

Journey Idea to Northwest Argentina

17 Days



Purmamarca, Salta

Prepared for
Steppes Travel Clients

QUICK REFERENCE ITINERARY

Day 1	Fly UK/Buenos Aires
Day 2	Buenos Aires
Day 3	Fly Buenos Aires/Jujuy
Day 4	Purmamarca
Day 5	Purmamarca/Iruya
Day 6	Iruya/Yavi
Day 7	Yavi/Purmamarca
Day 8	Purmamarca/Salta
Day 9	Salta
Day 10	Salta/Cachi
Day 11	Cachi
Day 12	Cachi/Cafayate
Day 13	Cafayate
Day 14	Cafayate/Salta
Day 15	Fly Salta/Buenos Aires
Day 16	Fly Buenos Aires/UK, flying overnight
Day 17	Arrive UK

DETAILED TRIP ITINERARY

Day 1

UK/Buenos Aires

Depart the UK on a flight to Buenos Aires, a journey of approximately 15 hours.

You will be met upon arrival by the Steppes Travel representative at the airport and transferred to your hotel. All transfers are private (unless stated otherwise) and included in your trip, however it will not detail every transfer on this itinerary.



After a first attempt in 1536 the great city of Buenos Aires was founded in 1580 on the shores of the River Plate. Not only is it the continent's largest city but it is also the most sophisticated. Its people are lively and friendly and it has something for every visitor: beautiful parks, football stadiums, horse racing, riding, rose gardens, golf courses, night clubs, theatres, tango and opera. Shopping is an exciting experience along Florida street, around San Martin Plaza or in San Telmo where antiques are a speciality. The Italian Boca district, Palermo Parks, Recoleta Cemetery and the waterway of the Paraná River are all attractions that give Buenos Aires a character all of its own. There are opportunities to savour the best beef and local wines in sophisticated restaurants, riverside eating houses or with Gauchos who prepare juicy cuts on special spits and grills - truly a city to be enjoyed!

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Buenos Aires on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 2

Buenos Aires

Day to spend independently as you choose in Buenos Aires. Here are some of the best ways to spend your time in this vibrant, buzzing city:



- Learn to tango in one of the city's famous *milongas* (dance halls)
- Browse for bargains in the famous antique market in San Telmo on Sunday
- Linger over a martini in the opulent surroundings of The Alvear Palace's lobby bar
- Watch a game of polo by some of the world's leading players
- Check out the trendy bar and restaurant scene in hip Palermo Viejo
- Hit Florida Street for superb leather goods
- Explore the riverside suburb of Tigre & cruise the waterways of the Delta
- Experience gaucho culture and traditional rural life on a Pampas estancia
- Make a daytrip by ferry across the Plata River to explore the charming UNESCO town of Colonia in Uruguay

Overnight at your chosen hotel in Buenos Aires on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 3

Buenos Aires/Purmamarca



Depart Buenos Aires on a flight to Jujuy.

Pick up your car hire from the airport and head north, up the Quebrada de Humahuaca, a journey of approximately 3 hours.

Purmamarca is a typical small Andean village made up of adobe brick buildings that have remained largely unchanged for centuries. The most remarkable feature of the village is its striking backdrop of the 7-coloured hill. The inhabitants live off the land or are artisans and are very warm and welcoming to visitors. Purmamarca is the perfect base for trips to the famous Quebrada de Humahuaca.

El Manantial del Silencio is the best hotel in Purmamarca with spectacular views over the seven-coloured hills and the picturesque village of Purmamarca. The hotel has twelve extremely comfortable rooms with large beds, telephones and ensuite bathrooms with a bath and a swimming pool in the garden. The sitting room and dining room have a minimalist design and are decorated with local tapestries and artefacts. The restaurant serves delicious typical Andean food such as llama and steamed maize parcels.



Overnight at El Manantial del Silencio in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 4

Purmamarca



Day to explore the local area, perhaps walk up one of the surrounding hills, visit the local boutique market stalls or just relax around the pool.

