



Argentina

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HISTORY



The country's name comes from the Latin word for silver, *argentum*, and Argentina is indeed a great source of valuable minerals. More important, however, has been Argentina's production of livestock and cereals, for which it once ranked among the world's wealthiest nations. Much of this agricultural activity is set in the Pampas, rich grasslands that were once the domain of nomadic Native Americans, followed by rough-riding gauchos, who were in turn forever enshrined in the nation's romantic literature.

In the Beginning

The history of Argentina dates back thousands of years, with the first human settlements beginning on the southern tip of Patagonia 13,000-years-ago. The indigenous people here and in the Pampas were advanced hunters and gatherers and included the Yamana and the Tehuelches. The country's history has been tumultuous over the years with political instability, military coups, exiled presidents, territorial disputes and dictatorships.

San Martin, the Argentine Liberator

Argentine soldier, statesman, and national hero José de San Martín helped lead the revolutions against Spanish rule in Argentina, Chile and Peru. José de San Martín who helped lead the revolutions against Spanish rule in Argentina (1812), Chile (1818), and Peru (1821). The boldness of his plan to attack the viceroyalty of Lima by crossing the Andes to Chile and going on by sea, as well as the patience and determination with which he executed it, was likely the decisive factor in the defeat of Spanish power in South America.

Independence

The military began the "dirty war" to restore order and eradicate its opponents. The Argentine Commission for Human Rights, in Geneva, has charged the junta with 2,300 political murders, over 10,000 political arrests, and the disappearance of 20,000 to 30,000 people. The economy remained in chaos. In March 1981, Videla was deposed by Field Marshal Roberto Viola, who in turn was succeeded by Lt. Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri. On April 2, 1982, Galtieri invaded the British-held Falkland Islands, known as Las Islas Malvinas in Spanish, in what was seen as an attempt to increase his popularity.

Great Britain, however, won a decisive victory, and Galtieri resigned in disgrace three days after Argentina's surrender. Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Bignone took over June 14, amid increasing pro-democratic public sentiment. In the presidential election of Oct. 1983, Raul Alfonsin, leader of the Radical Civic Union, handed the Peronist Party its first defeat since its founding.

Growing unemployment and quadruple-digit inflation, however, led to a Peronist victory in the elections of May 1989. Alfonsin resigned a month later in the wake of riots over high food prices, in favor of the new Peronist president, Carlos Menem. In 1991, Menem promoted economic austerity measures that deregulated businesses and privatized state-owned industries. But beginning in Sept. 1998, eight years into Menem's two-term presidency, Argentina entered its worst recession in a decade. Menem's economic policies, tolerance of corruption, and pardoning of military leaders involved in the dirty war eventually lost him the support of the poor and the working class who had elected him.



MONEY



The Argentine Peso (ARS) is the currency unit for Argentina. The Peso symbol is the same as the dollar sign (\$). The Peso is subdivided into centavos; 1 Peso is equal to 100 centavos. The previous currency of Argentina was also called the Peso; however, the currency evolved and fewer zeros are currently being used

Credit Cards

People traveling to Argentina can use a credit card in many locations, as long as it's a Visa, American Express, Mastercard or Diners Club, which are commonly accepted throughout the country. However, some places prefer that customers pay in cash, or they simply charge more to use a credit card, sometimes 5 to 10 percent more. Many places don't accept credit cards at all, such as museums, trams, taxis and other public transportation options. Most sit-down restaurants and hotels do accept credit cards, though a tip usually cannot be added to the bill.

Debit Cards

Debit cards are generally issued by international brands such as Visa with Electron or MasterCard with Maestro. These cards function through the ATM networks of Banelco and Link in Argentina. Debit cards in Argentina can be used to make payments at businesses such as supermarkets, pharmacies, restaurants, gas stations, clothing stores, etc. Businesses that allow payments by debit card can be recognized by the debit card logos on their establishments.

Caminito Amigo

A large, ornate sign for Caminito Tango. The sign has a red background with a yellow central band. At the top, three circular portraits are shown: Quinquela on the left, Gardel in the center, and Filiberto on the right. The word "CAMINITO" is written in large, stylized red letters with blue and green accents on the yellow band. Below it, the word "TANGO" is written in blue letters. At the bottom, it says "de: Juan de Dios Filiberto y Gabino Ceria Peñalosa." and "Julio- 154-026-9907".

