



Buenos Aires - City Business Guide

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Overview

With stunning baroque and rococo architecture, wide boulevards and beautiful foliage, Buenos Aires is often referred to as the "Paris of South America." This vast metropolis is one of the most exciting and scenic destinations on the continent a modern center of culture and commerce whose 32 million residents keep the streets humming with activity, 24 hours a day. The city brings Paris to mind in other ways as well: flowers are sold at colorful corner kiosks, the smell of freshly baked bread fills the air around well-stocked bakeries, terrace cafés appear on every block, and pedestrians carry themselves with a fashionable reserve that is remarkably Parisian. Unlike Paris, having no Eiffel Tower or internationally renowned museum, Buenos Aires does, however, provide a series of small interactions with intense Latin spirit: a flirtatious glance, a heartfelt chat, a juicy steak and a beautiful tango.

Business Etiquette

* Business dress, appearance and general approach are traditionally conservative, but also incorporate modern styles. Fashion is very important, and people are always up-to-date with the latest styles from Europe.

* There are no intricate rituals involved in exchanging business cards. Upon receiving a card, you are expected only to take a moment to look at it and express thanks.

* English is the language of business, but it's still an asset to have your card translated into Spanish on the reverse side.

* Business entertaining typically takes place in restaurants. It is a rare honor to receive an invitation to someone's home; in this case, be sure to bring a gift for the hostess.

* Expect Argentines to speak Castilian Spanish with an Italian accent, rather than the Mexican dialect of Spanish.

* Women, in particular, may be asked extremely personal questions regarding, for example, their marital status and weight.

* Avoid referring to an Argentine as an Indian or asking if he or she is of Indian origin.

Chamber of Commerce

Argentine Chamber Of Commerce

+54 11 5300 9000

Argentine Chamber of Importers

+54 11 4342 1101

US Chamber of Commerce in Argentina

+54 11 4371 4500

Embassies and Consulates

French Embassy, *Cerrito 1399, Buenos Aires 1010. Tel.: +54 11 4515 2930*

French General Consulate, *Avenida Santa Fe 846, 4th floor, Retiro, Buenos Aires 1059. Tel.: +54 11 43 12 24 09*

Japan Embassy, *Bouchard 547, 17th floor, Puerto Madero, Buenos Aires. Tel.: +54 11 4318 8210*

United Kingdom Embassy, *Dr Luis Agote 2412, 1425 Buenos Aires. Tel.: +54 11 4808 2200*

United States Embassy, *Avenida Colombia 4300, Palermo, 1425 Buenos Aires. Tel.: +54 11 4777 4533*

Canada Embassy, *Tagle 2828, Palermo, 1425 Buenos Aires. Tel.: +54 11 4808 1000*

German Consulate, *General Villanueva 1055, Palermo. Tel.: +54 11 4778 2500*

Republic of Korea Consulate, *General of Del Libertador Av. 2395. Tel.: +54 11 4802 9665*

Ireland Embassy *Embajada de Irlanda, Av Libertador 1068 6, Tél: + 54 11 5787 0801*

Italy Embassy *Embajada de Italia, Billinghurst 2577, Tél: +54 11 4802 0071*

Mexico Embassy, *Arcos 1650, Belgrano. Tel.: +54 11 4789 8800*

Netherlands Embassy *Embajada Réal de los Países Bajos, Edificio Porteño Plaza II Puerto Madero Olga Constantini 831, Tél: +54 11 4338 0050*

Business Centers

Business centers provide a range of services that include secretarial, translation/interpretation, and office services, including computer rentals, audio/visual equipment rentals, cellular phone rentals, copy and printing services, and temporary office space and staff. Most large hotels also have business centers that offer many of the same services that independent centers provide.

Marriott Plaza Hotel, *Florida 1005, Buenos Aires. Tel.: + 54 11 4318 3000*

Caesar Park, *Posadas 1232, 1014 Buenos Aires. Tel.: + 54 11 4819 1100*

Hotel Inter-Continental, *809 Moreno Street, Buenos Aires. Tel.: +54 11 4340 7100*

Conference and Exhibition Centers

Panamericano Buenos Aires Hotel & Resort

Carlos Pellegrini 551; Tel.: + 54 11 4348 5000

Translation Offices

Written translations, simultaneous as well as technical interpreters are available from a number of companies, many of which are located in Downtown Buenos Aires. Some hotels and most business centers offer translation services, as well.

