. And it's ... You can see, when you are in the platforms, you can hear people talking and that, but some people are just ... She said waiting. They are only hearing what's going to happen. It's like you're nervous and so. And even in Perito Moreno there's a phenomenon,

[33:55.4] of the crate, the brake. The ruptures [rupturas]. That a big, an enormous bridge of ice falls to the ground and the people from Calafate says that when you are there for that specific moment, everybody is silent. And when it breaks, some people shout but not because of the joy. They're ...

[34:25.3] It's frightening even: the earth moving because of that enormous chunk of ice falling, and it's quite a astonishing ... Seeing a force of nature so big and so close, that you can even walk over it. I think it's something that you have to live.

Interviewer: [34:55.5] So, you used a word that is very important to us. You said it's like being in the wild. So, since you guys speak English so well, could you explain what words you would choose in Spanish to say Wild? Are there different words?

HIM: [35:22.7] One word could be ``salvaje'' [savage],

HER: [35:23.3] Yeah, but it's ... There's some connotation that are not exactly wild. Wild is ... I have one but I have to remember it.

HIM: [35:39.0] In the Wild, would be ``en la naturaleza'' [in nature], but ...

HER: [35:47.7] It's a word that I have been looking for some weeks. Not for this because I wanted for my stuff, and I don't remember. ``Que no ha sido tocado'' [untouched]. ``Lugar Virgen'' [virginal place] [thinking and whispering] [Laughs! You can cut this part!]

Interviewer: [36:19.9] Yeah, you have the silence [dwelling ? x]!

HER: [36:22.9] It's like ... [In Spanish] It's like a place that is authentic. A place that is ... I know there's a word, that hasn't been touched, that is ... Indomitable [indómito] ? No, something like that. [HIM: Yes. That could be.] More than savage, it would be indomitable. I think that's the word. Thanks, I've found it.

Interviewer: [36:44.5] That word I understood. I think you just said untamed, untouched.

[36:50.0] BOTH: Yes!!

HIM: [36:51.5] Indomitable would be that haven't been humanized.

HER: [36:58.6] Yes. And for me to be in the wild is to be in a place indomitable. Yeah. It's around Perito Moreno with this example. Yes, there's the platforms, the people but the Perito itself is the Perito itself. And you can cover everything and you're with the Perito, in some way. But I think for me, in the Wild is indomitable.

Interviewer: [37:27.3] Is the word ``salvaje`` different?

HIM: [37:32.4] ``Salvaje`` could be ... And actually there's an example of a film called ``Into the Wild``, that's called ``Hacia rutas salvajes`` [Towards wild roads]... But I don't think the connotation is the same. Because we also talk about ``salvaje`` as something that is cruel, hard [HER: Aggressive sometimes!]

[37:54.9] And wild didn't have to be like that.

HER: [37:57.6] No. In Spanish like the first meaning of ``salvaje`` is that it's more like a bad word. It's that: aggressive, is hard, is something [HIM: Savage!]. Yes, savage!

HIM: [38:16.9] But when you talk about the wild maybe some people think about that. About a cobra crawling around your neck. But no. You can be in the wild and just camping in the mountain and you are in the most relaxing place on Earth.

Interviewer: [38:35.9] And so what is the difference between ``naturaleza`` and ``natura salvaje``?

HER: [38:46.3] ``Naturaleza`` could be going around in this coast. ``Naturaleza salvaje`` ... It sounds strange but you have to deserve it. You have to climb this mountain. You have to go to this place. Not everybody goes there. You won't see a big group of tourists for that, because there are tourists that only go with a bus, the bus stops, they go there, take some pictures, and come back. For me,

[39:13.4] this ``wild nature`` is that. For us, in the Pyrenees: we went to our route several days. You're in

really hard conditions: the cold, it was exhausting, we walked a lot, with a lot of hike. But the views there: we were alone. It's that. It's like you are alone with all this indomitable ['`indómito''].

[39:45.6] This indomitable place. It's like untouched by people. Maybe there are a shelter or something but there are no platforms. This is wild nature.

