

Buenos Aires (Escorted & Package Tours)

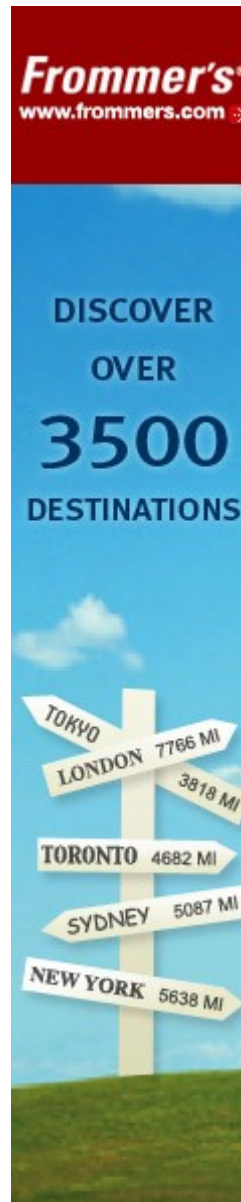
These days, so many people plan their trips via websites and e-mail that it's easy to forget that a computer can never replace the knowledge a good travel agent can have of a region and its offerings. Maybe you want to be in a special hotel for a romantic night or a honeymoon. Buenos Aires's tango history is a major component of its draw, but how do you know the difference from one show to the other or what *milonga* (tango salon) would be the best for a beginner? You might also have time for a few side trips, but is Iguazú Falls better, or should you try a beach destination? And what about the kids? What hotels will make them happiest, and how do you keep them interested while you enjoy the shopping and nightlife?

I answer most of these questions with special tips throughout this book, but nothing can replace the human touch. If you have a special agent you have used for years, ask him or her for advice, or try some of the following specialists who are based in the U.S. and Argentina. See also the sections for gay and lesbian travelers, women travelers, travelers with disabilities, and senior travelers for even more specially tailored vacation needs when visiting Buenos Aires.

Recommended U.S. - Based Operators -- The following U.S.-based tour companies offer solid, well-organized tours in various price categories, and they are backed by years of experience. All can arrange tours of Buenos Aires, the surroundings, and other parts of Argentina and South America. The charity group Airline Ambassadors is listed here because of its unusual approach to travel, but it only recently included Buenos Aires in its program itinerary.

- **Borello Travel & Tours**, 7 Park Ave., Suite 21, New York, NY 10016 (tel. **800/405-3072** or 212/686-4911; www.borellotravel.com; info@borellotravel.com), is a New York-based travel firm specializing in upscale travel to South America. The owner, Sandra Borello, has run her company for nearly 20 years and is a native of Buenos Aires. Prices can vary, depending on the season, options, and hotel, but a 1-week package to Buenos Aires can cost about US\$1,500 (£795) per person. Offering excellent, tailored client service, they also maintain an additional office in Buenos Aires that can be reached at tel. 11/5031-1988.

- **Travel Dynamics International**, 132 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021 (tel. **800/257-5767**; 212/517-0076; www.TravelDynamicsInternational.com), is a luxury cruise operator that specializes in educational enrichment programs aboard small cruise ships. TDI voyages include expert guided land tours and on-board lectures by distinguished scholars and guests. They cater to the traveler with an intellectual interest in history, culture, and nature. Operating for almost 40 years, this company offers voyages with destinations in South America and Antarctica. Their journeys to Antarctica usually begin with an overnight stay in Buenos Aires and begin at US\$7,995 (£4,240) for a 14-day program (prices may



vary).

- **Limitless Argentina**, 135 Willow St., #907, Brooklyn, NY 11201 (tel. **202/536-5812**; www.limitlessargentina.com; info@limitlessargentina.com), is a boutique travel company dedicated to designing authentic, personalized journeys for the discerning traveler. Founder Vanessa Guibert Heitner returned home to Buenos Aires after attending college and earning her Ph.D. in the United States to lead the company's Argentine operations. Itineraries often include fine arts, regional culture and history, food and wine, the great outdoors, and shopping. Her work with families, honeymooners, individual travelers, and small groups has earned her the distinction of top travel specialist for Argentina 2006 from Condé Nast's *Traveler* magazine. A 10-day personalized luxury adventure ranges from US\$4,000 to US\$8,000 (£2,120-£4,240) a person.

