

The Reality of Moving and Living in Argentina

Why move to Argentina?

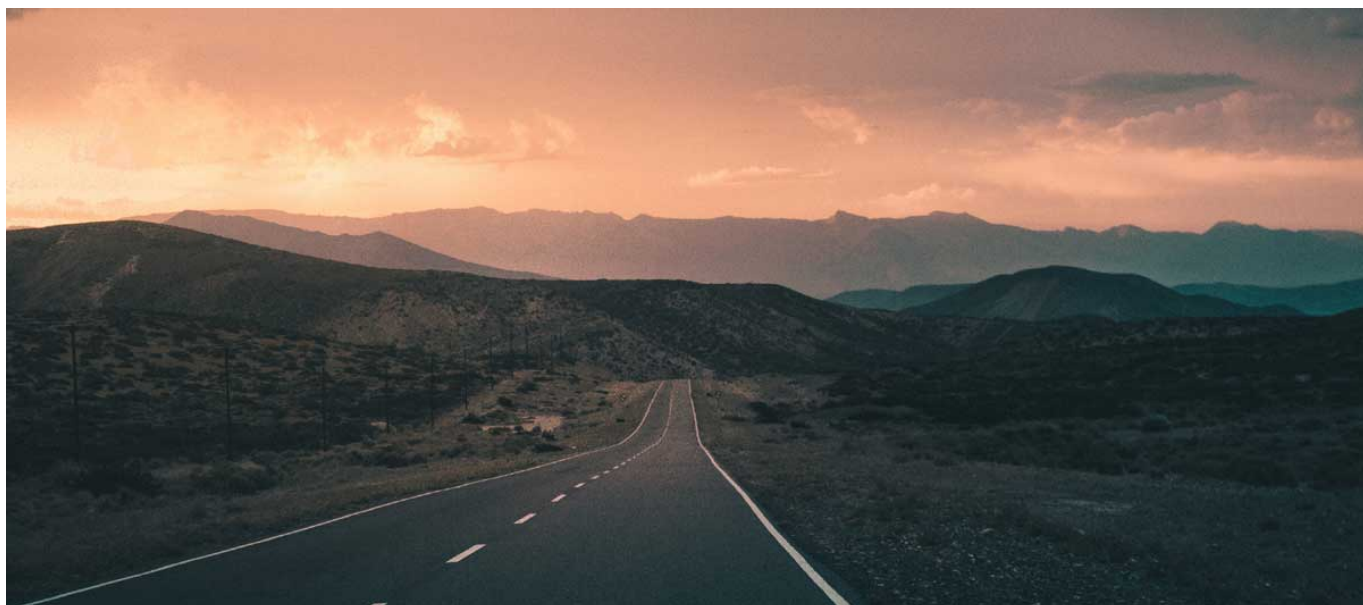
Why would you want to move to and live in Argentina? Was the response I got, when I told friends I was moving to Argentina, together with a raised eyebrow and quizzical expression.

Ironically, I was moving because people kept asking me “Why don’t you move to Argentina? You’d love it.”

At the time I was living in Amsterdam, restless and tired. Tired of the endless rain, excessive tourism and cramped spaces. I wanted to live in a city with flavour. Who doesn’t want a life with flavour?

What can I say, Argentina has flavour. Every body at the time in the Netherlands was talking about it. Two friends own a house there. The future king of the Netherlands just married an Argentine, other four friends had just come back from their trip to this magical wonderland.

All these conversations inspired me [to buy a book on Argentina](#), and I was hooked and enchanted within the first few pages.



Most Magical Place in the world

What is not to like about the idea of spending time in the 'Paris' of Latin America. A nation of polo playing horse fanatics and real-life gauchos (local cowboys).

A country where soccer is the religion and BBQ is the national cuisine. A country whose history is weaved so densely and dramatically you could carve it with a knife.

The country has the wild expansive plains of La Pampa, the mountains and lakes of Patagonia, the deserts up in Santa Fe [and Salta](#). As well as the uber magical city of Buenos Aires. If it could bring tears to the eyes of Evita and millions that hear the song, it may be worth checking out.

Within weeks a trip and dry run, was booked. Could, would or should I live there.



Is Argentina worth moving to?

Doing a dry run, whenever you are planning a move abroad is recommended.

When you spend time in a country for a trial run it's definitely not a holiday. It's a working vacation.

You'll spend your time researching the best areas to live. The quality of life versus the costs of living (rent/groceries), salaries, safety and the political climate.

It's a great opportunity to make time to meet with locals as well as expats living there so you get real stories of the everyday challenges from both sides.

Of course, also enjoy what the country offers from polo games, top restaurants and hotel pool, deciding where to live also means checking out the perks.



Researching the Move to Argentina

Luckily, researching Buenos Aires was easy; it is an exceptionally large city, so sources of information are also available in English, such as [BA times](#) a local online newspaper.

There are also plenty of opportunities to meet locals and expats at places like [Gibraltar the English pub](#) in San Telmo, at embassies, [expat](#) or [internations](#) events.