>A and C traducciones

Tél: +54 11 4571-5461

Interlingua.

Tel.: +54 11 4326 0982

Aleph Translations, *Tél: +54 11 4771-7956*

Courier/Messenger Services

Within Buenos Aires and the surrounding area, a number of messenger companies operate, many of them offering 24-hour service.

Correo Abdreani *Tel: + 54 11 4008 4250*

Redexpress *Tel: +54 11 4312 6555*

Nacional Express *Tel.:+34 11 4572-6407*

World Courier *Tel.:+54 11 43288300*

La Postal *Tel: +54 11 4300-3100*

Epsa *Tel.:+54 11 4687-5457*

Federal Express *Tel.: 0810 333 3340*

UPS *Tel.:(0800) 222 2877*

Internet Connection Place

All upper-range and most medium-priced hotels are equipped with dataports that allow guests to use laptop computers. Many hotels offer business centers equipped with computers and Internet access. Outside hotels, cyber cafés are available including:

Bacana Cyber Bar & Lounge *Av Rivadavia 5741; Tel.: + 54 11 4433 6300*

Cyber Cafe Golum, *Brandsen 788, Ramos Mejia, Buenos Aires. Tél : +54 11 4658-0021*

Visas & Customs

Nationals of the USA, Canada, most Western European countries, Australia and New Zealand do not need visas in order to visit Argentina. The rest may enjoy a free visa for a 90 days period. If you want to extend your stay in Argentina, you may do so by extending your visitor visa at the Immigration Center, located at: Antartida Argentina 1355. Tel.: +54 11 4317 0200.

Customs officials usually wave visitors through without any inspection. Also, the international airports have introduced a customs system for those with "nothing to declare", which has streamlined the arrival process. Foreign bus passengers usually have their suitcases opened, as do all other passengers. Up to two liters of alcoholic beverages, 400 cigarettes, and 50 cigars are admitted duty-free, as well as personal clothing and effects (as long as they have been used once), and personal jewellery and professional equipment.

Phone Information

For domestic calls, all phone numbers have eight digits.

To call Buenos Aires from abroad, dial Argentina's country code (54), followed by Buenos Aires' area code (11), and the full eight-digit number.

To make an international call from Buenos Aires, dial the access code (00), wait for a new dialing tone, the country code, the area code, followed by the number.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Police Department

101

Fire Department

100

Ambulance

107

Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

Although Argentine telephone rates are fairly high, making international collect calls or calls by credit card is not necessarily cheaper than calling from long-distance offices. The easiest way to make a phone call is to find a "locutorio" (small telephone office), which has private booths where you make your call and then pay at the register. To use street phones, you'll use regular coins or "tarjetas telefonicas" (magnetic phone cards are available in many corner shops).

Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

There are several cellular phone companies in Buenos Aires ; the leading service providers are :

* Unifon: this cell phone service is part of Telefonica, the local telephone company. Tel.: 0800 999 8643.

* CTI Movil: cell phones on a longer frequency for use all over Argentina without changing frequency. Tel.: 4809 8809

* Movicom: a division of BellSouth, a U.S. phone company. Tel.: 4977 7777

* Personal: newest company on the market specializing in small cells mainly for use in the capital. Tel.: 0800 444 0800. Cell phone numbers follow the regular telephone number convention. If you choose to bring your cellular phone into Buenos Aires, check with your home cellular service provider the compatibility of your phone with systems abroad.

Money

The rigid price structure has made Argentina the most expensive country in South America. Travellers should keep a close watch on exchange markets and current economic events.

The peso (\$) is the legal tender in Argentina, having replaced the austral in 1992. In July 2001, the peso was one-to-one with the US dollar. One "new" peso equals 100 centavos. Coins come in denominations of 1 (rare), 5, 10, 25 and 50 centavos, and 1 peso. Notes come in denominations of 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 pesos.

At present, US dollars are legal tender almost everywhere, but be sure to carry some pesos. Institutions like the Post Office and some bus companies refuse to accept US currency.

Tipping

* **Restaurants** : 10 or 15 % of bill, in times of economic instability (restaurant tips may not be added to a credit-card bill)

* **Cinema ushers** : 25 or 50 centavos

* **Taxi** : drivers don't expect tips, but it's usual to round up to the nearest peso

* **Hotel porters** : at least \$1

* **Beauticians and barbershop personnel** : around 5 % of your bill

Time Difference

Argentina is three hours behind GMT/UTC and no longer observes daylight saving time during the summer.





