

TRAVEL & LOGISTICS ▲ ACONCAGUA EXPEDITIONS

DESTINATION

All expedition members are responsible for flying to Mendoza, Argentina by their own means. Flights from the United States leave LA and Miami for Mendoza daily. We recommend flying with Lan Chile Airlines and purchasing your tickets ahead of time through a travel agent. AMS uses Talkeetna Travel: 1-888-567-8728 for excellent service. For those who stop over in Miami, there is a swimming pool on the top floor of the airport hotel; for \$15 they will provide a towel.

PLEASE CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A CURRENT PASSPORT FOR THE DURATION OF THIS EXPEDITION. North Americans are not required to have a visa for Argentina. Special vaccinations are not necessary for Argentina.

ARRIVING IN MENDOZA

Please plan on arriving by mid-day on the start day, which allows for unexpected delays, enough time to rest and for us to check your equipment in your hotel room before the expedition starts. At the airport, your luggage will come out on a conveyor belt and there are luggage carts for your use. When clearing Customs, tell them that you are an "andinista" (mountaineer) and that you have no meat or produce. We have arranged an airport pickup for our team members; we will send you an email with logistical details about a month before your expedition. The driver will bring you to your hotel, a 10-15 minute drive.

HOTEL ARRIVAL & MEETING TIME

We will have a message waiting for you upon check-in to arrange to meet with your guides to check your personal gear with you. El Portal Suites are located along the Plaza Chile, centrally located in downtown Mendoza. They have 24-hour reception, English-speaking staff, a pool, modern gym, WIFI and business center, and breakfast buffet. The street address is Necochea 661, Ciudad 5500, Mendoza. www.elportalsuites.com Single occupancy upgrade may be available, arrange in advance with AMS.

MONEY – US DOLLARS (USD)/ARGENTINE PESOS (ARS)

Credit Cards and US currency are widely accepted in Mendoza; you may not need to exchange much cash. You may wish to calculate the exchange rate daily; a handy website for converting currency: www.xe.com/ucc The exchange rate over the past several years has been approximately 3-4 pesos (ARS) to the dollar (USD). A good place to exchange money or Traveler's Checks is at Cambio Santiago, with several locations available. You can also exchange in the Casino at the Park Hyatt Hotel, but the rate is not quite as good. The airport also charges a higher rate. The most convenient option is to use your ATM card in any of the Cajero Automatico machines.

You will need to pay for your climbing permit in Argentine Pesos in person. Permit prices vary seasonally, peak season can cost as much as \$1,900 ARS (\$500 USD). We recommend you bring an additional US\$300 in traveler's checks or cash to carry with you during the expedition in case of emergency or evacuation. Argentines are suspicious about US dollar bills that are not crisp and in good condition. Avoid bringing torn or weathered cash as even the banks may refuse it.

MENDOZA

Mendoza is one of the most relaxed and beautiful cities in South America, if not the world. With a population of 876,000 people, it lies at 2,700 feet/824 meters near the Central Andes. The surrounding countryside is home to the country's finest vineyards. Mendoza's streets are lined with trees and outdoor cafes. Argentines proudly claim steak as their favorite food. Prices are similar to European or United States cities, except food and taxis are cheaper. Mendoza is a safe, clean, and modern city, but take care of yourself like in any foreign place: drink bottled water, eat peelable fruit, and conceal your money. Tipping in restaurants is similar in Argentina as it is in the United States, 15-20%.

HEALTH

Maintaining good health and strength is a high priority all the way to the summit. Knowing that dehydration is the root of all evil, begin your hydration training before you get on the plane for Mendoza. Drink at least two liters of bottled water per day while in Mendoza. There are many little shops where you can buy water. The better hydrated you are, the better your chances of staying healthy, strong, and acclimatizing well.

THINGS TO DO IN MENDOZA

The Secretary of Tourism, located on San Martin and Catamarca, provides an excellent map of Mendoza and will recommend things to do. Spending a couple of days sight seeing the historic Catholic churches and city plazas and parks is highly recommended. Your hotel can also make suggestions for rafting, wine tasting or other excursions.

DEPARTING MENDOZA

We are due back in Mendoza on Day 19. We will make every effort to return on schedule; it is dependent upon the weather during the climb. It is possible we will return early, in which case there is a good chance of being able to get an earlier flight by waiting on stand-by, or changing your ticket to an earlier date. Lan Chile and other South American airline companies have offices in Mendoza.

RECOMMENDED READING

Aconcagua, A Climbing Guide, by R.J. Secor, published by The Mountaineers Books, edited by Colby Coombs

Spanish for Travelers, published by Berlitz

Argentina, Uruguay & Paraguay, published by Lonely Planet

HELPFUL SPANISH PHRASES

Although charades work, prepare to speak some Spanish while in Argentina. Practice your Spanish before your expedition and on the flight down. The locals will appreciate your efforts!

General:

Por favor	Please
Gracias	Thank you
De nada	You're welcome (translates as: it's nothing)
Esta bien	You are welcome (translates as: it's good)
Si / No	Yes / No
¿Dónde está? (don-day esta?)	Where is...?
Muchas gracias	Thank you very much
Adios	Good - bye
No comprendo	I don't understand
¿Habla usted inglés?	Do you speak English?
Buenos dias	Good morning
Buenos tardes	Good afternoon or evening
Buenos noches	Good night
Suerte (swearday)!	Good luck!

At the hotel:

Mi (me) nombre es...	My name is...
He hecho una reserva	I have a reservation

At the restaurant:

Quisiera (keysierra)...	I'd like...
agua con/sin gas	Water with /without bubbles
un vaso de vino blanco/tinto	A glass of white/red wine.
Cervesa (sir-VAY-sa)	Beer
Biftec	Beefsteak
Pollo	Chicken
Pasta	Pasta
Cuanto cuesta? (quanto questa)	What's the price?
La cuenta, por favor	Check please