

Argentina & Chile

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION



GETTING READY FOR YOUR TRIP

Passports

- ❖ Passports are required of U.S. Citizens
- ❖ Must be valid for at least 6 months after your trip – if not, apply or renew immediately
- ❖ Keep a copy of the picture page of your passport in a separate place while traveling
- ❖ Carry an extra passport photo in case you need to apply for a quick replacement

Visas

- ❖ U.S. citizens do not need a visa in either Argentina or Chile for visits of up to 90 days
- ❖ You will obtain your tourist card from the airlines en route, which you should keep in a safe place until you depart
- ❖ All US citizens will need to pay a \$100 levy (cash only) on arrival into Chile; Canadians pay \$55 (subject to change)
- ❖ For those passengers crossing the border from Argentina to Chile, there is a \$5 departure tax, cash only.
- ❖ At Iguazu Falls, if you want to cross to the Brazilian side, a visa is necessary for U.S. and Canadian citizens. The fee is about \$110. You must get the visa before departure from home. Views of Iguazu Falls are panoramic from the Brazilian side, but alternately you can take the boat ride from the Argentinian side for a full view of the falls if you prefer not to get the visa.
- ❖ For further information regarding entry requirements, travelers should contact:
- ❖ Embassy of Argentina, 1600 New Hampshire Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20009-2512, Phone (202) 238-6401, Fax (202) 332-3171, www.embassyofargentina.us
- ❖ Embassy/Consulate of Chile in Washington D.C., 1732 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington DC 20036, Phone: (202) 530 4106, 530 4107, Fax: (202) 530 4145, consulado@embassyofchile.org
- ❖ Brazilian Embassy in Washington, DC, 3006 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008-3634, Phone: (202) 238-2700, Fax: (202) 238-2827, <http://www.brasilemb.org/>
- ❖ Nationalities of other countries please inquire regarding visas

Health, Immunizations

- ❖ Some immunizations are highly recommended, but none are required for entry to Argentina or Chile
- ❖ Recommended standard immunizations include: polio, tetanus, MMR, hepatitis A & B
- ❖ Typhoid vaccine may also be recommended for some areas
- ❖ A vaccination certificate for Yellow Fever may be needed if traveling from an infected country (required for travel to Brazil)
- ❖ SEEK INDEPENDENT MEDICAL ADVICE from your physician or local travelers health service
- ❖ For the latest recommendations for immunizations or malaria prevention contact the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia: 800-311-3435, or visit their website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>
- ❖ Many universities have immunization clinics that can assist you
- ❖ Further info on traveler's health is available from the World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/ith>

ARRIVAL

- ❖ Tourists must provide evidence of return tickets or onward travel
- ❖ The local U.S. Embassies can be contacted at:
- ❖ Argentina Consular Section, 4300 Columbia 1425, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Phone: (5411) 4777-4533 or 4534, Fax: (5411) 4777-3547.
- ❖ U.S. Embassy in Chile, Andrés Bello 2800, Santiago, Chile, Phone: (56-2) 232-2600, Fax: (56-2) 339-3710.
- ❖ For further information concerning travel to Argentina or Chile, travelers should consult the Department of State's web site found on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>



Physical Preparations

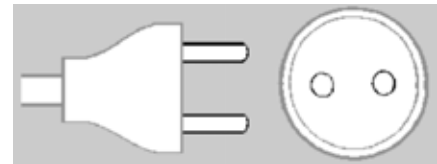
- ❖ All JOURNEYS trips to Argentina and Chile involve walking and hiking in the outdoors.
- ❖ The better your physical condition, the more you will enjoy your trip.
- ❖ On any trip, the change of climate, cultures, physical routines and activities can be stressful.
- ❖ Many people use their departure date as a target for getting in shape or a motivation for sticking with a regular program of exercise. You do not have to be an athlete, but you owe it to yourself to be in the best health and condition possible.
- ❖ We especially recommend activities that condition the legs, lungs and heart such as jogging, cycling, swimming or active hiking.
- ❖ Knees and feet are most susceptible to problems when hiking.
- ❖ Running or brisk walking up and down steep hills or stairs is an excellent conditioning method.
- ❖ Be sure to break in your hiking shoes.

