



**Argentinian
Explorer**



ARGENTINA TOURS

SAN JUAN, LA RIOJA, CATAMARCA, TUCUMÁN, SALTA & JUJUY IN 24 DAYS

This trip tours amazing places through the Northwest of Argentina and Chile because we enjoy the three most important provinces in the Argentinian North together with the natural beauty of the Atacama Salt and its Altiplanicas Lagoons, the Tatio Geyser and the Archaeological Village of Tular. We spend a full day in Tafí del Valle, the tucumana treasure and we experiment the adventure tourism in Salta where trekking and horse riding are mixed through the lovely San Lorenzo, in Potrero Grande.

24 DAYS - 23 NIGHTS

- Accommodation in double room with breakfast
- Transfers detailed itinerary
- Regular excursions listed in the itinerary (except optional)
- Bilingual English Spanish Guide
- Permanent coordination

Day 1 - San Juan & its surroundings

Welcome to Argentina. Reception and transfer from Ezeiza International Airport (Buenos Aires City) to Jorge Newbery Airport. Transfer from San Juan to the hotel.

We visit the principal places of interest in the city of San Juan, which is located in the centre north of the Valle del Tulum. This city was practically destroyed by an earthquake in 1944, thus it is one of the newest cities in Argentina. It is the city where Domingo Faustino Sarmiento was born, he was president of Argentina and a great creator of the public education. The most important attractions in San Juan are the Embalse de Ullum, the Quebrada de Zona and the Ruta del Vino (Wine Route). Within our visit we can visit the house where Sarmiento was born, the only colonial testimony left in the city, with 9 rooms and 3 servants' rooms with 2 courtyards, typical distribution of that time. Another place worth visiting is the Cathedral, in honour of San Juan Bautista (St. John Baptist), which is one of the most modern churches as it was first built in 1712 by the Compañía de Jesús and rebuilt in 1979 after the earthquake. Other interesting places are the Auditorio Juan Victoria, the cultural place par excellence, the Museo Sanmartiniano, etc. Then we visit the Ullum dam and the Cavas de Zonda, where we will taste first quality San Juan wines.

Day 2 - Barreal, Valle de Calingasta & Pampa del Leoncito (Astronomical Observatory)

We set off to Pampa del Leoncito, then we go to the Astronomical Observatory and the Cerro Alcázar. During this mountain road, we see the cerro Villicúm, the Quebrada de las Burras, Talacasto town, entering Calingasta up to the Barreal. From there we go to Pampa del Leoncito where wind-car is practised thanks to the sustained winds that blow more than 80km per hour. The wind-car is a small vehicle with 2 car wheels at the back and a motorbike wheel at the front, it has a fuselage and a mast made of aluminium to be light and be able to move with great impulse. The Pampa del Leoncito also called Barreal Blanco is a geological structure next to the Barreal town, where a natural reserve has been created. It is a plain with arid and cracked soil 15km long per 5km wide, which before was the bottom basin of a lake, without vegetation of any kind, similar to a spider web.

The vision is atypical and the white colour is very deep. We can observe the impressive Mercedario Mount 6,772m high and then have lunch at the Barreal. It is the most important tourist centre of the valley, a town with dirt streets and beautiful poplars, where we will also visit the astronomical complex El Leoncito. It is an observatory located at the foot of the mountain range, 2,500m over sea level, in the San Juan Astronomical Reserve, occupying almost 70,000 hectares, being an excellent place to observe the space. Once again in San Juan, we will enjoy a spectacular view of the Cerro Alcázar.

Day 3 - North of San Juan: Jáchal, Cuesta del Viento and Rodeo

Breakfast at the hotel. We take the Ruta 40 towards the north of San Juan province, leaving the San Juan river behind, going through towns like Albardón, Matagusanos, Talacasto and next to Villicúm Mount we arrive at San José de Jáchal city, where we learn about its indigenous cultures. We change direction to the west to the central Andean foothill along a mountain road discovering unique sights.

