



MENDOZA & SAN RAFAEL

Wineries + Cordillera + Villavicencio + Cañón del Atuel + Caverna de las Brujas

Mendoza from North to South, we begin knowing its capital city by night. We then go through the wine roads discovering its most important varietal which is the Malbec. We also go along the Cordillera de los Andes (Andean mountain range) and the Quebrada de Villavicencio (Villavicencio Canyon). We complete the journey in San Rafael where we visit El Cañón del Atuel (the waters in this canyon are good for rafting), La Caverna de las Brujas, El Sosneado or Los Reyunos.



9 days - 8 nights

- ✓ Accommodation and breakfast - Double Room
- ✓ Transfer IN OUT APT/HTL/APT
- ✓ Regular Tours with Spanish & English Guide
- ✓ Permanent Coordination

Itinerary



1 Mendoza

Reception and transfer from Mendoza airport to hotel.

[Optional: Mendoza by Night](#)

We discover another Mendoza during the night, lights give other appearance to the Cuyo city. The pedestrian street, the parks and the Civic neighbourhood, stand out with the gleaming lights once the sun sets. We go along España street to visit the San Martín, Independencia and España squares. Then we go to the Civic neighbourhood where we watch the Government House and the Law Courts getting into Belgrano Street where we go parallel to the railways which used to go from Buenos Aires to Mendoza. A special case is the Aristides Villanueva Avenue which is the highlight of the Mendoza night. This avenue has its own life, due to the varied shops and restaurants it offers. Then comes the General San Martín Park with its over 300 hectares, where we enjoy its principal attractions: The Rosedal, the Regatas Lake, the Cinco Continentes Fountain and the Portones. The return trip to the city is along the stately Emilio Civit Avenue, in an exclusively residential zone. Optionally, we can continue enjoying the night with a Tango show or a wine-tasting of the excellent quality and worldwide known wines.



day
2

Enoturismo en Mendoza: Tradición del Vino Malbec

Breakfast at hotel. To go after a good Malbec we must travel up to Lujan de Cuyo, there we go. We stop at the Lagarde Winery with an exquisite gourmet lunch washed down with wines from the winery. The road is among vineyards, fruit trees and olive trees towards another winery, but of handicraft production. This family business is dedicated to organic wines production. Then we continue our wine route but now to know an industrial winery. Then we continue to visit an olive oil factory. In the background we can enjoy the beautiful Cordon del Plata mountains.

***Note:** The possible wineries to be visited are principally Lagarde, Lopez or Flichman and as handicraft wineries, Cecchin Family, Cavas Don Arturo or San Huberto, among others. The program covers a visit to 2 wineries.*

day
3

Along the Andean Range bordering the Mendoza river.

Breakfast at the hotel. This program takes us to the limit with Chile crossing the Cordillera de los Andes (Andean Mountain Range) along the Routes 40 and 7 bordering the Mendoza river. We go by the Potrerillo Reservoir which contains the Mendoza river waters and along the Uspallata Valley dividing the foothills from the mountain range. We make a short detour to visit the Picheuta Bridge, a real milestone as General Jose de San Martin crossed it with The Andean Army when crossing the Andes. We will visit the most imposing Andean massif, the Aconcagua Mount, with its 6.962 meters over sea level and we watch the Puente del Inca (Inca Bridge), which is a natural bridge with a famous history and thermal waters. We stop at the entrance of the park to make a short walk to be able to watch the southern side of the Aconcagua and enjoy the sight of the Horcones Lake. The journey continues along the Route 7 and takes us to the ski resort Los Penitentes, up to the border town of Las Cuevas and with good weather we climb to the Cristo Redentor Monument (Christ The Redeemer). We can optionally have lunch (not included) to return later to Mendoza city.

day
4

Villavencio Gully.

Breakfast at hotel. We set off to the Villavencio Gully, leaving Mendoza in a northerly direction towards Las Heras department. During the journey we leave at one side the Historical Field del Plumerillo, historical place because the national troops of the General San Martin's Army organized here. Then we turn into Route 52, the old former route to Chile, in a northwestern direction. It was here that General Las Heras crossed with the Andes Army in 1817 during the campaign to free our neighbor country. Along this path we arrive at the old and new Minetti cement factories. Turning west we arrive at the Cañota Monument, famous for being the place where San Martin's Army divided, one wing overtaken by him crossed by the Paso de Los Patos and the other wing overtaken by General Las Heras crossed by the Puesto de Vaquerias, where we get before entering the Natural Reserve of Villavencio. There is an interpretative center of the autochthonous flora and fauna of the region. We continue up to the famous and abandoned hotel, with beautiful flowery gardens. We come to



know its chapel, built by Angel Velaz, owner of the place. In the afternoon we return to Mendoza.

