

Aconcagua Ascent

Trip Code: ACO

Version: ACO Aconcagua Ascent



MOUNTAINEER



GUIDED GROUP



TOUGH



HIGHLIGHTS

- Tick off one of the world's Seven Summits
- Acclimatise with a carefully planned trekking programme
- Climb via the Normal Route led by professional Argentinian guides and porters
- Explore the beautiful region of Mendoza

AT A GLANCE

- 16 days trekking and climbing
- Max altitude - 6962 metres
- Join at Mendoza

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 18 Breakfasts
- 17 Lunches
- 16 Dinners
- 1 nights Lodge
- 15 nights Camping
- 2 nights Hotel

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Dominating the Andes Mountains in South America, and the highest peak in the world outside of the Himalayas, the mighty Aconcagua (6962m) is the second highest peak in the famed Seven Summits. Every year since 1999, KE have been successfully running expedition style holidays to Aconcagua, meaning you're in excellent hands. We climb the mountain via the Normal Route, which is a challenging, high altitude trail but less technical than others. This climbing holiday starts in Mendoza, the capital of the beautiful wine-growing Cuyo region. Next, we transfer to the village of Penitentes, from where we start a two day trek to the basecamp at Plaza de Mulas. The adventure includes an excellent acclimatisation programme, including three days set aside for summit attempts. Unlike other companies that use UK leaders, KE's groups are guided by expert English-speaking Argentinean mountain guides; professionals who truly know the mountain. These high altitude experts are all members of the Argentinean Association of Mountain Guides (AAGM). Whilst on the mountain, assisting our expert guides will be a dedicated team of high altitude porters to assist in carrying equipment between basecamp and the three higher camps. This excellent mountain set up, alongside experienced guides and a well-planned acclimatisation programme, ensures you've the best chance of a summit success. We finish the holiday in Mendoza, where we can celebrate with the fruits of its renowned wine production.

Is this holiday for you?

The ascent of Aconcagua is generally considered to be a trek, rather than a climb and as such it is a very difficult holiday to grade. As you'd expect for climbing one of the highest peaks in the world, you'll need determination and a positive attitude alongside physical strength to reach the summit. Climbing Aconcagua is considerably more challenging than Kilimanjaro and should be considered an expedition, rather than a supported trekking holiday. On the approach to the mountain we have three days of straightforward trekking above Penitentes Village and whilst heading to Plaza de Mulas basecamp. Above basecamp, we'll encounter mostly zig-zag trails across scree, as well as unstable boulder fields and easy-angled snow slopes which will require the use of a walking ice axe. Although the gradient of the ascent is generally low, the high altitude of the peak and variable weather conditions (powerful sunlight, strong winds and cold temperatures) provides a genuine challenge. Aconcagua can be attempted by very fit hill walkers without significant mountaineering experience (although crampon and ice axe skills are required) but it should not be underestimated, it is one of the toughest holidays KE

offers. On the mountain, we'll be assisted by high altitude porters who'll carry the group's equipment between camps. However, you'll be expected to carry your own personal equipment and a food share on load carrying days. You'll also need to carry a backpack of up to 15kgs between camps and on summit days (in typical conditions) you'll be using crampons and ice axe, so previous crampon and ice axe experience (including the ability to self arrest) is highly required for this holiday. (This holiday requires a copy of your passport by the KE office after booking).

PLEASE NOTE: There is a single supplement available for both the hotels and tents on this holiday. Due to the expedition-style nature of this itinerary, you may be required to share a tent for operational or safety reasons. Depending on the make-up of the group, this may mean you will have to share with a member of the opposite sex.

Itinerary

Version: ACO Aconcagua Ascent

DAY 1

Meet at the group hotel in Mendoza. A transfer from Mendoza Airport is provided.

We meet at the group hotel in Mendoza. A transfer from Mendoza Airport is provided. Our hotel is located close to Mendoza's shops and restaurants and the central, Plaza Independencia. Your guide will meet you and there'll be a briefing and equipment check.



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Complete permit formalities in Mendoza before driving to 2725m and Puente del Inca.

