

ACONCAGUA EXPEDITIONS



15 EXPEDITIONS
15 SUMMITS
ON ACONCAGUA



SEASON 2011-2012
OUR BEST YEAR EVER!



AVENTURAS PATAGONICAS - MOUNTAIN GUIDES

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From National Geographic Adventure:

"For the second time in as many years, we've conducted an unprecedented survey of adventure travel companies, based on the idea that a traveler's most important decision is not always where to go but who to go with. For the 2009 edition, we spoke to more guide services—and their clients—than ever before (248 in all). We contacted companies that lead 85,000 people a year and those that cater to a hundred. We surveyed paddling outfitters, trekking guides, safari specialists, and the ones that do it all. We evaluated companies that will take you places you've only dreamed of (the Tibetan Plateau, the Serengeti on foot) and those that specialize in your own backyard (the Grand Canyon, the Grand Tetons).

And after asking them the tough questions (***Have you tested your risk management strategies? Are your guides trained to "leave no trace"?***), we scored each one using criteria synonymous with National Geographic—environmental awareness, reliable service, local knowledge. Because in a time when travel dollars are stretched, it's essential that an outfitter deliver the trip of a lifetime, the first time. These are the world's leading travel specialists."

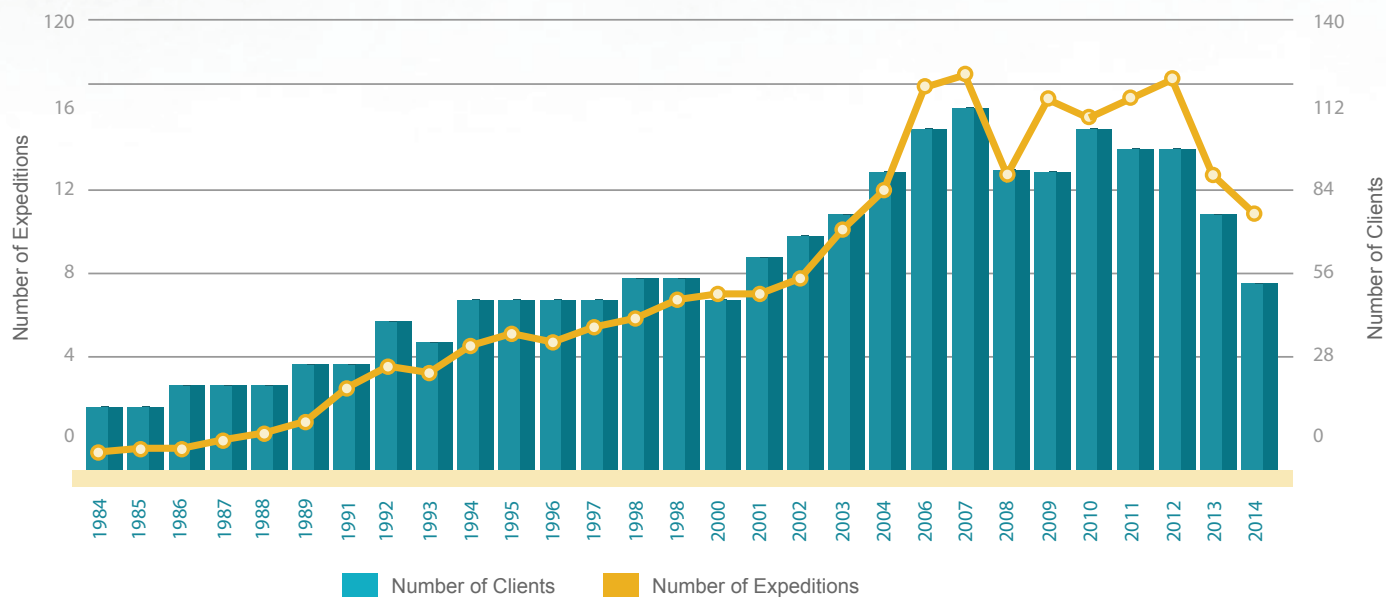


National Geographic Adventure Magazine has named Aventuras Patagonicas one of the Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth as of February 2009.

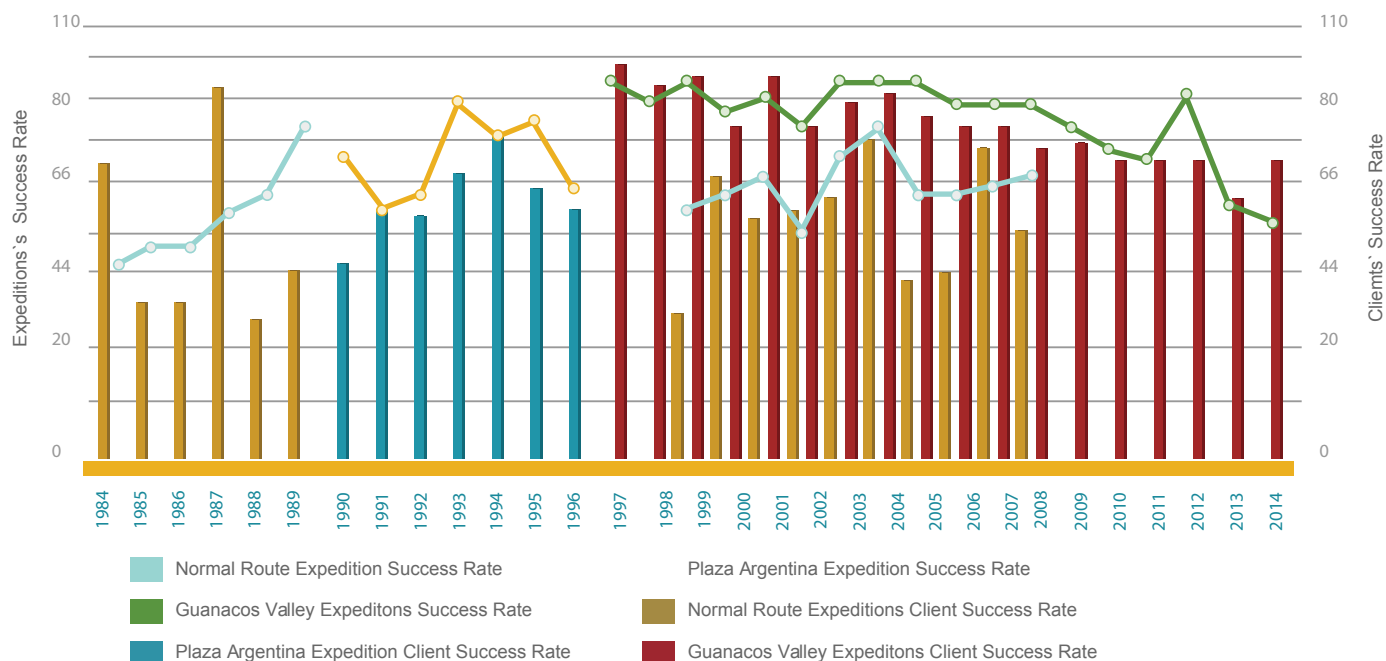
At Aventuras Patagonicas we are honored to be rated a **96.67 Client Satisfaction score**, this is one of the highest among all Mountain Guide Services.



Number of Aventuras Patagonicas Aconcagua Expeditions and Clients since 1984



Expeditions and Clients Summit Success Rate Since 1984



YOUR ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION

OVERVIEW / YOUR EXPEDITION

The expedition begins and ends in the city of Mendoza, Argentina. Mendoza is a charming city of wide boulevards, sidewalk cafes, lush colorful parks, and friendly locals. It is bustling with summertime activity and is a perfect city for walking. You will be staying at the Mendoza Park Hyatt, a five star hotel, for the first night of the expedition.

The first step of your expedition will be for your guide to check your gear in your hotel room, ideally, after you have rested from crossing the globe. Gear check is a critical step. It is important to pare down to the essential items you will need to climb to the Top of the Americas. Often at gear check we discover someone has brought gear that is not warm enough. More than one experienced climber has forgotten the essential expedition parka! It is difficult to procure gear in South America. Although times are changing, do not count on being able to find what you need once you get to Argentina. Mendoza is your best bet to buy or rent gear, although it is not always easy to find at the last minute. Make sure you leave home with everything on your equipment list. If you are having serious difficulty finding a particular item, please let us know before you leave for South America. We have a limited amount of rental equipment, which needs to be rented ahead of time.



A group meeting will follow gear check. We will introduce your guides and team members and talk about several aspects of your expedition. We will discuss the philosophy and style of the expedition, the effects of Diamox and prescription medications at altitude, sanitation, water treatment, teamwork, and the art of climbing big mountains. Dinner

will take place immediately after the meeting at a fine Mendoza restaurant, a pleasant walk from the hotel. We will have a chance to taste gourmet Argentinean cuisine, fresh beef and delicious wines (there are plenty of alternatives for non-drinkers and

vegetarians in the group as well). Be prepared for a late dinner. Dinnertime in Argentina begins at 9:00 PM!

First thing the next morning our van will take us to Penitentes, a ski area on the Argentinean side of the rugged Andes Mountain Range. This is a spectacular 3 to 4 hour drive, from Mendoza,



ascending over 10,000 feet through dramatic mountain scenery. Approximately 100 miles after leaving Mendoza, driving west through the expansive Central Valley, we reach Uspallata, a small agricultural town. Here we stop for lunch, then continue heading west towards the Cordillera de Los Andes (the Andes Mountain Range). We follow the Mendoza Valley, gaining altitude as we drive deep into the jagged Andes.

Imposing peaks and profound valleys line our route as we approach Penitentes. Once in Penitentes we do our last minute packing, arrange mule loads, and then have a free afternoon to enjoy a hike or just to relax.

Penitentes is the beginning of our acclimatization process, and although we are at only 8,500', the time spent here is essential to our slow building process of reaching 22,834'. Our body is a high performance machine and it starts compensating right away to the lower oxygen environment, even in Penitentes, producing more red blood cells, which is exactly what we want it to do.

