



## **Aconcagua – The Normal Route**

Climbing Aconcagua is a serious mountain challenge which requires previous high-altitude experience. This expedition demands excellent physical conditioning, grit, determination, and an ability to stay positive in the harshest of conditions. If you are up for the challenge of a real mountain expedition this will be the trip for you. We are available 5 days a week to help you answer any questions you have on the expedition!

All participants must be aware that they are taking part in a serious expedition to high and extreme altitude. Mountains and mountaineering carry an inherent risk of injury or death, which cannot be eliminated. We will provide information in our dossier about physical preparation before the trip and how to cope with the altitude while on the mountain and will always be your number one resource for information on the trip. Our itinerary is designed with optimal acclimatization for safety and success to provide you with the best chance of the summit. However, given proper preparation and fair-weather conditions, there is no reason why fit and healthy climbers will not be able to reach the summit, but this is not a guarantee! Mount Aconcagua (6,962m/ 22,811 feet) is the highest mountain in the western hemisphere and the highest mountain outside the Himalaya, and the second highest summit in the circuit of the seven summits. Its difficulty lies in its high altitude, low temperatures, and carrying heavy loads on steep terrain at high altitude.

### **ITINERARY**

- Day 1: Arrive Mendoza**
- Day 2: Penitentes or Puente Del Inca**
- Day 3: Confluencia**
- Day 4: Confluencia – Medical Check**
- Day 5: Plaza de Mulas Base Camp**
- Day 6: Plaza de Mulas Base Camp / Acclimatization Day**
- Day 7: Acclimatization to Mount Bonete**
- Day 8: Camp 1 Load Carry**
- Day 9: Rest Day at Base Camp – Medical Check**
- Day 10: Camp 1**
- Day 11: Camp 2**
- Day 12: Rest Day in Camp 2**
- Day 13: Camp 3 Colera Camp**
- Day 14: Summit**
- Day 15: Return to Plaza de Mulas**
- Day 16: Spare Summit Day**
- Day 17: Spare Summit Day**
- Day 18: Descend to Horcones / return to Mendoza**
- Day 19: Return Flight Home**



## **DETAILED ITINERARY**

### **DAY 1: ARRIVE IN MENDOZA, ARGENTINA**

Today we will arrive in Mendoza at 760m/ 2,493 feet. You want to arrive in Mendoza as early as possible on this day rest, recover and get ready for the gear check/briefing that will take place in the early afternoon. We will be waiting for you at the airport to take you to the hotel. On this day our guides will check your gear to make sure you have all the equipment needed for the expedition. (Meals are not included on this day)

### **DAY 2: DRIVE TO PENITENTES or PUNTE DEL INCA 2,725m/ 8,940 feet**

Our plan is to leave after breakfast for the journey ahead. Once we depart Mendoza, we will take a two-hour drive until we reach our lunch spot in Uspallata. After lunch we drive another couple of hours until we reach the Aconcagua Depot where we will drop all duffel bags to be loaded on the mules to be brought to Confluencia the next day. This process can take approximately an hour to get everything organized. Once the bags are sorted, we will head to our lodging for the night in either Penitentes or Punte Del Inca to start our acclimatization process. (B, L, D included)

### **DAY 3: HIKE TO CONFLUENCIA 3,300m/ 10,827 feet**

After breakfast we will take a short drive to the entrance of the park in a private van. Permits will be presented to the rangers as we start our 3-and-a-half-hour trek to Confluencia Camp 3,300m/ 10,827 feet. Keep your backpack light as we walk on this well-worn, picturesque trail. Upon arrival at Confluencia, you will be greeted with refreshments and a tour of the camp. After a good rest, we will set up our tents and take some time to explore the surrounding area and view the beautiful rock formations. You will spend two nights in Confluencia, with full meals and hot drinks provided throughout the day. It is a lovely camp, and our staff will be there to assist you. (B, Packed Lunch, D included)

### **DAY 4: HIKE TO PLAZA FRANCIA 4,000m/ 13,123 feet BACK TO CONFLUENCIA**

Today we trek to Plaza Francia 4,000m/ 13,123 feet, and back to Confluencia. At Plaza Francia, we will eat lunch and be able to view the spectacular South Face of Aconcagua while further acclimatizing. The South Face of Aconcagua is famous for its difficult accents where many of the best climbers in the world have come to test their skills. After exploring the area, we descend back to Confluencia Camp for the night. Today, you will also be required to visit the medical tent to have a check-up with one of the doctors. This is a requirement by the National Park. Six to seven hours hiking. (B, PL, D included)

### **DAY 5: HIKE TO PLAZA DE MULAS BASE CAMP 4,390m/ 14,403 feet**

Today, we will hike to Plaza de Mulas Base Camp 4,390m/ 14,403 feet. Our Guides ensure we walk at a moderate pace, so everyone arrives feeling good. The trek follows the Horcones Superior River and then rises onto a lateral moraine next to the Horcones Glacier. Upon arrival, team members can relax in the dining tent with hot drinks and snacks. Our Base Camp is a full-service camp with full meals and Wi-Fi is



available to purchase. Hot showers are available on request. Seven to nine hours hiking. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 6: ACCLIMATIZATION/ REST DAY**

