



## ARGENTINA HIGHLIGHTS

Argentina is a land of contrast. Nothing states this better than the fact it features the highest point in the South America, Aconcagua, and the lowest, Salinas Chicas, 40m below sea level.

Its vastness - it is the eighth largest country in the world - and diversity are just part of the appeal.

A fantastic culture of fine wine and dining sits alongside its adventurous and beautiful landscapes. The local's cheery disposition and fantastic word plays add to the enjoyment of being in this fascinating country.

### Buenos Aires

Argentina's capital is unlike any other in South America, and probably the world.

It fuses European-style architecture, South American passion and a creativity unrivalled elsewhere on the continent. Its diversity is its strength, from its old world feel to its contemporary attitude.

You can eat in some of the finest restaurants, dining on the best steaks, enjoy intense nightlife, grand parks and visit incredible museums. All of this, in glossy neighbourhoods, rubs shoulders with unkempt streets full of fervour.

You can explore this classic Buenos Aires too, the old world cafes, bustling markets and colonial architecture.

And that's all before we mention tango. Turn a corner and you'll bump into couples old and young sweeping around the streets, to the beat of this world famous Buenos Aires beat.

San Telmo's barrio of cobbled streets, with its fluctuating history of wealth and bohemia, now houses a myriad of designer stores, art galleries, independent theatres, trendy bars and posh restaurants. It also offers bargains and unusual items for the most avid of market shoppers and the Sunday fair is an incredible sight. Football fans cannot miss a match involving River or Boca, or perhaps attend the classic between the two.

Buenos Aires has everything, and is so both familiar and also completely different, as there is nowhere like it.

### Quick guide to Buenos Aires's areas.

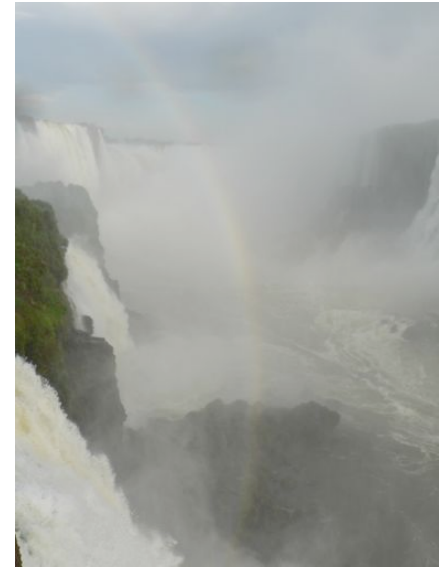
Avenida de Mayo is a Parisian-inspired boulevard with a distinctive spirit of cafés and restaurants, as well as the magnificent Teatro Avenida, the city's second opera house.

The port district of La Boca is one of the city's most characteristic spots. It's a working class district, where most of the Italian immigrants, mainly from Genoa, settled during the last decades of the 19th century. Some houses are made out of tin and painted a myriad of colours. La Boca also houses Caminito Street, an outdoors museum dedicated to tango and soccer, and La Bombonera, Boca Juniors' stadium.



Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires

Puerto Madero, on the north of the river, contrasts with La Boca, it being Aires' most modern and sophisticated area, with into trendy apartment buildings, restaurants and night clubs.



Iguazu Falls



The Retiro district features the splendid Plaza San Martín, a majestic memento of the French Belle Époque: also here are the former Palacio Paz, nowadays the Círculo Militar (Military Society), the Palacio San Martín and the Plaza Hotel, amongst others.

Recoleta is famed for housing the top designer houses in the world, such as Cartier, Hermès and Louis Vuitton. In Plaza Francia, there is the colonial Basílica de Nuestra Señora del Pilar, the second oldest in town. Next to that is the celebrated Recoleta Cemetery, where many of the greatest personalities of Argentinian history are buried, Eva Perón included.



**Perito Moreno glacier**

Palermo Soho, the Buenos Aires version of the New York namesake district, is full of boutiques, designer stores, trendy restaurants and bars. Buenos Aires has the lot.

## Patagonia

Patagonia is a region without fixed frontiers at the southern end of South America. It is characterised by dramatic and diverse landscapes.

The awesome Patagonian Andes, straddling the Argentine-Chilean border, change as you travel south. In the north you find snow-capped volcanoes, lakes and evergreen forests, while in the south soaring granite peaks, vast glaciers and deciduous forests predominate.

The South Patagonian Ice Field is the largest ice cap outside Antarctica and Greenland. It and the North Patagonian Ice Field generate huge glaciers that feed the Chilean fjords to the west and the Argentine lakes to the east.