The next three days will be spent approaching Plaza Argentina Base Camp, which is at 13,800'. Mules and their muleteers will carry all of our gear to Base Camp except for our daypacks, which we carry daily with food, water, and a change of warm clothes. We have access to our mules and gear every night on the approach. This makes our hike in very enjoyable. Our approach will involve 45 kilometers of spectacular, colorful, high desert scenery. Normally it gets very hot and dry during the day. Occasionally, a thundershower will pass by and have us quickly changing from shorts to warm clothes. After a 4-5 hour hike the first day, we will camp at Pampa de Lenas

at 8,910' (meaning grassy area with firewood), unload the mules, set up camp, drink matte (a tea served in a gourd with a metal straw) with the local gauchos, and get our permits checked at the ranger station. Early morning we start the day crossing the Vacas River then slowly gain altitude up the Vacas Valley, heading north. The Valley opens up revealing the geography of these high mountains, possible sightings of guanacos (cousin to the llama) and condors, and incredible geological features, a perfect setting for a western movie.

At the end of our day's hike, after a 5-6 hour walk, we reach Casa de Piedra at 10,230' (meaning Stone House) and get our first view of the mountain. From this camp, Aconcagua, the "Stone Sentinel", appears more magnificent and intimidating than ever, with its giant face, the steep and majestic Polish Glacier. This is one of the nicest camps of the expedition. With our first breathtaking view of Aconcagua and the excitement of getting closer to this colossal peak mounting, Casa de Piedra is a memorable place throughout the expedition. In the morning, we get our dose of cold glacial water by crossing the Vacas River again, this time a knee deep wade. Our Guanacos Valley approach took us much closer to the river's source as we continued up the Vacas Valley. For the Ameghino / Upper Guanacos and Polish Glacier Expeditions we turn toward Aconcagua and begin the climb up the Ameghino Valley (a.k.a. the Relinchos Valley).

*The Aconcagua Park Service has restricted access to the lower Guanacos Valley to protect the sensitive guanaco herds.



We had an excellent chance of seeing herds of guanacos on this route. When Rodrigo did an exploratory trip to this region, he encountered several hundred, counting 80 in one sighting alone! These magnificent mammals are well camouflaged, extremely elusive, and a rare sight in the Aconcagua region. The chance of seeing other expeditions in the Guanacos Valley was more remote, increasing the chance of seeing numerous wildlife. Spectacular glaciers contrasting with a desert backdrop made this approach both surreal and unforgettable. Whichever route you are using to approach Aconcagua, be sure to have your camera ready for some amazing photos as we arrive at Plaza Argentina, our 13,800' Base Camp.

We will spend a minimum of 3 nights in Base Camp. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to acclimatize and make the Summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. Occasionally a person does not acclimatize properly and is susceptible to pulmonary or cerebral edema. These are serious conditions that require immediate descent. All precautions will be taken to ensure your safety. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to the next camp and returning to sleep below at the previous camp. Carry high and sleep low. The next day we will move to the higher camp.

The first day in Base Camp is always a rest day and a good occasion to take a bath and go for a short walk. We will divide expedition loads to carry up to the next camp; community gear, fuel, food and individual lunches. Often

our loads are not heavier than 40 - 50 lbs. In combination with high altitude this weight can be a considerable challenge to anyone. Make sure your pack is about 6000 cubic inches capacity, since you will need this much space for the high traverse (to the Normal Route) for our Traverse expeditions. Often, for the descent the packs are huge, since we carry everything at once. At this point in the trip, our food and fuel supply is low. Everything else that we have been double carrying or caching, including our garbage, has to go down in one carry.

On the ascent, after our rest in Plaza Argentina Base Camp, we will do a carry to Camp I, at approximately 16,300'. This is a challenging day where we gain 2,500' with a heavy load up easy, but sometimes tricky, loose terrain. We will emphasize breathing in rhythm with our pace using power breathing, rest step, and other techniques that will help save energy at these elevations. We will incorporate a rest about every hour, and a breather (a short standing break) every 20 minutes or so. As we go higher, this simple breather will become our best friend. Breathers will also be taken more often as we get higher, especially on Summit Day. Breathers are an essential part of high altitude climbing allowing you to keep going for long periods of time.

At Camp I, we will cache our loads and descend to Base Camp with empty packs to spend the night. The following morning could be a possible rest day, or a move to Camp I. This will depend on how the group did the previous day, how the group is doing now, and on the weather. On most expeditions, we do stay an extra day in Base Camp. This has proven to be a great idea. Base Camp is one of the last comfortable



places we will be for a while. If you don't take the opportunity to get acclimatized at Base Camp, you may end up taking another rest day (or days) in a more uncomfortable camp higher up on the mountain, possibly jeopardizing your chance to summit. More than a needed rest, this time in Base Camp is an essential acclimatization period before tackling the peak!

The move to Camp I is always exciting. Leaving behind the comfort of Base Camp, we begin our climb of the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere. At Camp I, teamwork is key, building rock walls to protect our tents from the wind, making level platforms to place our tents on, fetching snow or water for cooking, organizing our gear, etc. It is endless work, campcrafting at high altitude.



Our next step is to establish our Camp II, at approximately 17,800', with first a carry, then a move. We will have fantastic views of the Andes from this camp. The route is straightforward, nontechnical hiking to reach this camp. Our main

challenge is the altitude. The load seems to get heavier and heavier at these elevations. If needed, we can take rest days or weather days. We have planned for this in our schedule, and extra food and fuel will be carried for this purpose.

The next step will be a carry to Camp III / High Camp at 19,200', and then a move to Camp III / High Camp, hopefully the next day. At this elevation there are overwhelmingly fantastic views. Here you will feel that you are up high in



altitude!

To attain our High Camp, Piedras Blancas (White Rocks) at 19,200', we follow the same procedure; make our carry to High Camp, return to sleep below at Camp II or III, then move up to High Camp. There will be more scree, patches of snow, and thinner air on our daily menu with incredible vistas of the Central Andes. We will be surrounded by 20,000' giants. At 19,200' building camp is laborious and takes a group effort. From here on, the route will be depend on which Aventuras Patagónicas expedition you are on.



ROUTES

For our Polish Glacier and Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Valley Traverse Routes the itinerary is basically the same, until Summit Day. Polish Glacier parties will climb up the challenging and constantly changing Polish Glacier, which begins at 19,200'. If condition allow. All other parties will traverse and join the normal route on summit day. After summiting, all of our expeditions return to their High Camp, then descend Aconcagua via the standard Normal Route, on the north side.

ACONCAGUA GUANACOS VALLEY TRAVERSE EXPEDITION

Our Guanacos Valley Traverse Route was a relatively untouched approach to Aconcagua with calculated elevation gain between camps, allowing for more efficient acclimatization than other routes. Acclimatization is the key element to summiting the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere and our excellent success rate has been improved by climbing Aconcagua via the Vacas Guanacos Valley. Our Guanacos Valley Route was named by Aventuras Patagonicas for the large guanaco herds encountered in this valley, a rare sight in the Aconcagua region.

It was the last untouched route on Aconcagua and we were pleased to have been able to share this scenic new route with our clients. Many of our clients were fortunate to be among one of the few people to climb Aconcagua via this route! We have guided on Aconcagua for over 25 years, and guided in the Guanacos Valley for eleven years. We approached Aconcagua via the pristine Guanacos Valley, meeting up with our long time favorite traverse to the summit, descending via the Normal Route of Aconcagua, circumnavigating the mountain, and exploring several valleys with views of four different spectacular faces of Aconcagua. The Guanacos Valley Route was a true luxury on Aconcagua. The last season the lower Guanacos Valley was open, only 256 people entered the Guanacos Valley, versus more than 4,000 people on the Normal Route. Out of those 256, 174 were Aventuras Patagonicas clients and guides. We guided this route almost exclusively, when we first began guiding Aconcagua via the Guanacos Valley in 1997.

Note: The Aconcagua Park Authorities have closed the lower Guanacos Valley until further notice. While the closure persists we will be using the Ameghino Valley and Upper Guanacos Valley Route.



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GREAT NEWS 2011!!

ACONCAGUA AMEGHINO VALLEY / UPPER GUANACOS TRAVERSE EXPEDITION

This is our clients favorite new route on the mountain! . It approaches Aconcagua via our previously established route (up the Relinchos Valley), which we have named the Ameghino Valley, after the striking Ameghino Peak (19,530') that surrounds us during the entire trip, and to differentiate our approach. After Camp 1 we reconnect with our long time favorite Guanacos Valley Route (Upper Guanacos), offering the best of both routes; a route less remote than

the pristine Guanacos Valley, an excellent approach for proper acclimatization, the comfort of an established Base Camp, access to porters in Base Camp, if needed, a doctor on call, etc. The Ameghino Valley & Upper Guanacos Traverse starts with the same approach as the Guanacos Valley for the first 2 days, then we take the beautiful Ameghino Valley. Even today, this eastern approach to the mountain is not as heavily traveled as the Normal Route. After three days of spectacular, colorful, high desert scenery we reach our Base Camp at 13,800'.

Note: The Aconcagua Park Authorities have closed the lower Guanacos Valley until further notice. This closure does NOT affect the Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Route.



THE ACONCAGUA TRAVERSE FOR ALL ROUTES

The traverse has proven to be a favorite method of climbing Aconcagua for Aventuras Patagonicas, after having successfully guided Aconcagua this way for many years. This is one of the most interesting and exciting ways to climb Aconcagua. All of our Aconcagua expeditions traverse the mountain, (except our Normal Route expedition) ascending the spectacular Guanacos Valley Route (the lower Valley is presently closed) or our newest route the Ameghino Valley & Upper Guanacos Route, and after summiting, we return to our previously established High Camp, then traverse the mountain and quickly descend the Normal Route. Mules carry our gear from Plaza de Mulas Base Camp back to Penitentes while we hike out to civilization with a light pack. This allows us to experience the entire mountain. We travel through three immense river valleys, and view each of the four tremendous main faces of Aconcagua.

