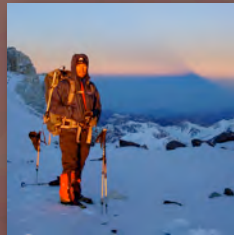
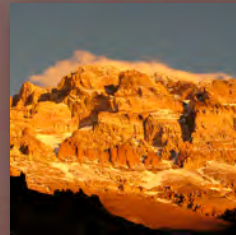


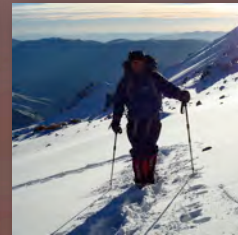
- Cerro Aconcagua 22,841 feet/6,962 meters
- Andes Mountain Range
- Highest Mountain in South America



ROOF OF THE ANDES
Ascend the highest peak in the world outside of Asia with Mountain Trip's fully supported climbs.



AMEGHINO VALLEY
Our Traverse of Aconcagua allows you to experience more of the mountain.



PERSONALIZED SERVICE
The highest quality Expeditions with a no-compromise commitment to your experience.

Mountain Trip

ACONCAGUA Planning and Preparation



MountainTrip.com

CERRO ACONCAGUA

DEC - FEB

22,834' / 6959M



OVERVIEW

Welcome to Mountain Trip's Aconcagua Expeditions

Truly the "Roof of the Americas," Cerro Aconcagua, at 22,834 ft. (6,959 meters) is not only the highest mountain in South America, but also the highest peak outside of Asia. The name Aconcagua is most likely a derivative of the Incan words "Akon Cahuak," meaning Stone Sentinel. Located on the Chilean- Argentine border, it is easily accessed through the Argentine city of Mendoza.

The two most popular routes up the mountain are the "Normal" route from the Horcones Valley to the west and the False Polish route, accessed from the Vacas Valley to the east. These two routes see the vast majority of climbers on the mountain, and though they are not difficult from a technical climbing aspect, the extreme combination of high altitude, winds, and cold temperature make them a challenge for any mountaineer.

Mountain Trip believes that the experience you take away from an expedition is paramount. As such, we have chosen to not offer climbs up the Normal route, as this route is just too crowded and is not nearly as interesting as the routes from the Vacas Valley. We feel the best non-technical route currently available is a variation of the False Polish route called the Ameghino Valley route.

We are proud to offer a fully supported, extremely well organized, Aconcagua expedition that cuts no corners in providing climbers with comfort and the highest probability for success.

Mountain Trip and Aconcagua

Mountain Trip is recognized as one of the world's most respected guide services. Our history goes back to the earliest years of guiding Denali in Alaska. There are very few companies that can offer climbers a complete Seven Summits program including legally guided ascents of Denali. Our guides have led dozens of Aconcagua climbs since 1996, so they will take great care of you on the mountain. You have our commitment that we will provide the very highest level of customer service from the moment you first contact us.

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

-John Muir



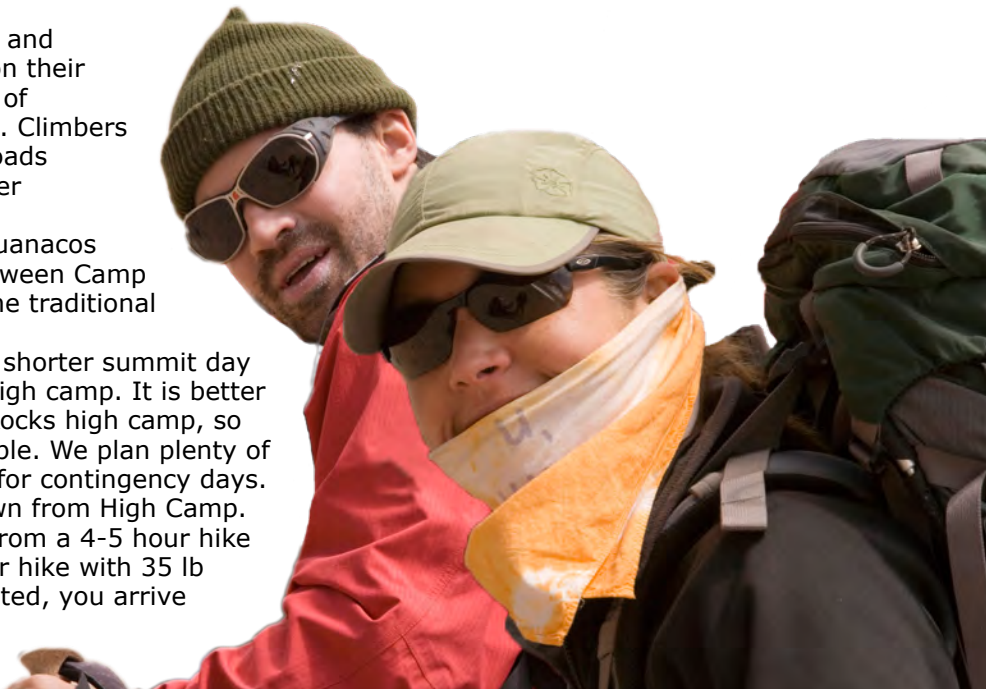
OUR ROUTE



From 1996 until 2004, we guided a seldom visited route called the "Guanacos Valley" or "Upper Vacas" route. Political pressure and governmental infighting has unfortunately closed access to this route for the past several years. With its closure we reevaluated our options for climbing Aconcagua and have settled upon a very sensible variation which combines the beginning of the Falso de Polacos route with the upper two camps of our old Guanacos Valley route.

The result is that we now have a route which blends the best parts of the Falso de Polacos, with its fully supported base camp at Plaza Argentina, and the moderate altitude changes between the upper camps on the Guanacos route. In 2009, we revisited our entire Aconcagua program and worked hard on how to best capitalize on all of the available logistical support from Plaza Argentina. We are proud to offer a highly supported, well organized Aconcagua expedition that cuts no corners in providing climbers with comfort and the highest probability for success.

- We spend extra time to help climbers develop a solid foundation of acclimatization at Plaza Argentina while eating well in the relative comfort of spacious kitchen tents replete with tables and chairs.
- Porters stock our upper camps with food and supplies so that our climbers can focus on their personal acclimatization process instead of stressing their systems with heavy loads. Climbers on our expeditions can expect to carry loads under 35 lbs between camps on the upper mountain.
- By utilizing the upper camps from our Guanacos Route, we decrease the altitude gain between Camp 1 and Camp 2 by 1,200' (compared to the traditional camps).
- Our 20,000 foot High Camp makes for a shorter summit day than from the traditional Polish Glacier high camp. It is better protected and not so high as the Black Rocks high camp, so weather or rest days are quite manageable. We plan plenty of time into our schedule to accommodate for contingency days.
- Porters bring most of our equipment down from High Camp. This changes the nature of the descent from a 4-5 hour hike with 60+ lb (27+ Kg) loads to a 2-3 hour hike with 35 lb (16 Kg) packs. Instead of feeling exhausted, you arrive feeling good and are more prepared for the long hike out the following day.



