



The Pampas & the Atlantic Coast

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Época de Quesos (p128)
- ➔ La Esquina de Merti (p124)
- ➔ Sur (p144)
- ➔ Cervecería Modelo (p120)
- ➔ Tante (p136)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Villa Nuccia (p143)
- ➔ Benevento Hotel (p119)
- ➔ Paradores Draghi (p124)
- ➔ Estancia Ave María (p127)
- ➔ Hotel Muñiz (p148)

Why Go?

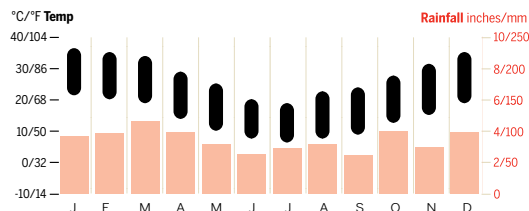
There's Buenos Aires, and then there's the province of Buenos Aires. Home to more than a third of the country's population, this is the nation's economic powerhouse: these fertile grasslands financed Argentina's turn-of-the-century golden age and still produce most of the country's famous beef.

While the region isn't exactly packed with tourist attractions, simple pleasures and traditional gaucho culture are waiting to be discovered. Charming San Antonio de Areco offers a glimpse of Argentina's real-life cowboys in action, while the picturesque hills around Tandil are lovely for hiking and feasting on locally produced *picadas* (shared appetizer plates). Beach towns on the Atlantic coast provide a breezy escape from the summer heat.

If you have a few days to spare, check into one of the region's historic *estancias* (ranches), where you can ride a criollo horse under the huge sky – and experience the faded elegance of Argentina's past for yourself.

When to Go

Mar del Plata



Jan–Feb Summer brings sunny weather and big crowds to the beach.

Oct–Nov & Mar–Apr Spring and fall are perfect for exploring Tandil.

Early Nov San Antonio de Areco hosts the gaucho festival Día de la Tradición.

NORTHERN PAMPAS

The pampas is both a general term for a large geographic region of fertile plains and the name of the province that lies to the west of Buenos Aires (La Pampa). The pampas grasslands roll southwards from

the Río de la Plata to the banks of the Río Negro, stretching west toward the Andes and all the way up to the southern parts of Córdoba and Santa Fe provinces, taking in the entire Buenos Aires and La Pampa provinces.



The Pampas & the Atlantic Coast Highlights

1 Going gaucho in **San Antonio de Areco** (p123), the prettiest town in the pampas.

2 Packing a picnic of locally produced prosciutto and cheese and going for a hike in the hills of **Tandil** (p125).

3 Soaking up the sun and a vibrant cultural scene in **Mar del Plata** (p138), the 'Pearl of the Atlantic.'

4 Spending the weekend riding horses and relaxing at one of the region's traditional Argentine **estancias** (p117).

5 Peeking through a natural rock 'window' after hiking up the mountain in laid-back **Sierra de la Ventana** (p128).

6 Wandering the streets of **La Plata** (p117), South America's first fully planned city.

7 Going windsurfing, swimming or cycling in the stylish beach resort of **Pinamar** (p135).

8 Following the footsteps of generations of Catholic pilgrims to the cathedral in **Luján** (p121).

9 Walking the quaint wooden boardwalk along the coast in **Villa Gesell** (p137).