Important Note: Access to the lower Guanacos Valley is presently restricted by the Aconcagua Park Service. We are offering our Ameghino Valley / Upper Guanacos Traverse Route as an excellent alternative.

Summit Day on Aconcagua is a tremendous challenge no matter which route you are on. Reaching Aconcagua's 22,834' summit, especially the final 3,600' to the summit, for many of you will be one of the toughest physical and mental challenges you will ever encounter. It is the most demanding and serious day of the expedition. It is here where taking the time to

properly acclimatize by ferrying loads and taking extra days in Base Camp will pay off. It is here where you will be glad you carefully followed the equipment list. It is here where you will feel that you are getting your money's worth by having expert high altitude guides guiding and pacing you assessing how your body is coping with the altitude. A good window of weather is needed for Summit Day. We have several days for the summit set aside on our itinerary. A calm, windless day is optimal.

SUMMIT DAY

- AMEGHINO / UPPER GUANACOS ROUTE
- GUANACOS VALLEY ROUTE

After an early start it is not unusual to spend 12 hrs climbing up to the summit, leaving camp with headlamps on from Piedras Blancas, at 19,200'. An hour later we connect with the Normal Route trail, often a cold morning with a light breeze, where -20 F is not unusual for Summit Day before the sun comes up. Gentle slopes will take us to Independencia, an old abandoned wooden hut at 20,790'. Normally the sun shines here for the first time that day. It is pleasant but still very cold. The next section is called "El Paso del Viento" (meaning the Pass of the Wind), where often there is a strong breeze even on calm days. This pass is entirely in shadow this time of day, and it is critical to move with efficiency through this section to avoid frostbite, and worse case scenario, to abort our summit attempt due to severe cold or weather.



The next section is called the “Canaleta”, at 21,450’. This can be the crux of the entire climb depending on conditions. Sometimes it can be covered with hard packed snow. Snow in the Canaleta is ideal. Sometimes the slope is dry with loose boulders and scree. Pacing yourself becomes difficult due to altitude and the loose scree and boulders underfoot, making upward progress frustrating and challenging. We may rope people up through some sections where a potential long slip could occur. Note: remember that you DO NOT need a harness for this route. Your guide(s) will carry a rope and webbing to quickly rig a harness, if needed. After the Canaleta we reach the Summit Ridge, just 300’ from the Summit. This last section takes normally up to 1 hour. From the Summit Ridge you can look down the spectacular South Face of Aconcagua, a gigantic 10,000’ face of rock, snow, and ice. The South Face is one of the hardest and most renowned routes in the Andes, a serious undertaking for even the expert climber.

After summiting, we return to High Camp and take a well-deserved rest. The next day we descend the Normal Route to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp. Here we will spend the night and arrange our gear for the mules to carry out. The next day is a one-day walk out to the trailhead where transport will meet us and take us back to Penitentes. We will return to Mendoza where a fun celebration dinner awaits us!

SUMMIT DAY

POLISH GLACIER ROUTE

For this route we need an early start. At about 1:00 AM our stoves will be running for our Polish Glacier climb. We have a very demanding and long day ahead. An 18-hour day is very possible while climbing the Polish Glacier. The line we choose will depend on conditions. If a lot of penitentes (snow pinnacles formed by direct sunlight) are encountered in the lower section of the glacier we will start by climbing through the scree and rock on the right hand side. The steeper Polish Glacier Direct Route has been the choice route in recent years. Although steeper, it is safer and easier due to fewer icy and exposed traverses than on the old Polish route. On this spectacular, steep snow and ice climb, we will use several running belays. In steeper icy sections, we will climb pitches instead of using running belays, belaying and regrouping at every anchor. A long day of climbing will take us to the Summit Ridge, at 22,000’, after the last steep pitch; a 55-60 degree narrow gully with the entire glacier below. The final ridge is very long and gentle. After summiting, we descend quickly down the Normal Route, where at Independencia (20,790’) we traverse east back to our High Camp at 19,200’. After an exhausting day, we sleep late the next morning, then descend to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp for the night. The next day we have a one-day hike out to Penitentes, then return to Mendoza.



RATIO

For non-technical routes we take an average maximum of 10 clients and 3 or 4 guides. For the Polish Glacier we can take a maximum of 6 clients and 2 guides. Normally on the Polish Route, we will take 4 clients and 2 guides.

FOOD

Our menus are some of the best expedition menus out there. They have been developed thoughtfully, evaluating calories per day, carbohydrates, weight, taste and variety. We are very proud of our menus. Rodrigo has used

them on his Alaskan expeditions to Denali. Most of our dinners and breakfasts are carbohydrates. For the approach and our stay at Base Camp, we bring fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and fish, a variety of fresh appetizers, and wine. Dinners up high are complemented with freeze-dried vegetables. We may eat freeze-dried meals only at our high camps for a maximum of 1-3 days per expedition. Freeze-dried is not the best choice except where weight and cooking time is a factor up high. They have many preservatives, are not the best energy source, and can be sometimes hard to digest. The freeze-dried meals we have chosen are our favorite and you may find them delicious!

For the rest of our meals we use food such as rice, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese,



cous-cous, tortellini, pastas, etc, complemented with freeze-dried vegetables and sauces for flavor and variety. Our lunches have lots of high-energy calories, fiber, and complex carbohydrates, changing according to the altitude we are at. We emphasize tremendously on staying hydrated and bringing plenty of all kinds of tea, juice, cocoa, etc. We have soup every night of the expedition with dinner, except for the first night. One of the most important aspects of our menu is the way we pack our food. Although not related to the taste of the food, it is logistically one of the keys to our success. We carefully measure everything in specific amounts. Everything is carefully prepackaged, labeled by day, and waterproofed to take the abuse of a 3-day mule ride. Finally, the small amount of garbage that we produce during the expedition is an indication of our careful packing process. We will also bring fresh fruit and vegetables, carried by mules, all the way to Base Camp. Please let us know when you sign up for an expedition if you are vegetarian or have any food allergies, so we can pack food accordingly for the expedition.



ACONCAGUA HISTORY AND ROUTES

Cerro Aconcagua, 22,834' (6,959 meters) has the distinction of being the highest mountain in both the Western and Southern Hemispheres, making it also the highest mountain in the world outside of Asia. Its name is native in origin and may come from the Inca word "Ackon Cahuak" which means "Stone Sentinel". This spectacular mountain is located in the heart of the Chilean-Argentine Central Andes, at a latitude of 32 degrees 40 minutes south.

Aconcagua was first climbed in 1897, up the Northwest side of the mountain by Swiss Mountain Guide Matthias Zurbriggen. This route has become the most popular way to climb the mountain, and is known as the "Ruta Normal" or Normal Route. The extreme altitude, severe winds, and cold temperatures make an ascent by this, or any other route on this mountain, very challenging. In 1934, a second route was pioneered up the east side of the mountain by a Polish team. The Polish approached the mountain up the Vacas and Relinchos Valleys to Plaza Argentina, and summited via what is known today as the Polish Glacier.



POLISH GLACIER AND TRAVERSE EXPEDITIONS

Our Polish Glacier and Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Valley Traverse Expeditions follow the 1934 Polish Expedition Route for the first two days. Our approach of Aconcagua continues via the less traveled Vacas and Relinchos Valleys. We have designated this route our Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Valley Route to differentiate it from our former Guanacos Valley route. From our Base Camp, Plaza Argentina, at 13,800', we ascend gentle slopes to Camp I, II, and III / High Camp. Our Polish and Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Routes continue along the same route all the way to our High Camp at 19,200'. From here, our Polish Glacier Expedition will climb to the Summit via the Polish Glacier and our Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Valley Traverse Expedition will traverse to the north side of the mountain, connecting with the standard Normal Route to the Summit.

Our Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Valley Traverse Route is not technically difficult, although high altitude, cold temperatures and strong winds can make any route on Aconcagua very challenging. Participants must be in excellent physical condition, able to carry a heavy pack, and have basic mountaineering skills.

Polish Glacier Route: People signing up for the Polish Glacier Route should have previous high altitude experience, and be very familiar with the use of ice axe, crampons, and belaying techniques. Many expeditions attempt the Polish Glacier Route, although it is rarely successfully climbed. The climb is non-technical to the base of the Polish Glacier, but from 19,200' on, the

climbing changes dramatically. Due to steep snow and ice climbing at high altitude, and a very long day, we only consider taking our stronger clients, who are properly acclimatized for this technical route to the summit, weather, condition of the route, and other important factors also determining whether we will attempt this route with our clients. Our key for success has been honesty on the difficulty of the climb. The route has been getting harder every year. We have noticed changes over the past 10 years, which may be attributed to global warming. We have found more bare ice on the glacier, making it more technical than in the past. There are often penitentes at the base of the glacier which create an obstacle, making the first few hours of climbing the Polish much more difficult and laborious. We will climb the steeper Polish Glacier Direct route, versus the regular Polish Glacier route, thus avoiding several traverses on icy slopes. Our description of this fine and spectacular route is not intended to intimidate, but to be realistic. If you sign up for the Polish Glacier Route, we make the final decision whether you have acclimatized and are strong enough for the attempt. Traversing to the north side and tackling the Summit via the Normal Route, as we have done in the past, is always an option.



HISTORY OF AVENTURAS PATAGONICAS

Aventuras Patagonicas is the culmination of many years of mountain guiding experience in the Andes, the Alps, Antarctica, and Alaska, and the desire to provide a mountain guiding service with superb standards in a competitive field. We bring genuine experience to Aconcagua, unequaled by other guiding companies. Our company is very proud to be guiding in spectacular places such as Alaska, Antarctica, Europe, Patagonia, and other parts of South America. We have guided over 200 Aconcagua expeditions in the last two decades, and hundreds of expeditions worldwide. We have an impeccable safety record and a very high success rate. The guides working for Aventuras Patagonicas are carefully chosen for their dedication to the guiding profession and extensive international guiding experience. Our lead guides are predominantly North American AMGA or UIAGM / IFMGA Certified Mountain Guides. This is the highest level of certification for professional mountain guides, setting worldwide training and certification standards for mountain guiding. Our North and South American assistant guides are exceptionally well trained and experienced mountain guides. Please refer to our website for a description of our mountain guides.