In the morning, all group members need to go to the Secretariat de Turismo to receive their permits. We then meet our transport for the journey to Puente del Inca (2725m), which is reached after a most picturesque two and a half hour drive (around 160 kilometres distance) from Mendoza. Starting out from an altitude of only 735 metres at Mendoza, our route winds up into the foothills of the Andes, with expansive views to the east and increasingly impressive views of the snow-capped ranges of the Andes. We'll take lunch in the town of Uspallata before heading west on the main highway between Argentina and Chile, we follow the River Mendoza which has cut a deep valley to the south of Aconcagua. We will have the afternoon to relax while the loads for the mules are prepared. We overnight here as an important part of our acclimatisation programme. Whilst at Puente del Inca, we will stay at one of the several basic hotels in this small village.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Lodge

DAY 3

Trek beside the Rio Horcones to Confluencia at 3350m.

A 20 minute ride by private vehicle takes us to the Ranger station beyond Puente de Inca. Here, the

group must complete the formalities of entering the park. Before setting off, the guides will have divided the group's gear amongst the ponymen, whose pack animals will be used to ferry our loads as far as the Plaza de Mulas. Please note that your KE trek bag containing your mountaineering gear will go directly to Plaza de Mulas and you will not have access to this bag until the evening of Day 5. Another bag with your essentials for next 2 nights will be taken to Confluencia. Today's walk up to the fixed camp at Confluencia is an easy stroll of 3 - 4 hours with the awesome south face of Aconcagua looming ahead. We reach the junction of the Rio Horcones and the Lower Horcones River which is the location of our first camp known as Confluencia.

Meals: **B L D**




	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 540M		Descent 50M		Time 3 - 4 hrs trekking		Distance 8KM
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DAY 4

An acclimatisation day as we trek to Plaza Francia (4000m) and return to Confluencia.

We have planned a day excursion up to a viewpoint for the south side of Aconcagua. We take the trail which heads up towards valley of the Glacier Horcones Inferior. After 3 to 4 hours, we reach an altitude of around 4000 metres at a viewpoint just before Plaza Francia and have a spectacular, unobstructed view of the Aconcagua's south face. We return by the same route to our camp at Confluencia.

Meals: **B L D**





	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 880M		Descent 880M		Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 14KM
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DAY 5

Head through the Horcones Valley to Plaza de Mulas basecamp at 4260m.

We cross the Rio Horcones river just after leaving the Confluencia campsite, and then follow the broad, level valley of the Rio Horcones, walking across the Playa Ancha (Long Beach). It can be quite hot on this stretch as we journey over 8 kilometres of outwash gravels on the river bed. The Horcones River has to be crossed several times today. We pass the Ibanez Camp and reach the old Plaza de Mulas site at around 4000 metres. At this point we are due west of the summit of Aconcagua. There is a final steep climb to the current site of the Plaza de Mulas (4260m) basecamp area. This is a permanent camp during the climbing season where you will spend a number of nights. At our camp there is a communal dining area, a kitchen tent, toilets and sleeping tents.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 1030M		Descent 80M		Time 8 - 9 hrs trekking		Distance 20KM
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DAY 6

An acclimatisation day for resting and exploring the local area around basecamp.

A rest and acclimatisation day today. We have the opportunity to explore the area around Plaza de Mulas and relax in our comfortable basecamp area.

Meals: **B L D**






	Accommodation Camping
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DAY 7

Ascent of Bonete Peak (5100m) and return to basecamp.

A second day of acclimatisation, making an ascent of Bonete Peak (5100m). Starting out by walking across to the building which was the former Plaza de Mulas hotel, we then take the trail heading off to the right. A reasonable trail leads up into the hanging valley below Bonete Peak and from there we climb a switch-back track across a broad, convex scree slope to the summit pyramid. The trail moves out right to avoid some small cliffs and then climbs back left to the summit and there is a short section of scrambling just below the summit. The total time for the ascent is around 4 hours. Descent is by the same route, with a few obvious short cuts. This superb acclimatisation walk covers predominantly easy ground and also offers outstanding views of Aconcagua, including the whole of the route of our ascent.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 840M		Descent 840M		Time 7 - 8 hrs trekking		Distance 9KM
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DAY 8

A day trekking with supplies to Camp 1 (4910m) before returning to basecamp.

Today we will make a carry up to the site of Camp 1 (Canada Camp) at 4910 metres. Carrying some of the expedition gear and food, we will make a cache of our supplies at the camp and then return to the Plaza de Mulas. The route follows easy switch-backs to the camp, located on the top of a cliff and the only flat ground in the vicinity. It takes approximately 4 hours to reach Camp 1 and possibly less than 2 hours to descend from here to Plaza de Mulas.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Camping	 Ascent 670M	 Descent 670M	 Time 5 - 6 hrs trekking	 Distance 6KM
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DAY 9

A valuable day of resting and acclimatisation prior to starting our ascent.

