



19-DAY ADVENTURE

CLIMB ACONCAGUA

Argentina

At 6961m, Aconcagua is the highest mountain in the world outside the Himalaya and is in the famed “Seven Summits”. Located in the north of Argentina it forms part of the Andes. With a very short climbing season and limited numbers climbing each season, Aconcagua only supports a small number of climbing operators. As a result it is the only destination we offer where we do not operate all our own climbs. Instead, we have partnered with the very best local operator who provides support for almost all of the adventure climbing companies worldwide. Their expertise and health and safety procedures are second to none so you are in the safest hands possible.

We added Aconcagua to our program as it is a popular choice for climbers who have summited Kilimanjaro. It is though a significant step up in difficulty and shouldn't be taken lightly, so training is vital. Because of the limited demand we only run a small number of group climbs each season and all our other climbs are private trips. Aconcagua is not a technically demanding peak if you are in really good condition. The difficulties of the ascent are, as always, those of trekking at extreme altitude. The altitude, weather and environment conspire to make this an adventure that will truly test you.

Please be aware that when you book with Kandoo Adventures the cost of your climbing permit is included.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Summit the highest peak in South America
- No technical climbing skills required
- Extra acclimatisation days for the best chance of success
- One of the famed seven summits



ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL

Arrival in Mendoza, transfer from the airport to your hotel for the night. Enjoy the rest of the day exploring the bustling city of Mendoza, the centre of wine-making in Argentina. With wide tree lined streets and plazas, the city is easily explored on foot with plenty of shops and restaurants. Beware 2.00pm – 5.00pm is siesta time!

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

PACKING AND PERMITS

The team and the guides get to know each other. Activities such as gear check, permit procedures and equipment sorting and packing are carried out on this day. Your duffel bags will be split here into kit to be carried to Confluencia and kit to be carried to Plaza de Mulas (your expedition pack can go straight to Plaza de Mulas as you will not need this until then).

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Reminder: you will need two large duffel bags, a small trekking pack and an expedition backpack.

DAY 3

MENDOZA TO CONFLUENCIA

Hike to Confluencia camp (3,390 m/ 11,300 ft). Private transfer from Mendoza to our warehouse in Penitentes. (there are lockers and storage place available for our guests). You can have coffee and snacks while the guides get the mule loads ready. Another 15 minutes ride takes the team to Horcones. This is the trailhead and also where the Park rangers will check everybody's permits. An easy hike (carrying only a daypack) leads to Confluencia, the first camp of the Horcones Valley routes.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Ascent: **2644 m**

Max. altitude: **3390 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

CONFLUENCIA - PLAZA DE FRANCIA - CONFLUENCIA

Our main objective today is one of acclimatization. We get our first clear view of the imposing south face of Aconcagua as we trek to Plaza de Francia (4050m), before returning to Confluencia for the night.

Hiking time: **7 - 8 hours**

Ascent: **660 m**

Descent: **660 m**

Max. altitude: **4050 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

REST AND ACCLIMATIZATION AT CONFLUENCIA

A good opportunity to get ready for the challenge ahead!

Max. altitude: **3390 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

CONFLUENCIA – PLAZA DE MULAS

Today we trek to our base camp at Plaza de Mulas. This is the toughest day so far and climbs 1000m from the start point. You will be glad to hit the camp where the additional ascent team will meet you and be your ascent team. A mess tent will be set up for all meals, briefings and general use.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Ascent: **960 m**
Max. altitude: **4350 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

REST AND ACCLIMATISE DAY AT PLAZA DE MULAS

Today we rest! Make sure you take plenty of water on board and eat well. This is an acclimatisation day and an opportunity to rest after the prior days' exertions. Showers are available, as is the opportunity to phone home from the hotel nearby.

