



Salta & the Andean Northwest

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Best National Parks

- ➔ Parque Nacional Calilegua (p245)
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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Estancia las Carreras (p264)
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Why Go?

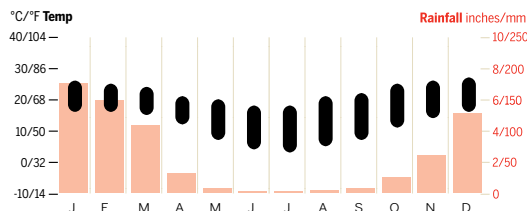
Argentina's northwest sits lofty, dry and tough beneath the mighty Andes. Nature works magic here with stone: weird, wonderful, tortured rockscapes are visible throughout.

There's a definite Andean feel with traditional handicrafts, llamas, indigenous communities and Inca ruins, and the high, arid puna (Andean highlands) stretching into Chile and Bolivia. The region's cities were Argentina's first colonial settlements and have special appeal.

Several popular routes await. From travelers' favorite Salta, head through a national park studded with cactus sentinels to gorgeous Cachi, then down through traditional weaving communities in the Valles Calchaquies to Cafayate, home of some of Argentina's best wines. Another route from Salta soars upwards to the puna mining settlement of San Antonio de los Cobres, heads north to the spectacular salt plains of the Salinas Grandes, and then down to the visually wondrous and history-rich Quebrada de Humahuaca.

When to Go

Salta



Feb Temperatures high but Carnaval celebrations worth seeing.

Jul & Aug Chilly up on the puna (Andean highlands), but pleasant around the Salta region.

Sep & Oct Top compromise: fewer tourists in Salta and acceptable spring temperatures.

Salta & the Andean Northwest Highlights

- 1 Wonder at nature's palette in the **Quebrada de Humahuaca** (p246)
- 2 Observe weavers at work in the memorable **Valles Calchaquies** (p232)
- 3 Cleanse your lungs in the crisp mountain air of **Tafi del Valle** (p263)
- 4 Hit Wild West **Chilecito** (p278), the base for uplifting mountain excursions
- 5 Soak up the colonial ambience and relax in the enticing boutique hotels of sophisticated **Salta** (p221)
- 6 Taste the torrontés at northern Argentina's wine capital of **Cafayate** (p236)