QUINQUELA

GARDEL

FILIBERTO

CAMINITO

TANGO

de: Juan de Dios Filiberto y Gabino Ceria Peñalosa.

Julio- 154-026-9907

A medium-sized sign for Caminito Tango. It features a red background with ornate gold and blue scrollwork. On the left, there is a circular portrait of Filiberto. The word "TANGO" is written in large, white, stylized letters. At the bottom, it says "Julio- 154-026-9907".

FILIBERTO

TANGO

Julio- 154-026-9907

A small sign for Caminito Tango, similar in style to the others, with a red background and ornate scrollwork. It features a circular portrait of Filiberto and the word "TANGO" in large, stylized letters.

TANGO



Visitors From The USA

A credit card is not the only way to buy things while on a trip to Argentina. In fact, it's often better to make purchases with cash and use credit cards only as a backup. Bring cash along, but note that U.S. dollars are generally not accepted in Argentina, as the local currency is pesos. Some high-end hotels and restaurants will take U.S. dollars, but often at a lousy exchange rate. It's best to exchange your cash beforehand.

ATMs

Max withdrawals are limited to \$2,400-\$4,000 pesos* (possibly less depending on the bank) per transaction with a maximum of 2 transactions per-day. So per-day you can withdraw \$8,000 pesos maximum as of June 2018. ATM fees are pricey in Argentina averaging out at approximately \$6 USD to \$11 USD per transaction.

The ATMs here spit out cash first and then your card when you decline to do another transaction. There is a parallel exchange rate for US Dollars and Euros meaning that there are two exchange rates you can get. There is an official exchange rate which you get from the ATMs or exchanging money at banks, and an unofficial exchange rate you get for cash.

The parallel rate also known as the “Blue Dollar” rate has been about 5% more in favor of the USD or Euro since 2015 to present. You may have heard about the golden blue dollar era during the Cristina Kirchner presidency (2007-2015). The Blue Dollar rate had wild and oftentimes lucrative swings in favor of USD holders with differences reaching 50%+ more compared to the official. Sadly for the USD holders those days are over.

HELPFUL INFO

Climate

Argentina's climate ranges from the great heat and extensive rains of the subtropical Chaco in the north, through to the pleasant climate of the central Pampas, and the sub Antarctic cold of the Patagonian Sea in the south. The main central area is temperate, but can be very hot and humid during summer (December to February) and chilly in winter. The most pleasant times to visit Buenos Aires are September–November and February–March. The city is best avoided in January, when the heat is at its most intense and many of its residents flee to the coast leaving behind a comparative ghost city.

Electricity

In Argentina the power sockets are of type C and I. The standard voltage is 220-V and the standard frequency is 50-Hz.

ANO 1912



Technology & Communication

Argentina has a telephone density of about 20 private phones per 100 people. There are also some 12,000 public telephones. Deregulation of the telecommunications industry is ongoing, and service and infrastructure have improved dramatically. Companies such as AT&T, MCI, and Sprint can now provide long-distance service to a limited degree. There are currently 40 earth stations that support the telephone system's microwave relay complex and 3 earth satellite stations.

Infrastructure & Transport

Argentina has a good infrastructure system in comparison with other Latin American nations, but many areas need significant improvement. The nation has 215,434-kilometers (133,870-miles) of roads, including 734-kilometers (456-miles) of expressways or highways, but only 63,553-kilometers (39,492-miles) of the country's roads are paved. Argentina has been the recipient of a number of aid packages to improve infrastructure. For instance, the United States has provided US\$7-million and the World Bank provided US\$450-million for highway construction. There is an extensive rail system that transports both freight and passengers around Argentina, with a total of 38,326-kilometers (23,816-miles) of track.



In Case Of An Emergency

Travelers should note that 107 is the general emergency number for immediate health or medical help. Ambulance services can also be acquired by dialing this number.

Language

Although Argentina's official language is Spanish, Argentinian Spanish is different from the Spanish spoken in Spain. In some ways it sounds more like Italian than Spanish. There are also many other languages spoken in Argentina, including Italian, German, English, and French. Indigenous languages that are spoken today include Mapuche, Guarani, Aymara, Toba and Quechua.