Time Difference

- ❖ Argentine time is two hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (-3 GMT)
- ❖ Chilean time is one hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time (-4 GMT)

Electricity

- ❖ Electricity is AC, 220 volts, 50 cycle
- ❖ You may need a converter kit with appropriate plug adapters, as well as converters for any appliances that do not switch between 110 and 220 volts
- ❖ 2-pronged round plugs are typically used (also found in Europe)



GETTING ALONG AS A VISITOR

Food & Restaurants

- ❖ Look for a restaurant where lots of locals are eating - chances are the food will be delicious and reasonable
- ❖ Eat only foods that are thoroughly cooked, and raw fruits and vegetables that you have peeled yourself
- ❖ Drink only bottled drinks, and avoid tap water, fountain drinks and ice cubes
- ❖ Don't buy food from street vendors or stalls
- ❖ Avoid fresh salads unless the vegetables are washed with purified water, and avoid dairy products that are un-pasteurized or may not have been refrigerated properly
- ❖ National dishes are based in the main upon plentiful supplies of beef and lamb. Many dishes are distinctive and delicious, especially the famous gaucho style "asado", a roast cooked on an open fire.
- ❖ It is more difficult to accommodate a strict vegetarian in Argentina and Chile than elsewhere in South America. In Buenos Aires, there are many alternatives including lots of tasty Italian food.
- ❖ In Patagonia, lamb predominates over beef.
- ❖ Argentine and Chilean wines are very good at any price range. Wine is usually consumed in moderate quantities at lunch and dinner. Locals mix it with soda water for a refreshing summer drink.
- ❖ Local lager beers are also quite good. (Alcoholic beverages are your own expense.)

Altitude

- ❖ Most people feel only mild effects from altitude on JOURNEYS hiking and trekking trips in Argentina and Chile. Most trips remain at relatively low elevations below 6,000', including treks in Torres del Paine
- ❖ Northern Argentina trips may reach altitudes of 12,000 ft.
- ❖ The abrupt change from sea level to high altitudes can cause symptoms such as shortness of breath, dizziness, headache, insomnia and loss of appetite.
- ❖ The best remedy is to take it easy.
- ❖ It is especially important at altitude to drink lots of fluids.



Climate, Weather

- ❖ Climate ranges from sub-tropical in the north to sub-Antarctic in the south
- ❖ The temperate central zone includes Buenos Aires and Santiago. From mid-December to the end of February they can be hot and humid, with temperatures ranging from 80 to 90°F and an average humidity of 70%.
- ❖ There are distinct dry and rainy seasons in the northern areas such as Iguazu and Jujuy. The dry season is from May to October (the southern hemisphere winter). While more rain falls from January to March, it is usually intermittent.
- ❖ Further south in Patagonia, the summers (December through February) are cool and sometimes downright cold at night. Several days of warm sunshine can be followed by days of cold rain, sleet, snow and wind. Southern summer temperatures during the day average around 55-60°F although they may reach as high as 80°F. Lows while camping could fall to 0°F. Thermal under layers are essential.
- ❖ In Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and Torres del Paine the sun sets as late as 11:00PM. Although you may very well experience fair weather, you should count on some days with strong winds and rain.
- ❖ Hiking conditions in Patagonia are particularly susceptible to variable and unpredictable weather conditions including rain, wind, snow and freezing temperatures at night.
- ❖ Trekking trips in particular involve hiking over rugged, un-maintained trails that may be slippery due to loose rocks, snow and ice. Use caution and ask your guide for assistance if needed. You participate in all activities during this trip at your own risk.

Money and Currency Exchange

- ❖ Currency is the Argentine Nuevo Peso and Chilean Peso, and U.S. dollars can be used in some instances
- ❖ We recommend bringing cash with you for exchange upon arrival at a bank, major hotel, or cambio
- ❖ Your U.S. cash for exchange should be newer than 2001, and not torn or marked – older bills may be refused
- ❖ You may need to show your passport when you exchange money or travelers checks, so keep it (or a copy) handy
- ❖ Major credit cards are accepted by most hotels and restaurants. You may also need to show your passport when using a credit card.
- ❖ ATM machines are available in major cities, but not all accept foreign cards
- ❖ We suggest bringing at least \$500 for items and meals that are not included, emergency money, and for shopping
- ❖ Be sure to have small bills, both in local and US currency. \$1 US bills can be very useful
- ❖ An airport exit tax of approximately \$20-25 (in cash, U.S. or local currency) must be paid when departing Argentina
- ❖ There is also a \$5-6 airport fee for domestic flights (in cash, U.S. or local currency)