Overnight at El Manantial del Silencio in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 5

Purmamarca/Iruya



Set off early morning from Purmamarca up to Quebrada de Humahuaca or Humahuaca Gorge; one of the most spectacular drives in the country. The valley cuts through the foothills of the Andes that are striped a striking orange, red, green and yellow as a result of the different rates of oxidisation of the minerals in the rock. Along the way to Humahuaca you will pass ancient pre-colonial civilisations marked by the number of cacti, each one planted to mark the death of an inhabitant. On reaching the adobe settlement of Humahuaca and after a tour of the town you could have lunch of traditional Andean dishes whilst a panpipe band plays haunting tunes.

Tilcara at an altitude of 2,360 metres is located along the Quebrada de Humahuaca. Tilcara is a good base to explore the surrounding area and is the liveliest and one of the prettiest adobe villages in the valley. Just on the outskirts of



the village are the pre-Hispanic hill top fortress of Pucara. The site consists of a number of walled buildings and terraces, with stunning views along the Gorge of Humahaca and an interesting archaeological museum.

Continue to Iruya, the drive from Tilcara, crossing the Tropic of Capricorn to Iruja will take approx 3 to 4 hours.

Iruya is situated overlooking the Quebrada Humahuaca, in the far north of Argentina; to reach the village is a challenging unpaved road. The village was founded in 1741, and is a small walled village perched at an altitude of 2,700 metres. Iruya was an overnight stop for the mule trains to Bolivia. Iruya is a great spot for walking trips where at all times the views are stunning.

Perched at the top of the village with far reaching views, Hosteria de Iruya is a comfortable base from which to explore the Iruya area. Each guestroom is simple yet charming, food is sourced locally and of a high standard, and much appreciated to those who make it this far up the Quebrada de Humahuaca.

Overnight at Hosteria de Iruya in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 6

Iruya/Yavi

Drive back down from Iruya and onto Yavi, a journey of approximately 5 hours.



Yavi is a charming sleepy brown adobe village town and a must see is the church of Nuestra Senora del Rosario y San Francisco. This is probably the finest church in northern Argentina, constructed in 1690, with white stone and huge buttresses. Opposite is the 18th century Casa del Marques Campero y Tojo, also worth visiting, the former house granted by Philip of Spain. Important the church opening times vary so please check on arrival.

Hostal de Yavi is a fairly basic hosteria in Yavi offering simple bedrooms, a communal lounge, home cooked food and a relaxed atmosphere to its adventurous guests. Good base for local trekking and exploration of Laguna Pozuelos.

Overnight at Hostal de Yavi in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 7

Yavi/Purmamarca

Drive from Yavi back to Purmamarca.

You could cross into Bolivia at La Quiaca and do a spot of shopping before heading back south to Purmamarca, a journey of approximately 4 hours.

Overnight at El Manantial del Silencio in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 8

Purmamarca/Salta



Early morning departure from your hotel climbing steadily upwards through a series of switchbacks until you go over a 3,100m pass and arrive onto the high *puna*. Here you will experience the Salinas Grandes or great salt flats, with mesmerising shimmering views of the salt encrusted lakes with pink flamingos. Here you leave the tarmac road to Chile and head west around the salt flats and drive for a few hours to the mining town of San Antonio de los Cobres. This is a rough road in the middle of nowhere, but more than makes up for it with its breath-taking scenery and the vicunas and llamas you may be lucky enough to see en route.



From San Antonio, visit the famous La Polvorilla train Viaduct at 224m long, curved and 63m high, one of the greatest feats of South American railway construction. Start descending down through the stunning Quebrada del Toro, visiting the ancient ruins at Tastil, following the 'train to the clouds' line until you hit the verdant plains of the Lerma valley where your hotel is located in Salta.



