



The Huarpe Route

11 DAYS / 10 NIGHTS

DAY 01: SAN RAFAEL / MALARGÜE 190 km

Arrival at Santiago Germanó Airport in **San Rafael**, followed by a transfer to **Malargüe** along RN 144 and RN 40, a drive of just over two hours. Arrival in Malargüe. Accommodation at the selected hotel. This town in the south of the province of Mendoza has established itself as the capital of adventure tourism and a key hub for astronomical science. It is crossed by the legendary Route 40 and stands out for its landscapes of extreme contrasts, which include volcanoes, caves, wetlands, and mountain rivers. Depending on the flight schedule, it will be possible, en route and before arriving in Malargüe, to make a 140 km round-trip detour to visit El Pozo de las Ánimas and the Laguna de la Niña Encantada, ending at Valle de las Leñas, a major alpine skiing and snowboarding resort. Accommodation at **Malargüe Inn & Suites 4*** or similar. **Overnight in Malargüe.**

DAY 02: MALARGÜE / LA PAYUNIA / MALARGÜE 420 km

Breakfast. We will then begin our visit to **La Payunia Provincial Reserve**. From Malargüe, we travel almost 130 km south along the spectacular RN 40 to "La Pasarela" and the imposing basalt canyon carved there by the Río Grande. La Payunia is one of the most diverse volcanic parks on the planet: with more than 800 volcanoes, it covers almost 670,000 hectares. Its highest volcanoes are Payún Liso, at 3,870 m above sea level, and Payún Matrú, at 3,850 m, which stands out for its caldera measuring 9 km in diameter. Another highly significant volcano in the area is Morado, where it is possible to climb up to the crater if weather conditions are favorable. The place seems to have been suspended in time and remains almost unchanged from its original state; according to researchers, its volcanoes appear to have erupted only a very short time ago. It is a very young area, so its volcanoes cannot be described as extinct, only as dormant. Includes a **box lunch** and an **afternoon snack**. Return in the afternoon. Accommodation at the selected hotel. **Overnight in Malargüe.**

DAY 03: MALARGÜE / ATUEL CANYON / SAN RAFAEL 240 km

Breakfast. We head north on RN 40 and RN 144 to the junction with RP 180, reaching the 9,600-hectare lake formed by El Nihuil Dam. Here stand the residential community of Villa El Nihuil and the Club de Pescadores San Rafael, where we will have some free time. From there, we will take R 173 into the **Cañón del Atuel**, which stretches for 56 km: a living testament to the origins of the world, carved by wind and rain over thousands of years into a variety of natural sculptures such as El Submarino (the Submarine), El Sillón de Rivadavia (Rivadavia's Armchair), Los Monjes (the Monks), and other landforms. We will stop at Hydroelectric Plant No. 2, which offers a panoramic view of the route we have traveled, and again at Plant No. 3, before finally crossing Valle Grande and arriving in **San Rafael** in the afternoon. Accommodation at **Tower Hotel & Suites 4*** or similar. **Overnight in San Rafael.**

DAY 04: SAN RAFAEL / VILLA 25 DE MAYO / SAN RAFAEL 75 km

Breakfast. Today we will devote the entire day to exploring this small city, the second most important in the province of Mendoza. First comes its urban center, whose highlights include Parque Hipólito Yrigoyen, the city's green lung; Plaza Francia, with its craft fairs; and Plazoleta El Inmigrante, home to the former railway station, now the Railway Museum, and to the locomotive that in 1903 pulled the first train to reach the region. Then we will visit the **La Abeja winery**, the first in San Rafael, built in 1883 by Rodolfo Iselin, a French immigrant and the founder of the present-day city. Next to it he built his imposing mansion, a symbol of the heyday and vigor of the French colony. Here we will take a tour on which our hosts will explain the winemaking process carried out with the original machinery from 1885, followed by the history of Rodolfo Iselin's family; then, in the cellar, we will discuss how sparkling wine is made using the traditional ancestral method, before finishing with a generous tasting of the winery's wines. After our visit to this



historic site, we will continue to the Cuadro Benegas area to visit the **Chayee Bourras winery**, a boutique winery opened in 2010 that stands out for a unique feature: it is devoted exclusively to the micro-vinification of limited lots of premium Bonarda grapes. There we will enjoy an exclusive **pairing menu with a special selection of wines**, in which each dish not only reflects regional flavors but is also designed to showcase each of the wines. After the experience, we will continue to **Villa 25 de Mayo**, known as the original colony and regarded as a true **"living museum"** because it was the first settlement in the region, founded in 1805 on the banks of the Diamante River. Preserved here are the Fuerte San Rafael del Diamante Ruins, the remains of the fort that defended the southern frontier, and the Nuestra Señora del Carmen parish church, with its original colonial architecture and religious images from the founding era. Return to San Rafael. Accommodation at the selected hotel. **Overnight in San Rafael.**