ON THE MOUNTAIN

► **The Ameghino Valley Route:** Climbers and guides have many different options for how to climb Aconcagua from the Vacas Valley side. We have weighed all the options and feel that we have the best route for providing a measured and reasoned acclimatization schedule.

Penitentes 9,000 ft. (2750m)

At this ski resort, we will meet the "arrieros," our mule drivers, and we will pack our gear for the trek in to Base Camp. We will provide dinner and accommodations at the hotel before starting our trek the following morning.

Pampas de Lenas 9,000 ft. (2750m)

We will reach our first camp here after a beautiful, six hour hike through a deep desert valley.

Casa de Piedra 10,000 ft. (3050m)

Continuing our hike up the Vacas Valley, we'll make camp at this old smuggler's hut situated where the Relinchos and Vacas Valleys meet.

Plaza Argentina Base Camp 13,800 ft. (4200m)

We cross the Rio Vacas on horseback and begin the steep trail that leads up the narrow valley, involving some mildly exposed side-hilling as we climb into the upper stretches of the Relinchos Valley. From here, we will wind our way through a steep gully, next to a dead glacier covered in rocks and picturesque penitentes.

Camp 1 16,300 ft. (4970m)

Our group gear, food and fuel will already be stocked at this camp, keeping the weight of our daily packs to 35 lbs (16kg) or less. Camp 1 is not visible from Base Camp, and is gained by climbing up into a narrow valley. Above Camp 1, the initial hour of hiking is visible, and ascends the broad bowl of scree that comprises the uppermost portion of the Relinchos Valley, and was once buried under the now mostly dead Glacier.

Camp 2 (Helicopter Camp) 18,000 ft. (5480m)

With easy hiking and one "glacier" crossing, we follow the saddle or "col" of the Ameghino Valley that separates the Cerro Ameghino to our east, and Aconcagua to our west.

High Camp (Piedras Blancas)

We climb steeply out of Camp 2 and then ascend gradually up to a shallow basin, for some remarkably surreal hiking. We reach our high camp at the top of the basin, perched on the north ridge of Aconcagua.

Summit Day

The longest day of our trip begins before the sun rises. We climb up the north ridge and then cross to the west side of the mountain to

traverse our way into the

legendary "Canaleta," a gully that will lead us to the summit. Because conditions on the way to the top may vary, ice axes, crampons, and/or ropes may be necessary depending on what. Above the Canaleta, we skirt along the south ridge with views of the South Face of the mountain, and up the final rocky steps to the summit!

Plaza de Mulas Base Camp 14,000 ft. (4260 m)

We will drop down the Normal Route out of the Horcones Valley. The descent goes quickly and easily with the help of our hired porters carrying out our kits. Our typically huge loads will be reduced to 30 lb packs. We will reach the Plaza de Mulas within a matter of hours, a tent city complete with restaurants, taverns, satellite phone and internet service.

After a good night's rest, we will hike out of the valley stopping at the Confluencia Camp for a pizza break. Once we reach the mouth of the valley, we will be met by the park rangers and be driven back to the hotel at Penitentes for showers and a celebratory meal!



RISK MANAGEMENT

US Trained Guides

This is a sensitive subject, especially in light of the relatively recent trend toward increased guide training in Argentina, but we are firm believers that US trained guides bring a higher level of client care and medical training to an Aconcagua expedition than do most locally trained guides. Alpine climbing skills are relatively easy for anyone to learn, but the larger skill set of taking care of your clients, nurturing them and setting your own personal ambition aside to better help the team are, to a large extent, grown through cultural influences and through lengthy apprenticeships in the mountains working under patient, experienced mentors.

Mountain Trip is an industry leader in developing exceptional guides long before we allow them to lead any of our expeditions. We have an almost 100% return rate amongst our guides, and many guides have worked for us for 5-10 years or more. Our team of guides are caring and compassionate, yet know how to get the job done when the situation dictates it.

Medical Training and Protocols

All our guides hold current medical certifications and are well versed in the most current protocols of altitude medicine, administered over by our company physician, Dr. Peter Hackett, perhaps the foremost altitude medicine practitioner in the US, and founder of the Institute for High Altitude Medicine in Telluride, Colorado.

Acclimatization Schedule

We have carefully selected our camps to maintain a very conservative acclimatization schedule. An additional acclimatization day at Base Camp is built into our typical schedule to better aid in the transition from the approach camps to the camps on the upper mountain. We average approximately 1000' (300m)

of elevation gain per day, which we feel is an appropriate acclimatization schedule for almost every climber.

The Importance of Communication

On mountain communication is facilitated by our US trained guides, but we cannot stress how important it is that you keep them apprised of how you are feeling on a daily basis. Our guides have deep resources to call upon if they know of a developing situation. Many mountain ailments or minor injuries are easily dealt with in their early stages, but can become serious if not addressed.

Pre-Trip Communication and Training

Our office is full of Aconcagua veterans. Use us as a resource as you train for your expedition. One of the nicest things about Aconcagua is it's relative accessibility. It is a great "gateway" for hikers and trekkers to experience expedition and high altitude climbing. Good physical fitness is important and we encourage you to train specifically for this climb. We like to see all our climbers

First Aid and Health Checks

An important part of climbing Aconcagua is closely watching everyone for signs of any health problems. Dehydration, coughs, or serious fatigue all can be managed if caught early and treated correctly. We carry well-equipped medical kits complete with pulse oximeters. This latter tool is helpful in distinguishing between certain ailments and an altitude related issue, and is only one part of larger comprehensive program of checking everyone's health at each step on the hill. As we previously mentioned, communication with the guides is important so that we can help mitigate an arising health problem before it becomes a more serious issue.

Weather Forecasting

We use several sources for weather forecasting. Multiple weather models, combined with the guide's experience in interpreting mountain weather, provide us with lots of information with which to better make challenging decisions.



develop safe and self-reliant habits that will last long after our expedition. Contact us for details on what skills to specifically practice before your climb and to provide advice as you assemble your clothing and equipment.

Satellite Phones

We have a satellite phone on every expedition. Phones are primarily for emergent use and for communicating daily updates with our office, but are available for personal use as well.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SO WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

People climb peaks like the seven summits for many reasons. Some just love being in wild places, while others want to challenge themselves physically and mentally, and for some it is to fulfil a lifelong dream. Climbing big peaks is serious business and every summit attempt requires a very deep sense of commitment and dedication. So please ask yourself, why are you goals on Aconcagua? Try to take an introspective look at the risk vs. reward as you make your decision. Any ascent this altitude involves a certain amount of risk. Our use of conservative, experience-based decision making will help minimize those risks and increase your chances for success, but ultimately, big mountains can be unforgiving require serious commitment and reflection.