Max. altitude: **4350 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 8

PLAZA DE MULAS – CERRO BONETE – PLAZA DE MULAS

This is a second day of acclimatisation. From Plaza de Mulas we leave to climb Bonete Peak (5004m) which affords you a clear view of the route almost all the way to Aconcagua before descending. You will remain overnight at Plaza de Mulas base camp.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**
Ascent: **654 m**
Descent: **654 m**
Max. altitude: **5004 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 9

EQUIPMENT CARRY TO PLAZA CANADÁ RETURNING TO PLAZA DE MULAS

Our first serious outing on the flanks of the mountain where we make our way to camp 1, Plaza Canada (5050m). We will carry some of the expedition gear and food required up to the site and cache them before returning to the Plaza de Mulas.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**
Ascent: **700 m**
Descent: **700 m**
Max. altitude: **5050 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 10

REST DAY IN PLAZA MULAS

This is your last day of rest and acclimatisation at base camp before we ascend Aconcagua. This is the day to finalise your gear and make preparations for the climb.

Max. altitude: **4350 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 11

PLAZA DE MULAS – PLAZA CANADÁ

Moving up to Camp 1 allows us to spend our first night on the mountain. This should feel a lot easier than the first outing and the benefits of steady acclimatisation become real.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Ascent: **700 m**

Max. altitude: **5050 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 12

PLAZA CANADÁ – NIDO DE CONDORES

Assisted by our porters, who will carry the tents and most of our gear, we set off for 'Nido de Condors'(5560m), the condors nest, to set up Camp 2. From here we can see Aconcagua and the canaleta that leads to the col between the twin peaks.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Ascent: **350 m**

Max. altitude: **5400 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 13

NIDO DE CÓNDORES – COLERA

Today we climb to our highest point on the mountain yet to Camp 3, the Colera camp (5970m). It is exposed and can be cold and windswept at times. There are some wonderful views of the high Andean peaks which warrant more than a second glance. This is our final camp prior to making the summit push.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Ascent: **530 m**

Max. altitude: **5970 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 14

SUMMIT DAY (6962M)

Today's the day! An early start underpins the summit attempt and the most arduous day of the expedition. Climbing the North ridge to the Independencia Refuge (6250m) to meet the sunrise, we follow the route to the base of the canaleta, a 300m scree climb leading to the summit ridge where you will appreciate the early start if it's still frozen. Often windy and cold, this is where your gear earns its value. Taking about an hour of hugely demanding effort, we reach the Cresta del Guanaco, the ridge joining the South Summit (6930m) to the North Summit (6960m), before we push for the aluminium cross that marks the peak's high point. From here we descend back to Camp 3 for a celebration, or as is more likely, a well deserved sleep!

Hiking time: **10 - 12 hours**

Ascent: **990 m**

Descent: **990 m**

Max. altitude: **6960 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 15

CONTINGENCY DAY

One of two spare days. The lead guide will use these days to the best effect in securing summit success for the team.

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 16

CONTINGENCY DAY

One of two spare days. The lead guide will use these days to the best effect in securing summit success for the team.

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 17

COLERA – PLAZA DE MULAS

We make our return from Camp 3 all the way down to base camp. Taking anything from 3 to 7 hours for the walk down to Plaza de Mulas, the crew will welcome you back for a celebration dinner.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Descent: **1520 m**

Max. altitude: **5870 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 18

PLAZA DE MULAS – MENDOZA

Today we make our way downhill to the ranger station where we will be met for the final drive back to Mendoza, after collecting our gear from Penitentes. Once in Mendoza we will check in at our hotel and look for a suitable venue to celebrate our success.

Transport: **Private transfer (3 hours)**

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Descent: **3590 m**

Max. altitude: **4350 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 19

DEPARTURE DAY

Transfer to the airport is included for your return or onward journey with happy memories of your expedition.

Meals included: **Breakfast**

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

There is **no technical climbing** on the "Normal Route" up Aconcagua. You need experience **walking in crampons** and with the use of an **ice axe** but nothing more. However, the **sheer height** of Aconcagua, along with **extremely cold temperatures** on the mountain, make it a **challenging ascent**, even for accomplished mountaineers. Since the summit is close to 7,000m, climbers have to spend sustained periods camping in tough conditions at high altitude - this can be mentally and physically draining. Climbers also have to help take kit to the high base camp which involves carrying more than your day pack. Moreover, weather conditions high up on the mountain can change rapidly, with extremely cold temperatures as low as -30°C not uncommon. Aconcagua is a big step up from Kilimanjaro. That being said, summiting Aconcagua via the Normal Route is very attainable for those with the right attitude, who have trained well and are mentally prepared for the rigours of high altitude trekking.

