

Title:

Overview of Argentina for Travelers

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Summary:

Located in South America, Argentina is a beautiful and passionate place. Following is an overview of Argentina for travelers.

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Article Body:

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Overview of Argentina for Travelers

Argentina covers roughly 1.1 million square miles and is the second largest country in South America. Due to its unique location, practically every climate imaginable can be found in some part of the country.

The people of Argentina are known as "Argentines." The total estimated population is 38.6 million and grows at half a percent each year. The ethnicity of Argentines is 97 percent European and 3 percent non-white. Argentines are overwhelmingly Roman Catholics, with 92 percent members of the faith. The primary language spoken is Spanish and the literacy rate is 97 percent. The life expectancy rate is 75.8 years.

History

Europeans arrived in Argentina in 1502 with the arrival of Amerigo Vespucci, the individual after whom the Americas are named. Spanish navigator Juan Diaz de Solias visited what is now Argentina in 1516. Spain pursued colonization 80 years later, establishing the city of Buenos Aires. In 1816, the Buenos Aires colony obtained independence. The country we now know as Argentina wasn't established until 1861.

In the late 19th century, Argentina became a favorite of European investment and

relocation. The country flourished. From 1880 to 1930, Argentina was one the top 10 wealthiest countries in the world. With this ranking came a developed infrastructure and fairly high standard of living. Unfortunately, things became a bit less prosperous after 1930.

In 1943, the military overthrew the civil leadership. Juan Peron was one of the military leaders and became the dominant figure in the new government. In 1946, questionable elections resulted in his ascendance to the presidency. Despite his role in the coup, Peron aggressively pursued policies to empower the working class and raise living standards. His legendary wife, Eva Peron, was masterful at generating popular support for her husband.

Juan Peron subsequently exiled by the military, but then brought back as president as the country destabilized because of corruption and fraud. Peron died during this second term and controlled chaos more or less existed in Argentina for the next twenty years as extremist groups fought with the military for power. This period is generally known as the "Dirty War" when thousands were killed in the power struggle or just disappeared.

The late 1990s were a horrific economic period for Argentina. A four-year depression led to massive unemployment. The government defaulted on \$88 billion in debt, the largest every default in history. The good news, however, is things have stabilized in the last four years with the country returning to better times both economically and politically. Indeed, now is an excellent time to visit.

Travel to Argentina and you will find a beautiful country with a little of everything. From the elegance of Buenos Aires to a day trip to Patagonia, Argentina is a top travel destination.