

North Argentina Highlights

12 days | Starts/Ends: Buenos Aires



Take a journey through Argentina's great rugged northwest, a land of infinite variety from ochre deserts to snow-capped mountains. Explore colonial towns, traditional Indian villages and pre-Inca ruins along the way with spectacular gorges to feast your eyes on.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Buenos Aires – city tour and Tango dinner show
- Salta – historic provincial capital
- Cachi – scenic drive through the Cardones National Park to the traditional village of Cachi with attractive colonial architecture
- Purmamarca – picturesque village at the base of a gorge with spectacular views of the Hill of Seven Colours
- Humahuaca Gorge – long narrow valley carved out by the Rio Grande
- Cafayate – centre of the northwest's wine industry
- Quilmes – pre-Inca ruins of a fortified citadel

- Tafi del Valle – popular summer retreat sandwiched between two rivers

What's Included

- 11 nights STANDARD accommodation. Upgrading to SUPERIOR or DELUXE accommodation options are also available upon request. Accommodation rating – See Trip Notes for details
- 11 breakfasts and 1 dinner
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 12
- Services of local English-speaking specialist guides
- Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary
- City tour in Buenos Aires, excursion to Cachi, Salinas Grandes, Quebrada de Humahuaca, Cafayate and wineries, Quilmes and Tafi del Valle on a shared basis (private touring available for a supplement)
- Tango Show and Dinner with shared transfers
- All relevant transfers and transportation on a private basis unless otherwise stated

What's Not Included

- International flights and visas
- Laundry, drinks and items of a personal nature

- Tipping – an entirely personal gesture
- Domestic flights from Buenos Aires – Salta and Tucuman – Buenos Aires

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Buenos Aires

Bienvendidos a Argentina! Upon arrival into the international airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel where the rest of the day can be spent at leisure **Overnight – Buenos Aires**

Day 2 : Tango in BA

Often labelled the 'Paris of South America', Buenos Aires, or simply BA, is a seductive mix of elegant architecture, characterful residents and fantastic entertainment options. This morning join a scheduled city tour taking in the Neoclassical Metropolitan Cathedral, the unusual dusty pink Government House and the history-packed Plaza de Mayo. Head to the neighbourhood of San Telmo where street performers gather to display the sensuous dance of tango, and continue to La Boca, a colourful suburb popular with local artists. Wander the attractive streets of Palermo until you reach Recoleta and the famous cemetery of the same name. The rest of the afternoon is free for you to explore Buenos Aires your

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way – why not wander further in search of the city's striking street art?

Later in the evening you will be collected from your hotel for a scheduled transfer to Café de Los Angelitos for a night of love, passion, madness and glamour with a traditional tango show. Born in the brothels of the 1920s, Argentine tango is a completely improvised dance and attracts both the old and the young.

Overnight – Buenos Aires (B, D)

Day 3 : Salta



Buenos Aires – Salta. After breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight to the colonial city of Salta in the northwest of Argentina. An appealing mix of festive atmosphere and handsome architecture, Salta sits between two rivers with steep, rippling mountains off in the distance. Upon arrival take a scheduled transfer to the hotel, and enjoy the rest of the day at your own leisure. Why not head to one of the lively peñas, informal folk-music clubs where you can usually enjoy dinner and drink. **Overnight – Salta (B)**

Day 4 : Cachi

Today enjoy a scheduled excursion to the charming village of Cachi. Founded in 1694, Cachi features whitewashed streets branching off the delightful Plaza Mayor with the permanently snow-capped peak of Nevado del Cachi providing a spectacular backdrop. Visit the pretty church with a roof made from cactus wood, the anthropological museum and the craft market. The drive here is as picturesque as the village and along

the way you'll pass quaint little towns and old Inca roads, entering the desert land of Cardones National Park also.