Looking for training advice or a training plan in preparation for this trip? We'd recommend checking out [Kate Sielmann](#) and her coaching programs that are specific to mountaineering and trekking training. [Find more details here.](#)

FOOD & DRINK

Before and after your climb meals will be taken at our hotel or in small adjoining restaurants. There will be a selection of main courses to choose from.

During your climb you will be accompanied by a **team of porters and cooks** who will provide heart and delicious meals each day. Eating well and maintaining a healthy appetite is essential for success on the mountain so we place great importance on providing **excellent food**. Argentine cuisine consists mainly of meat. More precisely, beef. Argentina is renowned for the quality of its steak and it is a meat lovers paradise. You will find grilled meats available everywhere including tripe, intestines and even udders. Meat aside, the cuisine is a mix of Spanish, native American and Italian influences so vegetarians can always fall back on dishes like gnocchi, pasta and pizza. In the large towns and cities, you will find all dietary requirements are catered for. You may also have the opportunity to sample "Mate", a Paraguayan tea made from a variety of holly and typical drank from a "bombilla".

On the trek we filter all the water that we give to you for drinking. You may wish to bring **purification tablets** as an extra precaution but they are not essential. Every morning we will fill up your water bottles or hydration bladder with at least 2 litres of water. Your guide will also be able to filter more water at your lunch stops if required.

ACCOMMODATION

We use only the very best high **altitude mountain tents** to ensure you stay warm, dry and comfortable on your Aconcagua climb. Please bear in mind, these are proper mountain tents, designed to **cope with extreme conditions** so don't expect to be able to stand up and walk around inside! The dry, dusty conditions on Aconcagua can play havoc with the zips and they can easily jam. Our guides are armed with WD-40 so just ask them for assistance, rather than trying to force the zip.

Your meals will be taken in a separate mess tent where you will be able to sit comfortably, while you relax and chat to your team mates and enjoy the wholesome food that our cook has freshly prepared for you. Inside, you'll be pleased to find a table (of course) and a proper, comfortable chair with arms. With a full 2 metres of headroom, even the tallest climbers will be able to stretch a bit, and move about without hunching over. They are fully waterproof, and regularly withstand the worst weather Aconcagua has to offer.

Our camps have a toilet/washroom tent where you can freshen up after walking in the Aconcagua dust. At Plaza de Mulas you will even be able to have a hot shower! During the hike in to base camps at Confluencia and Plaza de Mulas our camps have seated compost toilets. These are only for our customers and we try to keep them as comfortable as possible. All climbers are required by the National Park to use these (there are fines for not using them). Clients don't have to use bags, or do any special procedures, as we handle all the cleaning and disposal. Above Plaza de Mulas we set up small bathroom tents, with a special seat, and a bag (that we provide). The bag is then put in a designated spot, from where our porters will later collect them and carry them down to be disposed of.

Hotels before and after your climb will be of **2 or 3 star standard**. Accommodation is in comfortable twin rooms with private bathrooms.

LUGGAGE

The ideal luggage combination for an Aconcagua expedition is 2 **large duffle bags** (90-100L), an **expedition backpack** (70-90L), and a **light, small daypack** (20-30L). Your duffel bags must weigh no more than 30kg each as this is the limit the mules can carry, although it is also worth checking your baggage allowance with your airline too.

On the hike into Base Camp mules carry most of the gear and supplies. You will carry only a day pack with a few items (water, snacks, camera, jacket, sunscreen, etc.).

On Day 9 you will complete a gear carry of the group equipment (weighing up to 20kg) between Plaza de Mulas and Plaza Canada (for this you will need your expedition bag). You will return to Plaza de Mulas that night and have a rest day on Day 10, then the following day will complete the journey to Plaza Canada, this time carrying all your personal equipment. From Plaza de Mulas expect to carry all your personal gear to Colera camp (although we provide porters for group equipment). Typically, a fully-loaded Aconcagua backpack weighs ~15kg. If you do not wish to carry your personal equipment then a personal porter is available to hire from Day 9 onwards.

On the trek all items must be packed inside your main equipment bags. Items should not be attached to the outside, as we are not responsible if items fall off when the bags are being carried by the porters or pack animals.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

You will need to arrive at Mendoza Governor Francisco Gabrielli International Airport on day 1 of your itinerary. The airport code is MDZ.

