

ARGENTINA **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

GETTING TO ARGENTINA

All airlines flying to Argentina arrive mainly at Ezeiza ("Ministro Pistarini") International Airport, which is 37 Km away from the City of Buenos Aires. You can reach the city by Teniente General Ricchieri freeway.

WHEN TO TRAVEL

Remember that in the southern hemisphere seasons are the opposite to those in the northern hemisphere. In general, the summer is the best time to visit Patagonia and the Southern Andes because of the mild temperatures and long days. Wintertime is recommended for travelling to the North and Northwest as rains are less frequent and tropical temperatures drop a few degrees. Autumn and spring are marvelous in Buenos Aires, Cuyo and the pre-mountain range areas of La Rioja and Catamarca.

GETTING AROUND

By Plane: Due to the country's large size, planes are best to travel long distances, and you can then take overland transportation to get to your final destination. Buying Airpass Visit Argentina in your own country, you'll obtain more economical prices for flights within Argentina. por Aerolíneas Argentinas / Austral, Andes Líneas Aéreas, LADE, LAER, LAN Argentina and Sol Líneas Aéreas operate domestic flights. Domestic flights and flights to Uruguay depart from Jorge Newbery Airport, located to the north of the city beside the Río de la Plata. Airport taxes range from \$ 7.05 to US\$ 8.

By Bus: Buenos Aires bus station is located at Av. Ramos Mejia 1680 close to Retiro Station. Long-distance buses are equipped with toilets, air conditioning and bar.

By Train: Ferrobaires (Constitución Station); TBA (Retiro Station); Ferrocarril (Retiro Station); Trenes del Litoral (Federico Lacroze Station).

By Car (Car rental): All international car rental companies operate in Argentina. The following companies have offices in Buenos Aires: Ai Rent a Car International, Alamo Rent a Car-National, Avis Rent a Car, Budget Rent a Car, Dollar Rent a Car, Hertz-Annie Millet Rent a Car, Localiza Rent a Car, Thrifty Car Rental.

SHOPPING

VAT return: At the airport you may obtain a VAT reimbursement corresponding to any purchases made within the country for an amount over \$70 (per invoice) and in shops operating with the "Global Refund" system.

Payment methods: Although US Dollars and Euros are generally taken everywhere, foreign currencies can be exchanged in banks and authorized bureaus. American Express, VISA, Diners and Master Card are widely accepted. There may be difficulties in changing traveler's check outside Buenos Aires.

Opening hours: Banks and Exchange Bureaus: Mondays to Fridays from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. Business Offices: generally from 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. and from 2.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Stores: in the big cities from 9.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m., although in the outskirts and the provinces they generally close at midday. Saturdays, from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Cafés, cake shops and pizzerias: open most of the time except between 2.00 and 6.00 a.m. Restaurants: lunch is served as from 12.30 p.m. and dinner as from 8.30 hours. Fast-food menus are served in many restaurants at all times.

Tips: 10% of the amount of the check is usually left in cafeterias and restaurants. Doormen, porters, and ushers in cinemas and theatres are also generally tipped.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Documents and formalities: Valid passport with or without visa depending on your nationality. Inquire at the closest Embassy or Consulate. Visitors coming from countries not bordering Argentina are exempt from all taxes on travelling articles and new articles up to US\$ 300 and an additional US\$ 300, if purchased at duty free shops within the national territory. No vaccination certificate is required to enter the country.

Telephone: Pay phones work with cards that may be purchased in kiosks and telephone companies' offices, or with legal tender coins. There are also stores with pay phones (open 24 hours a day) where you can pay in cash. Calling to Argentina from abroad, dial the country code (54) and then the area code of the place you want to call. For domestic calls, dial 0 before the area code. For international calls, dial 00, the country code and city code.

Note that tariffs are reduced from 10.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m.