Aventuras Patagonicas is a small and dynamic guiding company. A combination of our high guiding standards, unique regional knowledge, and special attention to small details, prepare us to offer you a remarkable and safe mountain experience. With Aventuras Patagonicas you will have one of the best possible chances of

summitting Aconcagua, combined with a genuine experience of the region. We provide you with the absolute highest quality and most personalized mountain guiding service available on Aconcagua.

As Chief Guide and founder of Aventuras Patagonicas, I have personally guided 28 Aconcagua Expeditions, summiting on 24 of these expeditions, and getting most (if not all) of my clients to the summit on each of these expeditions. I have also guided 23 Denali (Mt McKinley) Expeditions, summiting on 20 of those expeditions, again getting most of my clients to the summit. I have been guiding in the Swiss and French Alps for over a decade. Altogether, I have guided over 85 high-altitude climbing expeditions around the world, including Europe and Antarctica. One of the main reasons for our high success rate has been due to excellent leadership, careful logistics, consistent acclimatization methods, experience on the mountain, and timing with the weather. We also attribute our success to our terrific clientele who have taken their expedition seriously from the moment they sign up, preparing physically and mentally before and during the trip, having a positive attitude, proper fitness, and plenty of determination.



I have guided Aconcagua Expeditions since the early '80's, when few guided on Aconcagua, and there was only one other North American guiding company. I truly feel that with our experience, Aventuras Patagonicas is uniquely qualified to offer Aconcagua Expeditions. Growing up 150 miles from this Andean giant, I spent my youth and early mountaineering career climbing throughout the Andes, exposed to high altitude guiding before I was 20 years old. I traveled to Europe to explore my career as a mountain guide in the French Alps, studying guiding as a profession. In the mid 80's and throughout the 90's, I dedicated myself to guiding on Denali (Mt McKinley), living in Alaska, and returning to the Andes to guide in winter. At present, I am dedicated to our busy South American climbing season in the winter (Southern Hemisphere summer) and guiding in the Alps, the Tetons, and worldwide during the Northern Hemisphere summer climbing season, and to our new world class heliski/board guide service, Powder South, in the Chilean Andes

during the Southern Hemisphere winter season.

I urge you to check our references, particularly in this new millennium when there are so many new guiding companies on Aconcagua. We have the most Aconcagua experience in the profession. Call the American Mountain Guides Association, (303) 271-0984, the finest guiding organization in the country dedicated to high standards in mountain guiding, and an excellent source of information. Ask them who specializes in Aconcagua and the Andes, and whom they would recommend. We have attached a list of previous Aventuras Patagonicas clients' for references. Take this aspect of choosing the guiding company you will climb with seriously. **The success and quality of your Aconcagua expedition experience depends upon your choice of guiding companies.**

Rodrigo Mujica

Owner / Director of Aventuras Patagonicas



Aconcagua Ameghino Valley - Upper Guanacos Traverse with porter option

ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION ITINERARY

FOR SCHEDULE AND RATES PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE

These expeditions all include Traverse of Aconcagua / Polish Glacier option / Descent via Normal Route /Porters available at Base Camp (not included in cost of expedition)

DURATION: 20 days

BALANCE DUE: 75 days before departure

COST INCLUDES

- Professional Mountain Guides
- 2 nights hotel accommodation in Mendoza, at the five star Mendoza Park Hyatt, with breakfast buffet (1 night at the beginning of the expedition and 1 night at the end of the expedition)
- 1 night hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner in Penitentes
- All land transportation
- Mules
- All expedition food
- All community gear such as; tents, stoves, state of the art Base Camp, cooking gear, medical kits, satellite phones, radios, gamow bag, pulse-oximeters, etc.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR

- Round-trip flights to and from Mendoza, Argentina,
- Aconcagua climbing permit fee (which you will pay in Mendoza, in cash, accompanied by your guide, credit cards not accepted)
- Meals in Mendoza, including banquet dinner.
- Personal equipment.
- Passport.
- Personal items and services (laundry, snacks, drinks, tips, etc.).
- Expenses incurred in the case of a rescue or early departure from the expedition.
- SAT phone charges.
- *Porter fee (If hire porters)

- *PORTERS ARE AVAILABLE, FOR HIRE IN BASE CAMP, THE COST OF PORTERS IS NOT INCLUDED, IN YOUR TRIP COST, IF YOU WISH A PORTER WE WILL ARRANGE THEM FOR YOU.
- Porters cost from \$150 to \$350 per load carry depending on altitude of the camp load is carried to. You will need a maximum of 5 to 6 load carries from Base Camp to High Camp and back down to Base Camp again (about \$1,000 USD), if you choose to have a porter for each carry, move to the next camp, and for the descent of the mountain.
- Porters will be available at Base Camp. The final number of estimated load carries may be decided at Base Camp.



**Important: Plan to arrive in Mendoza by 3 pm, the 1st day of your expedition. Plan to depart Mendoza the day AFTER the last day of your expedition. You may choose to arrive in Mendoza a day or two earlier than the first day of your expedition to rest from your flight, enjoy summertime in Mendoza, and/or get a few last minute equipment items. We do NOT cover any of the expense of spending extra days/nights in Mendoza.*



AMEGHINO VALLEY / UPPER GUANACOS TRAVERSE EXPEDITION

This is the best route on the mountain next to our Guanacos Valley route (the lower Guanacos Valley is presently closed by the Aconcagua Park Service). This route uses our previously established route (Relinchos Valley route), combined with the upper portion of our Guanacos Valley route. We have named the Ameghino Valley Route after the striking Ameghino Peak (19,530') surrounding the route and to differentiate this route from both the Relinchos route and the original Guanacos Valley route. After Camp 1 we reconnect with our long time favorite Guanacos Valley, offering the best of both worlds; a less remote route than the pristine lower Guanacos Valley, the comfort of an established Base Camp, access to porters if needed, a doctor on call, etc. The Ameghino Valley / Upper Guanacos Traverse starts with the

same approach as the Guanacos Valley for the first 2 days, then we take the beautiful Ameghino Valley. Even today, this eastern approach to the mountain is not as heavily traveled as the Normal Route. After three days of spectacular, colorful, high desert scenery we reach our Base Camp at 13,800'. Then we ascend to Camp 1 and traverse to the Upper Guanacos route, again rejoining our long time favorite Guanacos Valley Route.

The traverse after Camp 1 brings us to High Camp. Upon summiting, we descend the Normal Route, offering you an entire experience of the mountain, traveling through three different river valleys, the Vacas, Ameghino, and Horcones, and past the four tremendous main faces of Aconcagua.

Note: The Aconcagua Park Authorities have closed the lower Guanacos Valley Route until further notice. This closure does NOT affect our Ameghino Valley / Upper Guanacos Route in any way.

NEW! AMEGHINO VALLEY / UPPER GUANACOS TRAVERSE

ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION ITINERARY



DAY 1: Group meets in Mendoza, Argentina at the Mendoza Park-Hyatt Hotel. Please be at the hotel by 3 pm. Afternoon or evening team meeting at the hotel, individual equipment check with your guides. For dinner we will have a chance to taste the fine Argentinean cuisine and wine.

DAY 2: Get our permits at the Aconcagua Park Service office. Drive west from Mendoza to Penitentes ski area at 8,500'. Lunch stop in Uspallata on the way. Our drive winds along the Rio Mendoza deep into the heart of the rugged Andes Mountains, where we begin our acclimatization in Penitentes. Afternoon hike is recommended.

DAY 3, 4, 5: Approach to Base Camp. Hike up the Vacas and Ameghino Valleys to Base Camp. Mules will carry our gear. Here we begin the route, which was established in 1934 by a Polish Expedition. Even today this eastern approach to the mountain is not as heavily traveled as the Normal Route. After three days of spectacular, colorful, high desert scenery we reach our Base Camp, Plaza Argentina, at 13,800'. The hike to Base Camp is approximately 40 kilometers and gives us the perfect chance to begin our acclimatization.

DAY 6: Rest and acclimatization day at Base Camp. Organize for upper mountain. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to make the summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to the next camp, returning to sleep below at the previous camp. The next day we will move to

the higher camp. This is an excellent method of acclimatization, our main focus throughout your expedition.

DAY 7: Carry a load to Camp I, at 16,300'. The route goes up a gentle trail on the rocky moraine-covered Relinchos Glacier situated between Cerro Aconcagua and Cerro Ameghino. Here we will be able to see Nieve Penitentes, unique snow and ice formations created by the direct sun. Return to Base Camp.

DAY 8: Leave Base Camp. Move to Camp I. Also possible rest and acclimatization day in Base Camp, if needed.

DAY 9: Carry a load to Camp II, at 17,800'. Fantastic view of the Polish Glacier. We ascend scree slopes to a broad ridge crest where we will establish Camp II. Today we reconnect with our UPPER GUANACOS VALLEY ROUTE! After reaching the Ameghino saddle, a gentle easy traverse takes us to the Guanacos. This is an easy day, where we traverse from the saddle to the upper Guanacos, elevation gain is minimum.

DAY 10: Move to Camp II. From Base Camp on, there may be changes to the itinerary as needed depending on weather, the group, and acclimatization. As on any Aventuras Patagonicas mountaineering expedition, flexibility and adaptation are key to success. Your guide may elect to have an extra rest day at Base Camp, before moving to C1, a rest day at Camp 1 or Camp 2... depending on the group. This style and tactic is part of our success. and creates one of the best upper mountain acclimatization possibilities on Aconcagua. The results are overwhelmingly positive: a team well acclimatized.