Overnight – Salta (B)

Day 5 : Purmamarca



Salta – Purmamarca. This morning follow the Quebrada del Toro gorge to the pre-Inca city of Santa Rosa de Tastil, home to some of the most important ruins in the region, on a scheduled transfer. Continue to a pass of 4,080m above sea level and stop for lunch at the small town of San Antonio de Los Cobres. Route 40 brings you to the Salinas Grandes, a glistening expanse of salt-flats ringed by mountains on all sides. Downwards along the zig-zagged Cuesta de Lipan, one of the region's most dramatic roads, you might be lucky enough to spot condors cruising on the air thermals. Arrive in the tiny, picturesque village of Purmamarca **Overnight – Purmamarca (B)**

Day 6 : Humahuaca Gorge

Purmamarca – Humahuaca – Salta. Spend the morning enjoying a scheduled tour of Purmamarca and its tranquil main square, pretty 17th century church and the famous Cerro de los Siete Colores (Hill of Seven Colours) so called for the candy stripes of shades that mark the dramatic bluff of rock. Continue to the town of Tilcara to visit the local pucará, ruinous fortifications originally built by native Andean cultures. Cross the Tropic of Capricorn at Huacalera and head to the town of Uquía to see the beautiful paintings hanging in the Iglesia de San Francisco de Paula. From here it is a short journey through

brilliant gorge scenery to the town of Humahuaca and on pass the striking La Paleta del Pintor (Painter's Palette), sloping mountains banded with hues of pink and burgundy. Return to Salta.

Overnight – Salta (B)

Day 7 : Lerma Valley



Salta – Cafayate. Touring of Argentina's rugged northwest continues with a scenic scheduled drive to Cafayate, the centre of the region's wine industry. Traversing the Lerma Valley and historical towns along the way, stop at Shell's Gorge where wind and water have eroded curious shapes into the rocks. **Overnight – Cafayate (B)**

Day 8 : Cafayate

Spend the day exploring Cafayate your own way. Visit Cafayate's high-altitude vineyards on a scheduled excursion and enjoy wine tasting at a local bodega or set off on bike or horseback and soak up the surrounding scenery. **Overnight – Cafayate (B)**

Day 9 : Quilmes Ruins

Cafayate – Quilmes – Tafi del Valle. Departing Cafayate continue south to the attractive village of Tafi del Valle on a scheduled transfer. Along the way stop at the ruins of Quilmes, one of the most extensively restored pre-Inca archaeological sites in the country. The fortified citadel was built by the Quilmes Indians, an indigenous tribe who fiercely resisted the Inca invasions of the 15th century and the Spanish invasions 130 years later. Explore the terraced fortifications and the site museum. **Overnight – Tafi del Valle (B)**

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Day 10 : Tafi del Valle

Spend the day at leisure. Perhaps trek in the surrounding mountains or sample Taff's delicious cow's and goat's cheeses at one of the small farms or stalls that dot the town. **Overnight - Tafi de Valle (B)**

Day 11 : Back to BA



Tafi de Valle – Tucuman – Buenos Aires. After breakfast take a scheduled transfer to the airport in Tucuman for your flight back to Buenos Aires. The afternoon is free for last-minute souvenir shopping. **Overnight - Buenos Aires (B)**

Day 12 : Buenos Aires

Your unique journey comes to an end after breakfast and hotel check out. We'll transfer you to the airport for your onward departure journey, bidding you a fond farewell.(B)

BEFORE YOU GO

Tipping

Tipping is an essential part of the culture. For a job well done, we would suggest for your tour guide: USD \$5-6 per traveller, for each day of sightseeing.

For your driver and On The Go Representative we'd recommend USD\$2-3 per traveller for each day of service. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Accommodation ratings

On our Private trips, you can often choose your style of accommodation. The price quoted on our website

is reflective of the included accommodation, please see the "included" section on the first page of this document for details. Should you opt for an alternative hotel category, this will be confirmed in writing with the respective price on your invoice.

For further details about the indicative hotels, please see the "hotels" tab on our website. Here we rank hotel's in their respective country (REGIONAL CATEGORY) - but we also tell you how it ranks by Western standards (OUR CATEGORY).