Argentina has its own active online [expat forum baexpat.com](#) where you can delve deeper into the types of challenges you may encounter. Along with relevant solutions, or meet like-minded individuals.

***TIP:** keep a healthy perspective on forums, ignore the trolls. Take it with a healthy sense of detachment, and it'll become a helpful resource.*

Originally, I planned an 8-week dry run, which I extended 4 times. And ended up there for an incredible 6 months.

While there, I really wanted to get an idea of what it would

be like to work in a city with 3 million inhabitants. So, I spent some of my time volunteering at [BABS](#) (British Aged Care in Buenos Aires).

It was here I had the opportunity to meet people who'd lived in Argentina for over 80 years. And trust me when I say, there is nothing like listening to first-hand stories of a countries history.

On my second day in Buenos Aires, I stumbled upon and fell in love with Puerto Madero. A small island, next to the city and is secured by the naval police. The suburb is a refuge from the hustle and bustle, it is quiet, spacious and safe.



It was also here that English built the warehouses on the harbour in the early 1900's, while they were building the railroads. These recently renovated warehouses add a timeless charm and are home to some of the cities best restaurants, shops and cafes.

San Telmo markets are still within walking distance, and the rest of the city is also just a hop, skip and a jump away.

Final conclusion, after 6 months dry run?

Honestly, when I first arrived in Buenos Aires, I was shocked at the populous state of what seemed a dirty city. However, it won me over hour by hour, day by day. By my 3rd week, I was looking into potential job opportunities and any which way that I could stay long-term.

I stayed until my savings ran dry, and I had no options but to go home.

After 6 months, I left Argentina, heartbroken, devastated and determined to return.



Can you, easily move to Argentina?

How you migrate to a country depends largely on the country. In Argentina, you have a few options to choose from:

1. Get company/ employer to sponsor you

2. Set up a company
3. Marry and Argentine

My plan was to go with the first option. So, I meet with anyone I could via contacts, friends, LinkedIn, peers in my industry.

Including the Ambassador, at my countries embassy, and went to lunches that were put on by the local Dutch and English Chamber of Commerce.

Many countries will have an embassy or a local chamber of commerce who assist with cross-border trade advice and networking.

With a fully booked agenda, there was only one objective and that was to find work. While I didn't get a job, I did meet great people and got a wealth of advice and insight on the business landscape.

Legally moving to Argentina



Being that my best option would be to find a company to sponsor me, the reality is that this is easier said than done. Despite my meetings, lunches and endless cups of coffee, I didn't manage to find a sponsor in Argentina.

Language can be a real challenge when attempting to move to a country. If you are not fluent; it'll be hard to put you to work or compete with local job seekers.

Like many other countries, for a company to sponsor a foreigner can be a costly process. One that includes fees, lawyers and paperwork. Companies will hire you if you have specific expertise.

Or you can also try to get a job for an international company in your own country and apply to be relocated abroad.

Good Luck comes in Many Forms

Flying back to the Netherlands with a tissue in one hand and hope in the other. Expecting that it would be a near impossible task to find a company in the Netherlands to sponsor me to work in Argentina.

As luck would have it, a company that I knew just happened to be opening shop in Argentina. And within weeks, I had a job and was planning my move, as well as that of the company.

Friends I'd met, helped advise me on an appropriate salary, as the company would be giving me a local contract instead of an international one.

In a country like Argentina, excessive inflation rates need to be taken into account. Eventually, with the contract signed, everything else was put in motion. The real business of moving could begin.



Finally, Moving to Argentina

It was my 8th international move, so as ever practice makes perfect. My flat in Amsterdam was easily rented out via [expatica.com](https://www.expatica.com).

The bureaucracy in Argentina like most Latin countries is phenomenal; the amount of paperwork and documentation required was second to none.

I am eternally grateful that the company's local lawyers assisted me with my working visa and the importation of my goods. This is one move that I would not have wanted to do on my own.

As with anywhere, signing up for the utilities was not fun at all. This was when a good friend gave me advice that served me throughout my time in Argentina and beyond:

'When dealing with an issue: don't start a fight or get angry. NEVER back down or accept no for an answer'.



Great strategy to put into practice everytime I was told no. Whether it was for a bank account or electricity connection. I just planted myself down, and let them know I'd be there until we resolved it.

It is incredible how many miracles happen when you have all parties working on a solution.

After the move and a chaotic dance of organizational mayhem. The paperwork was done and I had a new office, a new apartment and a new life. I could finally start living the 'vida loca'.

Living the Dream in Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires isn't a walk in the park, although there are some great parks to walk in. The government is both crazy and corrupt, inflation is off the scale and life can feel like a bit of a roller coaster. Depending on the day, time and place.

The city is busy, polluted and in the last few years, the economic challenges have resulted in an ever-increasing crime rate. You need to live with both feet on the ground and be aware of how you walk and travel in town.

Despite all of this, it is one of the most incredible cities

to live in. Whatever you feel like doing, you can. Whether it's tango at 2 am or front row seats at the [Polo in November](#), or catching the boat to Colonia for the day.