Team members are ultimately responsible for their own well being. This includes making all necessary preparations to ensure good health and excellent physical conditioning both before and during an expedition. Our guides will oversee and discuss important issues along the way, but you should arrive in Mendoza very well prepared. Team members are responsible for understanding the conditions and risks that may exist on the climb and communicating closely with the guides. Over the course of an expedition, it is not unusual to have doubts or a change in focus. You need to keep in close communication with your guides at all times so that we can better help monitor your progress. Before an expedition, team members are responsible for having knowledge of all pre-departure information,

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEAM MEMBERS

preparing themselves to be in a very high level of fitness, and for assembling the appropriate clothing and equipment for the expedition. We will provide detailed guidance, but please contact us with any and all questions. While on the expedition, team members are responsible to listen closely to the guides at all times, maintain basic levels of hygiene and to conduct themselves respectfully with other team members, staff and members of other expeditions. We cannot stress how important open communication between everyone is on this trip.



GENERAL INFORMATION

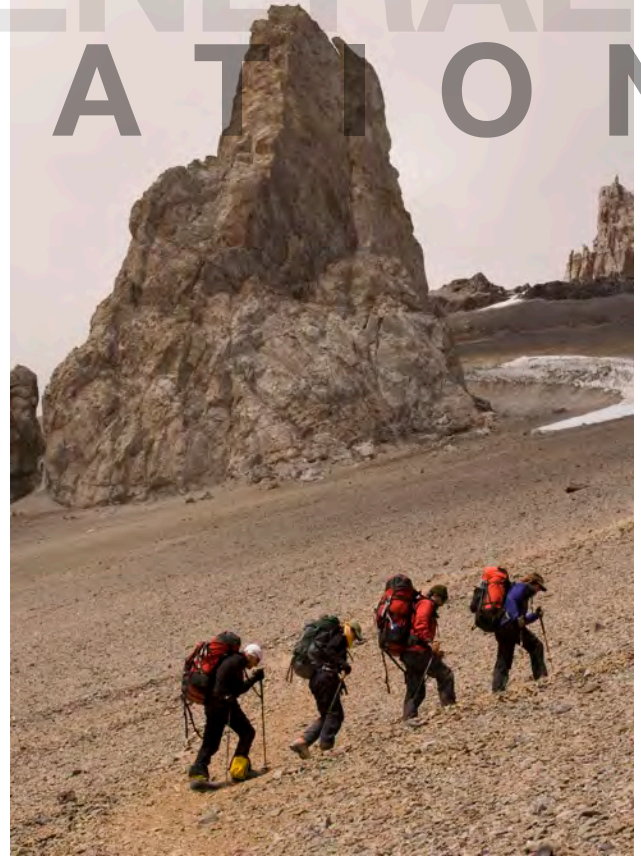
We will meet in the beautiful city of Mendoza Argentina for this expedition. Mendoza is wine country, and it is well worth planning on spending an extra couple of days touring wineries, whitewater rafting, or enjoying the bustling sidewalk cafés and parks. We will be staying in the Executive Hotel Park Suites (see address below) which is in convenient walking distance to downtown Mendoza and the popular "Sarmiento" district. The hotel is very comfortable and you will find prices in Mendoza fairly reasonable. Your Mountain Trip guide will be at the airport to meet

you upon your arrival if possible. If we miss you at the airport please take a taxi to the hotel where they will be expecting you. A taxi from the airport to the hotel will cost around \$8 US, and takes 10-15 minutes. US dollars are still widely accepted in Argentina, but the exchange rate is no longer 1:1. We find credit cards are generally the easiest way to pay for hotel rooms, restaurants, etc. as you will get the best exchange rate. You can also get Argentine pesos with your ATM card at many locations around Mendoza. Please have a way to get pesos, such

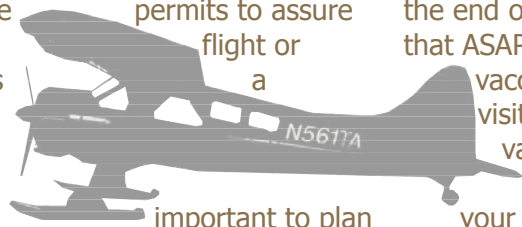
as an ATM card, or bring a supply of cash. Remember that you are responsible for some of your meals while in Mendoza.

If you would like to stay at a different hotel while in Mendoza please let us know so that we can help make recommendations and we'll know where to find you. We will provide accommodations for you at the Executive Hotel for one night before and one after the climb.

Hotel contact:
San Lorenzo 660
Mendoza, Argentina
T: +54 -261-5245000
www.executive.parksuites.net/



AIR TRAVEL Most flights to Mendoza will pass through Santiago, Chile. It is important to have your bags checked all the way through to Mendoza as this tends to minimize missed bags. It is a good idea to arrive in Mendoza a day early if your schedule permits to assure extra time in case of any flight or baggage delays. There is a departure tax when leaving Argentina by air of approximately \$18 USD. It is also important to plan enough time to comfortably accommodate our itinerary. Stressing out about missing an early flight is a waste of good energy.



If you do not use a travel agent to book your flights, you might make certain that someone at home has all the requisite information to make changes for you. If your passport is due to expire within six months of the end of your expedition, we recommend updating that ASAP. There are currently no mandatory vaccinations for Chile or Argentina, but we advise visiting your doctor and updating any vaccinations they may recommend. If you are delayed or have any problems with your travel to Argentina please let us know immediately at info@mountaintrip.com or call our office at: +1-970-369-1153.

TRAVEL TIPS

- Save the entry/departure forms that you fill out upon arrival in Mendoza and keep them in a safe place. You will need the copy the Immigration agent gives you to depart the country.
- Bring along two photocopies of your passport and keep them in different places...just in case.
- Strongly consider bringing your boots along as carry-on luggage. You can probably find most anything you need in Mendoza in the event that your bags don't arrive, but it will be hard to find good fitting boots.
- Tap water is good in Argentina and Chile, but we generally recommend avoiding it before the trip. Bottled water is readily available and is a safer bet. Please try to stay hydrated even before the trip.
- Food in Mendoza is generally not only safe, but excellent. It is; however, best to avoid foods that are very different than what you eat at home as you want to stay healthy before the trip.
- You are responsible for purchasing your climbing permit. Please have a way to get pesos, so you can save some money on your permit and you can purchase souvenirs or wine for your flight home.
- Bring \$150 or so in small bills to Penitentes and on the mountain. It is nice to have some money for drinks, food, etc. in the Base Camps and tips for the local staff.
- You can leave bags in storage in the hotel in Mendoza and in Penitentes. You definitely will want to bring clean clothes and shower supplies to Penitentes for a post-trip shower!