STANDARD - Equates to a Western 3-star standard, always featuring en-suite rooms and usually a restaurant.
 SUPERIOR - Equates to a Western 4-star standard, featuring en-suite rooms and usually a restaurant and often a swimming pool and/or a fitness centre.
 DELUXE - Equates to a Western 5-star standard, usually featuring spacious, en-suite rooms, a restaurant, swimming pool and fitness centre and an array of amenities, excellent service and customer care.
 LUXURY - Equates to a Western 5-star plus standard - the creme de la creme. Featuring spacious, en-suite rooms, a restaurant, swimming pool and fitness centre and an array of amenities, this accommodation is a cut above the rest. Sheer opulence!

What To Pack

For day-to-day wear you should go prepared to encounter all seasons. Both warm clothing and a sun hat are essential at altitude; a light fleece jacket and a Gore-Tex outer shell makes a good combination. Trousers or shorts made from light, quick-drying synthetic materials also work well. It can get very cold at altitude, particularly after sun down and so warm clothes are essential as is a good waterproof jacket. Strong, comfortable footwear is essential and you should bring insect repellent, sun block and sunglasses.

If you plan to go to good restaurants or out on evening entertainment trips, you might want to bring something a bit smarter as well (although formal attire will not be required).

Argentina Country Guide

Argentina - Buenos Aires Hotel Tax

The Buenos Aires Legislature in 2020 created the "Visit Buenos Aires" entity, an organization that will be in charge of promoting the city as a tourist destination around the world. This organisation will be financed through a tax on foreign visitors. This tax cannot be included in our tour price and you will need to pay this upon check out at each hotel so please budget accordingly.

This tax will be applied to foreign tourists older than 12 years old who visit the city of Buenos Aires from the 1st of March 2020.

The amount charged differs depending on the star rating of the hotel:

- 3-star hotels - USD 0.50 per person per night
- 4-star hotels - USD 1 per person per night
- 5-star hotels - USD 1.5 per person per night

Argentina - Fact File

- Official Name: Argentine Republic
- Capital: Buenos Aires
- Population: 38 million
- Total Area: 2.8 million square kilometres
- Official Language: Spanish
- Religions: Roman Catholic 92% (less than 20% practicing), Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 4%
- Voltage: 220 volts. Argentina has European type two-pinned round sockets in most old buildings and the Australian style three-pin flat sockets in most new buildings.
- Dialling Code: +54
- Time Difference: GMT/UTC -3

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- Airport Departure Tax: US\$18

Argentina – Visas

UK, Australian, Canadian, US, South African and New Zealand passport holders do not require a visa for entry into Argentina for up to 90 days.

For entry into Argentina you must:

- Hold a passport valid at least six months on entry with one blank visa page
- Hold proof of sufficient funds
- Hold proof of onward/return airline tickets
- Hold documents showing proof of purpose of trip
- Hold all documents required for the next destination
- Confirm with their airline that boarding will be permitted without a visa as these conditions are subject to change

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours.

Argentina – Climate

The Argentine climate ranges from hot and humid in the north to cold and windy in the south. In northern Argentina, summer is hot and winter fairly mild while in contrast, Tierra del Fuego, at the southern tip of Argentina, is quite often cold with continual winds, rain at times and freezing winter temperatures.

Buenos Aires, due to its position in the central region, has a Mediterranean climate with well-defined seasons. Spring, between September and November is mild, which contributes to the flourishing green colour of the plants and trees in the lush parks. Summer, between December and February, is dry and hot and winter can be cold. It usually begins to rain in April and reaches its highest level during June and July, then

decreases gradually to almost nothing in November.

Visit www.worldclimate.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

Argentina – Money

Important

In Latin America you will have problems changing the US\$100 CB B2 2001 series notes and it is important you do not bring them. In some countries banks won't even take them. The serial number is located in the top left hand corner and bottom right hand corner on the side with the President's face. This serial number starts with CB and then a few more numbers and then directly under that B2. At the bottom of the note near the signature of the Treasurer it says which series of notes it is and it is there that it says 2001 series.

Local currency

The monetary unit in Argentina is the Argentine peso. For up-to-date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.xe.com.

Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

We recommend that you bring cash/ travellers cheques in US dollars only. Visa, Mastercard, Diners and American Express are the best credit cards to bring however there can be problems at times getting money out from ATMs, so make sure you have sufficient cash for emergencies.