There is a suburb for every mood, be it shopping in Palermo, dinner in China town, after work cocktails in Recoleta. Bike riding around Puerto Madero or a visit the famous Sunday markets in San Telmo.



In the words of the worlds greatest writer who is Argentine:

[The Reality of Moving and Living in Argentina Click To Tweet](#)

It was all of this that made me love every minute of my crazy, wild, temperate and magical time there.

Yes, dreams can also end between a crazy government and the need for change, so I did eventually leave Argentina. Yet in retrospect, I wouldn't change a thing.

Just like the song, 'Don't cry for me Argentina', the truth is I never really left. The magic of the country lives on in my heart and lovingly etched in my memory.

Resources :

[BA Expats](#)

Online English paper [BA times](#)

Volunteer opportunities via [GoAbroad](#) or local [South American website](#)

[List of foreign Embassies in Argentina](#)

[Walrus books](#) English Bookshop

English Pub: [Gibraltar](#)

Meet locals and practice your Spanish via [Conversation Exchange](#) or [Toastmasters](#)

Further reading, see why November is the ideal time to visit and what to do while [there check out this post.](#)

My top reading list for before, during or instead of [your visit here.](#)



A few photos are my own, the others are shared with much gratitude to these other wonderful photographers:

[Eduardo Sánchez](#) on [Unsplash](#)

[Sasha • Stories](#) on [Unsplash](#)

[Nacho Rochon](#) on [Unsplash](#)

10 Reasons to visit Argentina in November

Argentina is an incredible place to visit, yet there are some times of the year that are better than others.

Here is the rundown on what to do, where to go and why 'November' is the best month to plan your visit to Argentina.

1. Whales watching, Peninsula Valdes

The whales come into the Peninsula Valdes with their newly born calves on their journey to the Antarctic. It is here they stay here for a time in safer, nutrient-rich waters while the calves grow, before moving further south in December.



To go and see them this closely is a once in a lifetime opportunity that can't be missed. I went out with a local company called '[Botazzi](#)'. We were very respectful of the whales by not going too close to the whales, as we didn't want to infringe on their space. However, they did come up to us, to hang out near the boat.

We were surrounded by 7 whales with their calves. The mothers were diving for food, while their young stayed near the surface.

These elegant masters of the sea were continually singing to their young and communicating with each other. Surrounding us with a mystical orchestra of whale sounds. There wasn't a person on the boat who wasn't touched by the experience.

Orca Whales:

There is also the opportunity at this time of the year to go and watch the Orca whales, which I didn't take. The Orca's come up at this time of the year to feed on the sea lions and penguins that come into the area. For them, it's a seasonal buffet of wildlife, and they come all the way up into the shallow water to snap up their next meal. However, be sure you have a strong stomach (unlike me) as it is nature at its rawest and most brutal.

If you are staying in the area for a night, I recommend you stay at [La Casona Del Rio](#) – a family B&B. You'll feel at so at home you may never want to leave.

2. Gaucho Festival, San Antonio de Aerco

The Festival de Tradition (Gaucho Festival) is a modest local affair, it was surprising how few locals in Buenos Aires are aware of it or come to see it. It's normally on around the 10th – 11th of November and may be moved if it is raining. For 2018 you can find further [details here](#).

San Antonio de Areco is a small country town that comes to life while the event is in town. There are a few local shops that sell traditional Argentina wares such as Mate's, Silver jewellery and leatherwear.



It also has a unique Gaucho Museum in homage to the famous Gaucho's (cowboys) of the countryside that is worth visiting. The event is held behind the museum.

It is the event of the year where all the local Gauchos compete against each other in some of the riskiest feats on horseback you are ever likely to see.

It is Argentine country life at it's most laid back and finest, you'll find kids and whole families turning up on their horse. Everyone drinking the famous yerba mate, and of course, there is a big Asado (BBQ – if you are vegetarian bring your own sandwich) to enjoy.

You can easily catch the bus up to San Antonia, attending the event itself is free. If you'd like to book a tour or visit a local working farm for a day out and a BBQ this local tour company ['Areco Tradicion'](#) can help you organise it.

3. Polo Open, Buenos Aires

The Polo in Argentina is the finest in the world. Most of the top international polo players are Argentine and spend most of the year playing in abroad. Yet they always come home to play in the Argentine Open which in November/ December. So it's the best against the best, which will have you sitting on the

edge of your seat throughout the game.

While in many countries Polo is a luxury affair, in Argentina you can have it any which way. On the one side of the field, you have the stands which cost a bit more than the normal seats and you'll be surrounded by more foreigners and affluent Argentines.



On the other hand, you can get the cheaper tickets. These tickets give you access to the side seats, that are closer to the field and the horses and in the middle of the Gauchos and campesinos (country folk).

At halftime, everyone rushes to the bar where it's a just one big gathering of polo fans. It's a serious sport and a dangerous one – which is why the risk-taking, fearless Argentines excel in it – and who make it a pleasure to watch.

The event is spread over 4 weeks, and most locals only attend the finals, so tickets are easily purchased at the gate before the game.

To find the most up-to-date information visit the website of the [National Polo Association Argentina](#).