Mendoza is the epicenter for Argentine wine making and olive oil production and serves as a gateway to the Andes. Locals say their city of just over 100,000 inhabitants is "muy tranquilo" (very relaxed... and we'd have to agree!

Wide streets lined with tall shade trees and lush city parks on seemingly every other corner help ease the transition from home life to expedition life and also provide a wonderful place to ease back into "civilization" after spending a couple of weeks on a big mountain.

Post-climb activities could include exciting white water rafting or partaking in a wine tour of one of the many famous and delicious Bodegas. "Asados," or grilled meats are a mainstay of Argentine cuisine so bring your appetite!



CUSTOMIZE YOUR
EXPERIENCE



SERVICES PROVIDED



**What's
included.**

What's not.

**What's
possible is
entirely up to
you!**

INCLUDED IN TRIP FEE:

- Unlimited pre-trip access to our office resources
- US trained, Mountain Trip guide(s)
- Airport transfers
- Up to two nights accommodation in Mendoza (shared room)
- Welcome dinner in Mendoza
- Up to two nights accommodation and all meals in Penitentes (shared room)
- Scheduled mule services for the team
- Trailhead transfers
- All food for the approach and climb, including grilled dinners on the approach, full Base Camp meal services, and delicious on-mountain meals
- Porter services for all on-mountain camps, sufficient to limit your load to 35 pounds or less
- All group equipment (tents, kitchen, ropes, med kit, satellite phone)
- Custom expedition dispatch blog for your climb, complete with podcasts from the mountain
- Assistance arranging for post-climb activities such as wine tours, rafting, etc.

NOT INCLUDED:

- Flights to and from Argentina
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Meals beyond the welcome dinner in Mendoza
- Additional nights' accommodation in Argentina
- Mountaineering fee (\$240-720 in 2010) paid to the Argentine Park Service
- Base Camp showers and beverages beyond those provided in our meal program
- Additional porter services
- Travel and rescue insurance (**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!**)
- Costs incurred due to evacuation or unplanned departure from the mountain due to illness or other problems (This can very quickly add up, hence our strong recommendation for trip insurance above)
- Costs incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of Mountain Trip
- Customary gratuities for guides and local staff
- Costs as a result of force majeure

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS:

- Extra porter support (price varies depending on # of camps porters support)
- Single room supplement (call for current pricing)
- Horseback transportation for descent (\$200)
- Helicopter descent- walk 6 hours or fly for 15 minutes! (\$1200 for up to 4 people)

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ITINERARY

AMEGHINO VALLEY | ACONCAGUA

Part One, Vacas Valley to the start of the Falso de Polacos Route: Our group meets in the small, lively city of Mendoza, Argentina, capital of the world renowned Argentine wine country. Here, the guides will check everyone's gear and you can pick up any last minute necessities. We'll all go out for a sumptuous Welcome Dinner, so bring your appetite and be prepared to eat some of the best steaks you've ever tasted! After picking up our climbing permits the next morning (permit cost was \$240-720 in 2010) and driving to the ski resort of Penitentes, we will organize our gear for the "arrieros" (mule drivers) to carry over our three day approach to Base Camp. We'll eat and sleep one last night in a hotel at 9,000 ft (2750 m) before hitting the trail, and set out from the mouth of the Vacas Valley on our second morning.

Reminiscent of parts of the Grand Canyon, our journey begins with about 6 hours of hiking through the beautiful desert valley as we approach "Pampas de Lenas," our first camp at 9,000 ft (2750m) where we'll dine in true gaucho style, dinner prepared over an open fire by our arrieros. The next day, we continue hiking with light day packs to 10,000 ft (3050m) where we'll make camp at the junction of the Relinchos and Vacas Valleys, where an old smuggler's hut was erected here decades ago, and gives the spot its name, Casa de Piedra (House of Stone).

The following morning, we'll get an early start to cross the Rio Vacas on horseback, where we'll meet the mouth of the Relinchos Valley. The trail rises steeply from the relatively narrow valley and involves some mildly exposed side-hilling as it climbs up into the broader upper stretches of the Relinchos. We'll need to cross the river at some point, so be prepared for some chilly feet. The 6-7 hour hike culminates at the Plaza Argentina base camp, where we can relax with cold beverages and warm hospitality. This is a tougher day than the previous two, and as base camp is located at 13,800 ft (4200m), it also involves a lot of elevation gain, so we will rest here to acclimate to

these new heights for the next day and sort our gear for the push to the upper mountain.

From base camp, we'll load up our personal kits with everything we won't need for the next couple of days at base camp and carry it all up to Camp 1 at 16,300 ft (4970m). Porters will stock our group gear, food and fuel at both Camp 1 and Camp 2, enabling our load to not be in excess of 35 lbs (16 Kg), and perhaps even considerably less.

The trail ascends along the side of a steep gully, next to a dead glacier covered in rocks. Fields of penitents (tall fins of snow formed by wind and solar radiation) line the gully and a 500 ft (160m) high field guards the access to Camp 1. Winding our way through this is a fun, memorable stretch of climbing. Have your camera ready!

Once we reach Camp 1 at Plaza Argentina, we will have climbed to 16,300 ft in only five days, so we will slow things down a bit and allow our bodies to more fully develop a solid foundation of acclimatization. We will have plenty of time to

fortify our camps sites against the ever possible "viento blanco" or white winds which can plague camps at any elevation from this point upwards. Above Camp 1, the initial hour of hiking is visible, and ascends the broad bowl of scree that comprises the uppermost portion of the Relinchos Valley, and was once buried under the now mostly dead Relinchos Glacier.

Part Two, Ameghino Valley Route: Above this point, most climbers will bear west toward their high camp at the base of the Polish Glacier at 19,200 feet. Opting for the pass less traveled, we will cut north and follow the beautiful Ameghino Valley, which separates the stunning 19,616 ft (5978m) Cerro Ameghino from its taller counterpart, Aconcagua. Easy hiking and one "glacier" crossing will quickly put us at our Camp 2 at just shy of 18,000 ft (5480m). The views here are staggering!



Mount
Cerro
de
Aconcagua



ITINERARY

AMEGHINO VALLEY | ACONCAGUA

The summit of Cerro Ameghino is just to our east, to the north we can see the 22,000' (6700m) Cerro Mercedario dominating the horizon and the array of peaks above the Gussfeldt Glacier to our north are pretty inspiring. This move only takes a few hours, so we can take our time and make certain that our camp is fully fortified and still enjoy the evening light, when Ameghino is bathed in alpenglow. The name Helicopter Camp comes from the bits and pieces of a crashed helicopter, which still adorn the camp, more than a dozen years after the crash.

