

## Cerro Aconcagua (22,841')

### Horcones Valley (Normal Route)

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*Aconcagua at sunset*

International Mountain Guides is the oldest and most respected high-altitude guide service in the world and has been operating successfully since 1975. In choosing IMG for your Aconcagua climb, you are going with the highest quality expedition, the most capable and qualified guides, and a highly personalized guide service that strives to limit risk and maximize success while conducting a fun, memorable team climb.

We have been guiding on Aconcagua continuously for longer than any other guide service. IMG was one of the first companies to pioneer the Relinchos Valley route more than thirty years ago when there was almost no one on Aconcagua. We also had some of the first guides in the Guanacos Valley.

Over the course of almost 40 years, IMG has had one of the highest, if not the highest success rates for reaching the top. That's no accident. We choose to not run dozens of Aconcagua expeditions a year, nor do we run hundreds of clients through our program. We focus on a personalized, professional, high-end experience. We want to build a relationship with our clients and give them the best possible service with the highest chance of success. Our goal is mutual as IMG guides genuinely love to summit! There IS a difference between our expeditions and those of other guide services. We welcome you to look closely at what we offer and see why we are the company for you.

Aconcagua was closed in 2021 due to Covid, and for 2022 we will climb the Horcones Valley (Normal Route) due to the Aconcagua National Park only opening that route. While not our first choice, we will do our best to make this a memorable climb, with the addition of extra porters above Base Camp and using the helicopter from Base Camp at the end of the climb.

#### Aconcagua: Just The Facts

**Summit:**

22,841' • 6962m

**Set Your GPS:**

32° 39' S • 70° 14' W

**Sizing Up:**

Aconcagua is the highest mountain in the Western hemisphere.

**First Boot-Prints on Top:**

Mathias Zurbiggen, became the first to climb Aconcagua on an 1897 expedition organized by Edward Fitzgerald who never got to the top.

**First by the Polish:**

The Polish Glacier was first climbed in March 1934 by the Polish team of Otrowski, Narkiewicz, Daszinski, and Osiecki on the 8<sup>th</sup> successful ascent of the mountain.

**By Any Other Name:**

Aconcagua means "The White Sentinel" in Quechua and "The Sentinel of Stone" in Aymara.

**Bring A Jacket:**

Temperatures range from balmy to -25°C, but frequent and severe winds can take the windchill to -15°C. The proximity to the Pacific Ocean brings frequent storms to Aconcagua, and a particular phenomenon on the mountain is a strong, humid wind that engulfs the peak from the west at high altitude (above 18,000') forming a huge mushroom cloud of micro ice-crystals. Locals consider it highly advisable to descend when this formation is visible.

**Don't Provoke the Wildlife:**

The Guanaco is a large mammal that lives in South America and is related to the llama. It lives in the mountains, eats mostly grass and spits when provoked.



*Descending to Plaza de Mulas basecamp*

## **ACONCAGUA: THE STONE SENTINEL AND TOP OF THE AMERICAS**

Aconcagua is one of the great mountains of the world. At 22,841 feet tall it is the highest mountain in the southern and western hemispheres and is the tallest peak in the world outside of the Himalayas. Given the opposing climbing seasons and day/night time difference between Argentina and the Himalayas, when you summit Aconcagua, odds are good you'll be higher than any other person on the planet. Not a bad perspective from which to gaze over Argentina, Chile and the southern Andean range. That rarified view has to be earned though! Only Everest is more topographically prominent than Aconcagua (meaning it is BIG compared to its surroundings), the weather conditions can be among the more difficult in the world, and the climb requires skill and endurance. Being one of the coveted seven summits, Aconcagua attracts climbers from all over the globe to challenge their strength and abilities to tag the top.

On this big peak, we follow impressive footprints. Although there is no proof that the Incans ever summited Aconcagua, it is generally accepted that they have at least been very high on the mountain. There is evidence of the Incas being at the top of many high Andean mountains and a well-preserved mummy was found at 17,060 feet along Aconcagua's Southwest Ridge. The first non-native expeditions to the mountain didn't begin until 1833 when a prominent German alpinist Paul Gussfeldt made an unsuccessful attempt. It was a long stretch to the first successful summit in 1896-97 when a team under the leadership of Edward Fitzgerald placed renowned Swiss mountain guide Matthias Zurbriggen on top. That made Aconcagua the highest mountain to have been climbed at the time. The great South Face of Aconcagua was later climbed by a French expedition under the leadership of Rene Ferlet in 1954, not long after the French summited the first of the 8000-meter peaks, Annapurna.