A final day of rest and acclimatisation at basecamp before our ascent of Aconcagua. We can use today to sort our equipment and make final preparations for the climb.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Camping

DAY 10

Leave basecamp and make our way up to Camp 1 (4910m).

Today, we will move up to Camp 1 to spend our first night on the mountain. We will probably already feel the difference of the extra acclimatisation compared to our first foray to this altitude. It should take around 3 to 4 hours walking to reach Camp 1.

Meals: **B L D**





 Accommodation Camping	 Ascent 660M	 Time 3 - 4 hrs trekking	 Distance 3KM
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DAY 11

Depart Camp 1 and climb to Camp 2 at Nido de Condores (5520m).

We move up at a more gentle gradient than yesterday across expansive scree slopes to Camp 2 at 5520 metres. This camping place, at a windy col known as 'Nido de Condores' (the condor's nest) affords spectacular views of a host of surrounding peaks. Looking upwards, we can see the top of the mountain and also the 'canaleta' (channel or couloir) of scree and snow which leads to a col between the mountain's twin summits. This canaleta is the key to the ascent of Aconcagua.

Meals: **B L D**





	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 550M		Time 4 hrs trekking		Distance 3KM
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DAY 12

A resting and acclimatisation day at Camp 2 (5520m).

An important day for resting and acclimatisation at Camp 2 (5520m) where we can recover our energy which will be needed for the following days.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 340M		Descent 340M		Distance 4KM
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DAY 13

Depart Camp 2 and climb to Camp 3 (6000m).

Today we will continue our climb up to Camp 3 (6000m), which is known as 'Colera Camp' on a plateau about 300m from the 'Berlin Huts', 2 small derelict refuges built by the Berlin Alpine Club. This will be our highest camp on the mountain and it can be a cold and windy place. We will carry our personal equipment with our mountain porters carrying the tents and group gear. After checking our summit gear and receiving a summit briefing from the guides, we have an early dinner and go to bed to get a good night's rest for the early morning start the next day.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 340M		Time 3 - 4 hrs trekking		Distance 2KM
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DAY 14

Summit day for the ascent of Aconcagua (6942m).

This is the first day that we have scheduled for a summit ascent. We have an early 'alpine' start for the longest and most serious day of the expedition. We climb the north ridge to the Independencia Refuge (an old ruined shelter) at 6250 metres, where we will hope to see the sun for the first time today. The next section of the route is known as El Portezuelo del Viento (the door of the wind) as there is usually a strong wind blowing here, even on a calm day. Traversing the west face, we arrive at the canaleta, a 300-metre scree-filled couloir, which leads up to the summit ridge. At the top of the canaleta we arrive on a high col and can look for the first time to the south and down the ice flutings of the incredible south

face. Turning to the east, the so called Guanaco Ridge takes us thankfully more easily now to the summit of Aconcagua in a further hour of climbing. A spectacular 360 degree panorama from the summit will be adequate compensation for the hardship of the ascent. This is a very long day of 10 or 12 hours from Camp 3 to the summit and back, and in recent seasons has required crampon and ice axe use due to higher levels of snowfall. We take care that the group members hold something in reserve for the descent back to our high camp. Arriving back at the camp we prepare drinks and food and after a small celebration most people will just want to sleep.

Meals: **B L D**


	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 1000M		Descent 1000M		Time 10 - 12 hours		Distance 11KM
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DAY 15

First contingency day.

This is a spare or contingency day, which can be used in the event of bad weather to allow the best possible chance of summing successfully.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping
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DAY 16

Second contingency day

A second contingency day. These extra days give us the best chance of a successful expedition. If they are not needed, the lead guide will discuss with the group how best to use these days.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping
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DAY 17

Make our way back down to Plaza de Mulas basecamp (4260m).

Return from Camp 3 all the way to basecamp. It will take anything from 5 to 7 hours for the walk down to Plaza de Mulas. At the basecamp we will be welcomed back by our crew who will have prepared a

celebration dinner.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Descent 1740M		Time 5 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 9KM
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DAY 18

Trek down the Horcones Valley to the park entrance and drive to Mendoza.

