



Aconcagua – Polish Glacier Traverse Route

Climbing Aconcagua is a serious mountain challenge. It requires excellent physical conditioning, grit, determination, and an ability to stay positive in the harshest of conditions. If you are up for the challenge of a real mountain expedition this will be the trip for you.

All participants must be aware that they are taking part in a serious expedition to high and extreme altitude. Mountains and mountaineering carry an inherent risk of injury or death, which cannot be eliminated. We will provide information in our dossier about physical preparation before the trip and how to cope with the altitude while on the mountain. The expedition leader has absolute authority regarding the welfare of the group and if he or she decides to send somebody down, either for their own or for the group's safety, his or her instructions must be followed. However, given proper preparation and fair-weather conditions, there is no reason why fit and healthy climbers will not be able to reach the summit, but this is not a guarantee!

Mount Aconcagua (6,962m/ 22,811 feet) is the highest mountain in the western hemisphere and the highest mountain outside the Himalaya, and the second highest summit in the circuit of the seven summits. Its difficulty lies in its high altitude and the low temperatures.

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTY

This route does not require any technical mountaineering ability. You do not require any previous climbing experience on rock or ice, however you will normally have to use crampons on the summit night, as part of this expedition. It does require previous high-altitude experience. Having been at 6,000m/ 20,000 feet is ideal. The summit night/day has steep, rocky terrain up and down, and will require excellent physical strength and conditioning.

PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY

Like in the Normal or Northeast route, the process of acclimatization is extremely important to succeed in reaching the summit. As this is a very important factor in any of our expeditions, the only previous requirement would be to follow a training program that is adapted to the activity that you are going to do. We highly recommend doing a VO2 MAX test so you can understand your lactic threshold. This testing can help you build a training plan, so you are training in the correct heart rate zones, and building slowly towards to desired level of fitness and conditioning. Specific training carrying weight is critical for a safe ascent and descent of Aconcagua. You can also incorporate yoga, flexibility, core stability and strength training to your routine. Strength and endurance training will be the core of your training and preparation. You will need to be building up to 10+ hours of training per week.



OTHER TYPES OF DIFFICULTIES

The biggest problem you may have to face on your expedition is the altitude effects on your body. This can be overcome somewhat by coming with excellent strength and endurance training prior to the climb. Having previous altitude experience is a must for an expedition like Aconcagua.

Another difficulty is the low temperatures on the mountain; such effects are reduced with high-quality clothing and equipment; however, you must be prepared to be exposed to very harsh conditions. Temperatures can drop as low as -30c (-22f) high on the mountain.

Changing from your modern lifestyle for an adventure requires imagination and energy. Being mentally prepared to accept the difficulties and inconveniences will be the key to your success and that of the entire team.

ITINERARY

- Day 1: Arrive Mendoza**
- Day 2: Penitentes**
- Day 3: Pampa De Lenas**
- Day 4: Casa De Piedra**
- Day 5: Plaza Argentina Base Camp**
- Day 6: Plaza Argentina Base Camp (Acclimatization Day)**
- Day 7: Camp 1 – Plaza Argentina Base Camp (Load Carry)**
- Day 8: Plaza Argentina Base Camp (Acclimatization Day)**
- Day 9: Camp 1**
- Day 10: Camp 2 – Camp 1 (Load Carry)**
- Day 11: Camp 2**
- Day 12: Camp 2 (Acclimatization Day)**
- Day 13: Camp 3 (Colera Camp) – Camp 2 (Load Carry)**
- Day 14: Camp 3 Colera Camp**
- Day 15: Summit Day – Camp 3**
- Day 16: Plaza De Mulas**
- Day 17: Horcones – Mendoza**
- Day 18: Mendoza**
- Day 19: Spare Summit Day**
- Day 20: Spare Summit Day**
- Day 21: Return Flight Home**

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1: ARRIVE IN MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

You will be picked up from the airport and transferred to our hotel. You will enjoy the comforts of a great hotel in Mendoza city. On this day we will check all your mountain equipment and accompany you



to hire any necessary items for the climb. One of our staff will arrive during the gear check and collect your permit money, which you must have in cash (USD ONLY). You will pay USD \$730 for your permit (this fee can change with very short notice from the government). You will also have to show your Global Rescue (or similar) card for Helicopter evacuation cover with Insurance details for the permit at this time. (Meals are not included on this day).