In the heart of the dramatic province of Salta lies the city of Salta itself, a charismatic colonial gem situated in a strikingly beautiful, mountainous region that makes a comfortable base for exploration of the dramatic surrounding landscapes. Once you've explored the city's striking architecture, museums and handicrafts market, there are plenty of excursions to consider further afield. Take the 'Train to the Clouds' that climbs to an incredible 4,475 metres passing over 31 bridges and through 21 tunnels, travel north through dramatic landscape of barren multi-coloured rock dotted with cacti or visit some of the enigmatic pre-colombian sites. This is an extraordinary region of Argentina less visited than other areas containing some of the country's most striking landscapes. Those travellers who make the effort will be richly rewarded.



The charming Spanish colonial style hotel, Solar de la Plaza, comprises just 28 beautifully appointed rooms all with private facilities and benefits from a central location overlooking one of Salta's main square's. There is a rooftop swimming pool, health club and a superb restaurant.

Overnight at Solar de la Plaza in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 9

Salta

Day to relax and explore beautiful Salta.

Salta is a fascinating city to explore, plus the surrounding area, here to follow is a suggestion of activities and excursions to choose from:

- MAAM - high mountain archaeology museum on the main square
- San Lorenzo, a verdant valley and pretty village just 10kms from Salta
- Explore the Quebrada del Toro



- Visit the man made Cabra Corral Dam, 83 kms outside of Salta
- Full day trip on the 'Train to the Clouds'
- Head north up the beautiful Quebrada d'Humahnaca
- Head south and visit the rock formations along the Rio de las Conchas
- Visit the surrounding wine lands and Calchaqui Valley
- Stay on a local finca and visit the tobacco and sugar cane factories
- Wander around Salta and explore the pretty streets and shops

Overnight at Solar de la Plaza in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 10

Salta/Cachi

Head off in the morning from Salta to Cachi, a journey of approximately 3 hours.



Cachi was founded in 1694, and is a charming village of simple whitewashed streets and a central square with a pretty church with a roof made from cactus wood. There are a number of interesting walks from Cachi into the surrounding villages, where you can still see the pre Inca irrigational systems bring down melt water from the surrounding peaks. Cachi is a very sleepy town and is the perfect place to unwind and relax.



At the foot of the Nevado de Cachi, La Merced del Alto dominates over the breathtaking valley, surrounding hills, rivers and streams. Its views invite you to explore the valley or simply relax and enjoy the silence. La Merced del Alto has 14 beautiful rooms as well as a restaurant, bar and wine cellar. Other facilities include a spa and outdoor pool with amazing views of the surrounding hills and a terrace to sit and relax.

Overnight at La Merced del Alto in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 11

Cachi

Day at leisure to relax and explore Cachi.



Stroll into Cachi town and sample local cuisine, browse for souvenirs in the simple market stalls or visit the Archeological Museum, Cachi Church or Antigales, where deposits of old native civilizations are found.

Overnight at La Merced del Alto in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 12

Cachi/Cafayate

The journey from Cachi to Cafayate, travelling along the Calchaquies Valley, must be one of the most beautiful journeys by road you can take in Argentina. Travelling times is approximately 4 hours, however there are plenty of



interesting places to stop and see on the way.

Molinos is a very pretty town to stop off and visit, or head off and visit Finca Colome, the wine estate that includes the highest grown grapes in the world. As the Calchaquies Valley widens, the area is planted with vines in greater number, before arriving in the beautiful town of Cafayate.



Patios de Cafayate Hotel & Spa is located in the same grounds as the state-of-the-art El Esteco Winery on the edge of Cafayate and overlooking the Calchaqui Valley.

Each of the suites and guestrooms are tastefully furnished with antique furniture, artisan carpets, and penny royal baskets. Ancient traditions of the Calchaquí Valley promote relaxation, health and pleasure which continue today as part of the philosophy of Winespa. Pamper yourself with world-class treatments amongst breathtaking views of the valley. Cafayate is home to an ample range of vinerias, which offer guided tours for sampling many excellent wines produced locally. The grape harvest takes place during March and is accompanied with a number of local fiestas and celebrations marking the occasion.