We retrace our route from Plaza de Mulass to the Ranger Station at the roadhead. This is a long day of around 8 hours trekking, covering around 25km, all downhill and if we have not had to use the contingency days at this point, we may opt to split this day into two, trekking first to Confluencia and then to the road-head the next day. At the road our vehicles will be waiting for the 2 to 3 hour drive out of the mountains and back to Mendoza. Arriving in Mendoza, we check in at the hotel and after a shower and clean up it will be time to go out on the town and celebrate our success.

Meals: **B L**

	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 105M		Descent 1530M		Time 7 - 9 hours		Distance 25KM
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DAY 19

Departure day. A transfer to Mendoza Airport is provided

Your holiday ends after breakfast. A transfer to the airport is provided.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- Qualified English speaking Argentinean mountain guides at a ratio of 1:3
- Airport transfers on Day 1 and Day 19
- All accommodation as described in the trip notes
- Meals as detailed in the meal plan
- Once on trek a full service including food and all equipment (excluding personal equipment)
- High altitude porters to carry group equipment to high camps
- All land transport involved in the itinerary
- National Park fees and Climbing Permit

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Some meals as detailed in the meal plan
- Tips for trek staff
- Accommodation and food costs in Mendoza if the group summit early and return early to Mendoza
- Additional Porters to carry your personal gear. Personal porters can be hired at additional cost.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will meet in Mendoza.

An airport transfer will be provided on arrival and departure for all clients.

Hotel contact details and an emergency contact number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

During the expedition all meals are included from breakfast on day 2 until arriving back in Mendoza. In Mendoza there is a wide range of dining options and here it makes sense to leave the choice of where and what to eat to you. We have therefore not included meals other than breakfasts while staying in Mendoza. Based on the current itinerary this is a total of 2 dinners, but please note this may be more if the group opts to return to Mendoza following an early success on Aconcagua. You should budget between US\$15 - 20 per meal while in Mendoza.

Special diets can be catered for on Aconcagua at an additional cost which needs to be paid on booking. This extra cost covers all meals whilst on the mountain and is - Vegetarian (No Cost), Vegan \$415, Lactose free US\$415 and Celiac gluten free US\$415.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

The holiday includes 2 nights at a standard hotel in Mendoza, 1 night in a basic hotel in Penitentes and 15 nights camping. Accommodation in Mendoza is allocated on a twin-sharing basis whilst in Penitentes rooms are from 2 - 4 people. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another solo traveller of the same sex whilst staying in hotels. For the 2 hotel nights in Mendoza and 1 night in Penitentes, single rooms are available for a supplementary cost, as are single tents.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the expedition-style nature of this trip, you will be paired up for tent accommodation with another climber. There is a possibility that this may be with someone of the opposite sex, depending on the make-up of the group. You can avoid this possibility by opting for the single tent supplement. However, it is important to note that the mountain guide's decision is final and that he/she may require you to share a tent for operational and safety reasons when at high altitude camps.

Additional hotel nights in Mendoza are also available. For Hotel prices and single supplement costs please refer to the dates and prices page of the trip on our website. Hotels are subject to availability and prices may vary.

On the mountain tents are either Mountain Hardwear or North Face high mountain tents which can withstand the Aconcagua weather conditions and terrain. You'll stay in these tents at base camp and at high camps on a twin-share basis. Occasionally at the higher camps there may be a maximum of 3 per tent.

If the extra contingency days allowed for summit attempts are not required, the group may wish to return to Mendoza earlier than planned. In this case any additional hotel nights in Mendoza are paid for by group members and are not included in the trip cost.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a qualified English-speaking Argentinian mountain guide and during the climb will be assisted by other qualified mountain guides. All of these guides are qualified through the High Mountain and Trekking Guides School in Mendoza (EPGAMT) and Argentinean Association of Mountain Guides (AAGM). The guiding ratio whilst on the mountain is 1:3 and all guides carry a VHF radio and a comprehensive first aid for emergencies.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to very high altitude. During the course of your trip you will be spending several nights above 5000 metres and you will climb to almost 7000 metres on summit day. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes and our proven programme of acclimatisation will give you the best chance of being in the best condition to attempt the climb, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on [trekking at high altitude](#). Unless you have previous experience of trekking above 5000 metres you should consult one of our trekking experts before embarking on this holiday.

