

# The Atacama Desert and its area

## The driest desert in the world

**The exact delineation of the Atacama Desert is debatable and widely discussed. However the entire area between Arica and San Pedro de Atacama is undeniably breathtaking and not to be missed.**

The Atacama Desert is a vast area of ??great archaeological, natural and cultural wealth. Its wide geographic variation, and sometimes lunar landscape, makes it a unique site. The arid landscape is punctuated with many fertile valleys and oases (the Azapa Valley and Pica Oasis). The fauna and flora are very special and varied despite the hostile desert environment. The national parks (Lauca, Isluga, and the Salar de Surireare) are home to many species, including flamingos, coots, llamas, foxes and many reptiles. Some sites in the area are particularly fascinating. At the heart of the Valley of the Moon you will see a totally different world. The Tatio Geysers are an amazing natural spectacle, as are the Salar de Atacama, small salt lakes with crystal clear, turquoise waters. The region also has a number of thermal springs and natural pools lovely for swimming.