We visit Cuesta del Viento, ideal place to practise nautical sports such as windsurf, then we go to Rodeo, small mountain town next to the Dique Cuesta del Viento, hydroelectrical dam with a mirror of crystalline water of a turquoise colour. We continue with the itinerary to Pismanta, where the famous thermal water complex is, mixing the arid desert with the green oasis, being one of the nicest places in San Juan. Its thermal water has healing, therapeutics and rejuvenating effects, ideal for rheumatism and skin diseases. We return to San Juan capital by Las Flores and Bella Vista, foothills road climbing up the slope to arrive at the highest zone at El Colorado. Then, in Talacasto we go back to the Ruta 40 to enter San Juan.

Day 4 - Ischigualasto Provincial Park: Fertile Valley and Valley of the Moon

Breakfast at the hotel. We leave towards Valle Fértil, going through the Difunta Correa Sanctuary in the town of Vallecito, San Juan. There is a great popular devotion from Catholic people although she was not recognized by the Catholic Church. Her followers believe in her miracles and consider her a popular Saint, worshipped as a Goddess. We arrive at the Ischigualasto Provincial Park to discover the Valle de la Luna and its five stations.

This park has an extension of 62.000 hectares and is 330km away from San Juan capital city. It boasts a considerable paleontological and geological patrimony, UNESCO declared it as Natural Heritage of Humanity in the year 2000. Ischigualasto belongs to the Triassic period, 300 million years ago, and it is an accurate representation of those times when the first mammals and dinosaurs spread. It was in these lands where one of the oldest dinosaurs, the Eoraptor Lunensis was found. Its principal landforms are: El Gusano, Valle Pintado, Cancha de Bochas, El Submarino, El Hongo and Los Colorados. We go back to Valle Fértil in the afternoon, where we will spend the night.

Day 5 - Talampaya National Park, La Rioja

Breakfast at the hotel. We get up early to leave San Juan province and travel to La Rioja province to Villa Unión to visit the Talampaya National Park. Villa Unión has 6,000 inhabitants and is located on a valley between the foothills of the Andes and the formidable Famatina mountain range, 60km away from the park. Talampaya is a natural reserve with sites of great archaeological-paleontological value due to the number of fossils found, such as the Lagosuchus Talampayensis, dinosaur of the Mesozoic era. To sum up, this park is a product of the intense tectonic movements and wind erosion produced during millions of years. It has 215,000 hectares and it is famous for its incredible red rock cliffs and the wind sculptured eroded figures where condors nest. Its rocks belong to the Triassic period in the Mesozoic Era where the first dinosaurs' pawprints are found. The return journey to San Juan is through the majestic Cuesta de Huaco.

Day 6 - Chilecito, Cuesta del Miranda, Nonogasta

Breakfast at the hotel. We say goodbye to Villa Unión to go to La Rioja through Cuesta de Miranda, caught between the Sierras de Famatina and the Sierras de Sañogasta (small mountain ranges). These hills have one of the few good roads linking the Valle de Chilecito with Cuyo. It is the obliged route to join Villa Unión with Chilecito. The Cuesta de Miranda shows a landscape full of different reddish shades, a path that draws a silhouette between the hills and the canyon of the river with the same name, ending in an edge

road with stunning curves and gullies. Before that, we had entered Chilecito, the second important city in La Rioja, located in the Valle Antinaco – Los Colorados and hidden between the Sierras de Velasco and Famatina. It is a zone dedicated to the winery industry and the walnut and fruit trees plantations. We arrive at the capital city in the afternoon.