From here, we'll move to High Camp at Piedras Blancas (White Rocks). We climb steeply out of Camp 2 and then ascend gradually up to a shallow basin, filled with bizarre purple and white rocks. Weaving through the rocks, makes for some surreal hiking. At the top of the basin, perched on the north ridge of Aconcagua, is our High Camp.

Summit day! A pre-dawn start is necessary for this, the longest day of our trip. We'll work our way up, past the dilapidated "Independencia" hut, to a rising traverse into the broad gully that leads to the summit: the "Canaleta." Depending on conditions, ice axes, crampons and ropes might be necessary along the traverse. Above the Canaleta, we'll skirt along the south ridge, with views down the tremendous South Face of the mountain, to the final rocky steps up to the summit! Save some energy for the descent, keeping in mind that the summit is only halfway today. Round trip time can take anywhere from 7-12 hours, depending on conditions. This is a tough, long day.

The Descent: After a well deserved night's sleep, we'll break camp, load up, and drop down the Normal Route to the Plaza de Mulas Base Camp. The typically huge loads will be minimized by our employment of porters to help carry our kit down to Plaza de Mulas. With 30 lb packs, the descent only takes a few hours. Plaza de Mulas is a veritable tent city with restaurants, taverns and satellite phone and internet service. There's even a hotel on the far side of the valley! We'll have a celebratory meal in a kitchen tent, seated at tables, and sleep deeply in the relatively thick air of 14,000 feet (4260 m).

The hike out the Horcones Valley goes relatively quickly as it's mostly a gradual descent and we only have our daypacks to carry. Mules will carry out the majority of our kit. The valley is huge and fascinating, both aesthetically as well as geologically. About 5 hours into our hike, we will stop at the Confluencia Camp for a nice lunch break (pizzas!). At the mouth we'll check out with the park rangers and be driven back to the hotel at Penitentes for showers and a celebratory meal!

Our last day, we're back to Mendoza. Touring some of the local vineyards gives an insight into the passion with which Mendocinos apply to their wine making. There is also some good whitewater to raft or you can just relax amidst the sights and sounds of this beautiful city.

Day 1	Meet in Mendoza	Day 10	Load carrying to Camp 2 (3 hrs up)
Day 2	Obtain permits and drive to Penitentes	Day 11	Move up to Camp 2 (Helicopter Camp)
Day 3	Hike 6 hours to Pampas de Lenas Camp	Day 12	Rest/Acclimatization day at Camp 2
Day 4	Hike 6 hours to Casa de Piedra Camp	Day 13	Move 3 hours to Piedras Blancas High Camp
Day 5	Trek 8 hours up the Relinchos Valley to Plaza Argentina Base Camp	Day 14	Summit Day!
Day 6	Rest/acclimatization day	Day 15	Descend to Plaza De Mulas Base Camp
Day 7	Load carrying day to Camp 1 (3 hours up and 1.5 hours down)	Day 16	Hike out Horcones Valley and return to Penitentes or Mendoza
Day 8	Rest/acclimatization day	Day 17-20	Contingency Days
Day 9	Move on up to Camp 1	Day 21	Fly Home



EQUIPMENT LIST

Climbing **big mountains** inherently requires specialized equipment. **The following is a list of required gear for climbing Aconcagua with Mountain Trip.** Many of the items on the list need to fit you well in order for you to fully enjoy your experience on the mountain. Please plan ahead with equipment purchased for your trip so you can be certain that your gear fits you well. 16,000 feet on Aconcagua is not the place to discover that your pack is too small for your torso, or that your boots give you blisters. Recommended items reflect the opinions of our guides.

We use and have faith in all of our recommendations, but they may not necessarily fit or work for you. Call or email with any and all gear questions, as we want you to be as prepared as possible for your expedition. We know what works, so please use us as a resource. **Contact us for a simplified version of our Aconcagua Equipment List or for one in spreadsheet form.**

NOTES

Much of today's gear is overbuilt so that it lasts a long time. This translates as heavy! You should be on a mission to purchase the very lightest gear that will serve a given purpose. Grams add up to Kilos... Think about your clothes as a system and how each layer will work with the others.

Become very familiar with all your gear. Know your equipment, how to adjust it, and what to do if something fails. Weight is one of the hardest things to deal with up high, so purchase your gear as if you will be carrying it all. Our porters will carry our food, fuel and some personal kit, but if you have items that are beyond the scope of our gear list, they will travel in your pack.

MOUNTAIN LAYERS

NOTES

- Spend time planning your clothing systems. Consider how everything you bring will work together, make sure it is as light as it can be and that you can layer it and use our staff as resources for your equipment selection. We are always very happy to answer your questions about equipment as we feel this really is a critical area for your enjoyment and success.
- If you want to return home with your gear, please mark all your equipment with paint or tape. All duffels need to be clearly marked with your name as things can get very mixed up when bags come out on the backs of mules.

CLOTHES FOR MENDOZA

Our Mountain Trip office is at just under 10,000' in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado, so Mendoza's 70- 80 degree Fahrenheit temperatures are quite the transition for us. Shorts and light shirts are the norm, with a couple of nice shirts for wearing out to dinner complete our ensemble. As we'll be spending plenty of time wearing hiking shoes and mountain boots, we'll be wandering Mendoza in our flip flops or sandals.

PENITENTES

Things get a bit chillier in the evenings up at 9,000', so keep a light fleece layer handy and have a light pair of pants for our night before trekking in to the mountain.

TREKKING UP THE VACAS

It is generally hot on the trek in, so we'll travel in shorts and light tech shirts with a long sleeved layer (expedition weight fleece or Schoeller fabric) handy. You should also have your sun hat, shell jacket and pants, light warm hat or Buff, camera, sunscreen, water treatment and 1 or 2 liters of water in your day pack. We will have access to all our clothes and camp gear each night so keep your puffy jacket handy in your duffel bag for when the sun goes behind the ridge.

Sunscreen and lip balm need to be copiously applied at each break. You don't want to get burned this early in your expedition!

BASE CAMP TO CAMP 1

While mornings and evenings can be cool, it often warms up enough to still

wear shorts while trekking on nice days. We can always put our shells over these layers for additional warmth at any point of the climb. You can opt to wear your mountain boots or climb this stretch in your light hikers if there is not any new snow.

CAMP 2 TO HIGH CAMP

For this stretch, you'll need to make a judgment call each day as to which layers you might want or need to wear. We can experience warm, sunny days or could easily travel in snow and wind, bundled up in our puffy layers.