DAY 2: MENDOZA / PENITENTES (2,725m/ 8,940 feet)

Before going to Penitentes we will wait for our permits to arrive at the hotel. This can take some time, but we aim to leave for the mountains at 10am. The drive to our lunch spot is about 1 hour and 30 minutes in our private vehicles. You will have lunch near Uspallata and continue for another hour to spend the night in Penitentes. In the afternoon, your duffel bag will be prepared for the mules and will be loaded and prepared for the following day. You will need to keep all trekking gear and toiletries with you as you will not see your duffel bag until the following day in Pampa De Lenas Camp. There is the option to do a short hike near the hotel for additional acclimatization. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner included)

DAY 3: PENITENTES / PAMPA DE LEÑAS (2,800/ 9,186 feet)

The group will be taken to the entrance of the Park in a private van and will start the trek to Pampa de Leñas Camp. Your duffel bag will be carried by mules to our campsite. At arrival, you will set up your own tent and you will be able to rest. The guides will be able to assist you if required. The trek is about 6 hours and 7.9 miles/ 12.7km (B, Packed Lunch, D included).

DAY 4: PAMPA DE LEÑAS / CASA DE PIEDRA (3,250m/ 10,662 feet)

After breakfast and taking down the tents, you will walk to Casa de Piedra. We cross a small bridge not too far from camp and follow the river all the way to camp. The terrain is gradual today and we will have our first view of Aconcagua from this side of the mountain. Like in the previous day, you will set up your tent and then rest while waiting for dinner to be ready. The trek is 6-7 hours and 9.4 miles/ 15.1km (B, PL, D included)

DAY 5: CASA DE PIEDRA / PLAZA ARGENTINA BASE CAMP (4,200m/ 13,780 feet)

The trek to Plaza Argentina Base Camp is a long trekking day. Our first obstacle is to cross a freezing cold river, where you will need your crocks or river crossing shoes pretty much straight away. You will carry your trekking boots and socks in your backpack and once you have warmed up your feet, we will keep moving towards Aconcagua Base Camp. We will have lunch on the way. Once at Plaza Argentina, you will stay in our own campsite, with the necessary comforts, making it as nice as possible in this environment. The trek takes about 7 hours and is 6.8 miles/ 10.9 km. (B, PL, D included)



DAY 6: PLAZA ARGENTINA BASE CAMP (4,200m/ 13,780 feet)

You will be able to rest during the whole day or just go sightseeing around the area and contemplate the beauty of the mountain. It is important to keep well hydrated and relax at this low oxygen environment. (B, L, D included)

DAY 7: PLAZA ARGENTINA / CAMP 1 (4,950m/ 16,240 feet) / PLAZA ARGENTINA

We will move to Camp 1 with part of our expedition equipment and group food that you will need in the higher camps (**each member of the group will carry -without exception- food and equipment load for the expedition**). Once at Camp 1, you will enjoy your packed-lunch and then return to Plaza Argentina. This hike will move equipment up the mountain as well as aid in the acclimatization process. When we arrive back in Base Camp, we usually have a break, get rehydrated before going over to the Base Camp Doctor, to do a health check. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 8: PLAZA ARGENTINA BASE CAMP (4,200m/ 13,780 feet)