To reach Mendoza you will need to transit through either São Paulo, Santiago or Panama City. From the UK, British Airways have direct flights to São Paulo and you can then continue to Mendoza with LATAM or Lufthansa have flights from Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham via Frankfurt to São Paulo then on to Mendoza with LATAM.

From the US, LATAM have flights via Santiago and COPA offer flights via Panama City from various major airports.

To ensure your baggage allowance stays the same ensure your international ticket reads as being from your departing destination to Mendoza. Split tickets may incur charges on baggage if there is a difference in baggage allowances between the different airlines.

On arrival, after clearing immigration and collecting your luggage, please look out for a member of our team holding a "KANDOO" sign.

BUDGET & CHANGE

The **Argentinian Peso** (ARS) is the local currency of Argentina. Your currency (*all major ones like US Dollars, Sterling Pounds and Euros*) and traveller's cheques can be exchanged at Mendoza Airport, banks and hotels. It is advisable to **bring some cash** for the trip. ATM machines are not always reliable or might have a low daily withdrawal limit. Other miscellaneous expenses in Mendoza may also require cash payments (certain restaurants, tips, etc.) Once on the mountain, US\$ are the best way to pay for porters, tips, a beer, etc.

In Mendoza expect to pay \$60 for a meal for two in a mid range restaurant and using public transport comes in at around \$0.20 for a one-way ticket. If you prefer to travel by taxi, starting price is about \$1.60. For every km after this you will then pay \$1.50. Our recommended guidance for spending budget in Argentina would be between \$50-100 on top of your tips, give you ample souvenir spending money.

TIPS

Our partner in Argentina pays their staff well and fairly, and are happy that any tips given are totally discretionary. As a guideline, we would suggest a total budget of \$200-250 per climber for tips - \$70-100 to be shared between porters and support staff at base camp and \$100-150 for the guide.

Different crew members will be with you for different stages of your climb:

- Your guide will be with you every day of the trek (17 days excluding arrival and departure)
- Your mule drivers will be with you up until Basecamp (3 days excluding rest days and acclimatisation hikes)
- Your porters will assist you from Basecamp to Nido de Colera (5 days excluding rest days and acclimatisation hikes)
- A driver will provide your airport transfers and transfer you to and from the trek (2 days)

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

As soon as possible after booking your tour, please provide Kandoo Adventures with your passport details (first name, last name, date of birth, passport number, issue date, expiry date) along with a photocopy of the photo page. We need this information in order to book your domestic flights (where applicable) and hotels.

Your passport must be valid for 6 months after your departure date.

VISA

United States and UK passport holders do not require a visa to enter Argentina. On arrival you will be granted a maximum 90 day stay in the country. The same applies in Chile.

This information may be subject to change, without notice, by the local authorities. It is your responsibility to check the latest travel requirements and information before departure.

VACCINATIONS

The World Health Organisation recommend the following vaccinations for travel to Argentina:

Tetanus
Hepatitis A
Hepatitis B
Diphtheria
Typhoid
Yellow Fever

It is your responsibility to check the latest health information before travelling.

INSURANCE

Before you can join any Kandoo Adventures trek, you will need to insure yourself against accident, injury, and illness.

Your insurance must cover the cost of helicopter evacuation and repatriation if necessary. Make sure your insurer knows of your travel plans, and verify that your policy fully covers your trek, climb, and any other activities you will participate in. Specifically, for all our adventures in Patagonia, you need to be covered for trekking above 2000m. If you are climbing Aconcagua, you need to be covered for climbing up to 7000m. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf. You will also need to bring details of your insurance cover to the pre-trek briefing.

We recommend the global supplier of travel insurance, World Nomads. Make sure to choose the correct policy for the altitude you are trekking to. Be sure to read the small print carefully for any policy you are considering - different policies provide different levels of cover, so make sure you understand what is and isn't included in your policy.