Each day you will need to have extra warm clothes, goggles and facemasks in your pack, as mountain weather at these elevations can be especially volatile.

SUMMIT DAY!!

Our pre-dawn start can be pretty cold, so you'll need all your warm layers, neoprene face mask, thick gloves and mittens, glacier glasses, and goggles all at hand. We might need ice axes and crampons, and everyone will have their lunch and two liters of water for this long day. This all should fit in your summit pack, so consider how your axe will attach when purchasing one.



GEAR LIST



BOOTS

___ MOUNTAINEERING DOUBLE BOOTS:

Modern boots fall into two categories, traditional double boots and "system boots" with integrated gaiters. Both versions work equally well on Aconcagua, so select a pair that fit your feet well.

Guide's Tip: We often advise climbers purchasing their first pair of, or updating their old mountain boots to consider what other mountains might be on their upcoming alpine wish list. If you think you might head to Denali, Vinson Massif or an 8000m peak in the not-too-distant future, you'll probably be happier with triple boots, as they are warmer for the weight and will not require overboots on those other peaks, as will a traditional double boot.

Recommended Triple Boots: **La Sportiva OLYMPUS MONS EVO, Lowa EXPEDITION 8000 GTX, Scarpa PHANTOM 8000, Boreal G1 EXPEDITION**

Recommended Double Boots: **La Sportiva Baruntse or SPANTIK, Scarpa INVERNO with INTUITION brand liners, Boreal G1 LITE**

___ **GAITERS:** If you need gaiters, any height gaiters will work. The tall versions like Black Diamond's Frontpoint Gore-tex are better for snow, but short gaiters like Outdoor Research's Flex-tex gaiters work well, too.

___ **APPROACH SHOES:** Light hikers or sturdy trail runners for the hike in and out. These also provide a welcome change from your mountaineering boots for wear around camp.

Please be certain that these are well broken in before the trek!

LEGS AND FEET

Consider how your layers will work as a system. Think about how easy or difficult it might be to change layers when the temperatures drop... or rise. How will you negotiate things when "nature calls" and the wind is howling?

___ **WARM PUFFY PANTS:** Down or synthetic pants with fully separating zippers so you can put them on and off over your boots.

Guides' Pick: Patagonia DAS Pants

___ **STRETCH WOVEN PANTS**:** Otherwise known as soft shell, these are very versatile.

Guides' Pick: Patagonia Alpine Guide Pants.

___ **BASE LAYER:** Synthetic Top and Bottoms such as Light or Mid-Weight Capilene or the new Wool 2 from Patagonia are nice because they keep you dry and warm. We really like the Merino wool layers!

___ **SHORTS:** Have we mentioned that it is HOT on the approach? Shorts are highly recommended. Consider two pair of light weight running or trekking shorts. Pockets are nice for lip balm and sundries. Wear one pair until you move up to Camp 1 and then send them out with the mules, leaving you with a fresh pair for the mountain and trek out.

___ **REGULAR UNDERWEAR:** Two or three changes or so should do the trick, although ladies might want a few more. Look for synthetics such as Patagonia Capilene. Ladies should also bring several synthetic sports-type bras.

___ **SOCKS:** 2 - 3 sets of wool or synthetic medium/heavy weight socks for your mountain boots. Make certain your socks fit with your boots! **Additionally**, bring at least two pairs that fit your approach shoes. **Make certain your socks do not make your boots fit too snugly.**

GEAR LIST

HANDS AND HEAD

___ **LIGHT GLOVES:** Look for a light to medium weight glove (or one of each!) We really like the Shoeller versions. **Guides' Pick: Outdoor Research "Vert" Gloves**

___ **INSULATED GLOVES:** Warm, shelled, insulated expedition glove systems are the workhorse on Aconcagua. The Mt. Hardware "Medusa Glove system" is a good choice, however our **Guides' Pick is Black Diamond's "Guide Gloves."** They are durable and have removable liners for ease of drying.

___ **SUMMIT MITTENS:** Thick, warm, non-constricting mittens made of Primaloft or down. Good choices include: North Face- Mt. Guide or Himalayan Mitts, Mountain Hardware's Absolute Zero or Masherbrum Mitts, Marmot Expedition Mitt and our **Guides' Pick: Outdoor Research Alti Mitts** They aren't cheap, but are extremely warm (Divide the cost by 10 fingers!).

___ **WARM SKI TYPE HAT:** Bring two hats of different weights. Fleece lined hats tend to be more comfortable. Your hat must provide ear protection and one might be windproof.

___ **BUFF:** This is the brand name of a lightweight neck gaiter that can also serve as a hat or headband. These are the choice of virtually ALL of our guides! Bring at least one, and perhaps more, as they now make them in different weights.

___ **SUN HAT:** Baseball type or (better!) wide brimmed sun hat for the intense sunshine of the trek and thin air of the mountain. You can combine a baseball hat with a bandana for good sun protection-again, think synthetic. Hats with neck protection are a bonus!

___ **HAND WARMERS:** Bring 3+ sets of these disposable insurance policies (Good for feet and hands).

___ **SUNGLASSES:** They must provide adequate side protection and filter 100% UVA and UVB. "Sport" style glasses are just fine, as you don't need glacier glasses.

___ **SKI GOGGLES:** Double lens goggles for use during storms or really cold high winds. Consider smaller children's goggles as they are lighter, more compact and we will be carrying these most of the way. UV-protected amber lenses work great (do not bring very dark lenses). Pack them inside a lightweight, hard-shelled case for protection while traveling.



UPPER BODY LAYERS

You will need to have five layers for your torso when you are on the upper mountain. As the amount of time spent on the upper mountain is not really that long, we would discourage you from bringing any changes of layers.

___ **EXPEDITION PARKA (WITH HOOD):** Marmot, Mountain Hardwear and The North Face all make good parkas, but our **Guides' Pick is the Mountain Hardwear Sub Zero Hooded Jacket**. There are some synthetic options such as the Patagonia D.A.S. Parka and the Wild Things Belay Jacket, however; down is recommended as it is lighter and less bulky. You do not need a full-on 8000 meter parka for Aconcagua, but you should have a warm one with a hood.

___ **SHELL JACKET:** This does not need to be a bulky, burly Gore-tex shell. Wind protection is of most importance with this layer. Consider bringing a light rain shell for the hike in and a very light, hooded wind shell for climbing.

Guides' Pick: Patagonia Houdini Jacket

___ **PUFFY JACKET:** We used to include thick fleece jackets in this category, but feel strongly that "puffy," Primaloft-type jackets are far superior. Size Primaloft to fit over your shell.