DAY 11: Carry to Camp III / High Camp, at 19,200' (White Rocks).

DAY 12: Move to High Camp III / High Camp, Piedras Blancas (White Rocks), at 19,200'. from where we will tackle the summit the next day.

DAY 13, 14, 15, 16: Summit! Weather permitting. We leave several days for our summit day in case of poor weather, although most parties choose to descend after 3 nights at High Camp.

DAY 14, 15, 16 or 17: Descend the Normal Route, on the west side of Aconcagua, all the way to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp, at 13,800'. This is a more direct descent than our approach of the east side of Aconcagua.

DAY 18: Hike out the Horcones Valley with its impressive views of Aconcagua's South Face. Mules carry our gear. We arrive in the afternoon to Penitentes where we may take a quick shower and head on to Mendoza to the comfort of the Mendoza Park Hyatt. If extra weather and acclimatization days are not used on our expedition, you and your team may arrive a day or two earlier to Mendoza. Evening banquet with your team.

DAY 19: Leisure day in Mendoza, possibly fly home this afternoon or continue traveling in South America

Note: This itinerary is intended to be a guideline only. Weather days and rest days are always a possibility while on a climbing expedition. Rest days may be taken at any of the camps due to weather, acclimatization, or team logistics. If no weather/acclimatization days are used, your team may arrive one or two days earlier to Mendoza. We do not cover extra nights in Mendoza. Due to this variability, please allow for flexibility in your schedule at the end of your expedition.

FOR SCHEDULE AND RATES PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE

These expeditions all include Traverse of Aconcagua / Polish Glacier option / Descent via Normal Route /Porters available at Base Camp (not included in cost of expedition)

DURATION: 20 days

BALANCE DUE: 75 days before departure

POLISH GLACIER ROUTE NEW! WITH APPROACH VIA AND TRAVERSE

COST INCLUDES

- Professional Mountain Guides.
- 2 nights hotel accommodation in Mendoza, at the five star Mendoza Park Hyatt with breakfast buffet; (1 night at the beginning of the expedition and 1 night at the end of the expedition)
- 1 night hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner in Penitentes
- All land transportation.
- Mules.
- All expedition food.
- All community gear; tents, stoves, state of the art Base Camp, cooking gear, medical kits, satellite phone, radios, gamow bag, pulse oximeters, etc.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Round-trip flights to and from Mendoza, Argentina.
- Aconcagua climbing permit fee (which you will pay in Mendoza, accompanied by your guide)
- Meals in Mendoza including banquet dinner.
- Personal equipment.
- Passport.
- Personal items and services (laundry, snacks, drinks, tips, etc.)
- Expenses incurred in the case of a rescue or early departure from the expedition,
- SAT phone charges.

Important: Plan to arrive in Mendoza by 3 pm, the 1st day of your expedition. Plan to depart Mendoza the day AFTER the last day of your expedition. You may choose to arrive in Mendoza a day or two earlier than your expedition start date to rest from your flight, enjoy summertime in Mendoza, and/or get a few last minute equipment items. We do NOT cover any of the expense of spending extra days/nights in Mendoza.

POLISH GLACIER ROUTE AND TRAVERSE

Via Ameghino - Upper Guanacos



We approach the Polish Glacier via our Ameghino – Upper Guanacos Valley route, traverse the mountain, and descend via the Normal Route. If you are signing up for the Polish Glacier Route you need to have previous high altitude experience, and be very familiar with the use of ice axe, crampons, and belaying techniques. The line we choose will depend on conditions. If a lot of penitentes (snow pinnacles formed by direct sunlight) are encountered in the lower section of the glacier, we will start by climbing through the scree and rock on the right hand side. The steeper Polish Glacier Direct Route has been the choice route in recent years. Although steeper, it is safer and easier due to fewer icy and exposed traverses than on the old Polish Route. On this spectacular, steep snow and ice climb we will use

several running belays. In steeper icy sections we will climb pitches instead of using running belays, belaying and regrouping at every anchor. A long day of climbing will take us to the Summit Ridge at 22,000' after the last steep pitch; a 55-60 degree narrow gully with the entire glacier below our feet. The final ridge is very long and gentle. After summiting, we descend quickly down the Normal Route to Independencia (20,790'), where we descend to our High Camp at 19,200' to rest and spend the night. The next day we descend the Normal Route.



POLISH GLACIER ROUTE AND TRAVERSE

DAY 1: Group meets in Mendoza, Argentina. Equipment check and afternoon briefing at the hotel. For dinner we will have a chance to taste fine Argentinean cuisine and wine.

DAY 2: Drive west from Mendoza to Penitentes ski area at 8,500'. Our drive winds along the Rio Mendoza deep into the heart of the rugged Andes Mountains where we begin our acclimatization in Penitentes. Afternoon hike is recommended, though optional.

DAY 3, 4, 5: Approach to Base Camp. Hike up the Vacas and Ameghino Valleys to Base Camp.

Mules will carry our gear. Here we begin the route, which was established in 1934 by a Polish Expedition. Even today this eastern approach to the mountain is not as heavily traveled as the Normal Route. After three days of spectacular, colorful, high desert scenery we reach our Base Camp, Plaza Argentina, at 13,800'. The hike to Base Camp is approximately 40 kilometers and gives us the perfect chance to begin our acclimatization.

DAY 6: Rest and acclimatization day at Base Camp. Organize for upper mountain. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to make the summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to the next camp and returning to sleep below at the previous camp. The next day we will move to the higher camp. This is an excellent method of acclimatization, our main focus throughout your

expedition.

DAY 7: Carry a load to Camp I at approximately 16,300'. The route goes up the narrow valley between the north side of Cerro Ameghino and Cerro San Francisco. Here we will be able to see Nieve Penitentes, unique snow and ice formations created by the direct sun. Return to Base Camp

DAY 8: Leave Base Camp. Move to Camp I.

DAY 9: Carry a load to Camp II at 17,800'. Fantastic view of the Polish Glacier. We ascend scree slopes to a broad ridge crest where we will establish Camp II.

DAY 10: Move to Camp II.

DAY 11: Carry a load to Camp III / High Camp below the Polish Glacier, at 19,200'.

DAY 12: Move to Camp III / High Camp from where we will tackle the summit the next day, depending on how group is doing.

DAY 13, 14, 15, 16: Summit! Weather permitting. We allow several days for Summit Day in case of poor weather. This is by far the longest and hardest day of the Expedition. Spectacular steep snow and ice climbing will take us to the summit.

DAY 14 - 17: Descend the Normal Route to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp. This will be quite exciting since we descend a different side of the mountain.

DAY 18: Hike out the Horcones Valley with its impressive views of Aconcagua's South Face. Mules carry our gear. We arrive in the afternoon to Penitentes where we may take a quick shower and head on to Mendoza to the comfort



of the Mendoza Park Hyatt. If extra weather and acclimatization days are not used on our expedition, you and your team may arrive a day or two earlier to Mendoza. Evening banquet with your team.

DAY 19: Leisure day in Mendoza, possibly fly home this afternoon or continue traveling in South America

Note: This itinerary is intended to be a guideline only, weather days and rest days are always a possibility while on a climbing expedition. Rest days may be taken at any of the camps due to weather, acclimatization, or team logistics. If no weather/acclimatization days are used, your team may arrive one or two days earlier to Mendoza. We do not cover extra nights in Mendoza. Due to this variability, please allow for flexibility in your schedule at the end of your expedition.



NORMAL ROUTE WITH PORTERS

ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION ITINERARY

FOR SCHEDULE AND RATES PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE

Porters available at Base Camp (not included in cost of expedition)

DURATION: 18 days

BALANCE DUE: 75 days before departure

NORMAL ROUTE WITH PORTERS

COST INCLUDES

- Professional Mountain Guides
- 2 nights hotel accommodation in Mendoza, at the five star Mendoza Park Hyatt, with breakfast buffet; (1 night at the beginning and 1 night at the end of the expedition)
- 1 night hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner in Penitentes
- all land transportation
- mules
- all expedition food
- All community gear such as tents, stoves, state of the art Base Camp, cooking gear, medical kits, satellite phones, radios, gamow bag, pulse-oximeters, etc.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR

- Round-trip flights to and from Mendoza, Argentina
- Aconcagua climbing permit fee (which you will pay in Mendoza, in cash, accompanied by your guide)
- meals in Mendoza including banquet dinner.
- personal equipment.
- passport.
- personal items and services (laundry, snacks, drinks, tips, etc.)
- expenses incurred in the case of a rescue or early departure from the expedition.
- SAT phone charges.
- Porter fee, if porters are used

**Porters cost \$100 to \$160 per "load carry". You will need a maximum of 5 to 6 "load carries" from Base Camp to High Camp and back down to Base Camp (If you choose to have a porter for each carry and move, and for the descent). Porters will be available at Base Camp. The final number of estimated "load carries" may be decided at Base Camp.*

NORMAL ROUTE WITH PORTERS



Our Normal Route expedition with Porters, is a variation of our original Aventuras Patagonicas expedition offered over a decade and a half ago. Although our Guanacos Valley Route to-date, remains the most pristine route on the mountain, we have received many requests for a shorter route on Aconcagua, with the option of a porter assist. Over the past few seasons we have chosen not to guide the Normal Route for aesthetic reasons due to the route's overuse causing the route in general to be unappealing. We began exploring other options on the mountain, to offer fresh alternatives and challenges to our clients, resulting in our Guanacos Valley and Traverse Route, which was extremely successful. If you are not bothered by the overcrowding of the Normal Route, seeing many other climbers while climbing, enjoy the social aspect of Base Camp (meeting climbers of all nationalities), and feel regular loads (45 to 50 lbs) are too heavy for you, then our Normal Route with Porters expedition is for you! We have designed this trip so that at Base

Camp you may decide how many carries you will need a porter. You may choose to use a porter for every carry, to alternate days, or experiment as you go. Now we offer an excellent alternative to the standard Normal Route. Please consider our Ameghino / Upper Guanacos Traverse Route (with porter option) which combines an approach which provides better acclimatization to improve your chance of summit success, availability of porters in Base Camp, AND a more aesthetic approach to the mountain, including a traverse of Aconcagua so you will know both sides of the highest mountain in the Western Hemisphere!