Today is an acclimatization day. This will be a leisurely day starting with a healthy breakfast and then a nice walk in the surrounding area, which has many stunning vistas. In the afternoon we will have an orientation and then prepare our gear for the next day's climb of Mount Bonete at 5,100m/ 16,732 feet. (B, L, D included)

#### **DAY 7: HIKE TO MOUNT BONETE SUMMIT 5,100m/ 16,732 feet**

Acclimatization trek to Mount Bonete Summit at 5,100m/ 16,732 feet and return to Plaza de Mulas. Today is essential in our acclimatization schedule. From the top we have great vistas of Aconcagua and the surrounding mountains. The climb of Mount Bonete also gives us essential acclimatization necessary to climb Aconcagua. Following our climb, we return to Plaza de Mulas and enjoy a nice evening in Base Camp. Six to seven hours of hiking. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 8: HIKE TO CAMP 1 - 4,950m/ 16,240 feet**

Today we will have an acclimatization trek to Camp 1 "Canada" at 4,950m/ 16,240 feet. Today, you will want to carry some of your personal expedition gear that will be needed only at the higher camps. Carrying some of your gear up on this day will lighten your load for the next round up, but you do not want to carry too much weight on your first day up to Camp 1. Once we reach camp, we will cache our gear, have a packed lunch, and then return to Base Camp. Three to four hours hiking. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 9: REST DAY AND PREPARE GEAR**

Rest and acclimatization day. Everyone will make sure that their equipment is ready, and we are well-rested to make the move to a camp higher up the mountain. Today, you will also be required to visit the medical tent to have a second check-up with one of the doctors. This is a requirement by the National Park. (B, L, D included)

#### **DAY 10: Camp 1 - 4,950m/ 16,240 feet**

It's time to move up the mountain to the higher camps. It will take 3 hours to reach Camp 1, Canada Camp at 4,950m/ 16,240 feet. The group will enjoy lunch and set up tents. You will only carry the remainder of your personal equipment. Our porters will carry the sleeping tents and the rest of the equipment. Three to four hours hiking. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 11: MOVE TO CAMP 2 - 5,570m/ 18,274 feet**

Today we move from Camp Canada to our Camp 2, Nido de Cóndores 5,570m/ 18,274 feet. We will spend two nights resting and acclimatizing at this elevation. On this day, each climber will be responsible



for carrying all your personal equipment. Everything that you will need higher on the mountain, you will have to carry. Porter staff will carry expedition equipment, food, and sleeping tents. After reaching Nido de Cóndores, you will set up tents, then settle down for the night. Three to four hours hiking. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 12: REST DAY AT CAMP 2: NIDO DE CONDORES**

Today is a rest day and an opportunity to further acclimatize and enjoy the comfort of our camp. Resting on this day will improve your performance on summit day and greatly increase your chances for successfully reaching the summit. This is critical for safety and success high on the mountain. (B, L, D included)

#### **DAY 13: MOVING TO CAMP 3, CAMP COLERA, 5,990m/ 19,652 feet**

Climb to Camp 3, "Cólera." You will carry all personal equipment, and porters will carry sleeping tents and group gear. At Colera Camp, our staff has strategically positioned the campsite for protection in case of high winds. While climbers rest, guides will check each team member's summit gear for the next day and give an orientation on the summit climb. We will have an early dinner and go to bed to get a good night's rest for the early morning start the next day. Three hours. (B, PL, D)

#### **DAY 14: SUMMIT DAY! - 6,962m/ 22,841 feet**

Climb from Cólera to the summit and return to Camp 3. We will wake up early around 3am in the morning, but this can change depending on conditions, and dress for our summit attempt. Guides will serve hot drinks and a quick breakfast. They will let us know what time to leave our tents, so we all rise together and start moving toward the summit. This keeps us warm and moving together as a team. The climb is gradual as we follow switchbacks until we reach a small A-frame hut called "Independencia". From here we will traverse across the North Face of Aconcagua until we reach the Canaleta.

The Canaleta is steep and leads us up towards the summit ridge. As we ascend the Canaleta, we can look down on the surrounding mountains, which begin to drop away as we go higher. A few hundred meters below the summit, the route traverses east and leads us directly to the summit! A cross proudly stands on top to mark the summit. There is plenty of room for everybody to take personal and group photos. It is a time for celebration! Time of day and the weather often determine the amount of time we spend on the summit. After we've all taken photos and absorbed the views, we will begin our long descent back to Cólera Camp. This is a twelve or more-hour day. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 15: DESCEND BACK TO PLAZA DE MULAS BASE CAMP 4,390m/ 14,403 feet**

We will rise early and start our descent back to the Plaza de Mulas Base Camp. We will reach the Plaza de Mulas Base Camp in the early afternoon. On this day, each client will be responsible for carrying all personal equipment back down to Base Camp. Sleeping tents and waste produced by the expedition group will be carried by our porter staff. Once in Plaza de Mulas, the group will be served a late lunch



and have the afternoon to share pictures, shower and celebrate the expedition. Wi-Fi is available for a fee. This is approximately a 4-hour hike downhill, where you will be carrying all your personal gear. (B, PL, D included)

#### **DAY 16: SPARE SUMMIT DAY**

If the itinerary goes to plan, then you will be back in Mendoza on day 16 and could leave on day 17. However, it is rare that we can stick to the itinerary, due to weather restrictions. Therefore, we require you to book your return flights for day 19 or later. These days are possibly essential for additional summit attempts. If these days are not needed on the mountain, you will return to Mendoza on this day and you will be responsible for the additional nights' accommodation/expenses.

