

Mendoza **A** INVEST

*Investment Promotion Agency
Government of Mendoza*



LIVING IN MENDOZA

MENDOZA
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QUALITY OF LIFE

The quality of life in Mendoza stands out in the region and in the world. According to specialized publication *International Living Magazine*, Argentina ranks fourth among developing countries in the Quality of Life Index, which evaluates factors such as cost of living, culture and leisure, economy, environment, health care, infrastructure and climate. In addition to this, Argentina ranked 45 out of 187 countries in the United Nations' 2012 Human Development Index (HDI); coming in second among Latin American countries, and above the Asian countries' average rating. The country also offers internationally competitive costs in transport, telecommunications, entertainment, gastronomy and real estate services, among other areas.

Prestigious local institutions offer educational and health care services of a quality comparable to that of the main international referents. This is the case of numerous bilingual schools specializing in the English, German, French and Italian languages, and of high complexity medical centers for the diagnosis and treatment of various conditions. Mendoza boasts well-educated human resources with a literacy rate of 97.8%. There are 8 universities, 7 university institutes of higher education, 74 institutes of higher education and more than 1800 schools. It is worth pointing out that 2 of the universities are national, publicly-managed and tuition-free, while the remaining 6 are privately-run.

The wide offer of cultural activities and sports attractions as well as the warmth of its people make Mendoza an exceptional place to live, work and visit.

TRANSPORT

Mendoza has modern means of transport connecting it with diverse local and international destinations. Due to the availability of a vast network of national and provincial routes, ground transportation is one of the most convenient options for medium to long distance traveling to the rest of the national territory.

Gobernador Francisco Gabrielli International Airport, located in the department of Las Heras, 11 km from the city of Mendoza, offers direct connections with the main Argentine cities as well as with Ezeiza International Airport in Buenos Aires and with Comodoro Arturo Merino Benítez Airport in Santiago de Chile. Connections with most of the world's main capitals are then available from these airports. Jorge Newbery domestic flight airport is located in the city of Buenos Aires and is also connected with Mendoza.

Long distance buses are an excellent option, given the quality of service offered, which may include sleeper services and even catering on board, as with an international airline. Also, a wide range of car rental services is available.

Within the city area and the Greater Mendoza area, buses are the most used means of transport. In addition, there is always the possibility to use the wide fleet of urban taxis and hire cars.

LANGUAGE

The language spoken in Mendoza is (Castilian) Spanish, but many places offering tourist services such as hotels, restaurants, wineries and tour and transportation services have bilingual staff. The Spanish spoken in Argentina differs from that spoken in other Spanish speaking countries mainly because the pronoun "vos" is used in Argentina for the second person singular instead of "tú", the informal form of address, as opposed to the formal "Usted". Another difference with traditional Spanish lies in vocabulary, particularly the names of everyday things. The Spanish of people from Argentina has something of the intonation of Italian, and the unrestrained gestures and body language Argentines use recall those of the Spanish and Italian people.

CULTURE

Museums

There are different types of museums in Mendoza. The Museo del Área Fundacional (Foundation Area Museum), located at the Pedro del Castillo Square, exhibits archaeological remains found in Mendoza between 1989 and 1991. The Museo Nacional del Vino (National

Museum of Wine), in Maipú, offers a full overview of the history of winemaking in Mendoza, and the Emiliano Guiñazú Art Museum, Casa de Fader, located in the district of Mayor Drummond, Luján de Cuyo, 14 km south of Mendoza City, is a historical mansion which dates back to 1890. It is the former residence of artist Fernando Fader, now turned into an art museum, and many of Fader's paintings are displayed around the building as part of the permanent exhibit. Rotating art exhibitions are also offered in Casa de Fader. The Espacio Contemporáneo de Arte (Contemporary Art Space) presents art exhibits and cultural events throughout the year and is located in the heart of Mendoza's downtown area, on the corner of 9 de julio and Gutiérrez Streets.

Independencia Theater

The Independencia Theater was founded in 1923 across the street from Independencia Square, in downtown Mendoza. Its interior design was based on that of the traditional Italian opera houses. It boasts an imposing marble staircase in the entrance hall and has a seating capacity of over 700. It is the seat of the Mendoza Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1963, it was destroyed by fire and re-opened two years later. In 2000, it was closed for restoration and finally opened its doors again on September 21, 2003. The theater features opera shows and musicals, and it is the venue where world-famous Mendocinian opera singer Verónica Cangemi performs when she visits her hometown.

