

ACONCAGUA

- 22,830 feet/6959m
- South Americas Highest Peak
- Fully supported and Professionally Guided
- The Highest of the Seven Summits after Mt Everest



Adventure Alternative are embarking on this exciting expedition to Aconcagua, to the highest point in the Western hemisphere and the highest mountain outside of Asia. This is a challenging climb for people who aim to reach a high point in their mountaineering life. It is led by a very experienced team and will fulfil ambitions and build experience for any aspiring seven summiteer or anyone who is looking to reach new heights!

You will need to be in good physical condition. If you have not been to altitude before you must consider that 22,000ft plus is very high in anybodies book. You will need to monitor your bodies' ability to acclimatize, which will require patience and good judgment. Your experienced guides will help you make the right decisions and be assured that you are in qualified and very experienced hands.

Aconcagua is a big mountain, which deserves respect. Accordingly we have been careful to build in a thorough program of acclimatization giving you the best opportunity of reaching her summit. This is a strenuous expedition, in the following pages you will find the facts and no sales pitch! We are not interested in taking people to such an area, on such an expedition unless you have considered the reality of the challenge ahead. Saying this it is a feasible mountain to attempt with the right experience and motivation under your belt.

If at any time you have questions or want to chat through your suitability then do give us a call, as we'd love to see you standing on the top.

The Mountain

Aconcagua has two summits, north and south joined by a ridge the Cresta del Guanaco, which is nearly one kilometer long. Other ridges radiate from each summit, and the whole massif is isolated from other peaks. Shaped like a giant wedge, it has a very steep and massive face to the South and a gentle slope to the North. The huge Polish glacier flows to the East and a series of arêtes and couloirs flank it on the West.

Weather on Aconcagua

In a word, unpredictable! The peak itself has its own microclimate. The weather can be pleasant in the central Andes whilst a storm is raging up on Aconcagua. During the summer months it can be windy all of the time. In the valleys it can be 27c and as low as 3c at night. At camp 3 in the night it can be -15c to -30c. In the middle of the day on the summit the temperature could range from -25c to +15c.

The daily pattern tends to be an early clearing of cloud that often provides clear weather until midday. In the early afternoon clouds usually appear, engulfing the summit by mid to late afternoon, then clearing again as night falls.

Our Route

Our route ascends the mountain by the second most popular trekking route, called the Vacas valley route, also called the Polish glacier route, and descends by the busier normal route, also called the Horcones valley route. We use the Vacos valley route for our ascent of the mountain, rather than the normal route for the following reasons:

- It is physically harder, and a little longer, therefore aiding our acclimatization, and making us better prepared for summit day.
- It is much quieter. Only 25% of all climbers on the mountain take this route.
- Superior countryside, vistas, greenery, flora and fauna.



Expedition Daily Itinerary:

- Day 1. Depart on international flight to Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Arrive Buenos Aires and transfer on internal flight to Mendoza. Overnight in hotel.
Obtain permit and travel to Puente del Inca 2750m. Overnight in hostel
- Day 4. Trek to Pampa de Lenas 2700m. Camp overnight
- Day 5. Trek to Casa piedra 3,200m. Overnight camp
- Day 6. Trek to base camp Plaza Argentina 4,200m. Camp
- Day 7. Rest day
- Day 8. Carry to camp 1 at 4,850m, return to base camp
- Day 9. Rest day
- Day 10. Move up to camp 1 and sleep overnight.
- Day 11. Carry to camp 2 at 5,600m, and descend to camp 1 to sleep
- Day 12. Rest day
- Day 13. Move up to camp 2 and sleep overnight
- Day 14. Rest day
- Day 15. Trek to camp 3 at 6,100m, sleep overnight
- Day 16. Summit attempt
2nd summit attempt or descend to Plaza de Mulas base camp at 4,200m
- Day 18. Descend to base camp
- Day 19. Walk out to road head and overnight hostel Puente del Inca
- Day 20. Transport to Mendoza- flight to Buenos Aires- international flight home
- Day 21. Arrive home



DAILY ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1:

International flight from your home, overnight to Buenos Aires the capital of Argentina.

Day 2:

Arrive in Buenos Aires and transfer for the one and a half hour flight to Mendoza. You will be met on arrival and transported to your overnight hotel, close to the city centre. Mendoza is a bustling, vibrant city with tree lined avenues, and pavement cafes. Food and wine are superb, and there are many well equipped gear shops, for last minute purchases.

Day 3:

The morning will be spent getting our Aconcagua permit, checking equipment and clothing before departing on our 3 hour drive to Puente del Inca. Here we'll stay overnight at the hostel, explore the village, have dinner and prepare for the start of our trek tomorrow morning.

Day 4:

After breakfast we have a short drive to the start of our route. We will be trekking with light day sacks, with most of our gear and equipment carried by mules. After 4 to 5 hours trekking we arrive at our campsite Pampa de Lenas 2,700m. It's an easy days walk, always interesting, with very little elevation gained. We camp under high cliffs with the river alongside.



Day 5:

Our trek today is similar to yesterdays, in duration and elevation gain. Early afternoon we will get our first view of Aconcagua, before we reach our campsite at Casa de Piedra 3,200m

Day 6:

Today we trek to our base camp at Plaza Argentina 4,200m, taking us 5 to 6 hours. There are 2 river crossings to make and continually fine views of Aconcagua and other nearby peaks. The camp lies on undulating glacial terrain, with a good view of our route to camp 1.



Day 7:

Today it's a rest day, so we can build on our acclimatization. We will prepare our equipment and food for the days ahead, catch up on diaries and books, talk with fellow mountaineers, and you can explore the interesting areas around base camp.