## El Chaltén & Fitzroy

The soaring granite spires and fissured glaciers of the Fitzroy and Torre groups offer some of the most awesome scenery and magnificent hiking and trekking in southern Patagonia.

Located in the Los Glaciares National Park immediately east of the southern Ice Field, the region is accessed via El Chaltén, Argentina. A network of trails allows day hikes to spectacular viewpoints, including those for the Cerro Torre and Cerro Fitzroy peaks.

Here, the classic route is the Fitzroy M, and we have menu of treks to choose from.

We offer the classic M taking in Cerro Torre Glacier, Fitzroy and Mount Torre is a group favourite, and there is also an extended eight or nine day hike including all the M highlights plus the remote Pasa del Viento (Windy Pass).



**Cerro Torre**

Independent trekkers may wish to choose our self-guided trekking option, or we can help to design an individual tour combining walks, camping, eco-camps and hotels or estancias.

October to March provide long daylight hours and, overall, are the best months to visit. However Patagonian's westerly winds are also strongest during this period, increasing the further south you go. For cold, crisp, relatively windless winter days, with few people about (and more chance of spotting the elusive puma), try our winter departures.



## Bariloche

San Carlos de Bariloche lies on the shores of Lake Nahuel Huapi and is surrounded by mountains and forests, making for a stunning location.

It is a year-round destination, with skiing in the winter (May-Sept), and then a whole range of activities in the summer months (Oct-April).

You can use your time to hike or go river rafting along dozens of waterways that bisect the ancient forests that surround. There are also tours on mountain bike or horseback to enjoy, and the city also has a lively nightlife with excellent restaurants and pubs.

The first snowfalls announce the beginning of the ski season at Mount Catedral, considered one of the most important ski resorts in the country.



Asado - BBQ Argentina style

## Mendoza

Mendoza is synonymous with wine and Aconcagua, South America's largest mountain.

Those attempting the peak will find Mendoza a great place to relax before and after the climb, its many cafes and restaurants offering fine food to accompany the excellent wines, well-earned on your trek.

Those visiting Mendoza for the wine and vineyards can look forward to kicking back and relaxing in the warmth of this desert town, surrounded by mountains and glorious views.

Water abounds in the city despite its arid situation, with irrigation ditches running along many main roads and large fountains in plazas. This perpetual motion seems to have invigorated the locals who are lively by day and more so at night.

If you head out to the countryside, you can visit and stay at some of Argentina's top vineyards, sampling the delicious and famous Malbec, of which Argentina makes 70 per cent of the world's supply. The makers here also produce Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and lesser-known varieties such as Tempranillo, Bonarda, Barbera and Torrontés.

For meat eaters, the rich darkness of Malbec tastes great with the hearty dishes such as the famous grilled red meat 'asado' of Argentina.

Adventure seekers without the three weeks or so required for Aconcagua don't have to miss out either, as, in summer (Oct-Mar), there are great places to raft and bike, and in winter (May-Sept) you can ski in the Andes that surround Mendoza.



Part of the mighty Iguazu Falls

## Iguazu Falls

The Iguazu or Iguazú Falls are one of Argentina's finest attractions, drawing and wowing visitors from all over the world.

Their appeal is their dramatic setting and sheer size. The falls line the rim of a crescent-shaped cliff about 2.5 miles long and around 275 individual cascades and waterfalls plummet up to 269 feet into the gorge below.

The thunderous roaring of Iguazu, which forms a natural border between Argentina, Brasil and Paraguay, can be heard from miles away.

Legend has it that a god planned to marry a beautiful woman named Naipí, who fled with her mortal lover Tarobá in a canoe. In rage the god sliced the river, creating



the waterfalls and condemning the lovers to an eternal fall.

The Argentine side of the Falls is very interactive, as you can walk up close to many of the waterfalls, while monkeys sometimes jump around in the trees above.

The Brazilian side of the Falls, too, allows you to get up close to the water, but also offers great panoramic views of Iguazu, so you can get that perfect photograph.

The name Iguazu comes from the Guarani or Tupi words meaning 'water' and 'big' meaning 'big'.



Sailing Magellan Straits

## Tierra del Fuego

The Tierra del Fuego archipelago - the uttermost end of the Earth - is divided between Chile and Argentina.

The south is wild and mountainous; Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world, is dramatically set overlooking the Beagle Channel and surrounded by awesome mountain landscapes.

The Beagle Channel's inlets and islets host colonies of marine birds and mammals, which can be visited on boat trips from Ushuaia.

