

BA VACATION GUIDE

Reminders | Cash vs Credit Cards | Tipping | Airport Transfers | Safety | Electricity
Restaurant Recommendations | Counterfeit Bills

Ezeiza Airport

The airport is still under construction and growing. Luckily it also has free WiFi!

This makes it super convenient to be able to contact your drivers or anyone you need to contact as soon as you are in the building.

WhatsApp

Everyone in Argentina uses WhatsApp. Download it before you get here and you will be able to contact just about anyone on that app; especially helpful for coordinating with your driver at the airport, for example.

Google Maps

Google Maps works great in Buenos Aires. If you try public transport you can see your public transport options within the map, where to take a bus and where to get off. I use this frequently myself.



Welcome to Buenos Aires!

We are glad you are evaluating touring with us. Throughout this guide you will find some links with further resources.

I put this guide together to help you get started on your amazing Buenos Aires vacation! Included, you will find some information on how to get to the city, how to tip, the use of cash vs credit cards and some limited restaurant suggestions.

I recommend that you read this guide, print it out, and you can use the links if looking at it in your phone for more information.

You can also use the following discount code on any of our own tours booked through our website. Just use the following code during checkout: **ASADOFRIEND**

Cash vs Credit Cards

Cash is king in Argentina; it's still a country that prefers to work in cash. In fact, there is a bank at the airport and it will not have the best exchange rate, but if you need to exchange a little money that would be your first opportunity. The branch is Banco Nacion and you can ask at the information booth to have them point you in the right direction within the airport. It's the first picture below:



However, if you are already in the city then you will have a couple of options: You can try going to a Banco Nacion branch (biggest hassle) or just taking money out of ATM's (very high service fees and very small limits on how much you can take out) or you can go to a "cueva" — unofficial exchange rate offices. The biggest difference is that you don't need to show your passport, and you won't have to wait in long lines or queue's (depending on where you go), and you'll get the best rates.

We have one near the tour. The address is [Av Scalabrini Ortiz 2354](#).

You can get an idea as to the exchange rate here: <http://www.preciodolarblue.com.ar>

Tips: Do not bring small bills. They will only exchange US\$100 and US\$50 dollar bills.

Also, try to make sure that the bills are in good shape. They prefer new crisp bills with no writing on them.

Credit Cards are accepted in many places, but it's a toss up in some places as well. You may even see a sign outside notifying everyone that they accept credit cards and then when you go to ask they will tell you that they either are not accepting them anymore or that the machine won't work.



Tipping

Tips are not an obligation in Argentina. They are looked at more as a reward for good service. Locals tip 10%, and if you really liked the service you can go up to 15%. If you receive bad service you could tip way less or not at all. Many restaurants tac on a *cubierto* (it's a service fee that is supposed to cover the bread basket for example), but I've seen it at restaurants that don't give bread.

Locals do not tip taxi drivers, at the most they round up and sometimes the cab drivers will even round down. Everyone tries to avoid small coins.

Airport Transfers

Getting into the city is relatively easy. The trip could be 50 minutes long or 90 minutes long depending on the traffic. There is no train service nor metro service. There are buses, shuttles, taxis, private unmarked cars, Uber and Cabify.

Once you go past customs and you walk past the first string of doors, you will see several stands of private transport companies. You can hire a car at one of these. Generally, these are the most expensive option, but you also get a nice, well-kept car with a professional driver. Some of the companies you will find here are:

On Baires Transfer

Remis VIP Cars

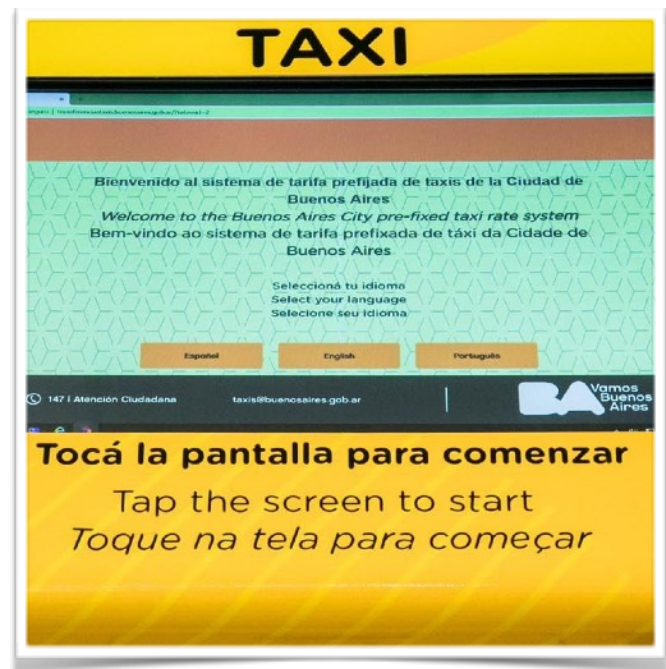
Remises Manuel Tienda Leon

Remis Transfer Express

None of these have a great website but in most cases you don't need to book ahead of time. You can easily book any of these right there on the spot.

Argentina has had a very long problematic history with the taxi mafias. To get around this, the city is installing new touchscreens where you order your taxi, you get a printout that includes the final price and you take it to a kiosk outside where they will assign a taxi to you. There are no more worries about tampering with meters or taking you through the scenic route. The price is set by the government and printed on your receipt.

Uber is basically illegal here. It's difficult to get it to work. I can't get my Uber app to work here, but I have no problem using it in other countries, for example.





Some notable neighborhood Craft Beer Bars

Desarmadero Bar - One of my favorite local watering holes. They tend to have the largest variety of craft beers on tap and they usually tend to have the latest trendy beers like Sours, Neipas, Milkshakes, etc. They open for lunch and stay open till the wee hours.

Growlers - Just like Desarmadero above, they were so popular that they opened a second location right in front of their original location so in each case there are two locations right in front of each other. They also offer the latest in craft beer and are also open from lunchtime onwards.



Cabify is another Uber type application and this one is legal in Argentina. If you plan on using that app, you should download it before you get here.

You can take a bus, and it's very cheap, like less than \$1,00 dollar, but it would also take you 2 hours to get to the city.

There are also some shuttle buses that range between \$4.00 and \$12.00 dollars. You would have to check what area in the city they serve:

Minibus Ezeiza
Manuel Tienda Leon

Finally, you can book an airport transfer through AsadoAdventure. Depending on availability I do have some drivers that are bilingual and have been working with me for years. The cost of an airport transfer through me is \$50 dollars. Just write back to me and let me know that you are interested and we can take it from there.





Notable cafe's with landmark status

The faded elegance of old can be experienced first hand in Buenos Aires' older, traditional cafe's. Each one usually has some story. Visit one for the ambiance though and for some Instagram worthy pictures. I have yet to find one that has anything exceptional on the menu.

Cafe Tortoni - This is one of the most beautiful cafe's in the world. It was inaugurated in 1858 by a French immigrant and he named it after another cafe of the same name in Paris located on *Boulevard des Italiens*. Since then many famous visitors have walked through their doors like Albert Einstein, Jorge Luis Borges, Carlos Gardel, Hillary Clinton, Robert Duvall, etc. Keep in mind this will be full of tourists.

Av de Mayo 825

Las Violetas - On the 21st of September, 1884, a yet to be future President of Argentina, Carlos Pellegrini, traveled out to the inauguration of this cafe. It has since been restored and is once again beautiful to look at.

Av Rivadavia 3899

www.asadoadventure.com

Safety

Buenos Aires is generally safe, but there is a bit of opportunistic crime. Do not wear expensive jewelry or expensive watches. These items just draw attention. You most likely, without any help from these items, will already look like a tourist. If you wear expensive items you will stand out even more making you a bigger target.

Be wary of people coming up to you offering to help clean a stain that has appeared on your clothes. This is a popular scam in which someone does stain you; a second person then distracts you by helping to "clean" the stain, all the while they are pickpocketing you. Just ignore them and keep walking. You can clean the stain on your own later.