Medical Checks on Aconcagua

At both Confluencia and Plaza de Mulas fixed camps there are medical posts staffed by doctors throughout the climbing season. They have portable altitude chambers and bottled oxygen for altitude emergencies. The base camp also has a helipad for emergency evacuations. It is mandatory for expedition members to visit the medical posts for a check-up before ascending further up the mountain. The doctors check blood pressure, oxygen saturation, pulse and other vital signs. The doctors can prevent expedition members from continuing further if they do not pass the medical checks. These medical professionals are also available at these camps to assist in any medical emergencies.

Additional Medical Information

A detailed medical questionnaire will be sent out to you once you are confirmed on the tour and needs to be filled in and sent back to the KE office. Alongside asking about your height and weight you'll need to provide details of your blood group and blood pressure.

Travellers over 60 years of age will also need an additional note from their doctor confirming good health and their fitness to participate, in order to meet local requirements.

Risk Acceptance Affidavit

In order to obtain the permit to climb Aconcagua, The Government of the Province of Mendoza, require all participants to sign a "Risk Acceptance Affidavit", disclaiming the authorities of responsibility for any accident, sickness, misfortune or emergency that may arise during your time within the Aconcagua Provincial Park. It also declares that the participant must meet all expenses that may arise in the case of rescue and evacuation by mule, helicopter or other means of transport, as well as, any medical expenses that may arise. It is a condition of travel with KE Adventure that you must have sufficient travel insurance in place to cover these scenarios. For more information please see our travel insurance advice.

HELICOPTER RESCUE AND INSURANCE

Helicopter evacuation from Aconcagua National Park requires upfront payment to the local helicopter operator, which then may be claimed back from your travel insurance. You must ensure your travel insurance covers such costs for rescue and repatriation and will reimburse payments made in this way. The helicopter operator also hold relationships with certain US-based insurance companies who can provide evacuation without the need for upfront payment. Supplementary policies to cover this specific evacuation without need for upfront payment can be arranged. Please contact us for more information if you wish to explore these options

Although this trip requires no previous mountaineering experience, you will likely have plenty of hill walking and some altitude experience so may be familiar with the risks of high altitude trekking and climbing. For further clarification, significant additional hazards of high altitude trekking, climbing and mountaineering include, but are not limited to, transportation (before, during and after the activities); dealing with pack animals used for carrying gear and for riding in some circumstances; injury or illness caused by contaminated or untreated water; slips, trips and falls on rugged terrain; being struck by avalanche, rockfall, icefall or other debris; glacier travel hazards such as crevasses and snow bridges; camping hazards; weather related hazards such as storms; extreme heat injuries; extreme cold injuries such as hypothermia and frostbite; altitude related conditions such as acute mountain sickness, pulmonary edema, cerebral edema; damage, failure or misuse of safety or climbing equipment; physical capabilities/limitations. The information on this trip page, make up of the itinerary and acclimatisation profile, as well as the expertise of the guides goes some way to mitigate these risks, but no risk on such trips can be completely eliminated.

Park Fees & Permits

The cost of the park fee/climbing permit for Aconcagua is included in the holiday price.

Spending Money

We estimate that \$400 - \$450 should be sufficient to cover your spending requirements including meals in Mendoza, tips for trek staff, and other personal expenses. It is not necessary to purchase local currency (Argentine Pesos) prior to your trip. Credit and debit cards can be used to withdraw cash from ATM's in Mendoza (Argentinian pesos only). Credit cards can also be used for purchases and to pay for meals at most restaurants in Mendoza. If you are bringing your spending money with you we recommend bringing US dollars cash as this is generally much easier to exchange. US dollars are readily exchanged at most banks and can often be used for transactions.

Please be aware that in the event of any early departure from the mountain extra hotel nights in Mendoza and transport costs will be at your own expense. Only 2 hotel nights in Mendoza (pre and post expedition) are included in the trip package. See Additional Information tab below for more information.

Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying thank you to your local guides and do not form part of their wages. We would recommend putting aside \$200 for tipping the local staff and guides on Aconcagua.

Additional Information

Early departure from the mountain

If you have to leave the trip due to a medical emergency there is a national park rescue helicopter service available, evacuation may also be by land transport or mule in some cases, depending on availability, location, weather and additional factors. All clients must hold suitable insurance to cover any costs arising from rescue and evacuation, as well as medical expenses, and must provide us with these details ahead of your trip.