Day 7 - Knowing La Rioja

Breakfast at the hotel. We will discover the principal charms of La Rioja city, we will also go to the Dique Los Sauces. This capital city with the soul of a town, has a square called 25 de Mayo which is the centre of the metropolis and the Government House of Greco-Roman style adapted with an entrance hallway and courtyards with galleries. In front of the square there is a Social Club where exhibitions take place and the San Nicolás de Bari Basilica of Byzantine style. The house of the former governor Joaquín Víctor González is very interesting to visit, too. It has a colonial style with a Medieval Castle image, built in the middle of the 19th Century. There is also the Santo Domingo Temple, built in stone with an outstanding carved carob wooden door, in 1623 by the natives. Finally there is a Museum of Religious Art.

Day 8 - La Costa Riojana: Sanagasta, Huaco, Chuquis, Anillaco...

Vamos a recorrer la costa riojana, de trata de las principales poblaciones de La Rioja. El mayor encanto lo brinda el cordón montañoso de la sierra del Velazco, que nos acompañara durante todo nuestro recorrido, encontrando lugares llenos de vida, colores, una paz que detiene el tiempo, el microclima que nos pone en contacto con la naturaleza. Las Peñas es el primer pueblo con sus casas de adobe sobre peñones de granito y la iglesia de San Rafael. Luego viene Agua Blanca, famosa por sus dulces caseros Sigue el pueblo de Pinchas, lleno de frutales, hortalizas y nogales. En sus tiendas artesanales, se pueden conseguir mantas de llama o vicuña.

Chuquis es conocida por que se encuentra el solar de Pedro de Castro Barros, actualmente es un museo regional. Continúa el pueblo de Aminga, con casonas, quintas y bodegas hechas con muros elevados de pircas. En su plaza principal está el Mercado Artesanal y la iglesia de La Merced. Una vez más sobre la ruta, alcanzamos a reflexionar sobre la alegría y la tranquilidad que se perciben en el aire de cada una de estas localidades. Llegamos a Anillaco, el más moderno de los pueblos de la costa riojana con calles de asfalto y grandes propiedades de viñedos ideales para degustar vinos de alta calidad o vinos pateros.

Avanzamos hasta Los Molinos con sus fincas de nogales, olivos, almendros y membrillos. Sigue Anjullón, con la iglesia más bella de la costa riojana, que data de 1896, de estilo italiano. Más tarde está la localidad de San Pedro y finalmente Santa Vera Cruz, que está sobre la montaña. Sobresale en el viaje el Castillo de Dionisio Aizcorbe. Por la tarde traslado a la terminal de buses de La Rioja para viajar a Catamarca (200 km). Recepción en la terminal de buses de San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca y traslado al hotel.

Day 9 - Catamarca & Cuesta del Portezuelo

We know the city of Catamarca during the morning. From the Basilica, the Paseo de la Fe, 25 de Mayo Square, San Francisco Convent up to the Handcraft Market. We set off to the Cuesta del Portezuelo arriving at the Dique Las Piquitas in the afternoon. The Cuesta del Portezuelo is a beautiful, long and winding road which is almost 1,700m over sea level, where we will have spectacular views of the Valle de Catamarca (the Catamarca Valley) crossed by the Paclin river and the Sierra de Ambato. This downhill has been immortalized in the zamba Paisaje de Catamarca, sung by the famous Argentine folklore group: Los Chalchaleros. During the journey we enjoy different towns by the roadside.

Day 10 - Catamarca - Departure to Tucumán

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the bus terminal in San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca. Reception and transfer to the bus terminal in San Miguel de Tucumán to the hotel.

Day 11 - El Cadillal, Raco, El Siambón, San Javier and Villa Nogués (Grand Tour)

Breakfast in the Hotel. We leave from the capital of Tucuman to make the Grand Tour, passing localities representative of this interesting province, taking the National Route 9 until we enter Tafi Viejo (Old Tafi). We divert at kilometer 20 to visit the Celestino Gelsi Dam, found in the locality of El Cadillal, and its town, Veraniega. We appreciate the very beautiful adjoining lake of nearly 3,000 acres surrounded by mountains marking the ultimate elevations of the Sierra de Medina (jagged mountain range of Medina). This is an ideal area for adventure sports such as kayaking, aquatic skiing, diving and amongst others, point to point trekking in the jungle or simply to refresh in the hot summer months.