Overnight at Hotel Patios de Cafayate in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 13

Cafayate



Day at leisure to relax and explore the surrounding valley including the charming town of Cafayate or you could simply laze around the pool with a glass of local wine.

Overnight at Hotel Patios de Cafayate in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 14

Cafayate/Salta



Return to Salta, a journey of approx 3 hours up the Route of the Conchas (sea shells). This is a stunning route of rock eroded rivers and valleys make a stop on the way to admire the views and incredibly shaped and coloured rock formations.

Either drop off your car hire in Salta or tomorrow at Salta airport.

Overnight at Solar de la Plaza in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 15

Salta/Buenos Aires

Depart Salta on a flight to Buenos Aires.

For your final evening in Argentina you may like to consider going to one of the famous tango dance shows so synonymous with this vibrant city, which put on highly entertaining tango demonstrations with dinner included. The quality of the dancing is exceptional even to a novice and the food draws

strongly on traditional Argentinian recipes. This can either be pre-arranged by *Steppes* or locally through either your guide or hotel.

Overnight at Legado Mitico in a twin/double room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 16

Buenos Aires/UK

Depart Buenos Aires on a flight to UK, flying overnight.

Day 17

Arrive back UK.

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TRIP PRICE

Estimated price from £2,945 per person + flight taxes

The rates quoted are subject to the availability of all services, currency fluctuations, written confirmation and Steppes Travels terms and conditions.

The price includes return flight from UK, internal flights, local transport, airport-hotel transfers and tours on a shared basis (or can be organised on a private basis), accommodation (twin/double with private facilities) and board. Accommodation is normally on a bed and breakfast basis, unless staying in a remote lodge when normally this will be on a full board basis.

Extras include entrance charges to sites, parks and museums, extra local excursions and guided tours, international and domestic airport taxes. Travel insurance, visas, single supplements (if applicable) and items of a personal nature, such as laundry, drinks, etc.

Please note that the above is only a suggested journey, allowing in-depth visits to the highlights of the country and the chance to explore the wide range of possibilities this fascinating country has to offer. We have a separate list of escorted tours and specialise in tailoring individual itineraries to your particular interests and requirements. This journey idea serves more as a general guide on what there is to see and do, as well as a guide on price.

Why Travel with Steppes?

Steppes Travel was founded in 1989 with the objective of creating a travel company where service and knowledge are of the highest priority. We aim to design itineraries and include the highlights of any country, whilst taking travellers off the beaten track to see lesser known, interesting places not frequented by large numbers of tourists. We offer individuals the ability to travel safely in remote areas, with the knowledge that we have travelled there before.

Financial Protection

Steppes Travel is a fully bonded tour operator that complies with the Civil Aviation Authority bonding conditions of the UK. This fully guarantees your money in the unlikely event of us going out of business before you start your holiday. Our ATOL number is 6945 and we have full insurance to cover the financial failure of an airline. In addition, all accommodation-only bookings (such as hotels, lodges and boats) which are not covered by the ATOL regulations are financially protected with all payments being held in a separate trust account until the date of departure. This is in accordance with the Package Travel Regulations Act 1992.

Specialist Knowledge

We demand and employ only a very high calibre of staff. All of our specialists have a wealth of travel experience and have travelled, and continue to travel, extensively throughout their regions of specialisation. You can therefore rely on their first hand knowledge and expertise. Some have been with us for more than ten years. They will tell you about those intimate, friendly hotels and introduce you to our charismatic guides - those little extra qualities that make your holiday both unique and special.

A Tailor-made Journey

After an initial discussion with you, one of our specialists will create a unique itinerary for your trip, designed around your own interests, preferred style of accommodation and the pace at which you like to travel. This will be fine tuned until you are completely satisfied with it. Throughout this whole process, you will be dealt with by the same specialist and you are welcome to call them at any time.

24 hour Emergency Service

We have an emergency service so that we can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Recognition

More than 65% of our business is achieved through recommendations, referrals and repeat bookings. This, for us, is the highest endorsement we could have. In addition, our 20 years of experience in this specialist travel sector confirms our expertise.

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