#### **DAY 17: SPARE SUMMIT DAY**

If the itinerary goes to plan, then you will be back in Mendoza on day 16 and could leave on day 17. However, it is rare that we can stick to the itinerary, due to weather restrictions. Therefore, we require you to book your return flights for day 19 or later. These days are possibly essential for additional summit attempts. If these days are not needed on the mountain, you will return to Mendoza on this day and you will be responsible for the additional nights' accommodation/expenses.

#### **DAY 18: HORCONES - MENDOZA**

The team will descend to Horcones, the entrance to the National Park, on the last trekking day of the expedition. This is a 16mile/ 26km hike. Your belongings will be carried by mules so you will only take a light backpack with a jacket and your packed lunch and water. We will transfer the team back to our hotel in Mendoza. That evening the guide and climbers often get together for dinner to celebrate their climb. Seven hours. (B, PL included - Mendoza dinner not included).

#### **DAY 19: MENDOZA**

You will have breakfast at the hotel, and can arrange a taxi from the hotel to pick you up for your return transfer to the airport for your flight home. (B included)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The above itinerary is intended as a guideline only. Although every effort will be made to adhere to it, changes may be caused due to weather conditions, transport failure, or other unforeseen events. Please be flexible if necessary.



### **Normal Route - Included Services**

- Transport from the airport to the hotel
- Hotel in Mendoza City 4\*\*\*\*, 2 nights on a shared room basis (1 night either side of the trip)
- Assistance obtaining your climbing permit
- Private transport from Mendoza to the start of the trail
- Porterage to carry all group expedition equipment, food and waste (not personal gear)
- Breakfast, lunch / Packed lunch on the move / Dinner in each camp
- Professional cook in Base Camp
- Professional mountain guides
- Office support 5 days a week prior to and during expedition
- Guides will prepare meals in higher camps.
- Transportation of gear by mules from trail head to Base Camp 30kg/66lbs
- Transportation of gear by mules from Base Camp to Trail Head 30kg/66lbs (after summit)
- North Face VE 25 tents throughout the expedition
- 2 showers in Plaza de Mulas Base Camp included (1 before summit and 1 after)

### **Normal Route - NOT Included**

- Climbing Permit for Aconcagua National Park (**will assist with purchasing when prices released**)
- International Flights to/from Mendoza
- Return transfer from Hotel to Airport after the itinerary
- Drinks and personal costs not mentioned in the itinerary.
- Expenses for leaving the Expedition early; mules, accommodation, guide, transfer to Mendoza etc...
- Personal equipment, gear, clothing, and mountaineering equipment for the expedition
- Personal Insurance, helicopter evacuation, medical insurance (Compulsory for Aconcagua permit)
- Additional porters for carrying personal gear and equipment (Can be arranged at an additional cost)
- Tips (approximately USD \$350 per person)
- Additional nights in hotels if we arrive back early from the expedition.
- Wi-Fi or additional showers in Base Camp (additional cost paid in Base Camp)

### **OUR GUIDES**

Our mountain guides are qualified professionals of the AAGM (Argentinean Association of Mountain Guides) and the EPGAMT (School of High Mountain and Trekking Guides). The last qualification is the result of 3 years of studying.



We believe that to succeed in our expeditions, professionals with experience and the ability to offer security should guide our teams. Their equipment includes a VHF radio, a first aid kit, complete with the appropriate drugs for altitude sickness, ropes, an altimeter, and professional clothing and equipment. All this will provide safety, security, and comfort. All our guides speak English.

#### **EXTRA DAYS**

Our expeditions include two extra days in case of any contingencies that may prevent the normal development of the itinerary. We have developed this itinerary with years of experience. However, sometimes conditions are out of our control, and our guides reserve the right to modify the schedule in response to the circumstances and safety of the group. If this situation arises, the client will not receive any sort of refund payment. Likewise, if you return to Mendoza after reaching the summit without the need for the spare summit days, then you will be responsible for the extra costs of hotels in Mendoza. Our team will help arrange rooms for you and you can pay for them on the ground.

#### **More Information**

If you decide to join one of our Aconcagua Expeditions, we will send out our 40-page Dossier on the trip. This will give you all relevant information on the trip, including the complete kit list. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to get in touch with Ian directly at [ian@iantaylortrekking.com](mailto:ian@iantaylortrekking.com).