If you have to leave the trip early, you will carry essential belongings with you and the rest of your baggage will come down with the group when they return from the mountain. The transfer by regular bus back to Mendoza is included and you can take your 1 night hotel in Mendoza on your return. Any additional hotel nights in Mendoza will be at your own expense. If you wish your baggage to return to Mendoza before the scheduled group return date this will be at an extra cost.

If you decide not to ascend Aconcagua, then you can wait in Plaza de Mulas basecamp for the group to return at no extra charge. If you wish to return early to Mendoza then there would be additional charges for a mule to carry your baggage to the park entrance and an accompanying guide. You are not allowed to return to the park entrance without a guide. We include a transfer in a regular bus from the park gate to Mendoza. If you want a private transfer there is an additional charge for this. You can take your 1 night hotel in Mendoza on your return and any additional hotel nights in Mendoza will be at your own expense.

If the group summit Aconcagua early and decide to return to Mendoza without using the 2 contingency days on the mountain, then the extra hotel nights in Mendoza will be at your own expense. Only 2 hotel nights in Mendoza (pre and post expedition) are included in the trip package.

Guide's Trip Management AND Summit Attempts

Given the nature of the trip, it is important to acknowledge that the guide's decision on the mountain, in relation to safety and the well-being of the group, including support staff such as the porters and camp team, is final. The guide, as the group leader, can decide on any changes to the itinerary, including ending the program if he/she considers the team is in danger.

The guide will make their best efforts to provide you with a summit attempt. They cannot, however, guarantee that you will reach the summit of a peak. Weather, route conditions and your own abilities, or the abilities of other climbers in the group may create circumstances that make an ascent unsafe, and you or your entire team may have to turn around without reaching the summit.

Beat the Jet Lag

Our holidays are normally designed with minimal 'down time' at the start of the trip, but having a day or two at the beginning will have the additional benefit of allowing you time to get over the stress of a long journey or travelling across time zones, leaving you refreshed and ready for your holiday. We can easily arrange for you to have additional nights and airport transfers.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Visa Argentina

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays.

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a trekking or climbing trip getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. We suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime. Regular hiking in hill country is the best preparation but almost any regular exercise is good for developing better stamina and general cardio-vascular fitness. Before departure, we suggest that you try to fit in a number of long walks in hilly country. As there are a number of days on Aconcagua when you will be expected to carry a pack weighing up to 15kg, we would recommend carrying a heavy pack in hilly terrain as part of your training. There is little you can do to prepare for the altitude, but if you have a good level of fitness this will help.

Climate

The best time of the year to climb Aconcagua is during the Southern Hemisphere summer - from the middle of November until early March. While Aconcagua is entirely within the Republic of Argentina, the Pacific Ocean is only 150 kilometres to the west. The mountain receives almost all of its bad weather from the moist winds which blow in from the west off the Pacific Ocean, but summer storms are relatively rare on Aconcagua and the sun shines for most of the climbing season. Rough guide to temperatures November - early March Maximum/Minimum Mendoza +30°C/+20°C, 4000m. +15°C/-5°C, 5000m. +10°C/-15°C, 6000m. +5°C/-25°C. On its upper slopes, Aconcagua is notorious for a fierce wind called "Viento Blanco" - the white wind - which can further reduce temperatures. This wind can be strong enough to rule out any summit attempt but rarely lasts more than 48 hours. Our spare summit days mean that an occurrence of this wind should not spoil our chance to reach the summit.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Aconcagua and the Southern Andes - Cicerone press
- Aconcagua - Summit of South America - Harry Kirkstra
- Argentina - Footprint Handbook
- Argentina - Lonely Planet
- Latin America Spanish phrasebook - Lonely Planet

Maps

Aconcagua 1: 50 000 - Zagier y Urruty

Attractive and detailed topographic map covering the whole Aconcagua Provincial Park. Contour interval is 50m, with spot heights for peaks. Roads tracks & trekking trails clearly marked.

Cerro Aconcagua 1: 40 000 - Sandra Greulich

An excellent 1:40 000 map of Aconcagua with all of the routes marked, panorama views of the faces with climbing routes, route profiles, useful information on Aconcagua, and a street plan of Mendoza.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum. Please refer to the Baggage Allowance for further information.