Tipping

- ❖ In both Argentina and Chile, tipping is customary but always at your own discretion, based on your satisfaction with services and the size of your group. For a very small group or private trip, you may wish to tip the upper range of these suggestions.
- ❖ In Argentina, suggested tipping is \$8-16 per traveler/per day for each your guide and your driver
- ❖ In Chile, trip members can contribute towards a group tip to be shared among the drivers, assistants, cooks and the staff that handles the logistics of the trip. A range of \$6-12 per person per day is suggested. Trip members usually tip the trip guide directly, from \$6-15 per person per day
- ❖ For baggage handling, tips of \$1-2 would be appropriate
- ❖ Tips should be in local or US currency (small bills are useful)
- ❖ Guides, cooks and other staff also appreciate good quality clothes or equipment that you wish to donate
- ❖ When you find someone particularly informative or helpful, a small gift or extra tip is gratefully accepted
- ❖ It is customary to tip service people such as waiters, bartenders, and hotel help
- ❖ The bill in most restaurants will have an added local tax and a 10 or 15% “servicio” charge, which is part of the wage. If you appreciated the service and want to tip, another 10% of the total bill is appropriate.

Emergency Services

- ❖ Medical care is available for minor medical conditions, and the guides are trained in first-aid
- ❖ Prevention of injury is always the best policy.
- ❖ For trekking, you must be reasonably fit, healthy and sure-footed.
- ❖ Medical care is generally good in the cities, but may be less so elsewhere, especially in remote areas

SPECIAL REMARKS

People

- ❖ You will find the people very friendly and welcoming
- ❖ It is best to ask permission before taking portrait photos. If in doubt, ask your guide

Time

- ❖ Relax and enjoy the easy-going rhythm of Latin America
- ❖ Do not expect everything to happen on time; remember that in some places time is not as important as it is back home, and there is often little concern for punctuality
- ❖ Despite best efforts, departures and arrivals could be a little before or after the time given. This applies particularly to aircraft movements. Operating requirements, weather and terrain sometimes present problems, and on these occasions, to ensure your safety, flight times may vary

Restroom Facilities

- ❖ It is a very good idea to carry your own small supply of toilet paper. In cities where there are flush toilets you will usually find a wastebasket next to the toilet - most sewage systems can't handle paper. Most bathrooms will neither look nor smell as sanitary as those you are used to.

Safety

- ❖ Observe the same precautions taken at home
- ❖ Do not flaunt a bulging wallet, always lock unattended vehicles, do not leave baggage unattended in public
- ❖ Make use of security facilities provided for valuables in your accommodation and on the boat
- ❖ In towns, the best place to carry your passport and money is in a pouch worn around the neck inside of the shirt or in a money belt around the waist
- ❖ It is highly recommended that you buy travel insurance that covers your baggage before you leave
- ❖ Don't take anything you can't afford to lose or can't replace

Shopping

- ❖ Shopping in Buenos Aires can be very exciting. Contemporary and fashionable items, many of European design, are widely available in stores concentrated in downtown areas. Leather goods, especially skirts, jackets, gloves and boots are a real bargain.
- ❖ The pink stone, Inca Rose, is the national stone of Argentina, and you can find many beautiful items made from it, from statuettes to jewelry. Prices range from modest to extravagant - be sure to buy such items from a reputable dealer.
- ❖ In Santiago, you can find handicrafts typical of the Andean cultures, such as weavings and textiles.
- ❖ There are many unique handicrafts in Patagonia made from local materials. If you find something you love, buy it. You may never see it again anywhere else!
- ❖ Bargaining is not common in Argentina or Chile except in some street markets, though if you are paying cash you may be able to negotiate prices or ask for a discount in some shops.

Equipment & Packing

- ❖ A good goal is to fit everything into a single piece of checked luggage and a carry-on daypack
- ❖ We recommend a durable, water-resistant, soft duffel bag or lightweight soft-sided suitcase as your



checked luggage. Hard suitcases are not recommended for our trips, and not acceptable for treks.

