

An elephant loose in Argentina



2021-2022

Watch out!

Now that you have chosen to give it a try and improve your language skills, and you are on your way to or already in Buenos Aires, then let's review together some sort of 'survival kit' on what we suggest to be done and what you should probably never do in such a unique country as Argentina.

There are many people who have written very funny chronicles about the cultural shock that many foreigners suffer in our beloved southern country. And not all are language related misunderstandings. The customs and habits of Argentina have their own pace and very particular rhythm, which without any doubt are part of the experience of living in this fantastic place.

F o r e x a m p l e . . .

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Rule number one

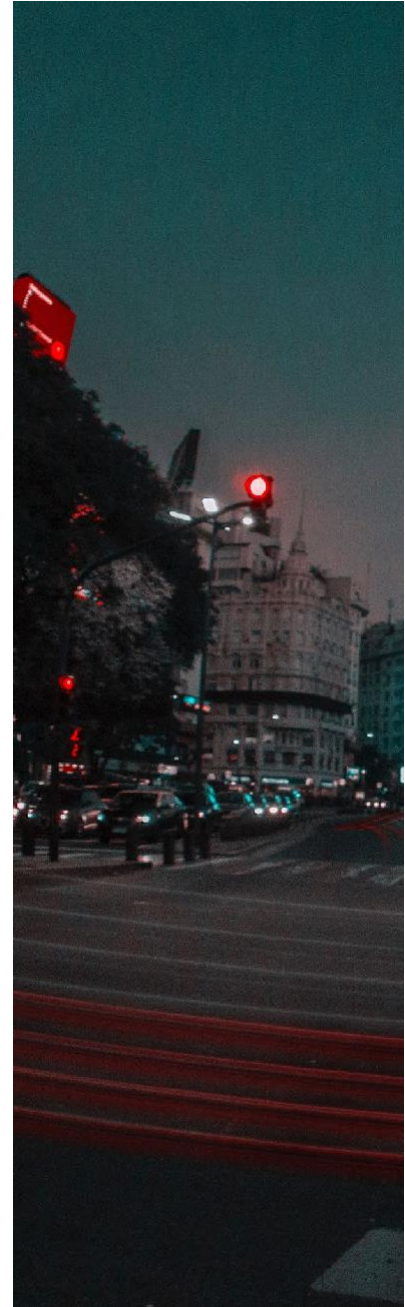
When it comes to the Spanish or '*castellano*' spoken in this country, you'll notice that people use the rather informal but common '**vos**' instead of '**tú**' (referring to the second person singular-you), it can be confusing at first but you will get used to it.



Eating out?

Nobody dines before 8 o'clock in the evening, so do not trust the quality and price-value ratio, if they offer you dinner before that time. It's a hoax, a trap for unsuspecting tourists! Go eat elsewhere and wait a couple of hours to get the best of Argentine cuisine. And if like some of us you live in a north European country, you are very likely to be always the one waiting for everybody else at the table!

You should also know that Argentinians are not a nation of small-portion eaters - oh no. You'll probably find the whole cow by the table when you are invited to an asado. Don't be surprised, we mean all of it; you'll see the intestines, the kidneys, the heart, and more! You will however have the best meat you've ever eaten.





Another gastronomic tip

You may very well forget your eggs for breakfast. Many people in Argentina nowadays understand what an American breakfast is, but the truth is that you have reached the realm of the crescent, the so called *medialuna*, an exquisite local croissant. So, enjoy your coffee with milk, marmalade, cream cheese and your pair of medialunas to start your day.

Another Argentine norm to respect,

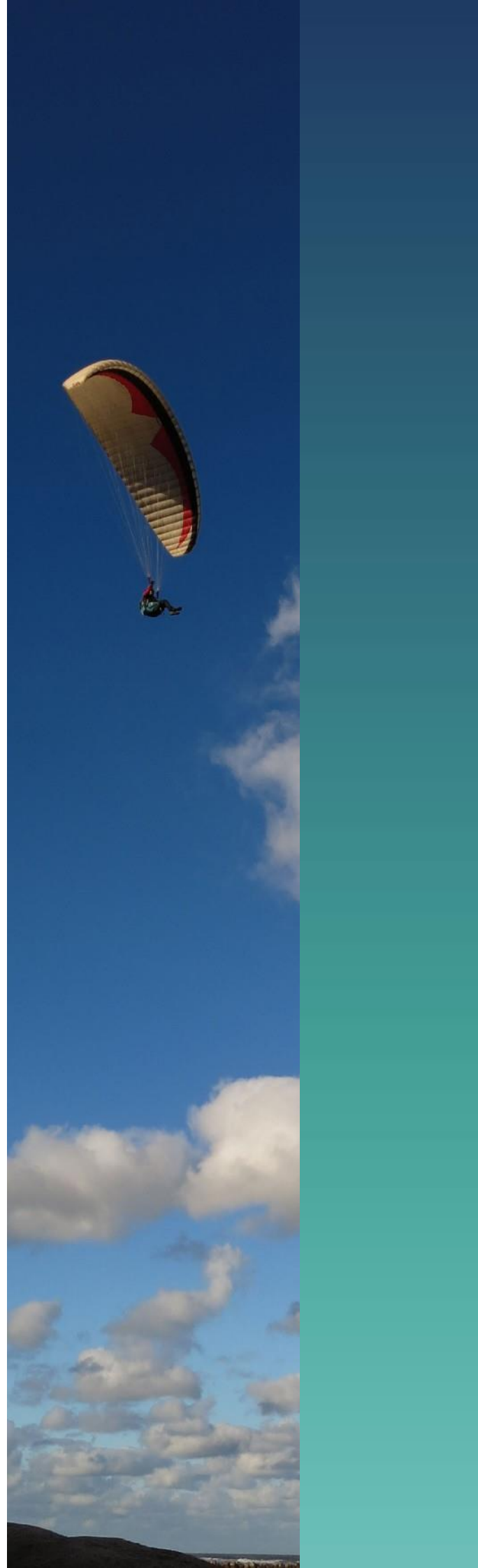
especially in less urban areas and the countryside,