Best hotel to stay in while in Buenos Aires while rubbing shoulders with the Poloista's or at least other polo fans is

the [Faena Hotel in Puerto Madero](#).

4. Jacaranda's are in Bloom

While this may not sound like much, it will be when you see it for yourself. Most large cities with a similar population look and feel like concrete jungles. Not Buenos Aires, throughout summer the trees give you shade and shield your view of the buildings behind them.

Yet in November the Jacarandas come into bloom and throughout the city and Puerto Madero you will come across a whole sea of Purple Flowers.

These contrasts assure that every photo will have a touch of contrast and magic.



[# 5. International Jazz Festival, BsAs](#)

For anyone who is into Jazz or live music – the biggest Jazz

Festival in Argentina takes place in November. It supports both national and international artists, playing everything from Jazz to bebop and Nuevo Tango.



With many of the events being free to attend. The program is available on the [government's website](#), where you can find this year's dates, bands, and venues.

Another live music experience that you can see any time of the year is [Fernando Fierro](#), who started off their careers at the San Telmo markets. As their popularity grew they opened their own venue and offer the best alternative tango night and experience in Buenos Aires.

To get into the flavour of the Tango, before you go, be sure to [read the Tango Singer](#).

6. Gay Pride, Buenos Aires

Gay Pride takes place annually in November celebrating not only the one day, but there are plenty of celebrations spread out over the week.

The parade starts at the Governments Casa Rosada (Pink House) and takes over the city from there. You can find more [information here](#).

[# 7. Night of the Museums](#)

Buenos Aires is one of the most nocturnal cities you will ever visit, with most tango bars opening between 1-2 am (yes that is very late at night or early in the morning).

Yet, while you can visit a Milonga (tango club) anytime, the Night of the Museums is on once a year.

All the museums are open and many have special events to celebrate the evening. Free buses and local taxis can take you from one spot to another, and [their website](#) has a map with all the museums participating.



[# 8. Iguazu Waterfalls](#)

November is a great time as it's just at the end of winter and heading into summer. These are some of the most stunning waterfalls in the world.

There is a discrepancy between Brazil and Argentina both claiming their side is the best. I advise you to make that decision for yourself. There are many tours taking you from one side of the other, or you can organise this for yourself.

Keep in mind that you may need a visa if going into Brazilian

side depending on where you are from. This can change at any time, so if you would like to go to both sides it is worth investigating before you go.

Staying at the [La Aldea de la Selva](#) hotel puts you in the middle of the Forest near the falls, which means you can enjoy nature and the butterflies while having breakfast in the garden.



9. Punta del Este, Uruguay

Ok, I realize this isn't Argentina. However, due to the amount of Argentines there in January, it feels like it's an extension of Buenos Aires.

While getting an affordable place to stay here in December or January is near impossible. So November is the perfect time to visit as everything is open and won't break your budget.

If you are looking to escape Buenos Aires for a day catch the [Buquebus](#) over to Colonia for a day. It is an old colonial Portuguese town with art galleries, craft shops, and great restaurants.