Our expeditions are staged in the unique and welcoming town of Mendoza which offers all the amenities for a comfortable and fun stay. Argentina has a culture known for great food and wine, relaxed nature, and hospitality. IMG has spent years perfecting our logistics in order to offer you the best expedition possible, taking advantage of all that the mountain and area have to offer. In doing so, we have created an almost unparalleled success rate while maintaining our flawless safety record. Your trust is well placed with International Mountain Guides.

## **THE ROUTE**

For the 2022 Season, our expedition will ascend the mountain via the Horcones Valley, also referred to as the Normal Route. Climbing the Normal Route, while not technically challenging, will require you to be in excellent physical fitness because it is a steeper climb. We have incorporated additional acclimatization days as well as porters to assist our team in moving gear up the mountain. The descent down the Normal Route from our high camp will also allow us to

get back down in elevation quickly after summiting. Once back at Plaza De Mulas Base Camp, we will celebrate and prepare for the helicopter flight back to the park entrance. The helicopter departure will also allow for more time climbing and when finished, a beautiful and unique experience to view the mountain from the air. This flight will take no more than 15 minutes whereas trekking out will take 2 full days!

Three camps will be established above Plaza De Mulas to put the expedition in position for a summit attempt. The three camps are Camp Canada Camp 1 (16,108'), Nido De Condores Camp 2 (17,244') and Cholera Camp 3 (19,587'). The camps we have chosen to use incorporate shorter carry and move days including better climbing terrain and will allow us to utilize the "climb high, sleep low" technique which has proven to be the accepted high-altitude mountaineering practice. After summiting, we will also have the option to drop back down to Nido De Condores Camp for the night. The lower we can get after reaching the summit, the better we will feel and the last day down to Plaza De Mulas will be more reasonable.

## OUR GUIDES

At International Mountain Guides we have some of the most qualified and experienced guides in the world. They are all extremely enjoyable to work with and lead expeditions adhering to the highest American and International guiding standards. Our local Guide Team is second to none and have over 25 summits each of Aconcagua. They have also climbed in other areas around the world including Alaska and the Himalaya. We are sure that you will enjoy getting to know our local team. They are world class climbers, cooks, and story tellers. You are sure to have many laughs with this team!

## REFERENCES

Joining a high-altitude expedition is a serious decision. You should be completely confident in the organization and leadership before you make that decision. Many of you have climbed with us before elsewhere in the world, and because your experience was good, you've decided to join us again. For those of you who haven't climbed with us before, we strongly encourage you to interview us thoroughly and also talk to our past customers. We are happy to provide you with a complete list of references.

## IMG's PHILOSOPHY

Our goal is to minimize risk while helping as many team members as possible reach their goal, and we invest in the personnel and equipment that will make this happen. We value our reputation as the premier international climbing company and we only put programs in place that measure up to our own highest standards. If you would like to join a world class team on Aconcagua, we encourage you to contact us to discuss your goals and qualifications and secure an exciting role for yourself on our team. Our goal has always been to send our clients away with fond memories of an arduous but enjoyable expedition. Foremost, our concern while on the mountain is always minimizing risk, and we go out of our way to take all the necessary precautions to be able to deal with any situation that may occur while on the expedition. Our other main goal is to give our clients every reasonable chance of summiting. To achieve this second goal, we have chosen a slightly slower on-mountain schedule which allows all team members to acclimatize fully and naturally. We have inserted a few rest days into the itinerary which allows us to acclimatize naturally. We also have scheduled extra summit contingency days to give us more room to deal with inclement weather. The pursuit of these goals has allowed us an impeccable safety record and a success rate that is well above the average of other guided and non-guided mountain groups.