Today we will rest in Base Camp and acclimatize further. You will have time to make sure that your equipment is ready for the next load carry and then spend the rest of the day relaxing and re-hydrating so that you will be ready for the next days, which will be more demanding. You will need to make sure that your duffel bag is packed up with all items you will no longer need on the mountain as tomorrow it will be taken by mules to Base Camp at Plaza de Mulas. You will not see this gear until after your summit attempt. (B, L, D included)

DAY 9: PLAZA ARGENTINA / CAMP 1 (4,950m/ 16,240 feet)

After approximately 4 hours of trekking, you will reach Camp 1. On this day, each client will be responsible for carrying personal equipment and the surplus of expedition equipment and food (if there is any). Sleeping tents will be carried by our porter staff. On the way, the group will have lunch and once you arrive, you will set up the tents with the guides help. You will start to feel the altitude effects on your body. Rest and hydration will be critical. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 10: CAMP 1 / CAMP 2: UPPER GUANACOS (5,500m/ 18,044 feet) / CAMP 1

Today we will move higher, moving part of the expedition equipment and food that you will need in Camp 2 and Cólera (**each member of the group will carry -without exception- food and equipment load for the expedition**). Once at camp 2, you will enjoy your lunch and then return to Camp 1 to sleep. This trek will continue helping with your acclimatization process as well as bringing gear further up the mountain. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 11: CAMP 1 / CAMP 2: UPPER GUANACOS

The group will climb up to 5,500m/ 18,044 feet, to install our Camp 2. On this day, each client will be responsible for carrying personal equipment and the surplus of expedition equipment and food (if there



is any). Sleeping tents will be carried by our porter staff. Once you have pitched your tent, you will then have time to rest and recover for the following day. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 12: CAMP 2 (5,500m/ 18,044 feet)

We will rest all day in Camp 2 to recover your strength, refuel and rehydrate. This is a very important part of the acclimatization process before moving higher on the mountain. (B, L, D included)

DAY 13: CAMP 2 / CAMP 3 CÓLERA (6,000m/ 19,685 feet) / CAMP 2

Today we will move part of the expedition equipment and food that you will need in Cólera (**each member of the group will carry -without exception- food and equipment load for the expedition**). Once at Cólera Camp, you will enjoy your lunch. Then, you will return to Camp 2. This trek will greatly help with your acclimatization process. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 14: CAMP 2 / CAMP 3 CÓLERA (6,000m/ 19,685 feet)

Everybody will get up very early in the morning, have breakfast, and you will start ascending towards the Normal Route. On this day, each client will be responsible for carrying personal equipment and the surplus of expedition equipment and food (if there is any). Sleeping tents will be carried by our porter staff. At Cólera Camp the campsite will be settled, strategically located for its altitude, and protected from strong winds. The guide will check each member of the group and give a final update and strategy for the summit day to assure the greatest safety and success possible for the summit. Dinner will be served, and the rest of the evening will be spent resting and getting as much sleep as possible. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 15: CAMP 3 "CÓLERA" / SUMMIT (6,962m/ 22,841 feet) / CAMP 3 "CÓLERA"

This is it! We will climb to the summit and return to Cólera Camp 3. The team will get up very early in the morning, have breakfast and start climbing. This is a long and slow ascent to the summit, and we will take short breaks after each hour of hiking. We will have a longer break once we reach the Cave, before the long and steep ascent through the Canaleta, to the summit. Once you reach the summit of South America's highest point, you will live an unforgettable experience in reaching this amazing goal. After enjoying the top for a short time, we will return as a team to Cólera Camp. You will sleep that night with the satisfaction of having reached your goal. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 16: CAMP 3 / PLAZA DE MULAS (4,390m/ 14,402 feet)

We will rise early and make the long trek down the other side of the mountain, on the Normal Route. We will reach the Plaza de Mulás Base Camp in the early afternoon. On this day, each client will be responsible for carrying personal equipment and the expedition equipment assigned to them. Sleeping tents and waste produced by the expedition group, will be carried by our porter staff. Once in Plaza de Mulás, the group will be served a late lunch and have the afternoon to share pictures, shower and



celebrate the expedition. Wi-Fi is available for a fee. This is approximately a 3-hour hike downhill, where you will be carrying all your personal gear. (B, PL, D included)