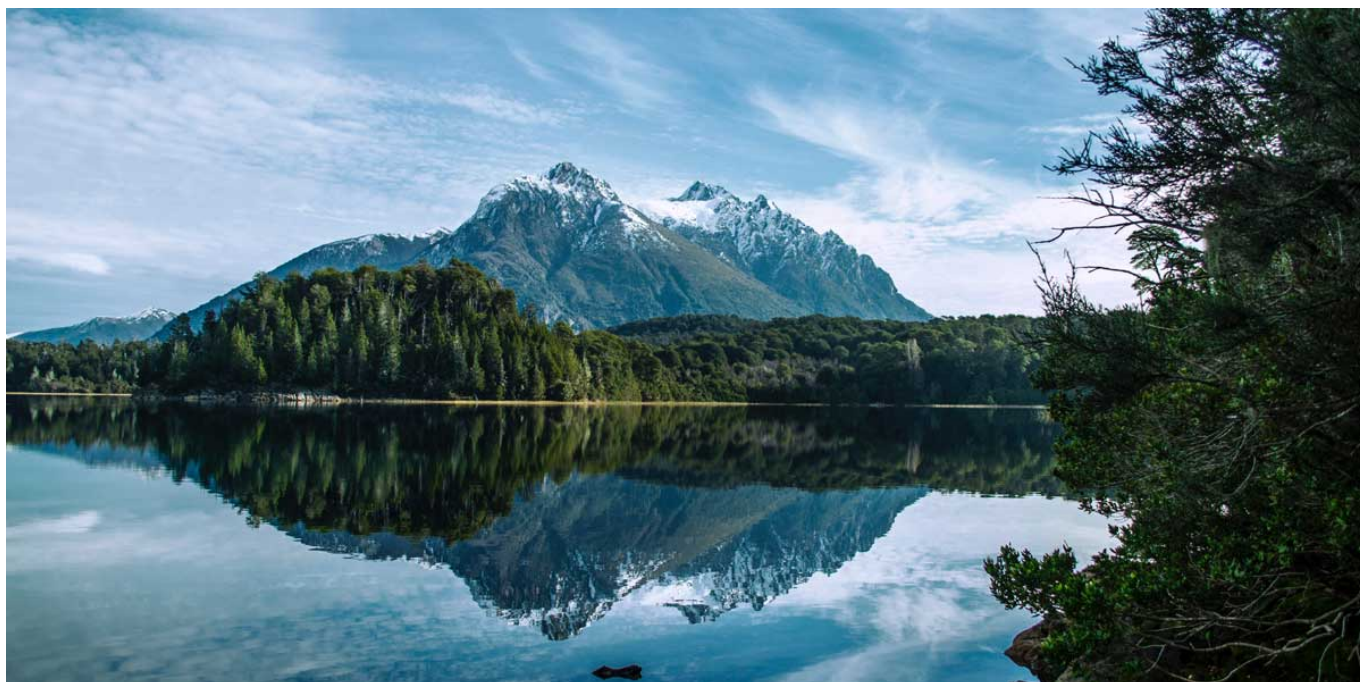


10. Patagonia

By November the snow has cleared off the mountains and the sun golden rays will be bouncing off the lakes. Hiking paths will be open or you can sit inside, kick back and enjoy the incredible views.

This is the place for fishing, hiking and nature enthusiasts. One of the most spectacular trips to make is the drive through the [Seven Lakes](#), this will take you past some of the most spectacular lakes in Patagonia.

For places to stay and use as a base Bariloche is a mini-Latin Switzerland, with wooden houses and chocolate shops. Most ideal hotel is [Hotel Tunquelén](#)*, perfect views over the lake of the mountains.



Do you want to know more about Argentina? Check this out:
[Things to do in Salta](#)

Photo of Iguazu by [Julia Caesar](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Photo of Pantagonia by [Delfina Iacub](#) on [Unsplash](#)

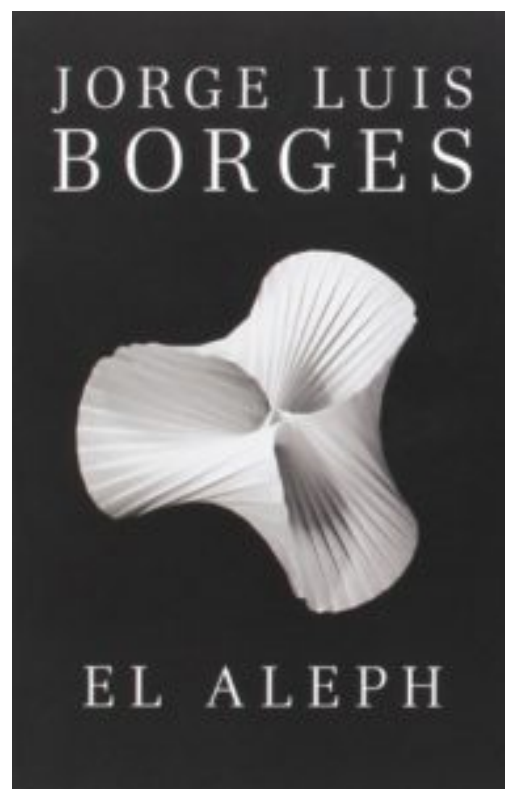
Armchair Travellers guide to Argentina

Have you ever dreamt of visiting Argentina? Perhaps interested in an insider's perspective to this fascinating country? Have you ever pondered about why Evita and Che are either fanatically loved or hated?

Or perhaps you are look for inspiration for an upcoming trip to Argentina? Any which way, this Armchair Traveller's Guide to Argentina is the ideally place to start exploring the country from the comfort of home.

Books and movies can paint a history like no other. They give you an understanding of a countries like Argentina's colourful past, its challenges and dictatorships, its culture and why it is the way it is today.

The best books about, or written by Argentine's:



You might not have heard about many Argentine writers, the country and it's dark past have produced some of the best in the world. One of the most renowned and one worth reading is [Jorge Luis Borges](#). He writes like none other.

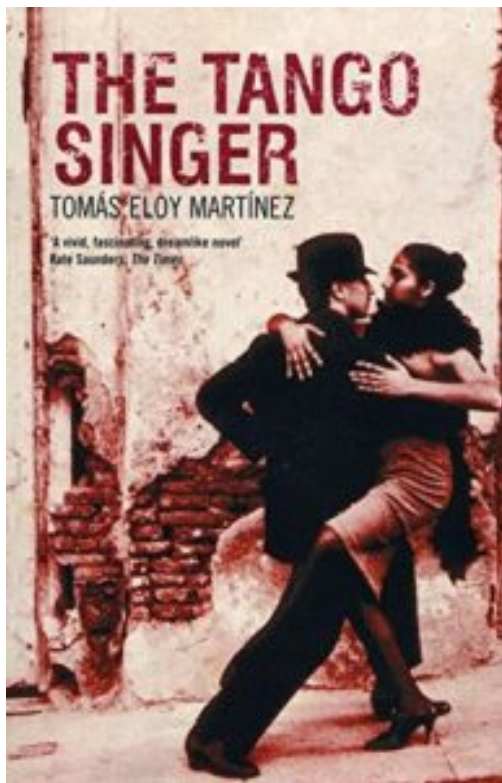
From [The Aleph and Other Stories \(Penguin Classics\)](#) to his [collected library](#) of short stories and [poetry](#). His work is simply mesmerising, and he is one of the most under appreciated yet spectacular writers and thinkers of his time.

