

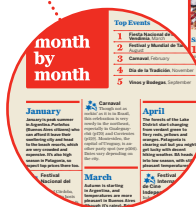
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# PLAN YOUR TRIP

## YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT

Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions  
to help you put together your perfect trip

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# UNDERSTAND ARGENTINA

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can make sense of what you see

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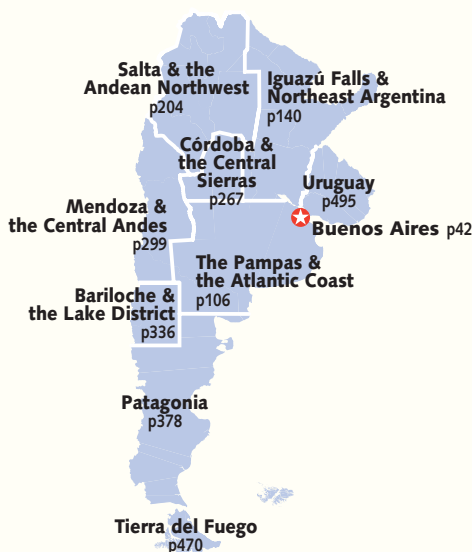
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THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

**Sandra Bao,**  
**Gregor Clark, Carolyn McCarthy,**  
**Andy Symington, Lucas Vidgen**

➤ Every listing is recommended by our authors, and their favourite places are listed first

➤ Look out for these icons:



Our author's top recommendation



A green or sustainable option



No payment required

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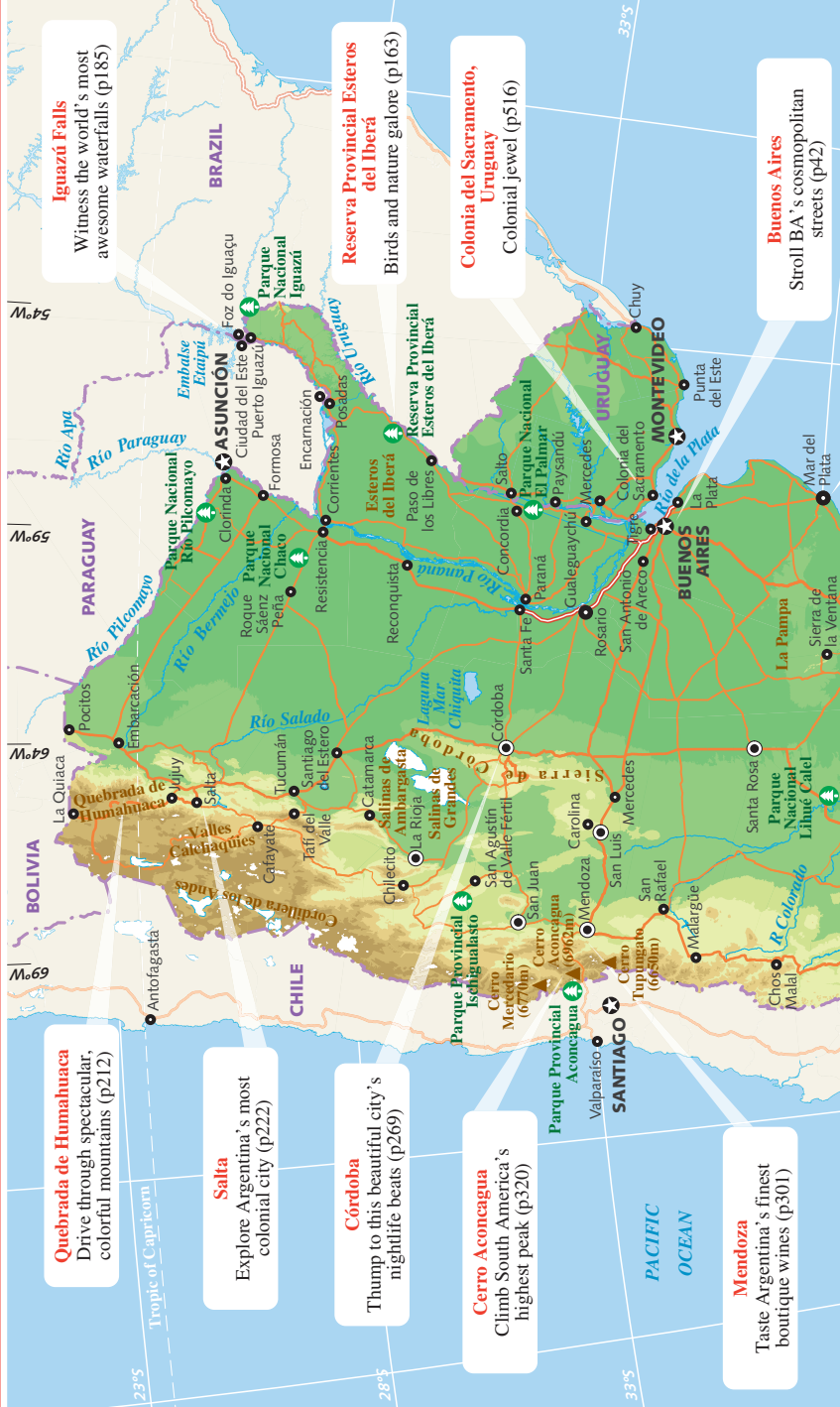
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# Argentina & Uruguay