There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that you may bring into Argentina, however very large sums should be declared on arrival. There is often a general lack of small change and we recommend maintaining a supply of small denomination notes and coins.

Argentina – Local Transport

Much of Buenos Aires can be visited on foot. Most sightseeing in Buenos Aires can be reached on foot from our hotel, with La Boca being the furthest at about an hour's walk. There is also

a good, if rather dated, underground metro system (called the "subte") which has 5 lines and is very cheap at approx \$0.30 per journey.

There are local buses called "colectivos", which are also inexpensive, but you **MUST** have the right change (ask hotel reception for prices) as you have to drop the money into a machine. We recommend you use taxis (black & yellow) at night as they are fairly cheap and usually have meters fitted. Just make sure that the driver turns it on when you get in. Remember that you will pay more for taxis at night.

Argentina – Food & Drink

As a guideline a simple snack (e.g. a sandwich) can cost as little as US\$1, a light meal will cost around \$5-\$6, and even a meal in one of the better restaurants in Buenos Aires costs very little in comparison to what you would expect to pay at home. Obviously this depends on what you order and if you have wine or other drinks, which will certainly increase the bill. If you eat in Puerto Madero or Recoleta in Buenos Aires you are likely to pay quite a bit more, however there is a huge choice of good reasonably-priced restaurants in the city centre where you can get a good meal (and great steaks).

Your tour leader will be able to recommend restaurants.

All drinks such as water, soft or alcoholic drinks are at your own expense at all times. The following is a guideline for drinks bought in a shop in the street. Prices in restaurants and hotels can sometimes be more than double the prices specified below;

- 1 litre of water US\$0.70
- 30cl bottle of soft drink US\$0.50
- 30cl bottle of beer US\$0.70
- 50cl bottle of beer US\$1.00
- Food

Food

In Argentina the basic diet focuses around meat mostly with french fries

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(papas fritas), mashed potatoes (pure) or 'papas sufle' (local typical deep fried potatoes that blow up like little balloons and are delicious). As there is a large Italian population you'll have no problem getting pasta dishes or pizzas. In fact, in the larger cities, you'll have no problem getting all types of food.

For breakfast it's normal to eat croissants (media lunas) with a good strong coffee. Most Argentines would have a large lunch at around 1pm then at around 5pm, they all head to the 'confiterías' for tea, sandwiches and cakes. Dinner is usually eaten around 10pm and is often grilled beef (asado) in different forms. Other dishes include 'lomo ala pimienta' (pepper steak), giant ribs (asado de tira) and mixed grills (parrillada) which include beef, intestines, offal, blood sausage (morcilla) and spicy sausage (chorizos) or thick grilled steak (churrasco). 'Bife de chorizo' is a rump steak (nothing to do with the sausage of the same name) and 'bife a caballo' is steak topped with a fried egg. Although seafood is not so common you can get fish (pescado) which can be served grilled, pan fried with breadcrumbs (apanado) or with a sauce. There are also plenty of chicken (pollo) dishes available. 'Milanesa de pollo' (boneless chicken cooked with breadcrumbs) is a favourite.

For a cheap and hearty meal 'tenedor libre' restaurants offer a fixed price buffet. These are usually very good value and you can eat as much as you like.

Vegetarians

If you are a strict vegetarian you may experience a distinct lack of variety in the food available, especially in small towns. However vegetarian alternatives are becoming more popular particularly in south Argentina. Our tour leaders will do their best to provide interesting vegetarian alternatives for included meals, but

your patience and understanding is requested.

Drink

You should be wary of drinking the local tap water. Bottled water, carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices are widely available and much safer. Argentina also has some of the best coffee in the world.

In Argentina some of the hotels we use have bars or serve alcoholic drinks. If there is not a bar in the hotel then there is sure to be one within walking distance. Imported beers and spirits are available but local spirits tend to be cheaper. There is an array of rums, gins and brandy and the fabulous Argentine wines can be extremely cheap (from US\$1 a bottle) There are also various brands of beers including Quilmes, Rubia, Negra Ahumada, and Negra Extra XXX.

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