His thoughts, mind and work have a multitude of layers that are both enticing and profound. Every time you read one of his stories you'll see new dimensions, ideas and provocative

metaphysical concepts. His poetry on suburban streets of Buenos Aires where he lived, adds a richness to the city that assure you'll never see them in the same light again.

If you've seen the magic weaved by the tango or the eloquence in a game of polo; it is this same grace, flow and passion that [Jorge Borges brings to his writing](#). A fascinating writer that will share Argentina and all its charm with you like no other.

[Without the streets or dusks of Buenos Aires, a tango cannot be written. - Jorge Luis Borges Click To Tweet](#)



[The Tango Singer](#)

Tomas Eloy Martinez

If you are looking for a book that captures and brings to life the rawness of energy that is Buenos Aires, this is it. You can almost feel the energy emanating off the pages and through the dance and music of the tango. The heaviness that borders on a dramatic, always serious yet spellbinding dance between two dancers. This book, will leave you a little breathless for the city, the tango, for the music, and for life. At the end you won't believe it was

all fiction, it feels so real, as though you had lived it. It's not. It is just a exceptional well told story, yet it is so captivating you can't help but wish it to real, and that the book would last forever. It's the perfect read whether you love the tango, exceptional stories or Argentina. **Buy the book or find out more about it on Amazon:** [The Tango Singer](#)

[Santa Evita](#)

Tomas Eloy Martinez

This is fiction rather than being a biographical account about the life of Evita Peron, and written by an Argentine living abroad. This may grant him a little more creative license than if he were living in Argentina. It doesn't stop this book from being both a compelling read. There are a lot of books written about Evita, and like Che, you either like her or you don't. The reality is that there is not much information available as Evita Perez. Evita, herself either omitted it or changed it, to suit the picture she wanted to present to the world. So most books on the subject are heavily biased opinions of the writers perspective. This book and period in history shaped much of modern Argentina – as did the story of Evita, which is why it's highly recommended. It's a hard book to find, I suggest looking it up on **Abe books: [Santa Evita](#)**

[Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life](#)

John Lee Anderson

Che is either loved or loathed, and you'll get a very different point of view on why depending on who you ask. It's best to read up and learn as much as you can before defending or jumping into arguments on this touchy subject. This biography is one of the best and unbiased on the market. It is also the largest, and most in-depth, so best read from the comfort of home rather than carrying it around in your backpack.





ARMCHAIR TRAVELLERS

Guide to Argentina

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There are points of this time period that were new to me, and rarely mentioned in our history books. Despite some of the atrocities committed in his name, Che fought for his beliefs, took action where others dare not, he gave his life fully to the end for a higher ideal. He saw and understood first hand what the American placed dictators were doing to Latin America, and took steps to create change where he was able.

A poetic hero, fighting for justice in a rather unjust and corrupt world. For anyone who wants to get to know the man behind the story. You can find out more: [Che: A revolutionary life](#)

For those interested in more information on Latin American History, and how that history formed revolutionaries like Che Guevara. The best book is: [Open Veins of Latin America](#). It is a real eye-opener as to the use and abuse of the resources and people in Latin America, long after the Spanish conquest.

Further Famous books already well noted, and written about that are also worth a mention on this reading list are:

- [Motorcycle Diaries](#): This covers the years of Che's early adulthood and much of the text was based on his diaries that he wrote while travelling through South America on his Motorcycle. This has since also been turned into a film, it is available on [Prime or DVD](#).
- [In Patagonia](#): Bruce Chatwin's is one of the best travel writers in the world. This book is without a doubt one of the most well quoted and famous book on and about his travels through Patagonia.

Experience Argentina through Film

Not all good writers in Argentina are novelists, some are brilliant film makers. A few films like the Nine Queens have been copied, but the English version just isn't the same.

The history and humour of the Argentines goes deep, and there are some idiosyncrasies that you get about the culture that you just won't get elsewhere.



Here are a few of my favourite films.

[**The Nine Queens:**](#) The story on and about a bank robbery, it's the most famous Argentine film. It's on the humourous side, but also is just a cracking story about a some would be slick robbers and the many failures they make.

[**Igualita de Mi:**](#) A favourite comedy, about someone who believes himself to be a bit of ladies man. You'll meet a few of these characters if you do ever go to Argentina, the would be smooth talkers. This movies put them in the funniest light and it a perfect romantic story with a lot of unexpected twists.

[**A boyfriend for my wife:**](#) Another great romantic comedy with a few of Argentina's best actors. The Argentine's have a way of bringing a story that you'll never find in a Hollywood movie – which is what makes them so incredibly funny.