NORMAL ROUTE WITH PORTERS

ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION ITINERARY

DAY 1: Group meets in Mendoza, Argentina. Equipment check and afternoon briefing at the hotel. For dinner we will have a chance to taste the fine Argentinean cuisine and wine.

DAY 2: Drive west from Mendoza to Penitentes ski area, at 8,500'. Our drive winds along the Rio Mendoza, deep into the heart of the rugged Andes Mountains, where we begin our acclimatization in Penitentes. An optional afternoon hike is recommended.

DAY 3: We will begin our approach to Base Camp. This 25-mile approach gives us the chance to begin our acclimatization. We follow the Horcones Valley, and camp our first night in Confluencia, at 10,900' Mules carry our gear.

DAY 4: Hike to the base of the majestic South Face of Aconcagua, at 13,000', toward Plaza Francia. Return to Confluencia to spend our 2nd night, before heading to Base Camp the next day. This hike will facilitate our acclimatization process.

DAY 5: After 3 days of hiking through colorful desert landscape we reach our Base Camp, Plaza de Mulas, at 13,800'.

DAY 6: Rest and acclimatization day at Base Camp. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to make the summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to our next camp, and returning to sleep below at the previous camp. The next day we will move to the higher camp. This day

(Day 6) we will practice snow and ice techniques on the Nieve Penitentes, unique snow and ice formations created by direct sunlight.

DAY 7: Carry a load to Camp I, Plaza Canada, at 16,170'. Return to Base Camp

DAY 8: Leave Base Camp. Move to Camp I. Beautiful campsite with impressive views of the north side of Aconcagua and alpine Cerro Cuerno.

DAY 9: Carry a load to Camp II, Nido de Cóndores, at 17,820'.

DAY 10: Leave Camp I. Move to Camp II.

DAY 11: Carry a load to Camp III, Piedras Blancas (High Camp) at 19,200'.

DAY 12: Move to Camp III. This unique spot will be our High Camp where we will spend at least 2 nights. Here we are surrounded by interesting rock formations only a day from the summit.

DAY 13, 14, 15: Summit! Weather permitting. We allow a window for our Summit Day in case of poor weather and depending on how group is acclimatizing.

DAY 16: Descend from High Camp to Base Camp.

DAY 17: Hike out the Horcones Valley with its impressive views of Aconcagua's South Face. Mules carry our gear. We arrive in the afternoon to Penitentes where we may take a quick shower and head on to Mendoza to the comfort of the Mendoza Park Hyatt. If extra weather and acclimatization days are not used on our expedition, you and your team may arrive a day



or two earlier to Mendoza. Evening banquet with your team.

DAY 18: Leisure day in Mendoza, fly home this afternoon or continue traveling in South America

Note: This itinerary is intended to be a guideline only, weather days and rest days are always a while on a climbing expedition



GUANACOS VALLEY AND TRAVERSE

ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION ITINERARY

FOR SCHEDULE AND RATES PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE**DURATION:** 20 days**COST OF TRIP:** TBA (to be announced) This route is closed by Park Service Authorities-**BALANCE DUE:** 75 days before departure

Note: The Aconcagua Park Authorities have closed the lower Guanacos Valley until further notice. While the closure persists we will be using our Ameghino Valley and Upper Guanacos Traverse Route.

GUANACOS VALLEY AND TRAVERSE ROUTE

COST INCLUDES

- Professional Mountain Guides
- 2 Nights hotel accommodation in Mendoza, at the five star Mendoza Park Hyatt, with breakfast buffet (1 night at the beginning of the expedition and 1 night at the end of the expedition)
- 1 night hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner in Penitentes
- All land transportation
- Mules
- All expedition food
- All community gear such as; tents, stoves, state of the art Base Camp, cooking gear, medical kits, satellite phones, radios, gamow bag, pulse-oximeters, etc

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR

- Round-trip flight to and from Mendoza, Argentina
- Aconcagua climbing permit fee (which you will pay in Mendoza, accompanied by your guide)
- Meals in Mendoza including banquet dinner.
- Personal equipment.
- Passport.
- Personal items and services (laundry, snacks, drinks, tips, etc.)
- Expenses incurred in the case of a rescue or early departure from the expedition.
- SAT phone charges.

**Important: Plan to arrive in Mendoza by 3 pm, the 1st day of your expedition. Plan to depart Mendoza the day AFTER the last day of your expedition. You may choose to arrive in Mendoza a day or two earlier than your expedition start date to rest from your flight, enjoy summertime in Mendoza, and/or get a few last minute equipment items. We do NOT cover any of the expense of spending extra days/nights in Mendoza.*

GUANACOS VALLEY AND TRAVERSE ROUTE



TRAVERSE

This route, our favorite route on Aconcagua, was a newly discovered, non-technical route explored by Aventuras Patagonicas in 1997. This was the least traveled and most remote route on Aconcagua. It had gradual elevation gain between camps allowing for easier acclimatization than other routes. Acclimatization is the key element to summiting the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere. Our excellent success rate had been further improved by climbing Aconcagua via the Guanacos Valley. We named this route the “Guanacos Route”. During the exploration of this valley, we encountered large herds of wild guanaco, a rare sight in the Aconcagua region. Very few were people were encountered on this route, giving this route a true sense of adventure.

Our Traverse has been popular among our clients. Climbing Aconcagua via this non-technical route and descending the shorter Normal Route gives you a full experience of the mountain. You will travel through three different valleys, the Vacas, Guanacos and Horcones, and pass four huge faces of this tremendous mountain. Mules take our gear to Base Camp, Plaza Guanacos, on the east side of the mountain. After the Summit, we descend the north side of Aconcagua via the Normal Route, to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp. Mules then carry our gear from Plaza de Mulas back to Penitentes, while we hike out to civilization with a light pack.

We ascend via the Guanacos Valley and traverse to the Normal Route for the descent.



GUANACOS VALLEY AND TRAVERSE ROUTE

DAY 1: Group meets in Mendoza, Argentina. Equipment check and afternoon briefing at the hotel. Dinner will be a chance to taste fine Argentinean cuisine and wine.

DAY 2: Drive west from Mendoza to Penitentes ski area at 8,500'. Our drive winds along the Rio Mendoza deep into the heart of the rugged Andes Mountains where we begin our acclimatization in Penitentes. Optional afternoon hike.

DAY 3, 4, 5: Approach to Plaza Guanacos Base Camp. Mules carry your gear. This approximately 35-mile approach is essential to our acclimatization. Our first two days we follow the same route as our Vacas and Relinchos Valley Expeditions. The third day begins our new approach. We continue up the Vacas Valley passing the Relinchos Valley. The chance of seeing other expeditions on this new exciting route is remote. The chance of seeing wildlife is much more probable. Spectacular glaciers contrasting with a desert backdrop make this approach both surreal and unforgettable. We have an excellent chance of seeing herds of guanacos. When Rodrigo did an exploratory trip to the region he encountered several hundred guanacos, counting 80 in one sighting alone! These magnificent mammals are well camouflaged, extremely elusive, and a rare sight in the Aconcagua region.

DAY 6: Plaza Guanaco Base Camp at 13,000'. Rest and acclimatization day at Base Camp. We want everyone to have the best possible chance to make the summit. The most effective way to do this is to take the time to acclimatize to the low oxygen environment. We will incorporate rest days into our schedule and climb in traditional expedition style. We will be carrying loads up to

the next camp and returning to sleep below at the previous camp. The next day we will move to the higher camp.

DAY 7: Carry a load to Camp I at approximately 15,200'. The route goes up the narrow valley between the north side of Cerro Ameghino and Cerro San Francisco. Here we will be able to see Nieve Penitentes, unique snow and ice formations created by the direct sun. Return to Base Camp.

DAY 8: Leave Base Camp. Move to Camp I.

DAY 9: Carry a load to Camp II at 16,500', a pleasant, well-protected area with tremendous views of Cerro Mercedario, Cerro Mano, and other Andean giants. Return to Camp I.

DAY 10: Move to Camp II.

DAY 11: Carry a load to Camp III below the Polish Glacier, at 17,800'.

DAY 12: Move to Camp III depending on how group is doing.

DAY 13: Carry to High Camp, Piedras Blancas (White Rocks), at 19,200'.

DAY 14: Move to High Camp.

DAY 15, 16, 17: Summit! Weather permitting. We allow several days for our Summit Day in case of poor weather.

DAY 18: Descend the Normal Route to Plaza de Mulass Base Camp. This will be quite exciting since we descend a different side of the mountain.

DAY 19: Hike out the Horcones Valley with its



impressive views of Aconcagua's South Face. Mules carry our gear. We arrive in the afternoon to Penitentes where we may take a quick shower and head on to Mendoza to the comfort of the Mendoza Park Hyatt. If extra weather and acclimatization days are not used on our expedition, you and your team may arrive a day or two earlier to Mendoza. Evening banquet with your team.

DAY 20: Leisure day in Mendoza, fly home this afternoon or continue traveling in South America

Note: This itinerary is intended to be a guideline only, weather days and rest days are always a possibility while on a climbing expedition.

Note: The Aconcagua Park Authorities have closed the lower Guanacos Valley until further notice. While the closure persists we will be using our next favorite route on Aconcagua, our Ameghino Valley / Upper Guanacos Traverse Route.