## Top Experiences



### Bariloche

Ski, hike and eat chocolate  
(p360)

### El Chaltén

Hike the famous Fitz Roy  
Range (p429)

### Perito Moreno Glacier

See (and hear!) this glacier  
calving (p446)

### Ushuaia

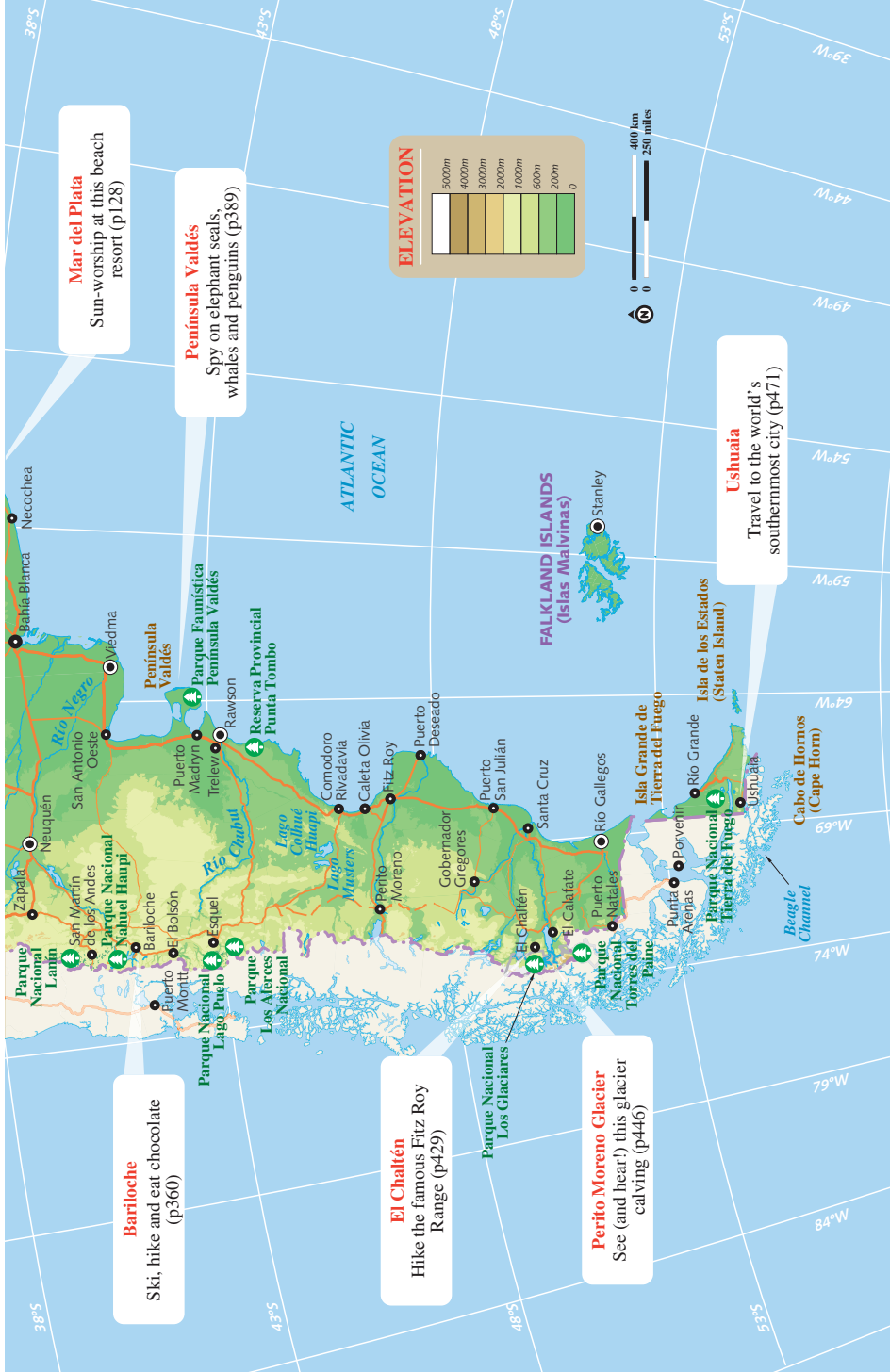
Travel to the world's  
southernmost city (p471)