You should bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Mountaineering double boots*
- Lightweight adjustable climbing helmet which can fit over a warm hat, and a headlamp can be securely attached to.
- Trekking poles
- Crampons (ensure these are correctly fitted to your double boots)
- Walking ice axe (with wrist leash)
- 120cm sling and 2 x screw-gate carabineers **
- Gaiters
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof over-trousers
- Underwear
- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Thermal baselayer shirts
- Shirts or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket
- Waterproof jacket with hood
- Warm jacket (down)
- Sunhat

- Fleece hat
- Sunglasses (Category 4 rated)
- Ski-goggles
- Inner thermal gloves
- Warm and waterproof insulated gloves or mittens
- Spare Warm and waterproof insulated gloves or mittens
- Sleeping bag (comfort rated -30°C)
- Sleeping bag liner
- Camping mat***
- Plastic bowl
- Plastic mug
- Spoon
- KE trek bag or similar expedition style duffle bag
- Backpack - minimum 70 litres ****
- Small daypack – for carry-on and trek to basecamp
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles. Take 3 x 1 litre 'Nalgene' bottles (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets

- Thermos flask - 1 litre
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Small towel
- Selection of dry bags (to keep trek bag contents dry)
- Basic First Aid Kit including Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium) painkillers, altitude (Diamox), plasters and blister treatment, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).
- Small padlock (to lock your KE trek bag)

The following items are optional:

- Windstopper fleece facemask
- Trainers or similar for camp use
- Spare laces
- Swimwear (for the hotel pool)
- Travel clothes
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Camera
- Pee bottle (wide necked Nalgene style bottle)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Notes

***Mountaineering boots** - You will need high altitude double boots for this trip. Climbing at altitudes of over 6000 metres, the temperatures can be very cold (as low as minus 30°C) and there is less oxygen in the blood to cope with these conditions. Single boots are really not suitable for these cold, high conditions. Most double boots consist of an outer shell and an insulated inner boot. Scarpa Vega is an example of a good all-round plastic double boot. La Sportiva Spantiks are an excellent alternative to a plastic boot, where the outer boot is constructed from modern synthetic materials. Other suitable double boots are La Sportiva G2 SM and Boreal G1 Lite. You must make sure that you are suitably equipped for these extremely low temperatures and high altitude.

**** 120cm sling and 2 x screw-gate carabineers** - During the last season the local guiding companies attached a 200m fixed line to protect a section across a snow field that became more technical due to higher than usual snowfall. This has generally not been required in previous seasons. Therefore we have included the 120cm sling and 2 screw-gate carabineers on the kit list to allow you to attach to the fixed line if it proves to be required on the summit day this season.

***** Camping Mat** - For this trip we recommend you bring a closed cell foam camping mattress for the high camps on the mountain as these are light, robust and cannot puncture while providing good insulation. You may also want to consider bringing a thermarest or similar inflatable mattress in addition for greater comfort at base camp. The thermarest can be left at base camp while you are on the mountain.

****** Backpack required for this trip** - While on the mountain we employ Argentinean guides to carry the group's tents, stoves and fuel. You will be required to carry all of your personal equipment including your sleeping bag and camping mattress, and a small proportion (approximately 1kg) of the group's food. To do this you will need a large (minimum 70 litre) backpack suitable for your size (or with adjustable back system) which is designed for load carrying with a comfortable hip belt. During the 3-day trek up to the basecamp, mules will carry your backpack containing those items you need during this stage of the trip. You will carry a small daypack with the things you need during the day.

What happens to your KE trek bag - Your KE trek bag containing the climbing gear items that you don't need on the walk up to the Plaza des Mulas (ice-axe, crampons, big boots etc.) will be taken directly up to Plaza de Mulas and you will not have access to this bag from the morning of Day 3 until the evening of Day 5.

PHD Gear Advisor

PHD specialise in cold weather equipment, from the world's lightest right up to the most protective for Everest or the Poles. It's a large range. So to help you choose what you need to keep you warm, PHD have listed the gear that is appropriate for this expedition. http://www.phdesigns.co.uk/gearadviser/destination.php?destinations_id=8.

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [-> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary, joining in Mendoza. Airport transfers are provided on the first and last day of the itinerary.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Mendoza. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the early evening, arriving in the afternoon of the following day (day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart Mendoza in the afternoon of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK in the afternoon of the following day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Why climb Aconcagua with KE? We've an excellent acclimatisation programme led by expert mountain guides on a 1:3 ratio. Unlike other companies using guides from the UK, we use high altitude Argentinian experts who truly know this mountain inside out. Plus we've set aside 3 possible summit days. With all departures guaranteed - all you need to do is say YES to your Seven Summit adventure.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 18/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change