- **Airline Ambassadors International**, 1625 W. Crosby Rd., Suite 132, Carrollton, TX 75006 (tel. **972/323-2772**; www.airlineambassadors.com), is a nonprofit, Texas-based alliance of airline industry personnel who engage in periodic charitable missions throughout the world. Travelers stay in conventional hotels and see everyday tourist sites but also use some of their time to help the disadvantaged in their destination. The group, which started in 1996, has recently begun operations in Argentina. Participants help out in soup kitchens and in a home for the severely retarded in the Buenos Aires suburbs. This is an ideal learning experience for children to see how disadvantaged children live while engaging with them in a safe and constructive way.

Recommended Buenos Aires-Based Operators -- Even if you have arranged things at home, once you're in Buenos Aires, there are always last-minute changes or new things you would like to see. The following companies are all excellent and have English-speaking staff members. All can also provide trips to other cities in Argentina outside of Buenos Aires, as well as South America.

- **Say Hueque Tourism**, Viamonte 749, Office 601, 1053 Buenos Aires (tel. **11/5199-2517**, -2518, -2519, and -2520; www.sayhueque.com), is a highly recommended small company with knowledgeable, friendly service and attention to personalized client care. The company began by catering to the young and adventurous on a budget, but has begun to deal with a more upscale, yet independent thinking clientele. Various tour themes include Literary Buenos Aires, Biking Buenos Aires, and Tango Buenos Aires, among many others. They also offer adventure tours within the vicinity of Buenos Aires such as to the Tigre Delta. Outside of Buenos Aires, they specialize in Patagonia and Iguazú, finding special, out-of-the-way places for their clients. Based on their very personal service, this is among my favorites of the operators within Buenos Aires.

- **Euro Tur**, Viamonte 486, 1053 Buenos Aires (tel. **11/4312-6077**; www.eurotur.com), is one of the largest and oldest travel companies in Argentina, specializing in inbound travel, but they can also help walk-ins to accommodate travelers' needs directly while in Buenos Aires. They can arrange basic city tours to trips of all kinds throughout Argentina and South America.

- **Les Amis**, Maipú 1270, 1005 Buenos Aires (tel. **11/4314-0500**; www.lesamis.com.ar), is another large Argentine tour company, with offices throughout Buenos Aires and Argentina. They can arrange trips while you are in town for Buenos Aires, Argentina, and many other parts of South America.

- **Dine At Home-Home Hosted Dinners Tours**, Avenida Las Heras, 4A, 1127 Buenos

Aires (tel. **11/4801-3182**, 11/4803-4960, or 15-6051-9328; edygoedhart@yahoo.com.ar). Edward Goedhart is the owner of this interesting company offering tours based on dinners at home with Buenos Aires residents. The meals can be accommodated for diabetics, vegetarians, Kosher, to seniors, fashionistas, gay groups, and many others. Tours must be booked through your own agent, but call Edward for more information or visit the site. He also offers other kinds of services through his company, as well as trips to Córdoba in the west of Argentina.

• **Liz Caskey Culinary and Wine Tours**, tel. **56-2/632-2015**; www.lizcaskey.com; info@lizcaskey.com). This company is actually based in Santiago in neighboring Chile, but is well known for its gastronomic tours within both countries. Using Buenos Aires's gastronomic culture as a guide, they take you through the food and wine scene in the city's picturesque neighborhoods. Founded by American expat Liz Caskey, a chef and sommelier, they offer half- and full-day culinary tours in Buenos Aires in addition to wine tours in the Mendoza wine region.

Private Tour Guides -- It's easy to hire guides through your hotel or any travel agency in Buenos Aires. You may also want to contact **AGUITBA (Asociación de Guías de Turismo de Buenos Aires)**, Carlos Pellegrini 833, sixth floor C, Buenos Aires (tel. **11/4322-2557**; aguitba@sion.com), a professional society of tour guides that has tried to promote licensing and other credentials legislation to ensure the quality of guides. Its offices are open Monday to Friday from 1 to 6pm.

Private guides I recommend include Buenos Aires-based **Marta Pasquali** (tel. **15-4421-2486**; marpas@uolsinectis.com.ar) and **Monica Varela** (tel. **15-4407-0268**; monyliv@hotmail.com). Both have conducted tours for several years in Buenos Aires. They offer high-quality specialized tours and often work with corporations. I highly recommend them for their specialized knowledge of the city, which goes far beyond what many other tour guides know.

Another excellent tour guide to consider is **Francisco Martoccia**, who gives private, personalized tours, one-on-one or with small groups. He knows the city well and has been doing tours on various themes for many years (tel. **011/4803-0950**; franmarto@hotmail.com).

Source: [Frommer's Buenos Aires, 2nd Edition](#)
