

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!

Welcome to Buenos Aires, the vibrant and colorful city that will steal your heart, where the steak is as juicy as the nightlife and the culture is as rich as the Malbec. We are thrilled that you are considering touring with us and we have put together this guide to help you make the most of your amazing vacation.

Throughout this guide, you will find some useful links with further resources to assist you in planning your trip. You'll find information on how to get to the city, how to navigate the local customs around tipping, and the use of cash vs credit cards. We've also included some limited restaurant suggestions for those looking to indulge in the delicious culinary scene Buenos Aires has to offer.

We recommend that you read this guide thoroughly, print it out, and refer to it throughout your trip. Additionally, you can use the links provided if you prefer to access the information on your mobile device.

As a valued guest, we would like to offer you a special discount on any of our tours booked through our website. Simply use the following code during checkout: ASADOFRIEND.

Thank you for choosing to visit Buenos Aires, we are confident that you will have an unforgettable experience. Safe journey and we hope to see you soon!

Cash vs Credit Cards

As you may already know, Argentina is a country that still prefers to work in cash, so it's important to be prepared before you arrive.

Upon arrival at the airport, you'll find a Banco Nacion branch where you can exchange a little money. However, it's not the best exchange rate, so we recommend only using it as a last resort. If you're already in the city, you have a few options for obtaining cash. You can try going to a Banco Nacion branch, which can be a hassle. Alternatively, you can take money out of ATM's, but be prepared for high service fees and small withdrawal limits.

The best option for getting the most bang for your buck is to go to a "cueva", which are unofficial exchange rate offices. They are easy to find and you won't need to show your passport or wait in long lines. Plus, you'll get the best exchange rates. We recommend visiting the one near our tour at Av Scalabrini Ortiz 2354.

For a quick reference, you can check the exchange rate at <http://www.preciodolarblue.com.ar> before you go. Keep in mind that the exchange rate can fluctuate, so it's always a good idea to check it before you exchange your money.

Tips: We want to remind you to bring US\$100 and US\$50 dollar bills, and make sure that the bills are in good shape. They prefer new crisp bills with no writing on them. Be aware that small bills will not be accepted.

Credit Cards are accepted in many places, but it's a bit of a crapshoot in some places. 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. To be on the safe side, it's always best to have cash on hand.



Tipping

When it comes to tipping, it's important to know that it's not an obligation in Argentina. Tipping is looked at more as a reward for good service. Locals typically tip around 10%, but if you really enjoyed your service, you can go up to 15%. If you received bad service, you could tip less or not at all.

Many restaurants include a "cubierto" which is a service fee that is supposed to cover things like the bread basket. However, you may come across some restaurants that don't even give bread.

When it comes to taxi drivers, locals don't tip, at most they round up and sometimes the cab drivers will even round down. It's best to avoid small coins as everyone tries to avoid them.

So, whether you're indulging in a succulent steak or sipping on a glass of Malbec, enjoy your trip and don't hesitate to reward good service with a tip.

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

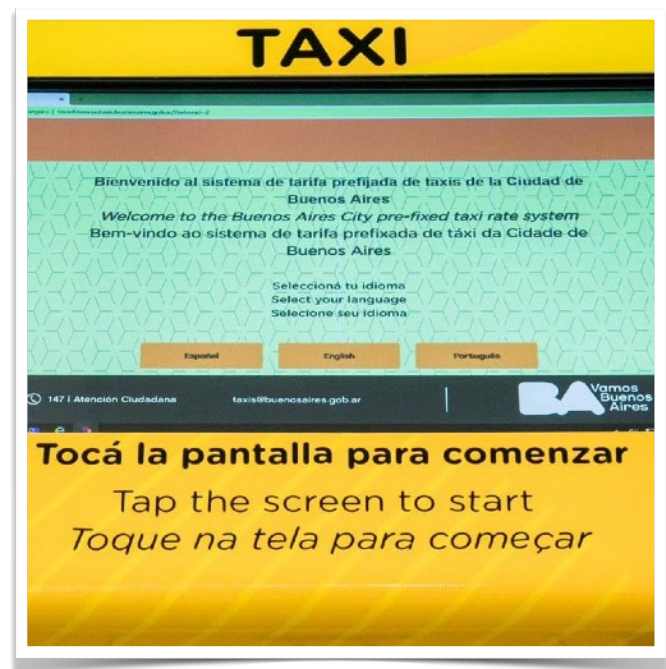
Remis VIP Cars

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, complicated history with the taxi mafias. To get around this problem, the city is installing new touchscreens where you order your taxi, get a printout that includes the final price, and take it to a kiosk outside, where they will assign a cab to you. There are no more worries about tampering with meters or taking you through the scenic route.





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.



I finally got my Uber app to work here and it works best if you set it up to pay your driver cash.

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, We have some bilingual drivers who have been working with us for years. The cost of our airport transfer is 50 dollars. Just write back to us and



let us know 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

Safety

First things first, Buenos Aires is generally a safe place to visit, but it's always wise to keep an eye out for opportunistic crime. To keep yourself from standing out like a sore thumb, it's best to avoid wearing flashy jewelry or watches. Trust us, you'll already look like a tourist without any extra help!

Another thing to be aware of is the scam of someone "helping" you clean a stain that has appeared on your clothes. This is a popular trick in which a second person will distract you while they pickpocket you. Our advice: ignore them and keep walking. You can clean the stain on your own later.

When it comes to transportation, most cabs are honest, but it's always good to be aware of the popular scam where they forget to turn on the meter or take you on a longer route to your destination. You can flag them down on the street or have your hotel or restaurant call a taxi for you. Alternatively, you can download Cabify, a legal ride-calling app where the price is quoted upfront and you can pay in cash or with a credit card.

Electricity

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

Enjoy!

Now that you're aware of some safety tips, go forth and enjoy the city! If you're interested in touring with me, just shoot me an email at frank@asadoadventure.com. I offer a variety of tours, including my signature Asado Adventure, a craft beer adventure, and a customizable food tour. And if you have any questions about where to rent an apartment or need recommendations for other types of tours (tango-related, soccer-related, art-related, etc.) I'd be happy to offer suggestions.

In the meantime, here are a few of my personal favorite spots in the city. Keep in mind, these are just a small selection of what my booked clients receive. Happy exploring!



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

While you're here, be sure to check out some of the best coffee shops in the city, starting with Lattente and Full City Coffee House. These gourmet coffee pioneers are only a few short blocks away from our home, and they sell beans that you can grind at home.

First up, **Full City**. Located in Palermo Soho at Thames 1535, this Colombian-UK owned coffee shop serves up authentic Colombian coffee and a traditional English breakfast on weekends. Be sure to check out their [Facebook page](#) for more information.

Next, **Lattente**. This small shop in Palermo Soho at Thames 1891 is one of the first gourmet coffee shops in Buenos Aires, and it's definitely worth a visit. They have several other locations throughout the city, so be sure to check out their [Facebook page](#) for more information.

Both of these shops will give you a taste of the best coffee Buenos Aires has to offer.

Top 2 parrillas (grills)

Welcome to Argentina, the land of steak and sizzle! If you're looking to indulge in some of the best parrillas (grills) the city has to offer, look no further. Here are my top two recommendations for the best steakhouse experiences in Buenos Aires.

First up is **Don Julio**, located in the trendy neighborhood of Palermo Soho on Guatemala 4699. This is my personal favorite local grill, known for its consistent quality and mouth-watering Entraña (Skirt Steak). Don Julio has become so popular that reservations are only accepted through their [website](#), so be sure to book in advance.

If you're looking for a traditional Argentine grill experience, you can't go wrong with **Madre Rojas** in Villa Crespo. Located on Rojas 1600, it's quickly becoming one of the hottest spots in town for some seriously delicious steak. Be sure to start off your meal with an order of mollejas (sweetbreads) while you wait for your steak and fries to sizzle to perfection.

Bon appétit! And don't forget to savor the sizzle.

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”



The Carlos Thays Botanic Gardens



Are you looking for a way to explore the botanic gardens at your own pace without missing out on any interesting tidbits? Look no further! Our self-guided audio tour is the perfect solution for you. With our GPS-triggered audio tour, you can put your phone away and simply listen to the tour as you explore the garden. The audio will automatically start at the correct location, allowing you to focus on the beautiful surroundings rather than a phone screen.

The botanic gardens have evolved into an outdoor museum, featuring breathtaking views and unique flora. For just \$4.99, you can take a 35-minute tour of the garden grounds and gain a deeper understanding of the botanic garden's significance. And, before you purchase the tour, you can listen to a preview to ensure it's the right fit for you. Don't miss out on the opportunity to fully immerse yourself in the beauty of the botanic gardens.

You can access the tours below by using the hyperlink for each version below:

English voice tour of the Botanic Gardens [**Link**](#)

Spanish voice tour of the Botanic Gardens [**Link**](#)