### Mar del Plata

Sun-worship at this beach  
resort (p128)

### Península Valdés

Spy on elephant seals,  
whales and penguins (p389)





## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Sandra Bao

**Coordinating author; Buenos Aires; The Pampas & the Atlantic Coast** Sandra is a Chinese-American born in Argentina, and this fact has confused many Chinese, Americans and Argentines she's met. Perpetually peripatetic, she's traveled to around 60 countries and has lived on three continents, but now calls the beautiful Pacific Northwest home. Sandra is proud to be a *porteña* and regularly returns to Argentina to investigate what the wildly fluctuating peso – which keeps

her fully employed as a guidebook researcher – is doing. As well as writing many of the chapters of this book, over the last decade Sandra has contributed to a couple of dozen Lonely Planet titles on four continents.

Read more about Sandra at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/sandrabao](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/sandrabao)



### Gregor Clark

**Uruguay** Over the past 20 years, Gregor has traveled South America from tip to tail, developing a special fondness for Uruguay while researching the last three editions of this book. Favorite memories this time around include surveying Uruguay's Atlantic coast from atop Sierra de las Ánimas, riding horses through the rocky landscape of Sierra de Rocha and searching nationwide for the perfect *chivito*. He has contributed to a dozen other Lonely Planet titles, including *Brazil*

and *South America on a Shoestring*.

Read more about Gregor at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/gregorclark](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/gregorclark)



### Carolyn McCarthy

**Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego** Author Carolyn McCarthy traveled overland over 5000km in winter to make this trip, visiting hundreds of attractions and three auto mechanics along the way. When not writing about her favorite destination of Patagonia, she tries to visit tropical nations. In the last seven years she has contributed to over a dozen Lonely Planet titles. She has also written for *National Geographic*, *Outside* and *Lonely Planet Magazine*, among other publications.

You can follow her Americas blog at [www.carolynswildblueyonder.blogspot.com](http://www.carolynswildblueyonder.blogspot.com).

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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### **Andy Symington**

**Iguazú Falls & the Northeast; Salta & the Andean Northwest** Andy's relationship with Argentina is a story of four generations: his grandmother lived here in the 1920s, and her father had a *mate* plantation in Corrientes province. Andy first visited the country with his own father, the start of a long love affair that has involved many trips all around the continent, a spell living and working in Buenos Aires, and a deep-rooted respect for provincial Argentina. Andy hails from Aus-

tralia, lives in northern Spain, and has contributed to many Lonely Planet guidebooks.



### **Lucas Vidgen**

**Córdoba & the Central Sierras; Mendoza & the Central Andes; Bariloche & the Lake District** Lucas first visited Argentina in 2001, and was captivated by the country's wide open spaces and cosmopolitan cities. The huge amounts of quality beef and wine didn't go unnoticed, either. Lucas has contributed to a variety of Latin American Lonely Planet titles including various editions of the *Argentina* and *South America* books. He currently lives in Quetzaltenango,

Guatemala where he publishes – and occasionally works on – the city's leading nightlife and culture magazine, XelaWho ([www.xelawho.com](http://www.xelawho.com)).

# itineraries

*Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to [lonelyplanet.com/thorntree](http://lonelyplanet.com/thorntree) to chat with other travelers.*



## One Week A Week Around Buenos Aires

Seen the capital city from top to bottom and wondering what else to do? Well, if you like water, **Tigre** is a great nearby choice – a bustling delta and popular *porteño* (resident of Buenos Aires) getaway. And not far away is peaceful **San Antonio de Areco** with a history of gaucho culture and surrounded by *estancias* – or tidy **La Plata**, with its huge cathedral.

Perhaps you'd prefer the beach? **Pinamar** and **Villa Gesell** make a great summer weekend trip, as does **Mar del Plata** – the biggest Argentine beach destination of them all. Or head inland to **Tandil**, a pretty town near scenic hills and a large recreational reservoir.

