



Mendoza & the Central Andes

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Best Wineries

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Best Parks

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Why Go?

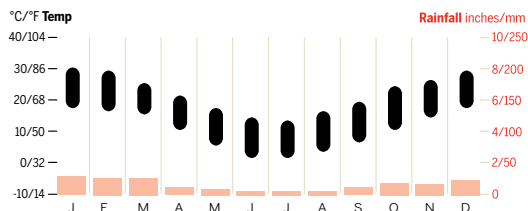
A long, narrow sliver of desert landscape, the Mendoza region is home to two of Argentina's claims to fame – the Andes and wine (p328). The city itself is lively and cosmopolitan and the surrounding area boasts hundreds of wineries offering tours – an educational (and occasionally intoxicating) way to spend an afternoon or a month.

If you can put your glass down for a minute, there's plenty more to keep you busy. Just down the road is Aconcagua, the Americas' highest peak and a favorite for mountain climbers the world over. A couple of ski resorts give you the chance to drop into fresh powder while Mendoza's tour operators offer up a bewildering array of rafting, mountain biking and paragliding options.

To the north, often-overlooked San Juan province is well worth a visit, as much for its small but important selection of wineries as for the surreal desert landscape of the Parque Provincial Ischigualasto.

When to Go

Mendoza



Dec–Mar Hot, dry weather makes this the perfect time to climb the region's highest peaks.

Apr–Jun Autumn is spectacular, thanks to the colors of Mendoza's trees and grapevines.

Jul–Sep Ski season paints the Andes white – a breathtaking sight, even for nonskiers.



Mendoza & the Central Andes Highlights

- 1** Carving tracks in fresh powder on the world-class slopes of **Las Leñas** (p345).
- 2** Grabbing some wheels and treating yourself to a tour of the wineries in **Maipú** (p334).
- 3** Getting away from the crowds and into the stunning Valle de Calingasta in **Barreal** (p351).
- 4** Discovering dinosaur fossils embedded in bizarre rock formations in **Parque Provincial Ischigualasto** (p355).
- 5** Making the scene in any number of hip bars on Av Aristides in **Mendoza** (p332).
- 6** Soaking those aching traveling bones in the thermal complex at **Cacheuta** (p336).
- 7** Touching the roof of the Americas on **Cerro Aconcagua** (p340), the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere.