Bicycle Tours in Argentina: Bicycling Northern Argentina

OVERVIEW

Here's an exciting opportunity to get a little further off the beaten path in Latin America. This tour presents irrefutable proof that there is a lot more to see and do in Argentina than visit Patagonia! Once home to a thriving Incan population, Northern Argentina enjoyed the prosperity that came with being located in the spectacular Rio Grande Valley. The area is part of the famous Camino Inca (Inca Trail) and a major trade and cultural route between Buenos Aires, Bolivia and Peru.

We'll pedal through lush valleys, stopping to explore Incan ruins, deserts, cloudforest, and wine country. The grand finale is a ride through the twisted and dazzling geological formations of Quebrada de las Conchas.

Extend this bicycle tour by 4 days. Click here to review our Bicycling Northern Argentina Plus! the Ruins of Quilmes.

Is cycling in South America for you? Check out our What to expect: Cycling in South America page.

HIGHLIGHTS

Ruins of Tilcara--the Pucará, Salta, goat cheese tasting, Purmamarca's Cerro de Siete Colores, the Mountain of Seven Colors, UNESCO World Heritage Site Quebrada de Humahuaca, Geological formations at Quebrada de las Conchas, Colorful deserts, Incan ruins, Rides through lush green valleys, quiet villages, and wine country

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/classic
Includes	Shuttle to Salta airport at the tour end; 8 days, 7 nights accommodation; Guided tour in Salta; meals as noted in itinerary.
Countries	Argentina
Begin/End	Salta / Shuttle back to Salta
Arrive/Depart	Salta Int'l Airport (SLA). There might be a reciprocity entry fee for entering Argentina through an international airport.
Total Distance	383 - 463 km (236 - 286 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	64 - 77 km (40 - 48 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	❯❯❯❯❯
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. Road surface quality varies significantly expect sections of rough chip seal and potholes. Because there are very few roads in this area we'll shuttle in and out of towns to avoid traffic.

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the online itinerary for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:
https://dev.experienceplus.com/bike-tours/argentina/northern-argentina

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DATES & PRICES

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	93km / 1201m (58mi / 3939ft)	Rolling hills		
3	Hike day	Gentle		
4	71km / 1942m (44mi / 6370ft)	Mountainous		
5	31km / 535m (19mi / 1755ft)	Very hilly		
6	87km / 473m (54mi / 1551ft)	Gentle		
7	80km / 1234m (50mi / 4048ft)	Gentle		
8	Last Day			

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ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

Note:

As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, check with us if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like Rome2Rio. The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We recommend flying into the Salta Airport (SLA).

- Taxi from the Salta Airport to the Day 1 Hotel (25-30 min/1,000 pesos).

A Note on Flights: For information on transferring between Buenos Aires' international and domestic airports see our information here.

DEPARTURE INFO

Your trip ends on the final day after the complimentary ExperiencePlus! shuttle either drops you off in Salta town or at the Salta Airport (your spot on the shuttle is already reserved for you). Take note of the shuttle drop-off times below and plan accordingly.

If you can't make the shuttle, then you will be responsible for your own transportation. It's about a 3-hour drive or a day trip on public transportation.

Two complimentary ExperiencePlus! shuttle options:

- Option A: Drop-off at the Salta Airport at 12 noon
- Option B: Drop off at around 12:30 p.m. at the Meeting Hotel in Salta specified in the arrival instructions

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Salta loop ride and bike fitting

DAY 1

Meals Dinner

Lodging Hotel Villa Vicuna

Highlights Salta, bike fitting, warm-up ride

We'll meet early this afternoon in Salta. After introductions we'll do a bike fitting, and take a short loop ride. Known to Argentineans as "Salta la linda," or "Salta the beautiful" because of its delightful colonial architecture, pleasant weather and beautiful natural surroundings. We'll be back in Salta in a few days so on your first day we recommend you enjoy the town square and lively city. Dinner is together this evening.

Bicycle to San Salvador de Jujuy

DAY 2

Distance 93 km (58 mi)

Gain 1201 m (3939 ft)

Terrain Rolling hills

Level

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

Lodging Altos de la Vina

Highlights Cycle through cloud forest, views of the Andes

Today we'll shuttle to the suburbs of Salta to cycle through a cloud forest to the outskirts of San Salvador de Jujuy, capital of the Jujuy Province. Today's ride highlights the contrasts of the area as you pedal in and out of a cloud forest with song birds, ferns and bromeliads before descending back into desert and cactus country. We'll have a picnic lunch at the border between the Salta and Jujuy provinces. San Salvador de Jujuy offers tremendous views of the Andes range which run the length of Argentina.

Purmamarca

DAY 3

Highlights Hike through the Cerro de Siete Colores

We have a rest day today on the bike. In the morning we will offer a 40 minute shuttle to Tilcara de Jujuy to visit the famous archelogical site of Pucara de Tilcara. And in the afternoon we will journey further north to Purmamarca, the town famous for its mountain of seven colors the "Cerro de Siete Colores." Put on your walking shoes and join us for the 4 km gravel path around the colorful mountain, or extend your hike further into the hills. This small village is also a great place to wander and shop for souvenirs at the traditional market in the square. Potter, painter, and ballad singer Barbarita Cruz was instrumental in preserving traditional pottery methods by offering workshops for both adults and children. You'll also find woolen goods, musical instruments, and traditional food like empanadas, and dulce de leche in numerous

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forms. We recommend visits to the church and cemetery, the 600+ year old Algarrobo tree. We'll have dinner together this evening. Our hike today will be at least 4 km long (more for those who wish)