Maps: Maps may be purchased at the offices of the Automóvil Club Argentino (Av. del Libertador 1850, Tel. 4808-4000, Buenos Aires, cartogra@aca.org.ar).

Tourist information: National Secretariat of Tourism, Tourist Information Centers: Av. Santa Fe 883, (C1059ABC) Buenos Aires, Tel. 4312-2232 or 0800-555-0016; Ezeiza International Airport and Jorge Newbery Airport; info@turismo.gov.ar. Buenos Aires Information Centres: Av. Pte. Quintana 596 (Recoleta), Retiro Bus Station (Local 83), Florida 100. Av. Alicia Moreau de Justo 200 (Dock 4, Puerto Madero), Defensa 1250 (San Telmo); infobue@buenosaires.gov.ar.

Security Prevention and Tourist Assistance: Comisaría del Turista: Av. Corrientes 436, (C1043AAR) Buenos Aires. Tel. 4346-5748, 4328-2135 ó 0800-999-5000, e-mail: turista@policiafederal.gov.ar. Defensoría del Turista: Av. Pedro de Mendoza 1835 (Museo de Bellas Artes de La Boca "Don Benito Quinquela Martín"), (C1169AAC) Buenos Aires. Tel. 4302-7816, Fax: 4302-7816, e-mail: turista@defensoria.org.ar.

INTERESTIN FACTS

The name Argentina: It comes from the Latin term "argentum", which means silver. The origin of this name goes back to the first voyages made by the Spanish conquerors to the Río de la Plata. The survivors of the shipwrecked expedition mounted by Juan Díaz de Solís found indigenous people in the region who gave them silver objects as presents. The news about the legendary Sierra del Plata - a mountain rich in silver - reached Spain around 1524. As from this date, the Portuguese named the river of Solís, Río de la Plata (River of Silver). Two years later the Spanish used the same name. The National Constitution adopted in 1853 included the name "República Argentina" (Argentine Republic) among the official names to designate the government and the country's territory.

Location, area and frontiers: Located in South America, and thus, in the southern hemisphere, Argentina has an area of almost 3.8 million square kilometers, 2.8 on the continent - approximately 54% are plains (grasslands and savannahs), 23%, plateaus, and the other 23%, mountains - and the remainder in the Antarctic. It is 3,800 Km. long and is located between latitude 22° and 55°. Its border with Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and Chile has a perimeter of 9,376 Km, while the territory bordered by the Atlantic Ocean is 4,725 Km long.

Geography: Argentina's main characteristic is the enormous contrast between the immense eastern plains and the impressive Andes mountain range to the west. This is the frontier with Chile and boasts the highest peak in the Western hemisphere: the 6,959 m high Aconcagua. From Jujuy to Tierra del Fuego, the Andes present marvelous contrasts: the Northwest plateaus, the lake region, the forests and glaciers in the Patagonia. To the north, Chaco is a forested area linked to rivers Bermejo, Salado and Pilcomayo. Between the Paraná and Uruguay rivers, the Argentine Mesopotamia (provinces of Entre Ríos, Corrientes and Misiones) is formed by low hills,



where pools and marshlands evidence the ancient courses of these great rivers. In some places within the subtropical rain forest, there are fissures which provide such spectacular phenomena as the Iguazú Falls. The Pampas, in the center of Argentina, is the largest and best-known area of plains. Agricultural and livestock activities are performed in this area, which includes the province of Buenos Aires, the northeast of La Pampa, the south of Córdoba and south of Santa Fe. To the south, the plains give way to small hills in Tandil and de la Ventana, and to the west, to the Córdoba hills. Towards the south, from the Andes to the sea, there appear the sterile and stony plateaus of Patagonia, swept by the wind during most of the year. The Atlantic coast, lined with high cliffs, forms massive indentations like the Peninsula Valdés, with its spectacular and unique colonies of sea animals.

Climate: The country's territory offers a wide variety of climates: subtropical in the North, sub-Antarctic in the southern Patagonia, and mild and humid in the Pampas plains. Media temperature from November to March is 23° C, and 12° C from June to September.