DAY 17: PLAZA DE MULAS / HORCONES / MENDOZA

Descent to Horcones. This is the last trekking day in the expedition. Your belongings will be carried by mules so you will only take a light bag pack with rain gear, jacket, water, and your packed lunch. This is a 15.5 mile/ 25km hike to the car park, where you will be picked up and transferred to Mendoza city in a private vehicle. Overnight in the hotel. (B, PL included)

DAY 18: MENDOZA

You will have breakfast at the hotel. We will Transfer you from the hotel to the airport for your international flight home. (B included)

DAY 19/20: SPARE SUMMIT DAYS

If the itinerary goes to plan, then you will be back in Mendoza on day 17 and could leave on day 18. However, it is rare that we can stick to the itinerary, due to weather restrictions. Therefore, we require you to book your return flights for day 21 or later. These days are possibly essential for additional summit attempts. If these days are not needed on the mountain, the team can either stay in Base Camp for the extra days, or you can return to Mendoza as planned and you will be responsible for the additional nights' accommodation/expenses.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The above itinerary is intended as a guideline only, although every effort will be made to adhere to it, changes may be caused due to weather conditions, transport failure or other unforeseen events. Please come with a relaxed attitude and be flexible as with all expeditions, things do not always go as planned.

Polish Glacier Traverse Route - Included Services

- Transport from the airport to the hotel, and back is included in the program
- Hotel in Mendoza City 4****, 2 nights on a shared room basis (1 night either side of the trip)
- Assistance obtaining your climbing Permit
- Transport from Mendoza to the start of the trail
- Breakfast, lunch / Packed lunch on the move / Dinner in each camp
- Professional cook in Base Camp
- Professional mountain guides
- Guides will prepare meals in higher camps
- One Shower in Plaza de Argentina Base Camp and one shower in Plaza de Mulass
- Lodging in Penitentes 2/4 people sharing per room
- Transportation of gear by mules to Base Camp 20kg/44lbs



- Transportation of gear by mules after the summit attempt

Polish Glacier Traverse Route - NOT Included

- Climbing Permit for Aconcagua National Park **USD \$730 CASH PER PERSON**
- Drinks and personal costs not mentioned in the itinerary
- Expenses for leaving the Expedition early; mules, accommodation, guide, transfer to Mendoza etc...
- Personal equipment, gear, clothing, and mountaineering equipment for the expedition
- Personal Insurance, helicopter evacuation, medical insurance (Compulsory for Aconcagua permit)
- Additional porters for carrying personal gear and equipment (Additional cost)
- Tips (approximately USD \$350 per person)
- Additional nights in hotels if we arrive back early from expedition
- Wi-Fi or additional showers in Base Camp (additional cost paid in Base Camp)

CAMP IN PAMPA DE LEÑAS AND CASA DE PIEDRA

While you are gaining height, your body needs some time to start with the acclimatization process. Therefore, it is extremely important to stop for a night in Pampa de Leñas and the following day continue with the trek to Casa de Piedra. In every stop you will meet the Arrieros (mule herders), who will give you your gear to spend the night in camp. With some assistance from the guides, you will be responsible to set up your own tent, and the guides will prepare the dinner and breakfast.

PLAZA ARGENTINA BASE CAMP

Once you have arrived at Plaza Argentina, you will spend some nights in our own campsite, fully prepared to make the trip around the magnificent South American Mountain, as comfortable as possible. With tents for eating, another for the kitchen, a third tent for equipment storage, and toilets. Here you will spend 4 nights. Excellent workers will attend to you, who will prepare delicious meals and provide an excellent service.