HIM: [39:58.8] I think for that the animals, the [x], the place are the best indicators sometimes because there are some animals that you would never see them if it's a place where a lot of people go. [SHE assents] Because they don't want to be with people. So, when you are in a place and you actually see a fox, or an armadillo,

[40:28.8] or some specific animals from the area that are rarely seen, it's like: OK, I think you are starting to meet the local people [Laughters]. [HER: The true local people.] You are starting to go into his house. You're out of your house.

Interviewer: [40:52.2] Do you think there's a word in English to say ``natura salvaje'' or is there a word to say ``naturaleza''?

HER: [41:06.3] Uf. Maybe my English is not so good. I don't know. [Thinking]

HIM: [41:19.5] [Also thinking: I don't know.] ... Wilderness.

Interviewer: [41:27.6] Thank you! In my modest opinion I think you are entirely right, and you've brought all around for us. That was a very very very intelligent and insightful and description. Wouldn't you say? [Laughters] Absolutely brilliant! Thank you.

Interviewer: [41:55.8] So wilderness. Well, do you think people come here because they see this as wilderness: the glaciers, the steeps?

HIM: [42:14.4] Some of them. There are some people that come here to see wild. Most of the people come here to see because there's a big airport and there's the Perito Moreno.

HER: [42:28.4] And there's the Lonely Planet that says ``Come here!'' But there's some people that stay here and ask ``Hey, what more can I do?'' I am thinking about the Cañadón. There's a little excursion ... South East, and you follow a river from here the edge of the town and you follow it and it's a really great excursion. Because you are in a desert but this river, with everything around it, it's green. There are little trees, and it's like a

[43:06.3] little oasis, that follows the river. And you walk six kilometers and you arrive to the fall of the desert. It's a little stream of water falling from a rock. And we did it and we came there and we were totally alone. And it

was like this situation: maybe not extremely tiring but it was like we discovered this place, and we are in this place sharing with nature.

[43:34.6] In fact we were walking and a lot of rabbits, the other kind of rabbit. Their name in English ... Running. Running around but like in tens, twenties, a lot. They were living there and there were two strange things walking there, and they were: Ah! And all of them scared, and in fact we have a funny episode with an armadillo.

[44:01.3] Because we were in the path, in a photo, and we saw something, coming at us. A dark thing. And it was an armadillo, walking happily in the path. It saw us, it was: Oh shit! He turned and ran.

HIM: [44:21.2] In the same path! And it was really funny because the armadillo saw us, we saw him. We stared for a bit, real fast, and he went where he came by. This happened!

HER: [44:36.8] Ask for these things, and then you go there and enjoy. One of them had maybe a bad episode with white horses. But, if you go to discover the wild, sometimes the wild discovers you as well. But it's, I don't know if unfortunately, or fortunately,

[45:02.2] there are not so many people looking for this kind of experience of this contact. Unfortunately because they miss it, sorry. But fortunately as well because when something is amazing and it's really popular they build platforms to get there. But people really don't want to deserve or make an effort to go there, to these places, to take a picture, and it totally changes the nature of ... I lost myself! Sorry

HIM: [45:35.3] Tourism destroys sometimes, for this kind of things, maybe tourism destroys the point of, the essence of that spot. Maybe not for Perito Moreno, because it's like an architectonic place, but for example ... Doing a trek crossing the mountain:

[46:05.3] But if you're alone in the mountain and you can feel the place where you have been and you are going, and seeing the animals and stuff. It's normally ... The experience is more authentic and more ... You enjoy it more, than when there's like a cue of people just going there, and you're only watching back packs and

[46:36.9] another people running crossing in front of you.

HER: [46:40.1] More than seeing people, it's more about people shouting. And it's: Please, you are here, this is an amazing place, enjoy it!!! Talk with each other, shouting ... Go to a bar!! Or to a pub! Please!

HIM: [46:56.0] You can see rubbish in a place like that and it breaks all the magic of the place. [SHE assents]

HER: [47:02.1] For this reason fortunately and unfortunately

there are some places that people don't know.

Interviewer: [47:10.0] So this brings me to another question. Because you're obviously travelling around South America, and we're really interested in this idea of wilderness and wild places. Do you think through your travels, that this idea of wilderness or wild place is a really good way to market a place? To bring economically ... What are your thoughts?