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VAT & Taxes

Sales tax in Argentina is the 21% value-added tax known as the Impuesto de Valor Agregado (IVA); it is usually included in the marked price. Under limited circumstances, foreign visitors may obtain IVA refunds on purchases of Argentine products upon departing the country. A \$20 departure tax is payable upon leaving the country.

Voltage

220V. There are two types of electric plugs: either two rounded prongs or three angled flat prongs. Adapters from one to the other are readily available.

Local Transportation

There are five subway lines in Buenos Aires and one premetro (tramcar) line. Tokens can be purchased at every station where you can find maps showing the different itineraries and destinations. The subway or subte, as it is called, is the fastest way to move around in the city. It runs from 5AM to 10PM Monday through Saturday, and 8AM to 10PM on Sundays and holidays.

There are 140 bus lines operating throughout the city. There is a minimum fare and each bus is equipped with an electronic ticket vending machine, which only takes coins. Buses operate 24 hours a day and are mostly used by city workers. Thousands of taxis cruise Buenos Aires' streets and they charge reasonable fares. The meter shows the price in pesos.

Health Info

No specific immunizations are needed to enter Argentina. But you should see your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect (hepatitis A, rabies - if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation -, typhoid - particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region -, booster shots and yellow fever, that recommended only if you are traveling outside urban areas in Argentina).

Climate

The Southern Hemisphere's seasons are the complete inverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere. Summer runs from November to January, fall is February to April, winter is May to July, and spring is August to October. Except for the summer, Buenos Aires' climate is pleasantly humid. The changeable spring, hot summer and mild autumn resemble New York City's seasons, but winter temperatures are moderated by the South Atlantic and are more comparable to Los Angeles.

Public Holidays

- New Year's Day (Año Nuevo)** : January 1
- Good Thursday and Friday (Jueves y Viernes Santo)** : March-April
- Labor Day (Día del trabajador)** : May 1
- May Revolution (Revolucion de Mayo)** : May 25
- Flag Day (Día de la Bandera)** : June 21 (for 2004)
- Independence Day (Día de la Independencia)** : July 9
- Date of San Martin's Death (Día de San Martín)** : August 17
- Columbus Day (Día de la Raza)** : October 12
- Immaculate Conception Day (Día de la Inmaculada Concepcion)** : December 8
- Christmas (Navidad)** : December 25

Where to Eat

For Modern Argentinean food and excellent Argentinean wines visit **Sucre** and its classy atmosphere. Considered by many to be Buenos Aires' best haute cuisine restaurant, **Tomo 1**, is an elegant but unpretentious place offering lunchtime and evening set menus. Long-established Spanish restaurant **El Globo** serves moderately priced classic dishes in a gorgeously old-fashioned interior. **The London Grill and Oyster Bar** offers traditional English dishes such as lamb with mint sauce in an elegant atmosphere (but is closed on weekends). For over a hundred years **Basque Français** has been serving up expertly cooked seafood, expensive but delicious. At **Club del Vino**, the modern Argentinean menu includes duck, lamb and seafood and the restaurant houses a wine bar with music venue. For excellent pizza and live jazz, visit **Piola**, a trendy, popular and lively Italian restaurant.

Local Gift Ideas

Buenos Aires is famous for its shopping zones, mostly along the Florida peatonal and on trendy Avenida Santa Fe. Soccer fans will also find in Buenos Aires the best deals on shirts, flags and many other items.

Leisure Time

Buenos Aires is filled with a rich Argentine culture that greets visitors the moment they step off the airplane. There is something for everyone in this city of 11 million people. Near the Plaza Fuerza Aerea, you will discover one of the most beautiful towers in the city: the English Tower. Dedicated in 1909 and recently refurbished, it is beautiful during both day and night. Directly across Avenida Libertador in the huge Plaza San Martín, sitting under the flowing Argentine flag, is the Malvinas War Memorial. A short stroll up the long hill in Plaza San Martín takes you to a large park filled with the unusual, locally typical Ombu tree and a massive statue honoring Jose de San Martín, liberator of Argentina (as well as Chile and Peru). Across from Plaza San Martín (on the southwest side) is the beginning of the pedestrian street named Florida, famous for its leather shops and souvenir stores. And don't leave without seeing a tango performance.

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