General San Martín Park

Located in the west of the city, the General San Martín Park is the ideal place to get away and practice sports,

sunbathe or simply spend a nice quiet afternoon by the lake. This vast green area offers about everything from miles of bike lanes and walking trails to sports clubs for the practice of golf, horse-riding and rowing, as well as the classical sports: soccer, tennis, swimming, gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, among many others. Also located in the Park is Cerro de La Gloria, a mount that offers an amazing view of the Andes mountains and of Mendoza city. At the top, a majestic statue of General San Martín can be appreciated as part of the monument to the Army of the Andes created by Juan Manuel Ferrari and inaugurated in 1914. On its northeast slope lies the Mendoza zoo, which is the most important zoo in South America.

The Park was designed by Carlos Thays in 1896 and stretches over an area of nearly 1000 acres, which is larger than New York's Central Park. Some of the Park's venues and sights are: the Malvinas Argentinas Stadium, the National University of Cuyo, the Frank Romero Day Amphitheater – where the traditional Vintage Festival is held yearly since 1936 –, the Juan Cornelio Moyano Museum of Natural and Anthropological Sciences – which holds 40,000 exhibits –, the Mendoza Zoological Park, and an artificial lake located by the Mendoza Regatta Club.

Although the city's everyday pace of life may be apparently relaxed, Mendoza is an active society. It is possible to see people jogging, skating or walking around the Park at any time of the day. Those who wish to get the most out of outdoor exercise will find fitness trails equipped with obstacles or stations for working out or stretching after exercising.

Mendoza has a relatively large bohemian population who can be seen performing aerial silk or tightrope walking, or selling handcrafted jewelry around the city squares or the Park. Spending time, often long hours, sitting around the Park and drinking *mate* with family, friends or your partner is a “sacred” tradition that can be enjoyed at any time of day. One of people's favorite meeting points is the *rosedal*. Bordering the lake and surrounded by beautiful roads lined with palm trees, this rose garden is ornamented with some of the 34 sculptures that the Park is home to. The lake is the training venue for rowers of the regatta club and makes a pretty picture with the Andes mountains in the background.

Town Squares

Independencia Square is considered Mendoza's central point. It was built in 1886 and remodeled in 1941. It occupies an area of 65800 sq yards, of which 1170 are made up of green space. Sarmiento Avenue, which extends across the city from west to east, turns into a pedestrian street eastward from Independencia Square.

There are also four smaller squares in the city: the San Martín, Chile, Italia and España Squares. They are so-called “satelites” because they are located on the projection line of each of the corners of Independencia Square, at a distance of two blocks. These squares feature tiles and sculptures in the style of the country each of them represents, and they host craft fairs and gastronomic festivals along the year.

TRADITIONAL FESTIVITIES

Mendoza is a great place to enjoy traditional festivities. The most important one is the Fiesta de la Vendimia (Harvest Festival), which celebrates wine and the year's

grape harvest. It consists in a series of parades and an impressive night show that closes with the election of a Vendimia Queen (Harvest Queen); and all with a background of music, dance and marvelous food. The Fiesta de la Vendimia is an activity not to be missed by tourists visiting Mendoza early in March. Where else in the planet can you see a young lady dressed as a queen give away fruits by throwing them at the public from a float in a street parade? Every year, on the first Friday of March, the Vendimia weekend is officially inaugurated with a night parade during which the beautiful candidates for Vendimia Queen are presented. The girls dress up in fine evening clothes and ride on parade floats circulating around the city streets. There is a candidate for each provincial department and her float reflects the theme chosen for her town's local vintage festival that year. The night before the parade, outdoor performances take place at Independencia Square featuring folklore and tango rounds in the middle of the crowd, a truly exciting show.

The following morning, try to find a spot near the General San Martín Park gates to enjoy, by daylight, the full version of the parade held the night before. One after the other, the beautiful candidates for each department will slowly pass by, waving and handling (sometimes throwing!) grapes, peaches, apples, pears and even big melons at the public. Each department gives away the fruit it typically grows. Children are commonly seen carrying containers to collect the treats landing from the floats.