[**The Official Story,**](#) looks into once of the sadder aspects of the adoptions of children of 'the disappeared one's' by wealthier or military families at the time of Argentina's dictatorship in the 1970s. This is the story of a mother of one such adoptee who tries to look into the Official story of what was going on at the time. While it was a shocking period in Argentina's history, these adoptions and the disappeared one's was real.

[**The son of the Bride:**](#) A look at how crazy that family and life can get Argentine style.



Did you know Argentinian's love to Read?

Argentine's love to read and will be happy to discuss a wide range of books they've read. The upside of this also means that you'll find bookshops all over the country. One of my favourite bookshops in Buenos Aires is the [El Ateneo Grand Splendid Bookstore](#). In it's previous life it was an old theatre that has been transformed into one of the most stunning bookshops. Its the perfect way to spend an afternoon.

If you to make it to Argentina and are looking for English books, you'll find them at [Walrus Books](#), San Telmo in Buenos Aires. They have an excellent selection of new and second-hand books.



In Summary:

So, whether you are planning or dreaming about Argentina, it is worth reading up on its literature. Take the opportunity to see the city of Buenos Aires through the eyes of Borges.

The tales in these books are so well weaved that you will see the city and country in ways you had not believed possible in such a short time. You will feel as though you've walked the streets. Had the tango dance a beat on your heart and a touch of revolutionary spirit will stir your soul.

Books and movies can unlock a richer experience of a country, a view behind the veil, this list on and about Argentina will be the key.

Of course if you'd like to visit, be sure to check out why [November is the best time to visit Argentina](#). If you are considering moving there, here's a [The reality of Living and Moving to Argentina](#).

Or if you just want to escape some more from the comfort of home, I also have a [Armchair Travellers Guide to England](#).

A few of the images are mine, and others a big thank you to:
Alfons Morales on [Unsplash](#)
[7 SeTh](#) on [Unsplash](#)
[Jeison Higueta](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Portland: Keeping it both Real, and Weird

Portland won me over from the start; This quirky, liberal, funky town has a pretty cool vibe. Within a few days, it jumped to the top of my list of favourite cities in the world.

My little bit weird and favourite thing to do: is that people looked you right in the eye and gave a genuine smile. And this my friends is the place to do it, people weren't glued to their mobiles, avoiding eye contact so much like the rest of the world – nope – straight in the eye look with a real smile... and that my friend, is priceless!

The city, for those that are unaware, is also the inspiration and muse of the much-loved quirky little bit weird show ['Portlandia'](#). If you've not seen it, be sure to check it out before you go.

Yes, the city is weird in the best of ways; its bike friendly, food cart crazy. Home of the alternative crowd – dare I say, critical thinkers... that are all growing their own food and beards (other than the ladies).

For a crafty creative like me, it's a huge Creative Mecca – one that must be visited and walked around at least once in this lifetime. It features some of the Best indie craft fairs, such as; [crafty wonderland](#), [renegade Craft Fair](#), [Picnic](#)

[Music+Arts Festival](#), [Portland Fleaforall](#). All worth visiting, be sure to check the dates before you go.

My Portland Recommendations:

To Sleep:

I used **Airbnb**, and stayed in Val's [Buddha room](#) – If I could've I would've moved in stayed forever! A lush, green and safe neighbourhood, a short walk to top local eateries, shops and gardens.

Where to Eat in Portland



[Brass Tacks](#), Most delicious Sandwiches I've ever eaten, ever! (This folks, is saying something – no not because I eat tones of sandwiches, but because I am an older than 29 ;-)). I had the vegan 'Meatball Wizard, and Salamigeddon'. Makes my mouth water just thinking about them!

[Sweeede dee](#) – this home cooked food rocked it! I loved the homely unpretentious vibe as much as the outstanding quality of their food...

[Salt & Straw](#); The Best Ice Cream; with flavours like Pear and Blue Cheese, Honey Lavender and Strawberry Honey Balsamic with Black pepper. As well as the standard classics. Don't wait for summer; these are worth checking out all year round.

[Que Sabosa](#), it the best Mexican food cart, I had the Burrito that was filled with fresh roasted vegetables, and mind blowing handmade sauces – that you don't come across this side of the border – authenticity all the way. @ N Williams.

Others recommend [voodoo doughnuts](#). I didn't get any, I walked passed saw the line of people waiting, wondering if it was a pop concert. But no, it gets this busy – so I put it top of my list for my next visit. I didn't even wait in line at the Vatican, sorry dude's can't wait in line for doughnuts....

Where to shop in Portlandia

[Crafty wonderland pop up shop](#): I recommend you visit Portland in June for the real event, which I missed. This pop-up soothed the pain. I was awestruck by the stunning and unique handcrafted items on display. There ain't no suitcase big enough to fit all I wanted to buy (no credit card limit high enough either).

[Collage craft supplies](#) If you craft, pondering the idea of crafting this is the supply store to go to. I spent hours and hours in there – it has everything and more.

[Contemporary museum of Craft](#): This has rotating exhibitions of fine quality handcrafted artisan good are. Let's say its many leagues above what I fathom to make.

– [Mississippi Ave](#): This is the street where you want to hang, shop and live nearby, it has the quaintest, to unique shops. There are too many to list in one post.