Following the Channel west and into Chile, the landscapes get wilder and the mountains higher as we enter the awesome Darwin Range. Among our Tierra del Fuego programmes are trekking and non-trekking itineraries. Trekking options include snow-shoeing in the Darwin mountains, or a three day trek above Ushuaia and to the summit of Mount Esfinge. Views over the Beagle Channel and to the Cape Horn islands are awesome.

Most Antarctic cruises embark and disembark in Ushuaia and we offer a variety of South Pole sailings to cap off your Patagonia experience.

## Antarctica

Antarctica is one of the most beautiful and unexplored places in our planet. For more than two centuries, this white continent has attracted scientists and adventurers with its unmatched natural beauty.

This frozen land has recently become much more accessible to wildlife enthusiasts and tourists, who can now study its unique wildlife, and enjoy the majestic icebergs and superb scenery. The Austral summer, from November to March, with its long hours of daylight means plenty of time for exploration and wildlife watching.

The sea ice has retreated, so it is possible to get to the continent itself and the wildlife is plentiful and active. During summer on the Antarctic coast, the daily temperature is usually about 0oC to 5oC.

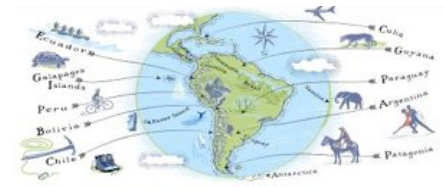


Stunning Antarctica

In December you are more likely to see massive icebergs in the water and for the ship to have to crash through plates of ice on the water's surface - if you want spectacular ice, this is the time to go. Penguins abound and are nesting their eggs.

In January the penguins are hatching and there will be plenty of action around the colonies with penguin chicks galore and skuas circling overhead waiting for the chance to swoop.

In February the mammals will be out in force - seals, orcas, humpback whales and minke whales abound.



## The Valdes Peninsula

Peninsula Valdes, a World Heritage site, is a wildlife paradise. This vast nature reserve sticks out into Argentina's South Atlantic, flanked to north and south by two large gulfs.

Among the marine mammals found here are sea lions, elephant seals, killer whales and southern right whales. The whales can be seen in the Gulf of San Juan from June to December by taking a whale watching trip from Puerto Piramide. Valdes also boasts abundant seabirds.



Whale watching

Nearby Punta Tombo, the continent's biggest Magellanic penguin breeding ground, has approximately 600,000 penguins.

Native land animals seen at Valdes include rhea (South American ostrich) and guanaco (wild llama). The area is also famous for its historic Welsh influences, the area having been settled by Welsh immigrants in the 1860s, and you can enjoy a Welsh tea after a day on sea.

## Aconcagua

Cerro Aconcagua (6,959m), the highest peak in the Western and Southern Hemispheres, is located in Argentina some 12 km from the Chilean border at latitude 32° south.

The itineraries are physically strenuous and a great challenge, but not technically demanding. Aconcagua is suitable for most adventurous people with a good level of physical fitness, and experience of trekking and camping in remote mountain areas. The mountain has two summits - North (6,959m) and South (6,930m), joined by a ridge (Cresta del Guanaco) approximately one kilometre long.

Our 19-day **Normal route** begins in Mendoza. There are well-placed rest and acclimatisation days to help you adapt as well as possible to the high altitude and increase your chance of summiting.

The **360 traverse** also takes 19 days, and sees you trek up the more beautiful, quieter but slightly longer Vacas Valley route, then descending by the shorter Normal Route.

Climbers may wish to attempt the **Polish Glacier Traverse** in 20 days, ascending alongside the prominent glacier on the northeast slope of the mountain. Experience in the use of crampons and ice axe and crossing crevasses is a requirement.

## Salta and the north west

Salta, in the north-west corner of Argentina, is fast becoming a must-see on any trip to Argentina.



Salt flats near Salta

Salta offers the traveler an excellent base offering a number of sights and museums before exploring the culturally and geologically rich Andean chain and altiplano of this region.

There are salt flats, multi-coloured mountains, remote Andean towns and cultures, haciendas and stunning gorges to feast your adventurous self upon. There are a number of day trips and treks, depending on how active you wish to be, including Pumamarca's Mountain of Seven Colours and the bustling town of Humahuaca.

Due to its geographic proximity to southern Bolivia and northern Chile, there are some excellent traverses from Salta via its highlights to Bolivia's Uyuni Salt Flats and ending in Chile's stunning Atacama desert.



Discover Argentina!