ACONCAGUA EQUIPMENT LIST EVERYTHING YOU

WILL NEED FOR YOUR ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION



FEET

- Socks:
3 pair outer socks, thick wool or synthetic
3 pair inner socks, thin silk, wool, or synthetic
2 pair silk, wool, or synthetic socks (for approach)
- Climbing boots plastic or leather DOUBLE mountaineering boots
- Lightweight hiking boots or sturdy approach shoes
- Booties, down or synthetic
- Gaitors (for scree, goretex type work well-not over boots)
- Neoprene booties with sole, for river crossings. Lightweight ok. sandals or old pair of tennis are also ok



UPPER BODY

- 2 Lightweight synthetic or wool long underwear tops
- 1 Expedition weight synthetic or wool long underwear tops
- Breathable windproof and water resistant outer jacket, such as goretex, with hood
- Fleece jacket or similar weight micro-light puffy jacket
- Heavy weight down or Polarguard Expedition Parka with heavyweight expedition hood (-20 F)
- Synthetic T-shirts
- Lightweight, breathable, long sleeved shirt for sun protection on approach hike



LOWER BODY

- Synthetic or nylon briefs or underpants - 3 pair (optional)
- Lightweight synthetic or wool long underwear bottoms - 1 pair
- Expedition weight synthetic or wool long underwear bottoms- 1 pair
- Fleece pants (full length side zippers recommended)
- Soft shell synthetic pants for mid mountain - 1 pair
- Breathable windproof and water resistant pants or bibs such as Goretex (full length sidezippers recommended)
- Shorts - 1 pair
- Lightweight synthetic breathable pants for sun protec-



tion (hike in, base camp - optional)

HANDS

- Heavy insulated mittens, thick fleece, down or thick wool - 1 pair
- Thin gloves, synthetic or wool - 1 pair
- Insulated windproof and water resistant finger gloves - 1 pair
- Goretex wind shells for mittens (needed only if your mittens are not made of windproof material) - 1 pair



HEAD

- Ski hat, wool or fleece
- Balaclava, wool, fleece, or synthetic - to cover neck, chin & face
- Baseball cap

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SLEEPING GEAR

- Down or synthetic sleeping bag comfortable to -20F
- 1 foam pad and / or 1 thermarest pad (both recommended, full length recommended)

ACONCAGUA EQUIPMENT LIST

EVERYTHING YOU WILL NEED FOR YOUR ACONCAGUA EXPEDITION

PACK



- Pack with 5000 - 6000 / 80 - 100 liter cubic inches capacity
- Large day pack for approach 2,000 - 3,000 cubic inch / 30 - 50 liter capacity
- Extra Large strong duffel bag (at least 7000 cubic inches) w/strong zipper and a lock, large enough for pack to fit in, for mules to carry and for storage of gear.
- Extra large stuff sack for gear storage in camp
- 1 stuff sack with straps or lightweight day pack (15L) to use as daypack for hike out last day. (If the top of expedition pack is a removable fanny pack this can be used as well).



TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

- Ice axe 70 cm. approx. Standing with your arm relaxed at your side, the ice axe should reach from the palm of your hand to the ground. For Polish Glacier Route it can be 5-10 cm shorter.
- Crampons, 12 points non-rigid recommended. For Polish Glacier Route; rigid are fine.
- Ski poles - adjustable preferred
- Crampon bag for plane flight and mule load



POLISH GLACIER ROUTE ONLY

- Climbing harness, to fit comfortably over bulky clothing.
- Carabiners, 6 regular, 2 locking
- 1 Ascender
- 30 feet of 6mm perlon rope
- Climbing helmet



PERSONALS

- Head lamp and extra batteries
- Sun glasses two pair (one as a spare)
- Ski goggles
- Sun screen lotion SPF 29 - 1 large or 2 small tubes
- Sun screen lip protection 1 stick
- Skin moisturizer 3 oz.
- Mole skin, bandaids, tape, 2nd skin, throat lozenges
- Pocket knife or leatherman
- Plastic bowl, large cup (insulated), spoon and Fork
- 2 water bottles -1 quart capacity wide mouth (nalgene recommended) w/ water bottle insulator
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Toilet paper - 1 or 2 rolls
- Antibiotics 1 cycle broad spectrum
- Aspirin or Ibuprofen - 30
- Disposable lighter
- Stuff sacks 2-3, assorted sizes (one extra large to store contents of pack on summit day)
- Iodine pills or similar water purification tablets - 2 new small bottles (for water purification)
- \$300 - \$500 US dollars in \$10's & \$20's for drinks, snacks in Penitentes, lunch in Uspallata, extra services in Base Camp, such as shower, internet, beer, soda, pizza, and for tips.
- \$50 & \$100 USD bills for Climbing Permit



OPTIONALS

- Camera
- Journal, pen/pencil, book, games, I-Pod
- Plug adaptor for hotels
- 1 Thermos 1 quart capacity (useful up high)
- Small towel and soap, baby wipes, foot powder
- Swimsuit
- Teva sandals
- Cotton bandana
- Portable water filtration system
- Earplugs (for windy nights)
- Pee bottle 1 qt. capacity, wide mouth, nalgene bottle (useful at higher camps)
- 2 lbs. of your favorite lunch treat or energy bar (we provide full lunches)
- 1 oz. of your favorite spice
- Hydrating system, (for approach and lower mountain only) 2 quart capacity, (i.e. camel bags) Do not count on this as a replacement for water bottles, since they do freeze up high
- Chemical handwarmers (for summit day)
- Extra straps to carry gear on outside of pack if necessary (essential if pack is smaller)
- Warm vest or lightweight windshell



REFERENCES

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AVENTURAS PATAGONICAS CLIENT COMMENTS

The experiences and comments of our past clients show the dedication of
Aventuras Patagonicas



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In my book, you could not find a more qualified company. I am certain, there are other good ones, but no other company knows Aconcagua as well. They own that mountain! The people are first-class and I am sure you will have a wonderful experience, but most of all a safe one. Should you have any further questions, feel free to contact me. - *Hubertus Guenther, Spokane, Washington.*

Both Aconcagua and the Vinson Massif with Aventuras Patagonicas. **The guides are excellent**, and the whole organization is well organized, especially on Aconcagua, which is basically their "home court". Have fun. - *Hank Skade, Tiburon, California*

I personally recommend using Aventuras Patagonicas for your Aconcagua expedition for the following reasons: **They have great logistics on the mountain, and logistics is key to success.** Being ill prepared on this mountain not only decreases your chances, but as history keeps repeating, it can be fatal. It is not worth using a "cheaper" company or compromising gear to save \$500. Up there you need everything to your advantage. Everything from their meal planning to packing to mule provisioning to the highly skilled American guides they used was excellent. Just a quick look at other companies on the hill was all that was needed to tell we were the best prepared and provisioned team up there. We had the cool Mountain Hardware tents;



got morning blood-oxy readings daily....and the Guanacos Route, in my personal opinion, is superior for acclimatization.

Your success on Aconcagua depends on many factors, the least of which are certainly not your pre-trip physical prep, mental preparedness and fortitude, the quality of your gear and some serious luck with the weather. Because there are so many complications that can deny you the summit which may be out of your control, it certainly makes sense to “max out” on the things which you can control; because for the price you pay for guided expeditions, it is always a real shame to come down off the mountain with failure, when problems you may have had could have been avoided by better planning. Using A.P. is part of great planning and I am not too proud to admit that my success in February '03 of summing was partly because of their great program. Come prepared and take the pre-departure gear check in Mendoza seriously. Augment their food by taking some of your favorite nutritious lunch snacks with you (like beef jerky, tuna and high-protein energy bars); the lunch snacks available in Argentina are marginal, especially for your high days when your appetite will be pretty awful. Most of all enjoy the stark beautiful Andes; summit or not I am sure you will have the adventure of a lifetime. If I can be of more assistance, feel free to call. - *Brian Ward, Marina del Rey, California.*

Great trip! Great company! Great Guides! Great Mountain! I lost a fair amount of weight on the mountain and probably put twice as much back on after spending a week and a half in Chile after the climb. If I didn't find every great restaurant in Santiago, I can't begin to guess where another one would be hiding. The country was super. The

people were wonderful. It's been a trip that will be tough to beat (although I'll continue trying). I have roughly 400 pictures of the climb and some events leading up to it and following it on CD. I will gladly make a copy of that CD and send it to anyone wanting it. I hope to see all of you on other mountains in the future.

I have climbed with a number of companies in the past and found my experience with Aventuras Patagonicas to be the best. Honestly, the services received from others has been good, but Patagonicas had (1) great, highly skilled, personable, and knowledgeable guides, (2) great food through advance base camp - after that, it's good old high altitude grub (3) a super ability to read and adapt to clients, (4) a wonderful climbing route (knowing what I know now - if the “Normal” route were my only option, I wouldn't climb the mountain) and (5) very strong organizational and logistical skills. If I were to climb Aconcagua again, they would undoubtedly be my first choice. *Howard Jones, Show Low, Arizona.*

I think Rodrigo and Bonnie have done a great job of putting together a very professional and highly competent team and organization. And though I have heard and am sure that Rodrigo himself as well as other AP staff are great guides as well, I was lucky enough to go with lead guide Jim Williams, who is not only fun but also one of the most (worldwide) experienced guides out there anywhere. I would not do the Normal Route -- since Rodrigo's circuit, going out on the Normal Route, is such a great circumnavigation of the mountain, that I would not recommend it any other way if possible. - *Mauricio Jaramillo, Ketchum, Idaho*



Rodrigo - I had the time of my life on Aconcagua. The trip was absolutely incredible, two weeks that I will treasure for the rest of my life. Whilst I enjoyed Orion and Zoe, and think they are highly competent, I have to say that Mike made the trip. Even though he is young, he just inspires confidence and security. I knew no matter what happened up there, he could fix it for us. I would climb anything with him. In fact, does he climb Denali? Well done Rodrigo - I would recommend Aventuras Patagonicas without hesitation. Hope to climb with you again soon. - *Nicky Messner, USA.*