LGBT Travel

Despite the strong influence by the Catholic Church, Argentina is one of the most gay friendly countries in Latin America, and arguably, the world. It was the first country in the continent to legalise gay marriage in July 2010, which also included full adoption rights. This made it the 2nd in the entire continent (after Canada) and 10th in the world. The right to change legal gender has been in place since 2012, and in the same year, legislation was introduced adding life imprisonment to hate crimes based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. Big cities in Argentina have fun gay scenes, particularly in Buenos Aires, Rosario, Cordoba and Mendoza. Even smaller cities like Puerto Madryn are popular gay hotspots.

Religion

92% of the Argentinian population is Catholic. There's also a large Jewish community. However, it's mostly concentrated in Buenos Aires.



Getting There

There are 1,359 airports in Argentina, although only 142 have paved runways. Buenos Aires has 2 major airports. The first, Ezeiza International Airport, is the main point of arrival and departure for most international flights. Most domestic or regional flights, including those to Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay originate from the second major airport in Buenos Aires, Aeroparque Jorge Newbery.

Driving

In Buenos Aires, travel by subte (subway) or remises (radio-dispatched taxis, as opposed to street taxis) is easier and safer than driving yourself. Rush-hour traffic is chaotic, and parking is difficult. If you have rented a car for whatever reason, park it at your hotel or a nearby garage and leave it there. Most daily parking charges do not exceed \$4 or \$5 (£2.75-£3.40). Many recently built hotels have parking on the premises; others use nearby garages. If you're traveling outside of Buenos Aires, it's another story when it comes to having a car. Argentine roads and highways are generally in good condition, with the exception of some rural areas. Most highways have been privatized and charge nominal tolls. In Buenos Aires, drivers are aggressive and don't always obey traffic lanes or lights. Wear your seat belt, as required by Argentine law. U.S. driver's licenses are valid in greater Buenos Aires, but you need an Argentine or international license to drive in most other parts of the country. Fuel (known as NAFTA) is expensive, at about \$1 (70p) per-liter (or \$4/£2.80 per-gallon).

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

Argentina is considered the most European republic in South America with the majority of Argentines being descendants of Spanish and other European colonists. Modern Argentinian culture has been strongly influenced by its European immigrant population but with a South American flair. Latin American passion is combined with a cosmopolitan European lifestyle. The character of Buenos Aires, the cultural capital, has stemmed from its high proportion of European descendants plus their imitation of European fashion, architecture and design.

Bucket List

Iguazu falls with Helicopter

Hike to the base of Mt. Fitz Roy – El Chaltén

Dance until Sunrise on a crazy night with new friends

Ride Across the Andes from Argentina to Chile

Partying in Córdoba

Mendoza – Wine tasting

Take a tango lesson

Learn more Spanish

Family Travel Highlights

Horseback Riding Through Mendoza

El Tigre Art Museum

Kayaking in Bariloche

Enjoy the wildlife at Peninsula Valdes

Overnight stay amid dinosaurs at Patagonia's Egidio Feruglio palaeontology museum

Tourism Authority

Argentina's national tourist board is the Ministerio de Turismo (www.turismo.gob.ar); its main office is in Buenos Aires. Almost every destination city or town has a tourist office, usually on or near the main plaza or at the bus terminal. Each Argentine province also has its own representation in Buenos Aires. Most of these are well organized, often offering a computerized database of tourist information, and can be worth a visit before heading for the provinces.



Foods To Try

Milanesa

Choripan

Llama Steak

Argentine ice cream

Locro

Asado

Humita

Provoleta

Empanadas

Alfajores

Drinks To Try

Fernet Branca

Gancia batido

Campari

Malbec

Coca Tea

Yerba Mate



Photography Hot Spots

Glaciar Perito Moreno, Santa Cruz

Quebrada de las Conchas, Salta

Buenos Aires, CABA

Cerro Fitz Roy, Santa Cruz

Bariloche, Rio Negro

Parque Nacional Los Alerces, Chubut

Valle de la luna, San Juan

Tierra del Fuego, Ushuaia

Souvenirs To Buy

Leather Items

Soccer Jersey

Silver items

Tango CDs and DVDs

Northern Textiles

Regional music instruments

Borges Books

