

4. CUYO REGION

The Cuyo region, from the Mapuche word meaning “Country of Sand”, is the most arid region in Argentina, lying at the foot of its highest mountains. Today it is also known as the “Country of Wine”. This region is the 5th greatest wine producer of the world and has one of the most beautiful landscapes of the country. In March the spectacular Festival de la Vendimia takes place, but the visitor will also be able to visit some of the many wine cellars and taste the excellent Argentine wine all year long. In no other part of the country does the work of man arouse such admiration as the green oases of Cuyo, with the sound of water running along the irrigation ditches. The cities of Cuyo are some of the oldest ones in the country and although there were destroyed by earthquakes, you will be able to get in real touch with Argentine history.

In addition to mountains that any mountaineer would like to climb, Cuyo has some of the most modern ski resorts in Argentina.

4.1 Province of Mendoza



Mendoza is an expanding and very pleasant city, located in the centre-west region of Argentina in the province of same name. It is 756 m (2,480 ft) above sea level and its population is about 1,5 millions. The climate is characterized by a radiant sun and a temperate temperature. Mendoza offers a wide range

of activities such as adventure sports, rural tourism and the complete journey of the Roads of the Wine, including visits to important wineries and the tasting of their famous wines awarded in the world.

Mendoza - Excursions

City Tour Mendoza (approx. 3 hours)

You will visit the city sharing the culture and history of its foundation by the Spanish colonizers four centuries ago. It includes a visit to the oldest part of the city with Pedro del Castillo Square, the sensual Alameda of General San Martín (Popular Avenue), passing by the Museum of “Area Fundacional” (entrance not included), Ruins of San Francisco Church (last testimony of Mendoza city before the terrible earthquake that took place in 1861). Along tree lined streets, hosed down by the well-known irrigation ditches, you will drive to the new city: its squares (like Plaza Independencia), downtown Mendoza, the main avenues and the Civic Centre, the old residential area until getting to the General San Martín Park with its lake and rose garden and the Hill of Glory, a popular spot for a panoramic view.

Half Day Wineries Tour Lujan de Cuyo or Maipu (visit 2 wineries) – Private (approx. 4 hours)

Mendoza, possessing the 70% of the vineyards of the country and same percentage of wine production is the main enological centre of South America.

Depart to Mendoza's agricultural oasis where you have the opportunity to visit two different vineyards to understand the complete wine making process enjoying a wine tasting.

You combine a visit to one craft / handmade winery and other of high quality technology to see the differences in the production of great wines.

Wineries at Lujan de Cuyo area:

Catena Zapata – Lagarde – Luigi Bosca – Alta vista – Cavas de Weinert – Belasco de Baquedano – Achaval Ferrer – Sottano – Finca Decero – Melipal – Benegas

Wineries at Maipu area:

Lopez – La Rural (Wine museum) – Trapiche – Viñas del Cerno – Carina e – Vistandes – Cavas de Don Arturo

Please note that wineries to visit during these tours might change without prior notice.

Most wineries are open Monday till Friday. On Saturdays, Sundays & holidays some might remain closed.

Full Day wineries Lujan de Cuyo & Maipu including lunch (visit 3 wineries) – Private
(approx. 7 hours)

Enjoy the pleasure of visiting one of the best enological areas in Argentina. Accompany us to discover its terroir guided by experts. You will have the opportunity to taste different wines and visiting vineyards to understand the culture of this region.

In the morning you will meet the guide who will accompany us throughout the tour. Then you will depart to Mendoza's agricultural oasis, and visit three wineries of wine's circuit. There you will enjoy a wine tasting session, during which you will begin to familiarize ourselves with the local's wines, and its elaboration process.

Lunch will be included at one of these bodegas.

Local guide will explain the technique of wine tasting, wine production techniques, the importance of the cork in the bottle and the correct way to handle a glass in order to taste wine. In the afternoon return back to Mendoza city.

Wineries at Lujan de Cuyo area:

Catena Zapata – Lagarde with lunch – Luigi Bosca

Others: Alta vista – Cavas de Weinert – Belasco de Baquedano – Achaval ferrer – Sottano – Finca Decero – Melipal – Benegas

Wineries at Maipu area:

Lopez – Zuccardi with lunch – La Rural

Others: Trapiche – Viñas del Cerno – Carina e – Vistandes – Cavas de Don Arturo

Please note that wineries to visit during these tours might change without prior notice.

Most wineries are open Monday till Friday. On Saturdays, Sundays & holidays some might remain closed.

Full Day Wine Tour of Luján de Cuyo including lunch (visit 4 wineries) – On regular basis (SIB shared with more paxs, approx. 6 hours)

In the Luján de Cuyo wine region the past meets the present. Here Argentina's best Malbecs are produced in quaint historic wineries and modern boutique wineries, which make for a unique wine tasting day with interesting contrasts and, of course, some great views of the Andes. This tour includes interesting visits and special wine tastings at 4 wineries, with a 5 course gourmet wine pairing lunch at one of them, usually *Bodega Ruca Malen* or *Bodega Melipal*. The focus of this day is to provide you with a truly memorable, authentic Mendoza Wine Experience, with some information about winemaking, some history, great conversations and, of course, lots of reserve to top end wines at some of Mendoza's most reputable wineries.