Population: Argentina's current population is more than 38 million inhabitants, almost half of which live in the city and the province of Buenos Aires. Population density calculated on a national basis is 14 inhabitants per square kilometer

Language: Spanish is the official language of the Argentine Republic. In Buenos Aires, some "lunfardo" expressions -city slang - are used.

Religion: There is complete religious freedom in Argentina, although Roman Catholicism prevails. Other religions practiced in the country are Protestant, Jewish, Moslem, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox and others.

Currency: The official Argentine currency is the Peso. There are bills of 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 pesos, and coins of 1 peso and 1, 5, 10, 25, and 50 cents.

Constitution and Government: Argentina consists of 23 provinces plus a federal district, the City Buenos Aires. The Argentine Constitution establishes a Republic under a representative and federal system, and three separate branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial.

The executive branch is exercised by the President and Vice-president of the Nation, elected for a 4-year term, and who may be reelected for a single additional term. The legislative branch is bicameral: the Senate (composed of three senators from each province and from the City of Buenos Aires) and the House of Representatives (composed of representatives elected directly and in proportion to each district's population). The judicial branch "is vested in the Supreme Court and lower courts of justice". Each province has adopted its own Constitution in accordance with the National Constitution, to rule its administration. The current National Constitution dates from 1853. Nevertheless, it was amended in 1860, 1898, 1957 and 1994. The last amendment made in August 1994, allows the President's reelection for an additional term.

Two historic dates: May 25, 1810. The first "Gobierno Patrio" or National Government Assembly was constituted. July 9, 1816. Proclamation of Independence by the "Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata".

National emblems: The Argentine flag has three horizontal stripes: the one in the middle is white and bears the golden sun, and the two outside stripes are light blue. The national flower is the ceibo, and the national stone is the manganese spar (rodocrosita) or "Inca Rose".

Holidays: Argentine national holidays: January 1st(New Year), March 24 (National Day of Memory for Truth and Justice), March/April* (Easter - Good Friday), April 2 (Veterans' Day and tribute to the fallen in the Malvinas War), May 1st (Labor Day), May 25 (Anniversary of the First Independent Argentine Government), June 20*** (National Flag Day), July 9 (National Independence Day), August 17*** (Anniversary of the death of General José de San Martín), October 12** (Columbus Day), December 8 (Immaculate Conception Day), December 25 (Christmas Day). * Floating Holiday. / ** If the date falls on a Tuesday or Wednesday, the holiday will be effective on the preceding Monday; if it falls on Thursday or Friday, the holiday will be effective the following Monday. / *** Holiday effective the third Monday of the month.



Distance in Kms. from Buenos Aires City TO:

NOA

Salta City: 1.605 Km
San Miguel de Tucumán: 1.310 Km

LITORAL

Puerto Iguazú: 1.346 Km
Paraná: 495 Km
Santa Fe City: 476 Km

CENTRO

Córdoba City: 710 Km

CUYO

Mendoza City: 1.037 Km

PAMPA

Mar del Plata: 410 Km
Bahia Blanca: 660 Km

PATAGONIA

San Carlos de Bariloche: 1.627 Km
San Martín de los Andes: 1.607 Km
Ushuaia: 3.171 Km

Estimated domestic flight times from Buenos Aires City TO:

NOA

Salta City: 2 h.
San Miguel de Tucumán: 1 h 50 min

LITORAL

Puerto Iguazú: 1 h 45 min
Santa Fe City: 1 h

CENTRO

Córdoba City: 1 h 15 min

CUYO

Mendoza City: 1 h 50 min

PAMPA

Mar del Plata: 45 min
Bahía Blanca: 1 h 15 min

PATAGONIA

San Carlos de Bariloche: 2 h 20 min
San Martín de los Andes: 2 h 20 min
Ushuaia: 3 h 20 min