What to visit/ do

[City parkland](#), huge, walk-worthy and a must visit. I wish I'd put more time aside for this, as you could take a picnic and get lost in there for a very long time.

[Powells Bookshop](#): filled to the brim with both the best collection of new and used books. I never buy books when travelling, but made the exception as there were a few books that I knew I'd not find anywhere else. this alone would be worth living close to Portland for. Also check out their schedule they often have speakers, authors or evenings of banter.

[Made here PDX](#) for best artisan handcrafted goods for both men & women.

To finish off, to prove that Portland is weird, here are a few unknown yet interesting facts;

- It's illegal to walk across the street with your shoes untied.
- It's illegal to whistle underwater.
- It's against Portland law to modify the weather without obtaining a license first. Luckily this is not something I attempted to do while there ☐ Does make me wonder if anyone has this license?...

Despite what others say about the weirdness, I felt more at home in Portland than I have anywhere in a long time. I had some deep thought-provoking conversations with some incredible people, saw and bought some amazing handmade wares, was inspired by all the creative craftiness that I saw – and ate some of the best food of my life. This is my kind of city, for visiting or living and any time in Portland is time well spent.

This is my friends, is my kind of city, for visiting or living any time in Portland is time well spent.

Going back in Time from Buenos Aires to Colonia de Sacramento

Sometimes the best thing to do in Buenos Aires is to get out of town.

Buenos Aires is many things; bustling and vibrant and at times overwhelming.

When the city starts to feel crowded, the best thing to do in the city is to get out. And the quickest and easiest way to do this is to visit Colonia del Sacramento in Uruguay. Which is a hop skip and a boat ([buquebus](#)) ride away.

TIP: If it's a windy day take the normal boat and not the hydrofoil. Unless you have a hardy stomach and don't mind all the people around you who do not.

Go for a day – I promise it'll feel like a week. The benefits of time-travel.



Historic centre

Colonia is the polar opposite to Buenos Aires. The tranquillity and change of atmosphere is notable from the moment you disembark.

It's as though you've time-travelled back in time. To an era when people walk slower, talk slower and live slower. The antique cars seem to be stuck in a time-warp, to the point that they are sprouting weeds.

You can see these cars parked in front of the old colonial houses that add an artful flavour to the place. And turns even an amateur photographer into a professional.

It's a small pueblo (town), and while they'll try to rent you a bike, moped or car when you get off the boat, there's not a real need. Best advice is to get a map, turn to the left and mosey into town which is a mere 5 minute walk.

Visiting the UNESCO site of Colonia de Sacramento



Colourful houses of Colonia

The road leads you straight to the Porton de Campo, which is the Historic gateway into the old town center. It's in these cobblestone streets that all find quaint houses and places of interest.

While the whole town is a living museum, there is a wide array of small museums to cater for most every taste.

You can find these on the on the [Museums of Colonia website](#) along with their opening times and details.

For instance, there is the; Portuguese Museum, Ceramic Museum, Indigenous Museum, House of Nacarello (which also has a great

little garden) and many more.

When you tire of the museums, the lighthouse is also worth a visit. If you're feeling energetic, you can climb to the top and get a view across town and the rivers murky waters.

Yet, with so much to do in such a small place, Colonia is where you've come to relax. So you may also skip the museums.

Be sure to Relax! Slow down and Enjoy.

✖ It's a barrio that inspires you to take your time, enjoy the gardens and the local charm, wind down, and relax. At this point, it might be time for a coffee or lunch.

The best spot for a coffee is a café on the waterfront called [Lenta Maravillas](#). It's a local house that its owners open a few days a week when it transforms into a cafe. And it's here where you will find the best cakes, décor, and food in Colonia.

While the décor is enchanting, the best spot is outside in the garden. where you can swing in a hammock or deck chair under the willow trees, while the sailing boats and clouds float on by.

The craziness of the big city is soon forgotten and already becoming a faint memory.

Once you've recharged, and regained your energy. There are a few of the artisan stores, on the 'Calle Real'. It's the best place to whittle away some time and dollars.



Modern and dated modes of transport

After more ambling on this lazy day, it's time to go and find somewhere to eat. Be sure to keep your eye out for restaurants offering asado (BBQ). One treat here that you won't find in Buenos Aires, is BBQ fish.

Finish off the day with a wander around the rest of town. Down along the harbour is a great mix of old house, ruins, and artwork.

To feel like you've been away for weeks, you can always spend the night. [Posada Plaza Major](#) is a lovely old hacienda and in a central spot in town.

Yet, even if you don't spend a night – you'll find that even after a mere day you'll feel like you've been away for weeks.

Recharged and ready to rock the big city once more. You'll arrive back in Buenos Aires and be ready for a few more rounds of the bright big magical city.

Resources:

[Buquebus Ferry & Bus Service](#) between Buenos Aires and Colonia a few times a day. Tip: Be sure to arrive with plenty of time for immigration and the process of queuing to reserve, pay, pick up ticket

[Museums in Colonia website](#)

[Playa Major Hotel](#)