Sample itinerary (wineries may vary):

8:45 - Pick up from hotel.

First stop is Bodega Benegas: Founded by Tiburcio Benegas at the end of the 19th century, this winery has played a fundamental role in the introduction of European grapes to Argentina. It is one of Mendoza's most historic wineries, in which Federico Benegas Lynch continues the tradition that his great grandfather started more than 120 years ago. Visit and tasting including their reserve *Benegas* line.

Bodega Dominio del Plata: Two of Argentina's most well-known enologists, *Susana Balbo* and *Pedro Marchevsky*, started this visionary project of precision winemaking in 1999. The winery is located in the middle of their 21-hectare vineyard planted with Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc y Petit Verdot. Visit and private reserve tasting.

Bodega Pulenta Estate, a beautifully designed boutique winery that combines the know-how of one of the most reputable winemaking families in Argentina with ultra-high-tech winemaking facilities. Visit and tasting of their outstanding reserve wines. Tasting with appetizers at Bodega Ruca Malen, a stylish winery with a great view of the Andes mountain range. Gourmet lunch with wine from Ruca Malen's whole range up to their top wine *Kinien*. 17:30 approx. arrival time at Mendoza.

Tour Includes:

Transportation on regular basis (shared with more paxs)

Regular tour in small group size: 2-8 people – Guaranteed departure with 2 paying pax.

Single travellers can join the tour if departure is already guaranteed with prior bookings (please check in advance).

English speaking guide only (not bilingual)

Visit at 4 wineries in Lujan de Cuyo area with wine tastings

Gourmet Lunch at one of the wineries (5 steps lunch)

Operation dates:

Lujan de Cuyo tour operates from Mondays to Saturdays

During low season (May-September) it may occur that the tour does not operate someday; please recheck in advance before confirming.

Tour does not operate during Christmas December 24th & 25th, New Year December 31st & January 1st, please recheck operation during other Argentinean Holidays.

Subject to availability.

Note: The exact winery and lunch locations may vary, maintaining the same standard.

Organic Bio & Sustainable Wineries (7h)

Lujan de Cuyo, Maipú and Valle de Uco are considered the three wine-growing areas of Mendoza. They are composed of beautiful farmhouses, leafy groves, extensive vineyards and centuries-old wineries. And that's how we start the Wine Road.

The organic viticulture helps to preserve the characteristics of the ancient vineyards of Mendoza.

There are several processes that make a Winery Organic and Bio sustainable. Some examples:

- Fertilize the soil with matter from farms and orchards.
- Procedures of work planned in relation to the movements of the sun and the planets.
- Use of gravity for wine production, designing and building wineries on natural slopes.

In this opportunity the proposal consists in learning the different wine elaboration processes and the secrets of each establishment, while tasting great wines.

At the end of the tour, we'll enjoy a great gourmet lunch.

Selected wineries for this tour:

- Familia Arizu (Luigi Busca) Winery: 9:30hs
- Matervini Winery: 11.00hs
- Susana Balbo Wines Winery: 12:30hs

Timing:

- Departure time from: 08.50hs
- Approximate return time: 16.00hs
- Departure days: diary
- Includes: Private Service, luxury vehicle with driver, visit and wine tasting, lunch (menu gourmet)
- Does not include: tips, extras.

Altos Limpios and Huarpes native community (ca. 9h)

We leave our hotel in the morning way East Asunción to visit the Huarpe community. Here you'll learn about the native culture of the region.

In Mendoza there are currently eleven Huarpe communities which respect their traditions and social structure. On the way we will make a stop to visit the "Altos Limpios" and take a short walk through the dunes of the Lavalle desert where we will be able to observe what is the typical native landscape of Mendoza while we hike through the Natural Reserve. Then we will go straight to reach the Huarpe's village La Asunción, where we will visit one of the families who will be waiting us with our lunch ready.

Home made empanadas, bread and a goat made in the outside oven will be part of the menu. After lunch, those who want be part of an interesting cultural exchange, will be able to participate in a small workshop of loom and leather crafts to learn the different techniques and go home with a souvenir made by ourselves using their technics. Return to the city in the evening.

Additional Information:

- Departure time: 8.00 am
- Estimated arrival time: 5.00 pm
- Day of operation: daily
- Inclusions: Private service, high-end transportation, bilingual guide, snack, lunch, leader handcraft workshop.
- Exclusions: Tips, extras

Full Day High Mountain Tour (Puente del Inca) (approx. 12 hours)

Travelling west up to Chile's border, a route of 200 km (124 mi) goes along Potrerillos dam and Mendoza river. Enjoy beautiful landscapes of foothills until arrival to Uspallata village. Get surprised in this valley by the colours and different shapes of Cordon del Plata, part of the Andes Mountain Range. You then pass by Picheuta Bridge, Polvaredas, Punta de Vacas and the ski centre Los Penitentes. Stop at Puente del Inca, nature formation that mixes yellow and red colours in its ruins and hot springs, which rises up to approximately 2.700 m (8.858 ft) high. Get to Las Cuevas, a small village which borders with Chile. With excellent weather conditions and only in summer it would be possible to get to the Cristo Redentor monument, otherwise a small trekking at Los Horcones Lagoon is a possibility, with great view of the Aconcagua's Mount.