Overall, I was very impressed with the Guanacos Valley Route and much preferred it from the normal route after our descent on the latter. Additionally, I was impressed with the quality and experience of the guides and was very happy that the weather turned in our favor so that I was able to summit. Finally, I was pleased that our group chemistry worked out as well as it did ...no negative incidences whatsoever. Thanks for your help with everything. Keep up the good work and I hope to climb with your outfit again someday soon. - *Dave Markwell, San Francisco, California.*

Hi Rodrigo (and Bonnie), Just wanted you to know that I had a great time on Aconcagua. The trip was everything I had hoped it would be. Summiting was definitely the high point. Overall I thought the expedition was excellent. I really thought the guides were excellent. I especially enjoyed spending time with Mike and Zoe. I didn't get to know Orion as well because he had to come out with sick clients fairly early in the trip. Martin is one of the strongest people I've ever met. He helped carry my pack down from the summit when I was starting to get really tired

later in the day. That was incredibly appreciated! - *Nathan Dolbeare, Normal, Illinois.*

I have traveled a lot all over the world and have used many different guide companies, but none really stand out as excellent, except Rodrigo and his company. I just did 2 wks. in Patagonia with him. They are really good with the details, safety, food, and fun. Any extra cost will be well worth it. The whole experience is going to be great with this company! Good luck on your climb and feel free to contact me. - *Frank Brummer, Teutopolis, Illinois.*

Thanks again for the experience!! You truly manage a "class" outfit!!! - *Dan Kammann, Champlin, Minnesota.*

Overall it was a fantastic trip, it was everything I wanted and more. The guides and clients worked very well together which helped to make it an excellent trip. - *Jim Considine, Chicago, Illinois.*

Overall it was a great trip that I'd highly recommend to others. Should be doing Denali with Aventuras Patagonicas next April / May. - *Wayne Morris, United Kingdom.*

It was truly a great trip and I look forward to the next one, although I'm not sure when that will be! - *Geoff Martindale, United Kingdom.*

Great company, great guides, AWESOME trip. I highly recommend them. They are safe, cautious, very experienced on the mountain and professional. Have a good time and train hard. It will be worth it. - *Cheryl Akright, Tabernash, Colorado*

No doubts that Rodrigo Mujica owner of AP has



a top company with skilled guides. If you want to summit Aconcagua (like me) AP is your only option. Good Luck. - *Christian Smidth, Parana, Brazil*

I can give nothing but the highest recommendation for Aventuras Patagonicas. I have climbed in North and South America with Rodrigo Mujica and he is without question one of the finest guides in the business. I have known him for most of twenty years and his expeditions are an education in culture, an adventure in safe climbing, and all with excellent food and detailed preparations. You will be pleased with your choice if you decide to climb with them. Best of luck. Let me know how it goes and give Rodrigo my best regards. - *Cleve McDonald, Anchorage, Alaska.*

... I know Mr. Mujica and Bonnie Schwahn as Guides both on Denali and Aconcagua. I personally have been twice on expeditions with his company, Aventuras Patagonicas, on Aconcagua. I also feel I have a fair assessment of guide companies and their quality of guides. I am very pleased to inform you that Aventuras Patagonicas scores a solid A+ in virtually all areas...- Their information and communication before the climb are thorough, helpful and geared toward your individual needs. Someone is always available. - Once in South America you find yourself in the top hotels available. You feel safe, looked after and entertained in a tasteful first class manner. Everyone goes out of their way to show you the interesting parts of the Chilean culture, which of course as locals only they can do. - The arrangements for the hike-in and climb are flawless and professional. Nothing is left to chance. You begin to feel in competent and safe hands. The equipment is state of the

art. On both of my expeditions the tents were brand new, a trademark of the Company. - Once on the mountain you begin to realize what a superb guide Rodrigo Mujica really is. He is very sensitive to his clients, anticipates their strengths, their weaknesses and uniquenesses. The food is good and plenty as I have ever had on a mountain. - On the way down, you get surprised with all kind of niceties. While other companies camp at Plaza de Mulas, we stayed at the hotel, showered, ate quasi restaurant food and slept in beds. What a treat... At the trailhead watermelon and beer was waiting for us, followed by an incredible feast of a meal, followed by another first class hotel ... which again is part of the fee. An evening of dinner and top entertainment are followed by a sad good bye. If you don't already know by now, in my opinion Aventuras Patagonicas is a first class act. I recommend them highly and you are welcome to give out my name for future references. As busy as our lives are, one does not want to go wrong and expose oneself to three weeks of misery or possibly danger. Both of my trips with this company were marvelous, safe and extremely enjoyable. - *Hubertus Guenther, Spokane, Washington.*

Thanks for your kind note on the recent Aconcagua climb. I also hope we can climb together again. I have filled out the evaluation sheet, and you'll see that I've given you and your Aventuras Patagonicas colleagues top marks in every category. However, I'd like to briefly record my assessment in words. In all respects, your management and leadership of the Aconcagua climb was outstanding. I say this not merely because your support enabled me to reach the summit, although that was certainly a key goal of



mine.

Your concern for the health and safety at all the group was exemplary. The well-paced itinerary gave us the conditioning and acclimatizing to altitude that we all needed to give us the best opportunity to summit. You showed great skill and organizational ability in managing the difficult job of assuring that all the necessary gear for the climb was where it needed to be, when it needed to be there. In the Andean world, this is no small feat!

The food and equipment were all first class. Nobody expected a gourmet experience on the mountain, but we had excellent food, which fueled our effort. Also, your professionalism and friendliness brought a group of strangers together into a real team, which not only succeeded in the climb, but enjoyed this demanding experience. I know that I will be keeping up with these new friends in the future. All the information you provided on equipment, conditioning, preparation and travel was concise, accurate and helpful. Our accommodations "....." were quite well chosen. And finally, the cost of the trip was reasonable and fair, considering everything included in the package.

In short, I would enthusiastically recommend that anyone wanting to climb Aconcagua (or any other mountain, for that matter) strongly consider doing so with you. Best regards, and keep in touch. -
Carlton Stoiber, Washington, DC.





TRAINING

TRAINING TIPS FOR YOUR EXPEDITION

It is imperative that everyone joining a mountaineering expedition be in a high standard of physical fitness when the expedition begins. The amount of time needed for training is completely dependent on the general level of fitness a person is in prior to the expedition. For the person that has spent the last ten years behind a desk with no emphasis on keeping in shape, it may take two years to regain top physical ability. The person that has always prioritized conditioning and a rigorous workout as a part of their daily routine may only take a few months to fine tune for the demands of mountaineering.

Consider, when setting up your program, that you will need to develop the endurance to carry a 50 lb. pack, wearing climbing boots for 6-8 hours per day. Though it is impossible to “train” for altitude, you can put yourself on a conditioning program that will best prepare you for this type of physical stress. How to do this? It is impossible to be specific and say if you do this and that you will be ready for a physically demanding expedition. Each person is different and everyone has different terrain and time at their disposal. After many years of observing climbers there are some reoccurring training schemes that seem to help some people be better prepared than others.

1. Train for developing stamina. Run, bike, ski, fast walk. Vary your routine to prevent overuse injuries and push yourself without injuring yourself. Do warm up and cool down stretches.

2. Progressive resistance weight training. This type of training improves anaerobic metabolism that feeds much of muscular work. This type of human energy production is fed by stored carbohydrates that require no additional oxygen to metabolize.

3. Train on hills or stairs with a pack on. Be prepared for 13,000’ of uphill wearing a 50 lb. pack and 13,000’ of downhill. Start with a light pack, gradually increase the weight. Never run with a pack on.

4. Wear 2 lb. ankle weights to help condition for the extra weight of climbing boots, soft snow and loose scree. (Don’t wear these while running).

5. Train as often as possible by skiing or hiking for all day, weekend, or longer trips. Train for what you are going to do! If you want to be good at climbing big mountains with a big pack on, start on little mountains with a small pack on and work your way up. Conditioning by climbing is the best thing you can do. Get comfortable moving in mountainous terrain all day long!! Heavy packs tend to tire climbers the most. Be prepared by training ahead of time and you will do fine. Don’t expect to get used to wearing a pack while you are on the expedition.

6. A good diet cannot be underestimated. Research out a diet that will help develop stamina and strength and that you can live with. There are lots of books and articles that will get you started or consult a professional nutritionist that has worked with athletes.

7. Be mentally prepared for the expedition. Know before you start the climb and accept the fact that at times you will be uncomfortable and that your body is going to be uncooperative. You are going to have to push yourself (unless you are superhuman). If you don’t have the ability to do this you won’t be successful. You may be in a cramped tent for many storm days. You are leaving the comforts of home in order to experience a unique challenge and a remarkable mountain. It



is worth it! You must also be well enough “in tune” with yourself to know the difference between pushing yourself and acute mountain sickness, pulmonary or cerebral edema. These are all serious altitude related problems which must be acknowledged. It is possible to “push yourself” too far. For the safety of the team, the chief guide will make a final decision on who needs a rest day, who continues to ascend, or who descends.

We hope this gives you ideas on which to base your training schedule. We recommend talking to a professional exercise trainer and setting up a conditioning program that you can incorporate into your daily routine, which will meet these goals. This type of training can easily take two hours per day, 5 days a week. Be committed to it and be consistent. It will pay off many times over! Start today with your training and keep it up. Good luck and please call, or email us, if you have any questions.



Training Resources

- [High Altitude Training Program](#) - Great ideas for Aconcagua by Stacy Taniguchi
- [Training for Mountaineering](#) - Preparation and Conditioning information from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
- [Train to Climb Mt. Rainier](#) - A superb video resource for training for climbs up to 20,000 feet in elevation like Aconcagua. Available at www.bodyresults.com
- Aventuras Patagonicas has teamed up with Body Results to provide you with the highest quality Conditioning Coaching and Products for your Adventure Trip. Wilderness Sport Conditioning experts Courtenay and Doug Schurman oversee all client training. They are co-authors of the book, *The Outdoor Athlete* (2009) and creators of the Train To Climb Mt Rainier DVD.



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