On Saturday night, the Central Show takes place, a sensational presentation with over 100 dancers on stage, superb fireworks and music performed live, where a panel of 50 judges will elect the National Vendimia Queen with

grandeur. Tourists arriving in the province during the month of February, a while before the Fiesta de la Vendimia, may attend the Fiesta de la Tonada (*tonada*: a local folk music style) and other events.

Additional tourist information on Mendoza: Visit the Ministry of Tourism for further information on Mendoza city. While you are there, take some time to appreciate the interesting architecture of the building. It is located on San Martín Avenue, three blocks eastward from Independencia Square, in the block between Garibaldi and Catamarca streets.
<http://www.turismo.mendoza.gov.ar>

ENTERTAINMENT

Mendoza offers a wide range of free time activities for all ages: art, science and historical museums; theaters and movie theaters; conference and convention centers; venues for fairs and exhibitions; and cultural centers among which the most outstanding are the Nave Cultural, located in downtown Mendoza, and the Julio Le Parc Space of Culture, where a host of cultural activities are offered daily. Cafés, stadiums for sports events and big concerts, restaurants, bars, discos, musical shows and many more options can be found. Argentina is known worldwide for the high level of its art and theater events, only found in a few places in the world. A new generation of ballet dancers offers marvelous performances. Besides traditional plays and theater spaces, avant-garde cultural movements have entered the scene with underground and alternative theater productions.

Tango lovers can select from a vast offer of shows and concerts, or join the *milonga* evenings. Folk dances are

also very popular and have gained renewed popularity over the last years, giving rise to a new space which attracts both adult and young audiences. Crowds are gathered by diverse folk music festivals taking place every year in different parts of the country. A good variety of rock and pop concerts and events are also available. Local bands are referents throughout Latin America.

Mendoza also boasts an interesting offer in relation to film-making. Mendoza hosts an independent documentary film festival: the MenDOC, an international film festival called MENDOZA PROYECTA and a yearly film festival organized by the department of Godoy Cruz.

In regard to sports, the province organizes international events and tournaments for the most popular sports: soccer, box and car racing, as well as for various other disciplines such as basketball, hockey, rugby and tennis, among others. Soccer is the most popular sport in the country. Stars like Diego Maradona and Lionel Messi have emerged from Argentine soccer. Over recent years, polo has had a remarkable development in Mendoza, following the Argentine tradition. The country is recognized as the international mecca of polo, and local tournaments are watched from all corners of the globe. Argentina has been chosen Best Golf Destination in the region by the International Association of Golf Tour Operators. In Mendoza, there are more than 4 golf courses, one of which comprises 18 holes.

In addition to all this, Mendoza has an intense nightlife. There are numerous bars, restaurants, discos, tea houses and thematic or traditional cafés that offer food, drink and entertainment to people of all ages and preferences.

CUISINE

Mendoza features a variety of restaurants and bars, as well as gourmet shops, offering both local and international dishes for the delight of the senses. Included in the gastronomic offer are Italian trattorias, Spanish restaurants, French cuisine, Japanese sushi bars, Mexican food and signature cuisine, as well as bakeries and gourmet shops. Nearly 150 wineries are open to tourists and the great majority have restaurants where visitors can enjoy lunch or taste wines and delicatessen, and, in some cases, even make a picnic.

Argentine beef, especially in the form of one of the country's most popular dishes, the *asado criollo* (mixed meats barbecue), has earned the country its well-deserved gastronomic reputation. It is a must try dish for visitors during their stay in Mendoza.

Dulce de leche (a thick, milk-based caramel sauce) and *alfajores* (cookie sandwiches with a sweet filling) are two of the most emblematic treats from traditional local cuisine. They have even crossed our borders, obtained international recognition and keep gaining consumers worldwide.

Mendoza is also internationally renowned for the quality of its wine industry. A great variety of red, white and rosé wines are produced in the province, including varieties of increasing sophistication, such as Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Bonarda, Merlot, Tempranillo, Torrontés, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Petit Verdot, Syrah and Traminer.