deep respect for the '*siesta*'. Generally, this means the time between 12 and 3 pm when some have lunch and afterwards still take a nap.

Be aware

of Argentinian's flirtatious nature

which is one of their most delightful features in men and women. In Argentina you will be among some of the better dressed and well-groomed people in Latin America and around the world. Ladies, watch out for those '*piropos*' when walking down the street, some men find it difficult to hide their delight and do tell you 'how gorgeous you look today'...



Three tips with reference to Argentine drinks

When drinking their famous *mate*, never clean the *bombilla* when it's your turn, this is considered insulting.

Do not criticise the particular flavor of Argentinean *Fernet*-aperitif drink, just accept with a smile what is offered with such national pride, and pour in more of the soft drink you have at hand and tons of ice to dilute this 'distinctive' taste.

And finally, do not ever consider saying anything regarding French or Chilean wines being better than Argentinean *Malbec*, never, ever and under any circumstances. At the barbecue you are likely to be left without food on your plate!

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In this beautiful austral country

Everyone kisses and smooches

You kiss the neighbor, the friend of the friend of the friend, that is, the whole world and at all times. Do not stand two meters away and extend your hand to an Argentine because you will be insulting him/her, no more, no less.

The *boliches*

that are the Argentine nightclubs or bars to go dancing, for your nightly entertainment, are deserted before 2 in the morning. Yes! Empty before 2am. It is believed this may really explain the local siesta. However, there is no such thing in cities anymore so many choose to sleep just before they go out at night!

If you are going to watch a soccer game in Argentina, be especially careful to have the right shirt on the right side of the stadium, or you will be in serious difficulties with the fans of each team.



AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IF YOU ARE A PEDESTRIAN is knowing that the buses in Argentina do not stop if you do not make it very clear to them that they should (and even then, they may miss you at times!), take out your hand and wave them to stop, making clear signs.

Never assume that placing one foot in the pedestrian striped zone, means that the cars will stop. They will often not, whatever happens, unless the traffic lights change to red. Be very careful when crossing the streets and attentive to all signs.

**BY THE WAY,
SPEAKING OF
RULES IN THE
STREET**

On the street you must also be very careful if you are going to exchange money: never on the public highway, no matter how good the change they are offering you. Never, never!

Keep in mind

that if an Argentine offers to call you tomorrow, '*mañana hablamos*', it may never happen. Of course, not everyone embraces this *mañanaland* attitude but...you've been warned!





Recommended on conversational etiquette with Argentines

if you do not want to enter a heated debate, do not get into topics such as football, politics and religion, as those can stir the most heated passions, and it will not be easy for you to get out of it once one of these controversial floodgates has been opened.

We also thought you may want to have these few ‘first aid’ useful language expressions which are important to note:...

‘Una mina’ is not a mine
of any kind: it is a way
to call girls, ladies,
women

‘Laburo’ means paid
work

‘Piña’, is not a
pineapple, it is a
punch, most likely
with a closed fist

‘Bondi’ used only in
Buenos Aires and
means city bus

‘Birra’ that’s how
your new friends will
refer to a beer

‘Cargar’ to joke



‘Che and Pibe’ used as synonyms of friend, you might get called that

‘Changuito’ Your new Argentinian shopping cart

‘Guita’ Money

‘Groso’ Something very good

‘Monoambiente’
Studio apartment without a room

‘Dos ambientes’ one bedroom apartment

‘Tres ambientes’ two bedroom apartment

‘Pancho’ your hotdog

‘Morfar’ to eat **‘Remis’** Taxi

‘Lavandina’ chlorine

‘Cargar’ to annoy/make fun of someone

‘Manteca’ Butter

‘Remera’ a T-shirt

‘Pucho’ a cigarette

‘Boludo’ a silly person, very colloquial, so be careful when to use it

‘Cheto’ Cocky and rich **‘Un**

cachito’ a little **‘Tomátelas’** Get out, go **‘Grasa’** ordinary and

tasteless

‘Afanar’ steal

‘Rajarse’ to leave

‘Chorro’ thief **‘Gamba’**
leg **‘Trompa’** mouth

‘Naso’ big nose

‘Capo’ Someone very good at something

‘Una gamba’ one hundred Argentine pesos

‘Salame’ silly (also the salami you eat)

‘Quilombo’ something messy, a big mess (also originally the Madame’s house)

We hope

you take advantage of these humble suggestions that may make your stay in Argentina more enjoyable and fun. What great fun to accompany you in enjoying your Buenos Aires adventure!

Finally: this guide has been put together by friends of elephant Minds. They are suggestions that we think may be considered. We do not necessarily confirm nor deny the existence of any such behaviours. See for yourselves and do let us know...



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