Note: *The Thermal hotel in Villavicencio. The hotel is located nearly 1,800 meters over sea level, it is well-known for its natural springs of mineral water. It was built in 1940 and was opened until 1978 working as a thermal hotel. Nowadays it is still beautiful as it was at first and is an Andean Mountain Range symbol. The water has mineral properties. Villavicencio is born from water falling from the Aconcagua Mount, filtering due to gravity to the subterranean formations descending to low depths. Pressure and temperature impel it towards the surface ascending through a tectonic crack, rising as a spring near 1,800 meters. Minerals of the stones are added on the way.*



San Rafael - Los Reyunos

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to San Rafael. We leave San Rafael city, before the excursion to The Reyunos we visit a winery which dedicates not only to high quality wine manufacturing but also champagne. Then we take the Christ roundabout to reach the Historical Fortress and the first chapel in the zone, then we visit the Galileo Vitali, The Tigre y The Reyunos dams. The Reyunos dam is 35 km away, it is a 740 hectares lake, where minnows are sown and excellent for trout and silverside fishing. It is the first pump central in South America, with a less energy consumption when its turbines spin to give back the accumulated water to the lake. It was finished at the beginning of the 80s, it is fed from the Diamante river and was made on the canyon with the same name.

[Optional -The Sosneado 4 x 4](#)

Near San Rafael, some 150 kilometers away, is the Sosneado, let´s go towards it. At midday we have breakfast there and in the afternoon we set off on Land Rover 4x4 pick-up trucks with a professional guide along a good road bordering the Atuel river entering the Sosneado Lake, to Cueva del Indio (Native Cave) which faithfully represents the ancient cultures that inhabited these lands. We also visit the remains of the old hotel Termas El Sosneado which had thermal water pools with healing effects. We come to know a mineral water spring and we reach the Fosiles Mount to discover fossilized marine algae and snails. We go back to San Rafael in the evening.



Atuel Canyon.

Breakfast at the hotel. We set off from San Rafael towards the Cuesta de los Terneros to go to Dique Valle Grande and the Atuel river. We stop at the San Francisco de Asis lookout point to enjoy a terrific sight of the city and the canyon. After several kilometres we enter El Nihuil which is impressive for the depth of its lake. We rest and may have lunch (not included). We set off to the Atuel Canyon, to be trapped by a landscape of pure beauty, typical of the andean ecosystem, due to the erosive action of winds and water creating natural sculptures becoming awesome landforms, fanciful shapes of mother nature such as Museo de Cera (Wax Museum), el Lagarto (the Alligator), Los Monstruos (the Monsters), Los Jardines Colgantes (The Hanging Gardens) or La Ciudad Encantada (The Haunted City), etc. The canyon is formed by the Atuel river, Valle Grande Reservoir and El Nihuil. We make a short



walk along the canyon to arrive at the Valle Grande. The ones who want adventure tourism, can enjoy rafting, rappel or a boat voyage (all these activities must be booked at destination).

Optional: Rafting in Mendoza

Breakfast at the hotel. The Cañon del Atuel river is a synonym of rafting and is famous in all the country for its rapids and the transparency of its water which combine with the beauty of the place. The river is navigable every month except June with a difficulty level 2, based on the international scale from 0 to 6, its average depth is 1,20 meters. The rapids of Atuel and Diamante rivers are excellent to practise this sport, Grande river is another option.



Las Brujas Cave

Breakfast at the hotel. We go towards Malargüe city, we go through the city to go other 60 kilometers to arrive at the caves. During the journey we appreciate the Cuesta del Chihuido and the Petrified Forest. Once we arrive, we start a medium level trek inside the cave, which lasts nearly 2 hours. We provide helmets and torches for this. We find stalactites and stalagmites inside the caves, as a product of water filtering during years and forming different shapes. Each centimeter of stalactites and stalagmites have been formed in more than 1300 years, this makes us think that Las Brujas Cave (The Witches Cave) is millions of years old. We finish our journey returning to Malargüe, after visiting the city, back to Mendoza.

***Note:** It is recommended to be lightly dressed with trekking shoes and a jacket or sweater as there are 10° in the caves. Children over 5 and below 8 can access to the first section. Children below 5 years old´s access is forbidden to the caves.*



Mendoza

Breakfast at the Hotel. Departure to Mendoza. Free day.

Optional - Towards the origins of wine: Mendoza wineries.

We begin this itinerary along Maipu, Mendoza wine and olive cradle, going to prestigious wineries in Mendoza province, such as La Rural - Ruttini, where we can see their museums and discover their San Felipe wine, bottled in caramagnola. If it is Sunday we replace this one for another winery but of handcrafted production. We then continue to the Zuccardi winery to taste the Santa Julia wines. This family got the Best of the Great Wine Capitals prize in the year 2007, in recognition of their history. Near midday we have lunch at the Casa del Visitante, where there are the cellars and restaurant.



Mendoza

Breakfast at the Hotel. Transfer to Mendoza Airport.

End of our services.