Guides' Pick: Patagonia Micro Puff Hooded Jacket

___ **"EXPEDITION WEIGHT" FLEECE:** Bring one top made from 100 weight or Powerstretch fleece. A zip t-neck is very nice for ventilating.

Guides' Pick: Patagonia R1 Flash Top or (better!) R1 Flash Hoody

___ **T-SHIRTS or SUN SHIRTS: Bring 2!** Synthetic, wool or cotton t-shirts for the hike in and the hike out. Synthetics dry faster! Some people prefer long sleeve shirts for their added sun protection. There are also a number of nice, ventilated, button up shirts on the market as well. You can hike in wearing one and send it out with the mules so your shirt for the hike out is a bit fresher than you are!



GEAR LIST

PACKS AND DUFFELS

___ **EXPEDITION PACK:** 5000+ cu in. or 70+ Liters. You'll need a large pack in order to carry your gear, even with porter support.

BE CERTAIN THAT YOUR PACK FITS YOU!

Get used to your pack before you leave home; train with it!

Guides' Pick: The Osprey Aether 70 is a great pack that weighs almost 2 lbs less than most Dana Designs or Gregory packs in this size!

___ **SUMMIT PACK:** 2000 +/- cubic inch LIGHTWEIGHT pack for the approach and for summit day. Light weight is stressed because you'll be carrying it the whole way. Look for one that weighs a pound or less.

___ **LARGE ZIPPERED DUFFELS:** Select a duffel that you can fit your pack and all your personal kit into. It needs to be fairly durable because the mules can be tough on gear. You should fly down with two duffels and leave one locked with your street clothes at the hotel at the trailhead.

SLEEPING GEAR

___ **EXPEDITION SLEEPING BAG:** Rated to -15 F (-20 C). Marmot Col, Mt Hardwear 4th Dimension or the Feathered Friends Peregrine are all great bags. Down bags are so much lighter that you really should have a compelling reason for selecting a synthetic bag, despite how much better they are than even a few years ago.

Guides' Pick: Valandre Shocking Blue- this -20C bag weighs just under 3 lbs! It has some "tricky" features built into its collar that annoy some folks, but for saving weight, it is top-notch.

___ **COMPRESSION STUFF SACK:** Outdoor Research has some nice, light compression sacks. These are essential for sleeping bags and one is recommended for your summit clothes, such as your parka, mitts and warmest pants.

___ **SLEEPING PADS:** You need **two** pads, with one being a closed cell pad such as a Ridge Rest or a Karrimat. While Therm-a-Rest inflatable pads have traditionally the warmest and most comfortable our **Guides' Pick is the Exped Downmat 7 paired with a Ridge Rest.** You might even bump up to the Exped 9, which is even thicker, warmer and cozier!



ESSENTIAL PERSONAL ITEMS

___ **STUFF BAGS** (for your personal items. Sil-nylon sacks are the lightest currently available)

___ **WATER PURIFICATION SYSTEM** (there are many good options, and they get better every year, be certain to have enough to treat 5-6 liters per day for approximately 16 days)

Guides' Pick: Polar Pur Iodine system

___ **CAMELBACK HYDRATION SYSTEM** (optional, but well worth the weight)

___ **TWO (2) ONE LITER WIDE MOUTH WATER BOTTLES**

___ **INSULATED COVER(S)** (1or 2 for your water bottles).

___ **LARGE PLASTIC CUP** for eating (2-4 cup measuring bowl, Fair Share Mug or Rubbermaid storage bowl)

___ **INSULATED CUP with lid** for hot drinks

___ **LARGE PLASTIC (LEXAN) SPOON**

___ **LIP CREAM 2-3 tubes (WITH 30+SPF)**

___ **SUN SCREEN (4-8 OUNCES in two or more tubes)**

___ **TOILET PAPER (1 roll)**

___ **HEADLAMP w/ NEW BATTERIES**

___ **EXTRA SET OF BATTERIES**

___ **TOILET KIT** (Tooth brush & paste, floss, Handi-wipes,... keep it small)

___ **HAND SANITIZER** A small bottle will suffice for the trip.

___ **SWISS ARMY KNIFE (optional)**

___ **"P" BOTTLE** (wide mouth collapsible Nalgene work great- they make a 96 ounce version- trust me, it's worth it! Ladies look for funnel type adapters and practise with them before you come- They work great!)

___ **PERSONAL MEDICAL KIT** (Blister kit, aspirin, antacids, lozenges, Ibuprofen, prescriptions medications per advice from your doctor)

Mountain Trip will have a comprehensive medical kit.

GEAR LIST

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

___ **ICE AXE:** (with leash.) 60-70 cm length works well for Aconcagua. Choose a light one.

Guides' Pick: Black Diamond Raven Ultra

___ **CRAMPONS:** 10 or 12 point crampons that FIT YOUR BOOTS! Step in or Straps work equally well, just make sure step-in versions fit with your boots. Aluminum crampons are also acceptable if they are in new condition.

___ **HARNES:** You can bring a traditional harness with adjustable leg loops, as you might wear it over your bulky, puffy pants. You can also bring 6 feet (2m) of 1 inch tubular webbing to fashion a lightweight, functional "swami belt."

___ **CARABINER:** Bring one large locking carabiner.

___ **SKI POLES:** Adjustable poles work best and they travel more conveniently. Black Diamond Flick Lock poles are recommended as they are less prone to spontaneously collapsing than other versions.

OPTIONAL ITEMS

___ CAMERA, with lots of film or memory and extra batteries

___ BOOK(S) for storm day reading- 2+ is not excessive

___ DIARY & PENCIL

___ ALTIMETER WATCH

___ HAND LOTION - it is very dry down there...

___ FOOT POWDER

___ MAPS (available in Mendoza)

___ BANDANAS - multipurpose!

___ NECK GAITOR

___ SPARE SUN GLASSES

___ PERSONAL MUSIC PLAYER(MP3 PLAYER with flash drive, as hard drives fail at altitude)

___ CHAIR KIT FOR YOUR SLEEPING PAD (Lighter than Crazy Creek chairs and pretty darn nice!)

___ 10 of your favorite Energy Bars, or Candy Bars and some Energy Drink (it is nice to have some of your favorites that are not available in Argentina. Don't over do it as this stuff gets heavy and we will provide plenty of food)



RENTAL ITEMS

****We charge more for our rental items on international trips, as we often pay extra baggage fees to get them to our destination****

___ SKI POLES (\$30)

___ CRAMPONS (\$45)

___ ICE AXE (\$45)

___ EXPEDITION PACK (\$100)

Please follow this list closely and do not hesitate to call us for clarifications or to solicit an opinion about anything you are considering. There is a limited selection of gear available in Mendoza but please do not plan on picking anything up down there. Only bring down good gear that is in very good condition. We also occasionally have expedition equipment for sale.