HEALTH

Altitude Sickness

Altitude sickness, also known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) or hypobaropathy, is an illness caused by exposure to low air pressure, especially low partial pressure of oxygen, which many climbers experience at high altitudes. AMS is caused by exerting yourself at high altitudes, especially if you have not been properly acclimatised. It is most common at altitudes above 2400m. Our routes have been designed to aid your acclimatisation wherever possible, but the following will also help your body adjust:

Slow and steady. You need to keep your respiration rate low enough to maintain a normal conversation. If you are panting or breathing hard, you must slow down. There is no pressure on you to keep up with other members of your group.

Drink much more water than you think you need. Proper hydration helps acclimatisation dramatically. You need to drink at least three litres each day.

Diamox

There has been a lot of research on Diamox that shows it has been reasonably well proven to be helpful in avoiding AMS by speeding up the acclimatisation process. In the UK it is a prescription drug which must be prescribed by a doctor, but some doctors are reluctant to prescribe it. The concern is that by taking Diamox, people believe that they are immune from AMS and can ignore the symptoms. In reality, although Diamox can help prevent the symptoms, should symptoms still develop it means that you are not acclimatising and you have to take notice. Diamox is taken before you start the trek to prevent altitude sickness, not once symptoms have developed.

Malaria

There is no risk of malaria in any of the regions of Argentina we operate in. However, malaria is present in some parts of Argentina so if you intend to go travelling before or after your tour, please check the specific health risks for the areas you will be visiting.

Dehydration

You can easily become dehydrated at high altitudes. The lower air pressure forces you to breathe more quickly and deeply, and you lose a lot of water through your lungs. You will also be exerting yourself, and sweating, and may even suffer from diarrhoea. As a result, you will have to drink much more water than you normally would and you should drink at least 3 litres of fluids every day while trekking. Even when you do not feel thirsty you have to drink this amount as a minimum, preferably more. Stay on the look-out for signs of dehydration in yourself and your fellow trekkers. The most common symptoms include thirst, dry lips, nose or mouth, headache and feeling fatigued or lethargic.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

CLOTHING TO BRING

View our [Aconcagua Equipment Recommendations](#)

HEADGEAR

- Sun hat
- Warm beanie style hat
- Neck gaiter or balaclava
- Climbing helmet
- Sunglasses
- Ski goggles

HANDS AND FEET

- Liner gloves
- Comfortable softshell gloves
- Waterproof shell gloves
- Summit mittens
- Socks - including thick thermal socks for high altitude
- Training shoes / trainers
- Trekking boots
- B3 Climbing boots - must have a shell and a liner. Triple boots are best
- Crampons - crampons that will fit your boots
- Gaiters

UPPER BODY

- 2 thermal base layers
- Light weight fleece
- Long sleeved shirts
- Soft shell jacket
- Warm fleece
- Hard shell outer jacket
- Expedition parka

LEGS

- Thermal base layer leggings
- Mid layer leggings
- Soft shell trousers
- Insulated trousers
- Hard shell trousers

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- 2 x Waterproof duffel bag - 110-120L (One just for high altitude gear that will go directly to basecamp)
- Expedition backpack - 60-80L (if you are hiring a personal porter this can be replaced with a larger daypack)
- Daypack - 25-35L (If you are hiring a personal porter this should be a larger 35-45L pack)
- Insulated sleeping mat
- 4 season sleeping bag - comfort rating of -20 degrees
- Trekking Poles
- Ice Axe - suitable for glacier travel rather than climbing
- Water Bottles
- Eating utensils
- Thermos flask
- Head torch and spare batteries

OTHER USEFUL ITEMS

- Pee bottle
- Earplugs
- Snacks
- Dry bags
- Camera
- Wet wipes and hand sanitiser
- Sun screen and lip balm
- Travel adapter
- Personal first aid kit

GEAR RENTAL

We recognize that the cost of some high altitude equipment is very high and many of our guests will prefer to rent rather than buy gear. It is possible to rent the following equipment in Mendoza. Prices given below are approximate and subject to change. Payment is made locally directly to the supplier.

- Plastic Boots - 20 day hire - £125
- Down Jacket - 20 day hire - £105
- Down Gloves - 20 day hire - \$26
- Mattress - 20 day hire - \$54
- Crampons - 20 day hire - \$46
- 80l Backpack - 20 day hire - \$60
- Ice Axe - 20 days hire - \$54
- Sleeping Bag - 20 day hire - \$140

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.