We continue to the towns of Raco and El Siambón, the first, located at 48km from city Tucuman and dates from the 17th century. It is a small picturesque town that has the river Raco running through it and has a club for diverse activities. A few more kilometers and we find El Siambon, another beautiful place know for its gentle green slopes in harmony with the blue skies and pretty houses, here we also find the Benedictine Monastery built in 1955.

After visiting these places we go to the town of San Javier situated some 1150 metres above sea level that beholds a mountain park of the same name and an ideal place to relax amongst this natural beauty or take in other activities such as parapenting, trekking and horse riding. On the way to the park we pass through an attractive residential zone. After, we visit el Cerro San Javier, a special hill top viewpoint where we can also see el Cristo Bendicente, a 28 metre statue. This is followed by a visit to Villa Nogués, another picturesque locality in the middle of the valley amongst zones of yungas jungles that are notable for this region. We then return to San Miguel de Tucumán.

Day 12 - The fair of Simoca, Jesuits Ruins of Lules & San Pedro de Colalao

Desayuno en el hotel. Todos los sábados salimos al amanecer desde San Miguel de Tucumán para ir a la conocida Feria de Simoca, la gente va llegando de distintos pueblos cercanos en caravanas de sulkys y carros, a comprar, vender, intercambiar trabajos o solamente para disfrutar del espectáculo que es la feria en sí, cerca del mediodía se prueba la gastronomía típica de la zona. Luego vamos hacia las Ruinas de San José de Lules.

Por la tarde vamos por los caminos rodeados de plantaciones cítricas con el objetivo de ir a conocer a San Pedro de Colalao para disfrutar de sus sitios arqueológicos, senderos ideales para realizar extensas caminatas y disfrutar de actividades de turismo aventura. En San Pedro de Colalao se puede visitar la parroquia de la villa, el casco viejo, la plaza Leocadio Paz, la gruta de la Virgen de Lourdes y la reserva fito zoológica.

En las proximidades se establecieron en otros tiempos de la antigua Cultura La Candelaria; San Pedro de Colalao debe su nombre de la época prehispánica, parcialidad pazioca denominada colalao (la desinencia ao, en lule, significa pueblo, kolal, significa jefe o autoridad principal). Durante el siglo XVII se funda la encomienda española San Pedro de Colalao y para fines del siglo XIX empiezan a edificarse las primeras casas de los criollos tucumanos. El pueblo está muy próximo a los Valles Calchaquíes, sobre la Quebrada

del río Tipas, sus casas son de afines del siglo XIX y sus calles presentan árboles con moreras y tarcos y sus habitantes la gran mayoría son gauchos criollos.

Nota: La Feria de Simoca funciona los días sábados, el resto de los días vamos a visitar las Ruínas Jesuíticas de San José de Lules y a San Pedro de Colalao.

Day 13 - Tucumán - Tafi del Valle - Archeological Ruins of Quilmes – Cafayate

Breakfast at the hotel. We will get ready to start this tour which will take us to Tafi del Valle, the natives Quilmes Ruins and, our last stop, Cafayate. We will go through the national route 38 to visit, as a first stop, the Jesuital Ruins of San José de Lules, which has a chapel and a convent which was found by the jesuits in 1670. We will continue our tour going through Famaillá, Acheral and Santa Lucía which is the road that will take us to Tafi del Valle and the one from which we will be able to watch some sugar cane, citrus and other fruit farm fields.

After a few kilometres, we will be getting to Quebrada de Los Sosa, we will travel by the Cornice Road (Camino de Cornisa) which offers us a spectacular vision of the wild tucumana vegetation and we will go through spots like the Indio, Fin del Mundo and Heladera along all the way, which are attractive to people because of their curious geoshapes. We will continue ascending and as we do it, we will notice some changes in the landscapes, because it starts appearing lower vegetation, between willows, pines and alisos which give a special and beautiful touch to the green hills, crossing streams in an admirable light blue sky.