Day 8:

Today we will make a carry of food, fuel and equipment to camp 1, at 4850m. It's a steep trail of about 5 hours. Initially, open, with fine views, then through a maze of penitentes (wind formed ice spikes). In the afternoon a quick descent back to base camp.

Day 9:

Today we will explore more of the area around base camp and ascend some of the lower peaks, to build on our fitness and acclimatization.

Day 10:

After breakfast we will carry our remaining gear, food, tents and sleeping bags to camp 1, where we will camp overnight.

Day 11:

Today we make a carry of food and gear to camp 2 at 5,600m. It's a steady trek, gradually gaining height, with an excellent sheltered spot midway for lunch. At the camp site there are great views of the polish glacier and the summit. In the afternoon we descend to camp 1.



Day 12:

Today we stay at camp 1. Good food, plenty of liquids and lots of rest.

Day 13:

After breakfast we ascend once more to camp 2 with our remaining equipment and stay overnight.

Day 14:

Our final rest day to complete our acclimatization program will be spent at camp 2. Its an opportunity to talk to climbers often descending from the summit and get the latest conditions of the terrain and weather.

Day 15:

This morning, a long ascending traverse brings us to Rocas Blancas camp 3, at 6,100m our last campsite on the mountain before our summit attempt. We have now joined the normal route on Aconcagua and would expect to meet a lot more climbers. It will take us about 3 hours so we will have plenty of time to rest and prepare everything for our summit attempt in the morning.

Day 16:

An early start, will see a steady climb to a col at 6,250m, then a long traverse to a ridge known as cresta del viento. More traversing and we come to the base of the canaleta. It's a 400m steep ascent on a mixture of loose sand, scree and snow, and then a final gentle traverse to the summit. After photographs, celebrations, and fantastic views, we start our descent back to camp3.

Day 17:

If we don't have favorable conditions on our summit attempt, we also have today. Otherwise it's a long descent to base camp on the normal route at Plaza de Mulas. Here we camp overnight.



Day 18/19:

After breakfast we get an early start to the road head, and meet our transport to take us to Puente del Inca. We stay overnight in the hostel and celebrate our achievements.

Day 20:

Transport will return us to Mendoza to catch our return flight to Buenos Aires and our international flight home.

Day 21:

Arrive home

N.B. The exact itinerary is flexible, and will depend on the fitness, acclimatization, and goals of the group.

EQUIPMENT:

A variety of clothing will be necessary for your trip. You will need clothing for dining in restaurants, the heat of Mendoza and lower altitudes, and to protect you from the colder temperatures whilst on the mountain. This list is designed to help you choose the right gear for the demands of this trek. The emphasis on equipment necessary for mountain travel follows two simple rules: Lightweight and functional. The items you choose to take should be lightweight, dependable and adaptable to a variety of weather conditions. When making the final decision as to what goes into your pack, remember that it's a fine science of taking just enough clothes and accessories to do the job, whilst not over burdening yourself with items you probably will not use.

Rucksack capacity 80 litres

Small day sack

Thermarest or foam sleeping bag

Plastic or leather mountaineering boots (compatible with crampons)

River shoes, sandals or old trainers to cross rivers

Inner and outer gloves

Sunglasses, suncream, lip salve

Small towel

Small first aid kit containing: plasters, aspirin, ibuprofen

Water bottle

Adjustable trekking poles

Wind proof fleece, polartec 300

Lightweight fleece pants

Wind proof pants/jacket/suit

Diary, pen, book

Waterproof inner or quality garbage bag

Sleeping bag rated to -20c

Ice axe, crampons (compatible with boots)

Approach shoes or lightweight trekking boots

Headtorch

Fleece hat, sunhat, balaclava

Toiletries, wet wipes

Personal medication

Shorts and t shirts, lightweight long pants

Pee bottle

Down jacket

Base layer top and bottom

Underwear and socks

Camera, batteries

Time Zone

Local time in all of Argentina is three time zones west of GMT. You must take into consideration daylight saving seasonality.

Money

The official currency is the Argentinean Peso, although the American Dollar is widely accepted. The official exchange rate is about



3 pesos to 1 dollar, but they can be exchanged for .5% fee as well. Due to the ease of forging US dollars not everybody is happy to exchange them and \$20 notes tend to be the easiest changes however you should ensure they are clean notes. Sterling and Euros are also easily exchanged.

Language

Argentina and Chile's official language is Spanish. English is spoken at most agencies, hotels and information centers. The Spanish is slightly different to European Spanish but spoken slower. Local street traders are friendly and if you speak 'Spanglish' to them they will happily help you although they will reply in Spanish!

Power Supply

220 volts, 50 hertz, most hotels have American and European shaving sockets or a combination of European / Australian sockets so it is worth bringing an adaptor.

Expedition fee includes:

- Hotel in Mendoza 1 night
- Hostel in Puente del Inca 2 nights
- Peak permit
- Mule transportation for ferrying gear to and from base camp.
- Tents and cooking gear
- Transport return from Mendoza to the mountain
- Welcome and farewell dinner
- All meals on expedition
- Western and local guide
- All organization and preparation

Land Costs do not include:

- 1/ International round trip airfare to Buenos Aires
- 2/ Internal airfare between Buenos Aires and Mendoza
- 3/ Meals and hotels outside the itinerary
- 4/ Personal equipment
- 5/ Single room supplement for hotels
- 6/ Medical/Evacuation insurance
- 7/ Alcoholic and bottled drinks
- 8/ Porters

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