DAY 05: SAN RAFAEL / ZUCCARDI WINERY / MENDOZA 250 km

Breakfast. Afterward, we will set off for our final destination, **Mendoza**, taking RN 143 and then RN 40. This route leads us into the **Uco Valley**, Argentina's most internationally prestigious wine region. A stop here is practically a must, which is why we will visit the renowned **Zuccardi winery**. We will enjoy a tasting of the entry-level, mid-range, or premium line, depending on the group's request, followed by **lunch** at the **Piedra Infinita** restaurant. We then continue to the city of Mendoza, arriving in the afternoon. Accommodation at **Diplomatic Hotel 5*** or similar. **Overnight in Mendoza.**

DAY 06: MENDOZA / HIGH ANDES / MENDOZA 420 km

Breakfast. Today we will discover the majesty of the Andes at their most imposing on the **Alta Montaña** circuit. We begin by following the Mendoza River, with a panoramic view of Potrerillos Dam, and then continue through the historic Uspallata Valley—an ancient Huarpe settlement and a key setting in General San Martín's campaign for independence—where we will make a rest stop. We will climb International Route 7 through a succession of bends and switchbacks, passing Villa de los Penitentes and stopping at the fascinating **Puente del Inca**. From there, we will reach the **Aconcagua viewpoint** (6,959 m above sea level) to take in the imposing south face of the highest mountain in the Americas. Finally, we will ascend to Las Cuevas, a picturesque village on the border with Chile, at 3,200 m above sea level. From January to April—if weather conditions and the official authorities permit—we will crown the adventure by climbing to 3,850 m above sea level to visit the iconic **Cristo Redentor**, which offers a panoramic view of the majestic Andes. Return to Mendoza. Accommodation at the selected hotel. **Overnight in Mendoza.**

DAY 07: MENDOZA / LUJAN DE CUYO / MENDOZA 80 km

Breakfast. Morning at leisure; at the scheduled time, we will travel about 40 km south of the city to Luján de Cuyo, known worldwide as the **Land of Malbec**. There we will enjoy an outstanding food and wine experience at the **Catena Zapata winery**, taking part in the exclusive Blending Games experience: stepping into the shoes of a winemaker, we will combine different lots and components, discovering the secrets of terroir and the science behind the creation of its world-class wines. The crowning touch is **lunch** at **Angélica Restaurante**, a high-end culinary offering in an exclusive setting. Each dish, prepared with regional and seasonal ingredients, is perfectly paired with a selection of the most outstanding wines, creating an unforgettable harmony that captures the essence of Catena Zapata. Return to the city of Mendoza. Accommodation at the selected hotel. **Overnight in Mendoza.**

DAY 08: MENDOZA / SAN JUAN / ULLUM DAM / SAN JUAN 240 km

Breakfast. Departure heading north to the neighboring **city of San Juan**, capital of the province of the same name. Before checking in at the hotel, we will tour the city and its surroundings, including downtown San Juan, where we will see the Casa Natal de Sarmiento (Sarmiento's Birthplace), among other city attractions. We continue west to the Quebrada de Zonda for a guided tour and wine tasting at the **Finca Sierras Azules winery**, rounding off the experience with a **3-course lunch**. Next, we will visit Ullum Dam,



taking in its main viewpoint and the dam wall, with views of the surrounding hills and the San Juan River. Arrival in San Juan in the afternoon. Accommodation at **Del Bono Park Hotel 5*** or similar. **Overnight in San Juan.**

DAY 09: SAN JUAN / VALLE DE LA LUNA / SAN AGUSTIN DEL VALLE FERTIL 400 km

Breakfast. We set off for **Ischigualasto Provincial Park**, a natural World Heritage Site, better known as Valle de la Luna (Valley of the Moon), a name inspired by its otherworldly landscapes. Along the way, we will pass through the hamlet of Vallecito, home to the shrine of the Difunta Correa, one of Argentina's most venerated folk saints. Arrival and free time for lunch (not included). We will then do the traditional **daytime circuit**, which covers 40 km over three hours, with five scheduled stops, or stations, along the way. Each one holds a landscape as distinctive as it is captivating, shaped by nature over thousands of years. After the visit, we will continue to the town of **San Agustín del Valle Fértil**. Accommodation at **Hostería Valle Fértil 3*** or similar. **Dinner. Overnight in San Agustín del Valle Fértil.**

DAY 10: SAN AGUSTIN DEL VALLE FERTIL / TALAMPAYA / SAN JUAN 500 km

Breakfast. Departure for **Talampaya National Park**, which, together with Ischigualasto, forms the world's most complete set of continental fossils from this period. Here, Triassic sediments, accumulated over millions of years deep within the planet, were exposed during the formation of the Andes. That is why touring the Cañón de Talampaya is a journey through time: discovering geological formations more than 250 million years old, walking on ground once trodden by dinosaurs, and delving into the culture of age-old peoples. During our visit, we will do the **traditional two-and-a-half-hour circuit**. Along the way, strategic stops are made to walk and observe emblematic natural formations such as the Petroglyphs (ancient rock art), the Botanical Garden, the Gothic Cathedral, and El Monje (the Monk). We will have free time for lunch (not included) before returning to the city of San Juan via the Cuesta de Huaco mountain pass. Arrival in the evening and accommodation at **Del Bono Park Hotel 5*** or similar. **Overnight in San Juan.**

DAY 11: SAN JUAN

Breakfast. Free time until the transfer to Domingo Faustino Sarmiento Airport for the return flight. **End of services.**