And then there's Uruguay – just a (relatively) short boat ride away. **Colonia del Sacramento** is truly charming, filled with cobbled streets and atmospheric colonial buildings. **Montevideo** is kind of like BA's little sister – smaller and less frantic, but still offering big city delights like a beautiful theater, historic downtown and eclectic architecture. And if you really want to party, take your bikini to **Punta del Este** – a magnet for celebrities, rich *porteños* and whoever else just wants to have a good time.



## One Month Unmissable Argentina

Argentina is a huge country – the world's eighth largest – and experiencing all its highlights thoroughly will require at least a month, plus a lot of airplane flights. If you want to see both the north and south, plan your trip accordingly: Patagonia is best in January and February, but this is when the northern deserts are at their hottest (doing both might be best in spring or fall). Tailor the following destinations to your tastes, spending more or less time where you want it.

Take a few days to explore the wonders of **Buenos Aires**, with its fascinating neighborhoods and big-city sights. If it's the right season, head south for wildlife viewing at **Reserva Faunística Península Valdés** – the whales, elephant seals and penguins are especially popular. From here hop a flight to **Ushuaia**, the southernmost city in the world and prime jumping-off point to Antarctica (add another two weeks and *minimum* US\$5000 for this trip!).

Now you'll head north (your only choice) to **El Calafate**, where the stunning **Perito Moreno Glacier** (in Parque Nacional Los Glaciares) is one of the world's most unique sights. If you love the outdoors, cross the border to Chile's **Parque Nacional Torres del Paine**, an awe-inspiring cluster of mountains boasting some of earth's most beautiful landscapes. Back in Argentina is **El Chaltén**, another world-class climbing, trekking and camping destination.

Further up the spine of the Andes is Argentina's **Lake District**, where a chocolate stop in **Bariloche** is a must. Gorgeous scenery, outdoor activities and lovely nearby towns can easily add days to your itinerary. Your next destination is now **Mendoza**, Argentina's wine mecca, which also offers great outdoor adventures and mind-blowing Andean scenery. A 10-hour bus ride lands you in **Córdoba**, the country's second-largest city with amazing colonial architecture and cutting-edge culture. From here it's a flight north to pretty **Salta**, where you can explore colorful canyons, charming villages and cacti-dotted desert panoramas.

Pack up your bags again and head east to **Parque Nacional Iguazú**, where the world's most massive falls will simply astound you – they're nearly 3km long and made up of 200 separate waterfalls. Now fly back to Buenos Aires, do what you missed doing the first time around (or do the stuff you loved again) and party till your plane leaves.





- » (above) Tigre (p103)
- » (left) Glaciar Perito Moreno (p446)

MICHAEL TAYLOR/LOVELY PLANET IMAGES ©



## One Month Ruta Nacional 40

Argentina's quintessential road trip, RN 40 travels the length of Argentina (more than 5000km) and through some of the country's remotest regions.

Start in **La Quiaca**, at the border with Bolivia. Heading south, you'll pass through the wildly scenic villages of **Valles Calchaquies**. Then it's a pause at lovely **Cafayate**, before passing traditional **San José de Jáchal**. Take a breather in **Mendoza** to drink wine, then explore the volcanic landscapes around **Malargüe**.

Continue south, stopping to check out the lagoons and hot springs around **Chos Malal**. Detour to the national parks of **Lanín** and **Nahuel Huapi** for epic hiking before hitting **Bariloche**. Further on, consider sidetracking to **Los Antiguos** if it's cherry season, and stop at **Cueva de las Manos** for indigenous art.

Take a side trip to **El Chaltén** for hiking, then drive to **El Calafate** and see the Perito Moreno Glacier. Cross the border to Chile and explore stunning **Parque Nacional Torres del Paine** before doglegging west to **Río Gallegos**, where RN 40 ends nearby at **Cabo Virgenes**. Now consider continuing to **Ushuaia** on RN 3; it's as far south as any highway in the world goes.