We are ready now to come into the valley, which offers a huge green postal right in front of us, so we can go to El Mollar, a tourist village in the province of Tucumán, which was a very important archaeological settlement, where some ruins of an ancient civilization that dates from 300 years b. C. has been discovered in the XX Century. We will be surrounded by pure nature and green landscapes; we will continue to see La Angostura Dike, a wonderful water mirror which is an ideal place to practise aquatic and adventure sports.

We will see the "village of a magnificent entrance" (pueblo de entrada espléndida) just in front of us, a name given by the diaguitas, a native community who lived here a hundred years ago and that is what means "Tafi". Once we get there, we will visit the Jesuit Church of La Banda, a simple colonial relic which dates of the beginning of the XVIII Century. From there we will continue to Abra del Infiernillo, a deserted path between Tafi del Valle and the calchaquí Valleys, where we will be able to watch animals such as llamas and sheeps and it is also the habitat for some animals in extinction danger like the andino cat and the taruca. Once we cross the Abra and go to Ampimpa, we will be able to see cardoons beside us, a natural balcony of the Yocavil Valley or Santa María from where we will see the village of Amaicha del Valle, a few kilometres away. There is only one native community in the northwest who live in this last area, the diaguita culture, manufacturers of unic handicrafts, apart from being a famous town because of its exquisite "patero" wines, alfajores, nougat candy (turrón) and quesillos.

As soon as we cross the Yocavil river, we will come into the Quilmes Ruins, remains of the biggest pre columbian community in Argentina, the name was given because they were forced to walk a thousand kilometres when they were defeated by the spanish, until getting to Buenos Aires, to the town which has that name. We will do a visit to the museum and next, to the fortress built by this community.

We will go through El Bañado, Colalao del Valle. Then we will continue to the town of Tolombón so we can enter to Cafayate. We will be able to watch its arid landscapes and vineyard fields, then we can notice that we are in the Cafayateñas lands. We will spend the night in Cafayate.

Day 14 - Calchaquíes Valleys through Cafayate

Breakfast at the hotel. We will continue our journey from Cafayate, by visiting the Calchaquí Valleys. We will visit the Cathedral "Nuestra Señora del Rosario" which contrast with the multi – coloured hills in the background and then we will cover the most traditional wineries in this beautiful city between valleys and hills of an impressive green colour, which is the most important one in the Calchaquí Valleys because of its "torrontés" wines above all, an ideal place because of the temperature and humidity to the development of this kind of grape with a sweet and fruited taste, together with their goat cheese. The name of the city was given because of an old native settlement which means "Bury of sorrows or sadness" (Sepultura de las Penas). We will be pleased to taste some wineries' wines. We will continue to visit the Archaeological Museum, a place where there is a great quantity of objects which belonged to native villages. Many people have been investigating, making excavations, restorations and exhibitions about them.

We will be wondered as soon as we watch those rare and eye-catching shapes, going through Quebrada de las Conchas, where we will be able to see figures such as the Devil's Throat (Garganta del Diablo), the Amphitheater (Anfiteatro) a wonderful place where we can perfectly hear the echo of any sound and it is here where many festivals take place, such as the folklore; another shapes are the Obelisk (Obelisco) which makes a lonely crag, the Castles (Castillos) of an intense red colour which reminds the castles in the medieval times, the Yesera with its light sandstone formations, the House of Parrots (Casa de los Loros) named like this because there are stone walls which are the habitat for great flock of parrots during the summer; the friar (Fraile), the toad (Sapo) and the impressive Devil's Throat in Salta, shaped as a human trachea and also called like that because of its colour.