Most cabs are honest, but another popular scam is when they forget to turn on their meter and/or they take you through a longer way to your destination. You can flag them down in the street, but your hotel and restaurants can call taxis for you as well. You can also download Cabify, which is a legal ride calling app. When you put your destination in the app you will have the price quoted to you upfront and you can set it up so you pay in cash or credit card.

Electricity

Argentina runs on 220 volts, 50 cycles (AC). Most North American appliances will need a converter.

Enjoy!

I hope you have a great time visiting the city and getting to know Argentina. If you are interested in touring with me just write to me at frank@asadoadventure.com I not only have my www.AsadoAdventure.com tour, but I also have a craft beer adventure and a customizable food tour as well.

If you have questions about where to rent an apartment or if you are interested in any other type of tour (tango related, soccer related, art related, etc) I can also offer you suggestions.

In the meantime I can offer you a limited selection of some of my favorite spots below. These are only partial listings of what my booked clients receive.



Argentine Pizza

El Cuartito - Theatre District, Talcahuano 937. This is my favorite local pizzeria. It's open late and it gets full. It's first served first come service. Apart from the tables it also has standing room area with a high counter to rest your pie and beer.

Banchero - Boca, Avenida Almirante Brown 1220: Pizza for Boca Jrs. fans. This is another traditional pizza joint in the Boca neighborhood.

Empanadas

La Cocina - Recoleta, Av Pueyrredon 1508: My favorite empanada! It is small, has a communal table and some stools, and it can get pretty warm in the summer; however, you should really try their empanadas. They only usually have two wines to choose from, cheap and cheaper still. Insider's tip: If it's warm out, when placing your order at the register tell them to put the bottle of wine in the refrigerator before anything else and then pick it up with your order, unless you like warm wine. Lunch is from 12 noon to 4 pm; Dinner from 7 pm to midnight. [TripAdvisor Review Page](#)

Top 2 Gourmet Coffee Shops

The best coffee to buy is from Lattente and Full City Coffee House. Both places are only a few short blocks away from our home and they do sell you beans to grind at home. They are the gourmet coffee pioneers that brought great coffee to Argentina so you might want to stop by there to enjoy some great coffee.

1. **Full City**, Palermo Soho, Thames 1535: The Colombian-UK couple, Victoria Angarita and Allan Dorgan serve up great authentic Colombian coffee as well as an authentic English Breakfast (the last one only on weekends): [Full City Facebook Link](#)
2. **Lattente**, Palermo Soho, Thames 1891: This is one of the first gourmet coffee shops. It's a small shop that serves a great cup. They have also opened up several more shops: [Lattente Facebook Page](#)

Top 2 parrillas (grills)

Argentina is still steak country and you just have to try a local tradicional grill.

1. **Don Julio**, Palermo Soho, Guatemala 4699: This is one of my favorite local grills. It's the most consistent top quality steak house in the city. Their specialty is the *Entraña* (Skirt Steak). Reservations are by website only these days: [Don Julio Link](#)
2. **La Cabrera**, Palermo Soho, José Antonio Cabrera 5099: Another great local neighborhood grill. This place is more touristy than Don Julio, but it's still notable. If you finish eating by 8pm you can get access to a special discount. It's gotten so popular that they opened a second location only half a block away from the original location: [La Cabrera Webpage](#)

Apps

[Foursquare](#) and [TripAdvisor](#) - They were in Argentina first so they have more entries than [Yelp](#) for example.

[EasyTaxi](#) - In Argentina, when you call for a taxi you get a surcharge. This is a way to get around that surcharge.

Counterfeit Bills

Argentina has been rolling out new currency designs incorporating safety features to help thwart counterfeiters. These new features have been a great help in that area. But there is one specific feature that the counterfeiters have not been able to replicate with any success at all.



All of the new bills have large numbers on the corners. Within these numbers there are micro-texts (BCRA) that are clearly visible with the aid of a magnifying glass or with your cell phone. You can take a picture of that number and zoom in.

Below is picture of the 1,000 bill and I only focused on the one feature. If you look at the large number and follow the line to the square to the far right you should be able to see the micro-text, "BCRA"