## Two to Three Weeks Patagonian Passage

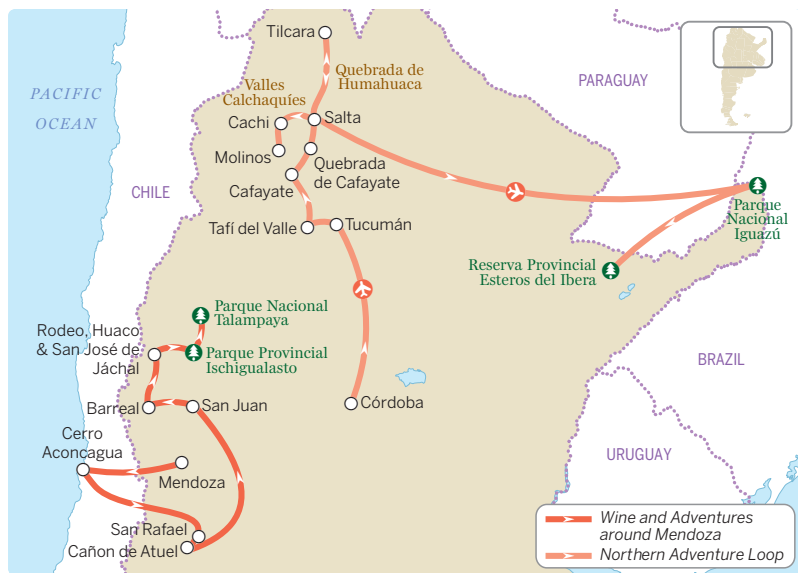
Begin in **Ushuaia**, in Tierra del Fuego, where you can kayak or hop on a boat to cruise around the Beagle Channel. Nearby **Parque Nacional Tierra del Fuego** offers a few end-of-the-world hikes (literally).

Now fly to **El Calafate**, in Patagonia, and lay your eyes on the spectacular and unforgettable Perito Moreno Glacier in **Parque Nacional Los Glaciares**. You'll also want to bus down to **Puerto Natales** and hike in the famous **Parque Nacional Torres del Paine** – you'll need at least four to six days here to appreciate it fully. Head north again to **El Chaltén** for world-class hiking and camping in the **Fitz Roy Range**.

With an extra week, fly to the **Lake District** and **Bariloche**, where you can hike (or fish, or raft, or bike) for days on end in the gorgeous national parks of **Nahuel Huapi** and **Lanín**. If you have an extra day or two, take a day trip to the hippie enclave of **El Bolsón**, or to the cute village of **Villa Traful**.

Finally, stop in **Puerto Madryn** to see the whales, elephant seals and penguins at **Reserva Faunística Península Valdés** – just make sure they're in season.





### Three Weeks Northern Adventure Loop

Start in **Córdoba**, Argentina's second-largest city, to explore one of the finest colonial centers.

Now fly north to historic **Tucumán** for some eclectic architecture and a lively street scene. Over to the west is pretty **Tafí del Valle**, and getting there via a gorgeous mountain road is half the fun. A bit further north is beautiful **Cafayate**, the place to knock back some aromatic torrontés wine. Sober up and travel through the epic **Quebrada de Cafayate** to **Salta**, whose central plaza is one of Argentina's best preserved; this is also where the famous 'Train to the Clouds' begins.

From Salta, head back south to the other-worldly region of **Valles Calchaquíes**, and the adobe villages of **Cachi** and **Molinos**. After this peaceful interlude, journey back north through the magnificently eroded valley of **Quebrada de Humahuaca**, where you can overnight in lively little **Tilcara**.

Return to Salta and fly to the incredible **Parque Nacional Iguazú**, home to nearly unbelievable waterfalls. And if you like animals, another worthy destination is **Reserva Provincial Esteros del Iberá**, an amazing wetlands preserve full of capybaras, caimans and countless bird species.

### Two Weeks Mendoza Wine & Adventures

Uncork your trip in beautiful **Mendoza**, located on the flanks of the Andes. Not only are there world-class vineyards surrounding the city, but outdoor enthusiasts will be in heaven. White-water rafting and skiing are awesome in the area, and **Cerro Aconcagua** (the western hemisphere's highest peak) isn't too far away.

Now take a crack-of-dawn bus to **San Rafael**, where you can rent a bike and ride out to the city's wineries – some of which specialize in sparkling wine. The area is also home to scenic **Cañon de Atuel**, a colorful, mini Grand Canyon. Then backtrack up north to **San Juan** to try the excellent syrah and other regional whites produced near this leafy provincial capital. You can also rent a car and head west to ethereal **Barreal** for rafting, mountaineering and land sailing, then go further north to explore the remote and traditional villages of **San José de Jáchal**, **Rodeo** and **Huaco**. Finally, be sure to visit the amazing landscapes of **Parque Provincial Ischigualasto** and **Parque Nacional Talampaya**, both boasting spectacular rock formations – along with petroglyphs and dinosaur fossils.

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