We will make a stop in Alemania, a lonely town, but we cannot miss the visit so we can admire its old country houses between green hills, the train station which doesn't work anymore and now we can see the beautiful work of the craftsmen who invite us to bring a nice souvenir from this town. We will get ready to descend through the valleys. We will get to Dique Cabra Corral, next to Coronel Moldes, an ideal place to practise water sports, then we will go through some towns dedicated to the farming activities such as El Carril, where we will find many stock-tobacco companies and also fig tree, walnut tree and peach tree fields; La Merced, with its clean streets and green spaces which make it so picturesque, and Cerrillos. All these towns belong to Valle de Lerma, where there are treasures which come from mines that were found and they are hidden somewhere between the hills, according to local stories. We will continue to Salta city, going through impressive landscapes that change on every curve we make in wonderful colours like the reddish hills, ochre colour of the grass, grey stones and green cactus. Night in Salta.

Day 15 - Knowing Salta

We will start our tour along the city from the nice 9 de Julio Square, so eye-catching because of its decorated coloured quarries and its fruited trees which leave a nice fragrance in the salteño air. From the square we will be able to have a first vision of its history and colonial past, as we will be surrounded by old buildings such as the Cabildo, the Cathedral, the Church of San Francisco, the Convent of San Bernardo de las Monjas Carmelitas, one of the oldest buildings in the city which was the entrance door to the convent and it is made of carob wood that was carved by the natives in 1762; its old houses complete the historical quarter, which are today very important monuments.

Then, we will go to the impressive and most recognised hill in the salteña city: Cerro San Bernardo. Before getting to it, we will tour along the streets, getting to Güemes monument, an argentinian general who is known because of its ideals of freedom, dispise to materialism and his love to his Motherland. We will get

to San Martín Park where we will find the cable railway station, our means of transport to get to the hill so we can have an amazing panoramic of the city and its surroundings, with the hills at the background.

After the ascent, we will continue to a really charming place, which is chosen by many tourists because of its wonderful natural attractions and the different activities to do: the summer village of San Lorenzo, where we will find the Quebrada, an ideal place to spend the day at the edge of the river, listening its relaxing sounds. We will enjoy our way to it, as we will go through flowered Gardens, mansions and castles which are surrounded by small hills and where we can do (horse) riding, trekking and pic-nic. We will go back to the city, going through the Handmade Market (Mercado Artesanal) first, where we will be able to get some souvenirs from this beautiful city, such as silver and pottery pieces, rustic fabric of llama wool, craftwork in leather, among others.

Day 16 - Safari to the Clouds – Salinas Grandes – Purmamarca

Breakfast at the hotel. We will tour the road that the Train to the Clouds does, even visiting the Big Salts (Salinas Grandes) to Purmamarca. Campo Quijano will be the first village that we are going to cross, it is a peaceful town in which we have to highlight Las Lomitas Dike, where we are going to get beautiful views of its farms and green hills such as the Arenales river landscape in El Encón, it is a traditional town in the Lerma Valley, very well known for being the entrance door to the Puna, where the Train to the Clouds railway tracks go past.

We will continue our tour going through Río Blanco, which is surrounded by pure nature, we will get to Quebrada del Toro, which stretches to Puerta Tastil, a small precolumbian city which has its higher development in the XIV century and then, it strangely disappeared, in this very same village it appears the Río Blanco again that goes along the way. The prehispanic city of Tastil represents the entrance "door" to Quebrada de las Cuevas, where we will find the archaeological Ruins of Tastil. We will continue by Abra Blanca which is located at 4080 metres over the level of the sea to San Antonio de los Cobres, a small village that is found at 4000 metres over the level of the sea and it is famous because the Pachamama (Madre Tierra) National Festivity takes place there. Besides, it is the best spot in the Train to the Clouds.