PLAZA DE MULAS BASE CAMP

When you return from Camp 3, you will spend a night at Plaza de Mulas Base Camp, fully prepared and like our Plaza Argentina Base Camp on the other side of the mountain. You will also find here tents for eating, another for the kitchen, a third tent for equipment storage, and toilets, and you will be attended to by excellent workers.



PORTERS FOR THE HIGH CAMPS

In our program our porters carry the sleeping tents from the Base Camp to all the High Camps and on the way down to Plaza de Mulas. They will also transport the garbage and toilet waste produced by the group in all the high camps as NO waste can be left on the mountain.

Each member of the group must transport the expedition equipment (such as stoves, fuel and pots) and altitude food mentioned in the day by day itinerary, summarized below.

DAYS WHEN YOU MUST CARRY ADDITIONAL WEIGHT – This will vary depending on your personal gear. Obviously, the lighter weight your gear is, the better. Likewise, the amount of extra items you decide to carry up will effect how much weight you have for each load carry. Sometimes it is best to carry less on the first load carry to a new elevation and have a heavier one on the second carry, but this will be decided at the time. Ian is happy to talk through this further on a call before the trip so that it is clear.

Day 7: Plaza Argentina / Camp 1 / Plaza Argentina. You will carry expedition equipment, food and some personal equipment and water – Total is approximately 17kg/ 37lbs of gear.

Day 9: Plaza Argentina / Camp 1. You will carry the remainder of your personal equipment - Approximately 12kg/ 26lbs of personal gear, plus water and + 1 or 2kg/4.4lbs of expedition gear – Total is approximately 16kg/ 35lbs of gear depending.

Day 10: Camp 1 / Camp 2 / Camp 1. You will carry expedition equipment & food for the higher camps and some personal gear to be stashed at Camp 2 and water – Approximately a total of 17kg/37lbs of gear.

Day 11: Camp 1 / Camp 2. You will carry personal equipment – Approximately 10 kg personal gear plus 1 or 2 kg expedition gear and water – Approximately 14kg/ 31lbs.

Day 13: Camp 2 / Cólera Camp / Camp 2. You will carry some expedition equipment, food & personal gear for the higher camp and water – Approximately 12kg/ 26lbs in total.

Day 14: Camp 2 / Cólera Camp. You will only carry your remaining personal equipment and water – Approximately 15kg/ 33lbs.

Day 16: Cólera / Plaza de Mulas. After the summit climb, you will have to carry all of your personal gear and water – Approximately 17kg/ 37lbs.



IMPORTANT NOTE: If you want a porter to carry all the loads up and down the mountain as outlined above, we do have that option for an additional cost. We have two options; one is for a porter to carry up to 10kg/22lbs, and another option for a full carry up to 20kg/ 44lbs. If you want to avail of these options, get in touch to find out updated costs. Porterage would need to be booked well in advance. If you want to further discuss this, please get in touch with Ian at ian@iantaylortrekking.com.

OUR GUIDES

Our mountain guides are qualified professionals of the AAGM (Argentinean Association of Mountain Guides) and the EPGAMT (School of High Mountain and Trekking Guides). The last qualification is the result of 3 years of studying.

We believe that to succeed in our expeditions, professionals with experience and the ability to offer security should guide our teams. Their equipment includes: VHF radio, a first aid kit, complete with the appropriate drugs for altitude sickness, ropes, an altimeter, and professional clothing and equipment. All this will provide security and comfort. All our guides speak English.

EXTRA DAYS

Our expeditions include two extra days in case of any contingencies that may prevent the normal development of the itinerary. We have developed this itinerary with years of experience. However, sometimes conditions are out of our control, and our guides reserve the right to modify the schedule in response to the circumstances and safety of the group. If this situation arises, the client will not receive any sort of severance payment.

More Information

If you decide to join one of our Aconcagua Expeditions, we will send out our 40-page Dossier on the trip. This will give you all relevant information on the trip, including the complete kit list. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to get in touch with Ian directly at ian@iantaylortrekking.com.