Equipment is available at:

Feathered Friends in Seattle

****Mention that you are joining Mountain Trip and receive a 10% discount.**

www.featheredfriends.com

+1-206-292-6292



TRAIN



- Climbing a high mountain is a serious undertaking, which demands a lot from your body. This experience can only be fully enjoyed if you have prepared for it. Physical fitness is one of the subjective factors of mountaineering over which we can exert a great deal of control. It is especially important for the occasional mountaineer to realize that being fit can make dealing with objective hazards less dangerous. Your physical capacity for mountaineering is determined primarily by your level of aerobic power and physical strength. You must begin training well in advance of your expedition. Plan your training a minimum of six months before your trip. Make up a realistic training schedule for yourself, and stick to it!
- Do not count on getting into shape over the first days of your expedition. Seasoned mountaineers understand this and try to maintain a continual state of fitness. An unfit climber on an expedition can be a potentially dangerous liability to himself and to the safety and success of the rest of the team members. The fitness level of individual members of an expedition can make or break a climb. Your fitness level can also dictate just how much you will enjoy the experience.
- If you are over 30 years old and have been living a sedentary life for more than a year, you should have a complete physical before beginning your training program and you should begin your training program 5-6 months in advance of your expedition.
- Climbing a high mountain is serious and one must be serious about being prepared. Begin your training program with low key exercise and then gradually build up both distance and intensity. Do not over-train at the start, but give your body and mind time to adjust to the training stress. LSD (long, slow distance) is one of the safest ways to train and it will produce the fastest results. After you have trained yourself so you can climb, hike, cycle, ski or whatever for several hours with minimum of fatigue, you will have the self confidence and body awareness for mountaineering.

TRAINING FOR AN EXPEDITION

Aerobic Training and Endurance Training

Aerobic conditioning for mountaineering should involve long term, sub-maximum heart rate (65-85% of max HR) endurance type activities that stress and develop the cardiovascular system. Activities that fall into this category include cycling, running, Nordic skiing, brisk walking, swimming, hiking and mountaineering. To be effective, these endurance activities must be done at a constant heart rate (above 65% of max HR) for at least 30-60+ minutes, three to five days a week. At least one day should include a multi hour effort. Your maximum heart rate (HR) is roughly 220 less your age.

Your mountaineering endurance program must eventually reflect the long, continuous hours spent climbing a high mountain. Running a few miles a week will be of little benefit. In preparing to climb a high mountain like Aconcagua; you should be able to run 6 to 8 miles in under 1 hour or cycle 60 miles in well under 4 hours. This provides a fitness safety margin you will need to have for high altitude mountaineering. Plan on at least 10-12 weeks of training.

Strength Training This is important to prepare your body for climbing steep terrain while carrying any sized pack. Strength training can entail working out with weights, or climbing up hills, mountains, stairs, stair-climbers, etc with a pack. Getting used to carrying a medium (30-35lb.) pack is essential for success on Aconcagua. Begin with a light pack and build up to a weight that is more than our anticipated load. Too often we have seen team members who could run for hours, but could not carry a 30 pound pack for 4 to 5 hrs.. Spend at least one day a week carrying a pack. This will allow you to get used to your pack and fit it to your body.

Suggestions for a Training Schedule

"I believe that the man who works hardest deserves to win..."
Lance Armstrong

Come up with a realistic training program that you can actually do. Write up a schedule for a few weeks at a time and change it as your body begins to respond to the exercise. Once you have gotten a good fitness base and you can work out without too much stress, you should increase this to 5-6 days a week. Do not try to work out 7 days a week, as your body needs at least one day of rest.

The harder you train before a climb, the more you will be able to enjoy the experience and the greater will be your chances for success. So begin your training now: take it seriously and enjoy yourself on the mountain. So get that

pack out and go for a hike! Training can often be achieved doing all the activities you love!

The following is an example of an early training week starting 6 months prior to your climb. Exercise time should increase to double this as you get stronger and closer to the expedition departure date. It is important to taper off a harder training schedule to lower the risk of a training related injury. We all like to ski fast, bike hard but balance this with the risks of injury. You can replace different activities with what you enjoy, so training can be having fun! Skiing, Mtn. Biking, Road Biking, Skate Skiing, Cross country Skiing, Backcountry Skiing, Rock Climbing and Alpine Climbing.

SUNDAY: Long endurance activity 2-3 hours with light pack (increase pack weight as your strength improves)

MONDAY: Rest Day

TUESDAY: Endurance activity of your choice 60 minutes. Cycle, ski, run, stair climber...

WEDNESDAY: Rest with some stretching or strength training for 30-60 minutes.

THURSDAY: Activity for 60+ minutes, Strength and Cardio

FRIDAY: Activity for 30-60+ minutes, Cardio

SATURDAY: Activity for 90+ minutes, Strength and Cardio

Consider these training tips to be a minimum at which you should comfortable before you depart for your climb. The actual climb will be considerably harder in the number of hours and will be closer to your maximum cardiovascular and respiratory rates.

Write Down your Training Schedule and keep notes on your activities. Simply writing down your training schedule for the next few weeks can help you stick to it can really help improve your commitment. Write in a calendar what you will do and compare it to what you have done.

Training is one of the most important things you can do to increase your summit chances starting right now.



OUR SOAP BOX



Mountain Trip is committed to Low Impact Practices in all aspects of our operations. We travel among some of the most beautiful mountain environments in the world and believe it is our responsibility to protect these places in whatever way we can. We practice the "Leave No Trace" policy in the wilderness to minimize our impact in the pristine mountains where we lead our trips.

As mountain guides, we are lucky to be able to travel to remote locations around the globe and visit different peoples and places. While acknowledging that our mere presence in some regions is an impact, we will always do our best to learn about and respect local cultures in all our travels.

Moving forward into the second decade of the new millennium, we need to be conscious of the fact that the choices we make affect the footprint that we leave on this planet. We try to do our part to make this world a better place by purchasing healthy expedition food with minimal packaging and packing out our trash on expeditions. We support vendors who practice lower impact policies. Our Mountain Trip T-shirts are made from organic cotton and we utilize a solar powered web service to power our website. Since 2008, we have been purchasing carbon offsets to reduce the impact of our operations.

As a company, we invest heavily in our guides and we think that you will notice what a

difference this makes on our trips. Mountain Trip has always felt more like a family than a corporation and this is a big reason that so many of our guides return year after year. A result is that all of our lead guides are among the most experienced and respected in the world.

We encourage you to call our office with any questions or comments. When you call, you will reach someone who has climbed Aconcagua many times and can give you advice based on personal experience not based on an informational "cheat sheet." We love what we do and are excited to share the high mountains with you. Thanks for your trust and we'll see you in Mendoza.