We will continue on the Route 40 to the Big Salts (Salinas Grandes), now in Jujuy, which are at 3450 metres over the level of the sea, approximately. These stretch through the Puna Jujeña region. The origin of the salts date from 5 and 10 millions years ago, in which period this salt's basin was covered with water with a great quantity of salts because of the volcanic activity, and little by little, the evaporation of these waters gave rise to this big salt, which is an spectacle to enjoy and it contrast with the sky. We will descend the Cuesta de Lipán and we will get to Purmamarca town, located at the foot of Cerro de los Siete Colores.

Day 17 - Paseo de Los Colorados, Purmamarca

Día libre en Purmamarca. La breve caminata por el Paseo de los Colorados, nos brinda paisajes que nos muestran formaciones sedimentarias de color rojizo con figuras pétreas que la madre naturaleza ha tallado con el correr de los años debido a la erosión del viento y el agua. Este trekking se hace siguiendo el Cerro de los Siete Colores, que hizo famoso a Purmamarca, es de aproximadamente 3 kilómetros que van rodeando los cerros colorados, de ahí su nombre. En el camino nos cruzamos con ovejas, cabras y llamas, finalizando detrás de un poblado, cerca del cementerio.

Day 18 - Quebrada de Humahuaca from Jujuy

Breakfast in the hotel. We leave from San Salvador de Jujuy in the northern direction to La Quebrada de Humahuaca, a national patrimonial and cultural humanity site. The entrance to La Quebrada is León and our journey runs alongside the Rio Grande (big river). On the way we pass the towns of Yala, Lozano, León, Tumbaya and Volcán. In the world famous picturesque town of Purmamarca we encounter the mountain of the seven colours. Here we go to the walk way of Los Colorados, the fair and the church.

Leaving Purmamarca we then go Maimará where we see the Cementerio de Altura (high cemetery) and the mountain Paleta del Pintor (painter's pallet). Following on our route goes by the historical monument of La Posta de Hornillos and arrives at Tilcara where we visit el Pucara. Our sleepover destination is Humahuaca where we also visit the Monument to the Heroes of Independence, the church with its cuzqueñas paintings and optionally can go to the Benediction of San Francisco Solano.

Day 19 - Walking with Llamas in Tilcara

This begins a special day because we encounter the llamas. The llama is a true companion of the local peasants. They are used, like donkeys, to transport goods across the puna, valleys and the jungles. In Tilcara they use a system of 'positive stimulation' to tame them and this results in them becoming docile and perfectly domesticated. Called the 'camel of the heights', the llama became a sacred animal for distinct ancient cultures and was an emblem of richness or nobleness. It is identified with Jujuy and its cultural legacy. Here we can go walking to rural houses and panoramic points to enjoy visiting the local inhabitants and experience the spectacular views. Also we will be able to perceive the ancestral wisdom that the Jujuy men incorporate in whichever cultural activity they realize. In the afternoon we begin our trip to La Quiaca following the rest of La Quebrada de Humahuaca to arrive at the extreme northwest of Argentina.

Day 20 - La Quiaca - Yavi - Villazón - Jujuy

Breakfast in the hotel. We visit the city and after go Yavi, known for its historic chapel. La Quiaca is on the Bolivian border with its sister Bolivian town of Villazón and they are connected by an international bridge. At the beginning of the 20th century a railroad was built from La Puna to La Quiaca and here it crosses the river Quiaca by a viaduct of three arches.

La Quiaca has developed over time and became important from the middle of the last century. There is an incessant transfer of people from the Altiplano Andino, typified by their puneña clothing. We also visit the Yavi, another important north eastern town due to its historical routes and then cross the bridge to get to know the Bolivian town of Villazón. We will return to San Salvador de Jujuy.

Day 21 - Iruya, a town in the mountain, Casabindo

Breakfast at the hotel. The bullfighting of the headband is the only bullfighting from the Argentina and was inherited from the Spanish colonization. This is done in the village of Casabindo in Jujuy Province. The ceremony is held in the Quipildor August 15 of each year, in order to celebrate the assumption of the Virgin Mary. Unlike bullfighting in Spain, the bull you don't hurt it, only you must remove the headband. Tradition says that one who manages to remove the headband to the bull must lay down it is the Virgin. A true syncretism of 2 different cultures combining in an original and unforgettable event.