- ❖ A durable backpack is ideal for carrying bottled water, camera, raingear, extra warm clothes, etc. while trekking
- ❖ Choose a distinctive, easily identified bag, and use a JOURNEYS luggage tag for bag identification by staff, and your name and address should be also indelibly affixed inside the luggage.
- ❖ Wool and polypropylene clothing is highly recommended.
- ❖ Lightweight & light colored clothes will help keep you cooler in hot climates. Also keep in mind that synthetic fabrics dry faster than natural fibers like cotton, so you can wash and dry your clothes more easily.
- ❖ Many Argentines and Chileans are very fashionable dressers, especially in capital cities. You may want a set of nice city clothes (or plan on buying some). Jackets or ties are not necessary unless you want to visit a fancy restaurant or club where formal attire may be required.
- ❖ Some hotels may have laundry services, but you will probably need to wash out some clothes en route
- ❖ Be aware that weight limits on checked luggage for in-county flights are 44 lbs per person
- ❖ You may want to bring an extra smaller (lockable) duffel, to leave items at your hotel while trekking

CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT SUGGESTIONS CHECKLIST

Pre-Departure Tasks

- Obtain or renew passport
- Buy travelers checks in low denominations
- Evaluate and obtain trip cancellation, baggage and medical insurance
- Consult with physician for immunizations and prescription medicine recommendations
- Break-in primary footwear
- Make final payment to JOURNEYS at least 60 days before trip departure

Clothing

- Lightweight hiking boots and/or comfortable athletic or walking shoes
- Sport sandals with Velcro strap (in warm climates)
- Extra shoes and/or Flip flops
- Shorts
- Comfortable, lightweight pants & jeans
- 1 pair nicer pants or skirt (optional)
- T-shirts, short sleeve shirts and/or tank tops
- Warm wool or polypropylene long-sleeve shirt
- Warm sweater or sweatshirt
- Layered fleece jacket with windbreaker, winter jacket, or medium weight parka
- Rain gear - poncho or jacket and pants
- Wide brim sun hat w/ strap to secure on windy days
- Bandana
- Swim suit
- Socks
- Underwear
- Sleepwear
- Warm hat and gloves

Personal Items

- Soft duffel with shoulder strap or durable soft suitcase
- Luggage tags
- 2 spare passport photos (in case of lost passport)
- Copies of all important documents



- Insect repellent with DEET content (for tropic areas)
- Wrist watch and/or travel clock
- Sunglasses (with strap, case)
- Extra eyeglasses/contacts
- Money belt or pouch for valuables
- Small flashlight with extra batteries
- Day pack (can also serve as an airline carry-on bag)
- Camera, memory cards, film, batteries, charger
- Lead bag/containers to protect film from X-rays
- Plug adapter (if needed)
- Ziploc-type bags for packing shampoo/other liquids
- Stuff sacks or plastic bags for organizing luggage
- Small packable umbrella (optional)
- Thread, needles, safety pins for minor repairs

Personal First Aid Kit

- Sunblock (30 or higher SPF)
- Lipbalm with SPF
- Aspirin or other pain killer
- Cold relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops
- Band-aids, gauze pads
- Antibiotics
- Prescription medicines
- Aloe gel or lotion in case of sunburn
- Anti-diarrhea medicine
- Antibiotic cream/ointment
- Feminine hygiene items
- Earplugs
- Motion sickness tablets (if applicable)

Essential Items For Your Carry-On Bag

- Passport
- Domestic and international air tickets
- Travelers checks, money and credit cards
- Insurance certificates
- Address and telephone number of emergency contact
- Prescription medicines
- Extra set of underclothes
- Toiletries in small leak-proof bottles
- Camera gear, film and other valuables

For Trekking & Camping

- Duffle Bag (w/ lock)
- Sleeping Bag liner (optional)
- Sleeping Bag (0-10°F) (ONLY if specified on your trip)
- Comfortable Hiking Boots & Extra Shoes
- Hiking Pants
- Outdoor/Hiking Shirts (fast drying)
- Socks (hiking socks suggested)
- Long Underwear
- Soap and Container
- Biodegradable/Camp Shampoo



- Walking Stick or Poles (optional)

Optional Items

- Binoculars
- Address book, writing paper, or journal, pen/pencil
- Small washcloth
- Wet wipes/moist towelettes and Kleenex
- Favorite snack foods (pre-packaged)
- Pictures of your house and family
- Map
- Silica bags for moisture (protect camera equipment)
- Video camera
- Phrase book