HIM: [47:37.7] I think it is. And I think the best example of this, I have learned it here in Argentina, in another natural reserve, which is called Esteros del Iberá, in the North of Argentina. And they talk about, they have a very very small village, mainly dedicated to tourism, but

[48:07.8] everything is controlled by Parques Nacionales and they talk about the productivity of the place in terms of how many animals have reproduced, we have increased the number of yaguaretés [*Panthera onca* wild cat species] and it's also a way of productivity. You don't always have ...

[48:37.8] In some places you see the yield of a land is how many wheat you can get. Or how many any production. But you can also think of it like that. It's also a way of producing. If you can manage to preserve the nature and

[49:07.5] get tourism, that can really respect that, you can make profit of it, without harming the essence of the place.

HER: [49:19.0] We really liked this place. Maybe it's not the most breathe taking or the more amazing or the more 'Oh, the wonderful of the nature ...' This is a really nice place, I really enjoyed it. But what I enjoyed most was that they were [fighting?] ... And the purity was to maintain the wilderness of this place. And they really limit the name of the little boats that go to the wetlands, they limit everything.

[49:48.4] It's a really difficult place to reach, to go there. And they live from the tourism!! And you, talking with the local people, they say: Yeah, we live from tourists, but we don't want more tourists than we have.

HIM: [50:06.7] We don't want a route here. You have to go for 50 kilometers of mud, for arriving there. That is like hell. But it's not [x]. But we don't want a route here. We are OK with ... The people who actually reach this place is because they like this. They don't want this to be crowded.

HER: [50:36.3] Yeah, and they are living and they are not poor. And they're exploiting this wilderness. This authentic, and the essence of the natural place.

Interviewer: [50:53.2] Since you're from Spain, how would you refer to this place? What do you call this area?

HIM: [51:03.4] Patagonia... Or Patagonia Argentina.

Interviewer: [51:12.5] I find it quite interesting that it seems that you guys had like a change of life, I might be wrong, if you already had some relationship with the outdoors, but in some way you said that you had a steady life, in Spain, and then you came over here. So my question would be if you believe that now or in the future, you would have in your daily activities a different relationship with the outdoors?

[51:41.8] Either if you go back to Spain and have a steady job, or whatever activity you go on with, or staying over here for I don't know how much time? How do you see this in the next 10 years for you?

HIM: [51:53.3] It's quite difficult because we don't know where we will be. [SHE laughs ...] But we have always been really into outdoors. And actually our weekends weren't going to parties in Barcelona. Because we preferred to take our car and go to the mountain and sleep in the car and

[52:24.9] arriving on Sunday tired and

HER: [52:31.2] Start cooking for the week. But ... We always avoid city and crowds. We like outdoors. We like nature. We like ... I like animals and plants.

HIM: [52:42.5] It's true that if I have to stay in a place like forever, for the rest of my life, it has to be a place where at least you can have your piece of nature, or wilderness, close. At least close. At least that you can go up once a week, or once a month, you have to have a place to visit, that it's

[53:11.4] out of everything. So maybe yes. Maybe we have to ...

HER: [53:20.2] Yes, we have a lot of cities that seem nice but for me it's a must: to have the option to get out easily. And go far away from crowds, buildings, and so for example, Buenos Aires sorry, but I don't want to live in Buenos Aires. Or I don't know ...

HIM: [53:41.9] In big cities in general.

HER: [53:41.9] Yes. In big cities in general. I don't know if this is a change, but it's like more of a reaffirmation of: I don't want big cities. I don't know if depending on the town, depending what I will do for a living finally, or if I [x] never. Who knows? But we are like reassuring that we want that.

HIM: [54:09.8] And also this travel is a way of understanding ourselves in these terms. Because when you're travelling and you're doing this points in tourism there are stuff that you can't like live different lives. And compare to it to your own life. The life that you had previously. And say: OK, I like the most these things but I don't like those others. So maybe if I want to live a life in a city place forever,

[54:47.1] it should have been, should be like this. And not having these ones, and I think it's also a way of learning, discovering yourself.

Interviewer: [55:11.0] That was wonderful. Thank you so much.