We went to Casabindo, 210 km from San Salvador de Jujuy, if we went to La Quiaca, slept in La Quiaca to be closer to the next day. We arrived at the morning to attend mass offering to the Pachamama and the procession through the streets of the village with images, quartered and prom samilantes dresses with

nandu feathers and rattles on the legs to ask for rain during the sowing months. At noon you can taste typical dishes of the North. Then we are located in the perimeter wall to the square, right in front of the Church founded in 1690 which preserves paintings Cuzco to observe the friendly clash between the Cowboys and the bull, in order to remove the headband and give it to the Virgin. Average late return to San Salvador de Jujuy.

Option: Iruya from San Salvador de Jujuy

In the morning we leave Humahuaca to go to Iruya, passing by the typical picturesque Jujuy towns of Iturbe, Chaupi Rodeo and Abra del Cóndor that is at 4000 metres. We then descend to 1200m over the next 19kms where we can observe the changes in colours that mother nature offers, passing from rustic green to a royal purple or violet. The road follows the river Colanzuli until we arrive at our destination Iruya, a beautiful town that seems to emerge from the mountain. Later we return to Humahuaca.

Day 22 - Las Yungas, Calilegua National Park: The Reserve of Biosphere of the largest in Argentina

We commence our enjoyable adventure visiting the National Park where we undertake a guided tour of one of the three trails, the Mamota, the Herradura or the Lagunita that go between an altitude of 475 to 1700 metres. The Yungas jungle is one of the areas richest in mammals of this tropical region. It is estimated that there are 100 species of mammals in the 600km extension of the northeast of Argentina and 35% of them are encountered in the ecosystem of the jungles and Yungas.

It is possible to observe mammals such as the jaguar, tapirs, great anteaters, cai monkeys, great ferrets, porcupines, coloured squirrels, bats, armadillos etc. and birds such as Toucan parrots, humming birds, eagles, partridges, orioles and many more, also amphibians such as different frogs and toads including the red stomached toad and many types of fish.

The mountain jungles are on the slopes between 500 and 1000 metres where the vegetation is dense and humid. The highest treetops of over 30 metres are those of the cedars, laurels and walnuts whilst those at the 20 metre level consist of oaks, chalchal, palo luz and tala. There are other stratas such as that of shrubs and herbs, plants that spread over the surface and there is an important number of vines and epiphytes. In the Calilegua National Park there are different forests of mountain pines, alders and queñoa that are on the slopes up to 3000 metres.

Day 23 - Lagunas de Yala & Termas de Reyes

We journey from San Salvador to the Yala lakes that are some 20km from the city. Here there is an imposing group of six small lakes situated at an altitude of 2000m surrounded by the exuberant green of the alder and pine forests. We ascend by the mountain pass to a trout fishing area. The lakes are in the Provincial Park. Potrero de Yala, and are classed as a Biospheric Reserve that is a protected part of Jujuy and the North East. Yala is an ideal place to practice adventure sports, fishing and ecotourism. This region is part of the Jujuy Valleys and is similar to the National Park of Calilegua. Later we leave Yala to go to Reyes by an isolated very picturesque route where we find the panoramic viewpoint of la Quebrada, a giant mountain fissure.

Day 24 - San Salvador de Jujuy - Return to Buenos Aires

Breakfast in the hotel. Transfer to San Salvador de Jujuy Airport. Reception and transfer from Buenos Aires Airport (Domestic Airport) to Ezeiza International Airport in Buenos Aires. End of our services.

ARGENTINIAN EXPLORER EVT

Av. Callao 531, Piso 3°, Depto. B, (C1022AAR) Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Teléfono: +54 11 4371-8055 - Móvil: +54 9 11 6820-2048 - email: contacto@argentinianexplorer.com
www.argentinianexplorer.com