

KANDOO ADVENTURES



18-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.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

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



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

MENDOZA TO PENITENTES

Transfer in private vehicles from Mendoza to Los Penitentes, where the group will spend the night prior to starting the climb.

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

Ascent: **1820 m**

Max. altitude: **2580 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

LOS PENITENTES VIA THE HORCONES VALLEY TO CONFLUENCIA

From Los Penitentes, we make our way to the Horcones Valley (2950m) where the trek begins, and we start our trek to Confluencia where we spend the night. At Penitentes we divide our gear into 2 loads: 1 high altitude and 1 to remain with you on to Confluencia. The high altitude gear is transported by mules to base camp and will comprise of your crampons, ice axe and high altitude boots, amongst others.

Hiking time: **4 - 5 hours**

Ascent: **810 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

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 6

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 7

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 8

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 9

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 10

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 11

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 12

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 13

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 14

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 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

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**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 17

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 18

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.

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.

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 a **large duffle bag**, an **expedition backpack** (70-90L), and a **light, small daypack** (20-30L). 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 the hike from Base Camp to High Camps: expect to carry all of your personal gear plus a share of the common gear (although we provide porters for group equipment). Typically, a fully-loaded Aconcagua backpack weighs 18-22 kg. On the trek all items must be packed in your main equipment bag. They 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 Buenos Aires, Santiago or Panama City. From the UK, British Airways have direct flights to Buenos Aires and you can then continue to Mendoza with LATAM.

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

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 traveler'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.

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.

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
- Lightweight gloves
- Waterproof gloves
- Summit mittens
- Socks - including thick thermal socks for high altitude
- Training shoes / trainers
- Trekking boots
- Climbing boots - must have a shell and a liner. Triple boots are best
- Crampons - C2 crampons that will fit your boots
- Gaiters

UPPER BODY

- 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

- Waterproof duffel bag - 110-120L
- Expedition backpack - 60-80L
- Daypack - 20-40L
- 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

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.