Distance 5 km (3 mi)

Gain 61 m (200 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging Hosteria Posta de Purmamarca

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Bicycle to Salina Grande

DAY 4

Highlights Cuesta de Lipan, Salina Grande

Today we shuttle 1h 15 minutes further north to Purmamarca, the town famous for its mountain of seven colors the "Cerro de Siete Colores." Today you have a ride up to the great salt flats above Purmamarca. Considered one of the most epic and scenic rides in the region you'll begin in Purmamarca at 2,325 meters (7625 feet), up the Cuesta Lipan to 4170 meters (13678 feet), downhill to the Salt Flats. The ride starts gently and offers stunning views from the first pedal stroke. The van will support the climb so if you decide to take a lift over the pass you can shuttle to the salt flats, or get back on your bike at the top and ride. There is nothing quite like the surreal feeling of walking in this immense basin of salt so we encourage everyone to give it a go! This afternoon we shuttle back to Purmamarca and our hotel.

Distance 71 km (44 mi)
Gain 1942 m (6370 ft)
Terrain Mountainous
Level
Meals Breakfast, Lunch
Lodging Hosteria Posta de Purmamarca

Salta la linda

DAY 5

Highlights Guided walk of Salta

We shuttle back towards Salta today and then mid-morning jump on our bikes and pedal through the hills and back into town. Just before the descent into Salta we'll recommend a great place for lunch where you can relax and enjoy views of the city. We'll reconvene this afternoon for a guided walk of the city to learn about its pre-Columbian history.

Distance 31 km (19 mi)
Gain 535 m (1755 ft)
Terrain Very hilly
Level
Meals Breakfast
Lodging Hotel Villa Vicuna

Dique Cabra Corral

DAY 6

Highlights Lush green valleys and quiet countryside

Leave the city for the quiet countryside and green valleys south of Salta. As you ride today notice the whitewashed colonial farm houses amid fields of one of the finest types of tobacco in Argentina. Our destination is the lake resort area of Dique Cabra Corral and our hotel tonight has a beautifully situated pool!

Distance 87 km (54 mi)
Gain 473 m (1551 ft)
Terrain Gentle
Level
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging Hotel Del Dique

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Cafayate

DAY 7

Highlights Spectacular scenery, Quebrada de las Conchas, Cafayate

We start our day with a shuttle before embarking on what some people consider their "most beautiful ride ever." Decide for yourself as you pedal through the magical Quebrada de las Conchas, passing by geological formations eroded into forms such as the "Devil's Throat," the "Frog," the "Amphitheater," the "Monk," and more. Take your time through the canyon as the late afternoon light creates an explosion of colors over the last 30 km. Our destination is the colonial town of Cafayate, famous for its wines and a base for adventure travel in the area.

Distance 80 km (50 mi)
Gain 1234 m (4048 ft)
Terrain Gentle
Level
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging Hotel Killa Cafayate

Shuttle to Salta

DAY 8

Highlights Tour ends - back in Salta

We'll provide a shuttle back to Salta this morning. Buen viaje! ***Extend this bicycle tour by 4 days and join us to Bicycling Northern Argentina Plus! the Ruins of Quilmes.***

Meals Breakfast

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WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include the three most important aspects of a guided bike tour.

- Superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling.
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel.

PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing ExperiencePlus!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Explorer Tours excluded)
- See "What's Included" for tour-specific inclusions and be sure to check the "Keep in mind" section under "Tour Summary" online.

BICYCLES

For a full list of what's included with your bike see: https://ep-2023.localhost/what-to-expect/our-bikes/. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer tours we include a GPS device on all bikes. We ask that you bring your own helmet to ensure the best fit. If you would like us to provide you with a used helmet, please contact us.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

Each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information also includes Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks. On tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths.

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Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM:

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler — this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know. *Tips are included in Expedition pricing.

PHOTOS:

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or that are taken by our guides or other travelers, in any medium, including but not limited to print, electronic media, or Internet, free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you, you must inform us or your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

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OUR TOUR STYLES

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers. No matter what you are looking for in a cycling vacation, we have a tour with just the right pace for you.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? then our Classic style bike tours are for you! Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars, most itineraries include at least one two-night stay at the same hotel.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: $$$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Explorer Tours: Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars, occasional multi-night stays at the same hotel.
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Group riding and GPS
- Price: $$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Bike and Boat Tours: Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: $$$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Expedition Tours: Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars, typically there is a 2-night hotel stay every 5-7 days.
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: $$$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

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Bike Tour Levels

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

LEVEL 2 - 2.5

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 — 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

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TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- ☐ Read through your Reservation Confirmation and After you Book Information (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- ☐ Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- ☐ Complete the Customer Information Form: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/customer-information-form/
- ☐ We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/travel-insurance/
- ☐ Choose a bicycle training program: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/
- ☐ Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- ☐ Refer to your Tour Packet/Itinerary to see step-by-step arrival and departure information for your tour, meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, along with other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- ☐ Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- ☐ Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- ☐ Begin your chosen training program
- ☐ Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail which we send 10 days prior to the due date for detailed instructions.

6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- ☐ Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/.
- ☐ Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists for suggestions, and see luggage limits at https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/packing/.
- ☐ We'll email you your access code to Digital Daysheets, Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders, emergency phone numbers, and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date. All this will be provided to you via a feature called Experiences via the RideWithGPS App (tracks available but not necessary for navigation on Classic, Expedition and Bike & Boat tours).

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!

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