Malbec is Argentina's flagship wine variety. Argentine Malbecs enjoy international recognition and are awarded prizes in the most prestigious wine competitions. *Mate*, a hot tea-like infusion, is one of the most traditional beverages in Argentine culture.

TOURISM

Mendoza is a tourist destination with countless possibilities to explore, enjoy and learn. With options ranging from adventure tourism to eco-tourism and from wine tourism to cultural, health and convention tourism, Mendoza attracts visitors with varied interests from all five continents.

Among its natural sites, the most noteworthy are the majestic Andes mountains.

Wine Tourism

The Wine Roads

More than 150 wineries bring forth Mendoza's "Wine Roads" a wine tourism circuit receiving over a million visits a year. This activity, also known as winery tourism, originated as a new fully-integrated experience that allows visitors to appreciate the aroma, color and flavor of local wines and get to know about their history, the vineyards and wineries while they enjoy unique views of the imposing Andes in the background.

CLIMATE

Mendoza has a semi-arid climate. There are broad temperature variations across the year and rains are scarce.

Summer: The summer, from December 21 to March 21, is hot, with average temperatures above 28 °C (82.4 °F), reaching temperatures around 37°C (98.6 °F). Sudden summer storms with abundant rain and occasional hail fall are common.

Winter: The winter, from June 21 to September 21, is cold and drier than other seasons, with average temperatures below 8 °C (46.4 °F). Night frosts periodically occur and rainfall is scarce. Snowfall is rare in Mendoza city, but may happen about once a winter. The Greater Mendoza areas may get snow up to 3 times a year.

Autumn: The autumn, from March 21 to June 21 is relatively warm, with mild temperatures below 26 °C (78.8 °F). It is one of the most eagerly awaited seasons in Mendoza for the beautiful colors of its trees.

Spring: The spring, from September 21 to December 21, brings warmer days. It is the miraculous time when crops become ready for bud break and eyes turn green as they fuse with the landscape.

The area where Mendoza is located presents a semi-arid climate, and water supply is only available in the four oases, the northern, southern, eastern and Uco Valley, where the rivers descending from the Andes peaks pour their turbulent waters. Open ditches called *acequias* have been built in the main cities with the purpose of watering the lines of trees along the streets.

TIME ZONE

Mendoza's time zone is UTC/GMT -3. There is no summer time change.

PARTICULARITIES

Mendoza has some rules of its own, like *siesta* time and late dinner.

Mendoza around the Clock

The Siesta!

The *siesta* lasts from around 1:30 pm to 4:30 or 5 pm, every day. The stores downtown close during that time and open again at around 5 pm. However, most restaurants do not close and a number of wineries stay open and offer activities during the *siesta*.

Sundays

Sunday in Mendoza is the day when family and friends gather to share an *asado*. In general, stores, wineries and restaurants are closed, except for the hypermarkets – each of which has its own department store – and the shopping centers: Mendoza Plaza Shopping, Palmares Open Mall and La Barraca Mall. On Sunday, people go to San Martín Park with friends or organize some kind of outing. If you are lucky to be invited to an *asado*, you should accept. It is an unforgettable experience.

MEALS IN MENDOZA

Restaurant Hours

Breakfast

From 7 to 11:30 am.

The typical breakfast in Argentina is not usually a hearty meal, which does not necessarily mean it is low in calories. It consists of a cup of white coffee accompanied by the classical croissants (*medialunas*) or pastries.

Lunch

From 12 to 3 pm.

Lunch may consist of anything from a sandwich to an elaborate meal. As any meal in Mendoza, lunch is never quick and may easily take longer than an hour (especially if the food is an *asado*, in which case you may need a couple of hours). Bakeries and health food stores offer a great variety of exquisite bread products.

Tea and Afternoon Snacks

From 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Tea time is the ideal moment to sit down and relax in the company of friends or family. A great number of Argentines have *mate* as their afternoon snack, and many extend the practice of this habit throughout the day.

Dinner

From 8:30 pm to 2 am.

Dinner can be anything from a simple sirloin sandwich to a very elaborate meal. Dinner is eaten late in Argentina. If you wish to have a truly local experience, make plans for a dinner that will last until 11 pm at the earliest, and have in mind that the opening and closing hours of each gastronomic establishment usually differ in 30 minutes from the hours announced.

INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY

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