## PROGRAM FEES

### Aconcagua Dates:

- Jan 8, 2022 – Jan 30, 2022                      Landcost: \$7,200 US (plus \$900 permit fee)

### Costs Included:

- Guide fees
- Double accommodations in hotels (3 total nights in Mendoza, 1 in Penitentes)
- Shared accommodations in tents
- Group transportation
- Group equipment including stoves and fuel, ropes, cooking gear, group first aid kit, technical climbing equipment, radios, etc.
- Mule support for Plaza De Mulas approach and final exit day
- One shared porter from C1, C2, and C3 to carry group gear up and down the mountain as well as carrying down group garbage and human waste.
- Helicopter transportation from Plaza De Mulas to the Park Entrance
- Meals while climbing except for snack items. Check out what guides prefer to eat in the mountains: [guide snack tips](#). Mendoza has a wide variety of food shopping options but bring your favorite items from home.

### Costs Not Included:

- International airfare including airport taxes
- Aconcagua climbing permit (estimated to be \$900)
- Meals while not climbing
- Airport transfers in Mendoza
- Personal clothing and climbing equipment included in the Aconcagua gear list.
- **REQUIRED Insurance:** IMG requires that all international trip participants purchase [Travel Insurance](#) that includes coverage for medical evacuation, repatriation and medical expenses for the duration of their IMG program. Trip Cancellation Insurance is strongly recommended. Trekking and mountaineering programs are true "adventure travel."
- Guide gratuities (10-15% recommended)

### ACONCAGUA PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Due	Payment of:	Aconcagua
At registration, if > 120 days of Trip Date	Application Fee	\$1,500
At 120 Days Prior to Trip Date	Balance of Landcost Fees	\$5,700
At registration <= 120 days of Trip Date	Total Landcost Fees	\$7,200

*All IMG program fees are quoted in US dollars. All fees and payments are non-refundable and non-transferable. Payments must be received by IMG on or before the due dates noted above. If you require bank wire information, let us know. Our bank does not charge for incoming bank wires; however, please account for wire fees charged by your bank or correspondent banks.*

**REQUIRED Travel Insurance:** IMG requires that all participants on international programs purchase Travel Insurance that includes coverage for medical evacuation, repatriation and medical expenses for the duration of their IMG program. We strongly recommend that you add [Trip Cancellation](#) coverage to your policy to cover cancellation (before trip starts) or interruption (after trip starts.) If you have general travel insurance questions, please email [Becky Kiorvestad](#). Please extend your insurance policy to cover your trip until you return to your home country.



<b>Aconcagua via the Normal Route Itinerary</b>		
Day	Date	Itinerary
1	Saturday, January 8, 2022	Depart from Home
2	Sunday, January 9, 2022	Arrive Mendoza, gear checks
3	Monday, January 10, 2022	Secure Climbing Permits, pack, gear checks
4	Tuesday, January 11, 2022	Depart Mendoza for the town of Penitentes (8,940ft)
5	Wednesday, January 12, 2022	Penitentes to Confluencia (10,826 ft) 3-4 hours
6	Thursday, January 13, 2022	Acclimatization / Active rest day at Confluencia
7	Friday, January 14, 2022	Confluencia to Plaza De Mulas (13,976 ft) 6-8 hours
8	Saturday, January 15, 2022	Plaza De Mulas Acclimatization
9	Sunday, January 16, 2022	Carry to Camp Canada and return to Plaza De Mulas
10	Monday, January 17, 2022	Plaza De Mulas Rest Day
11	Tuesday, January 18, 2022	Move to Camp Canada (16,108 ft)
12	Wednesday, January 19, 2022	Move to Nido De Condores (17,244 ft)
13	Thursday, January 20, 2022	Nido De Condores - Rest Day
14	Friday, January 21, 2022	Carry to Camp Cholera and return to Nido De Condores
15	Saturday, January 22, 2022	Move to Camp Cholera (19,587 ft)
16	Sunday, January 23, 2022	Summit (22,842 ft) and return to Camp Cholera
17	Monday, January 24, 2022	Descend to Plaza De Mulas
18	Tuesday, January 25, 2022	Helicopter to Penitentes, return to Mendoza, get Covid test
19	Wednesday, January 26, 2022	Depart Mendoza for Home
20	Thursday, January 27, 2022	Contingency
21	Friday, January 28, 2022	Contingency
22	Saturday, January 29, 2022	Contingency
23	Sunday, January 30, 2022	Contingency

**Please Note:** This is a probable but tentative itinerary. Our exact schedule may change depending on factors including weather and group ability.

### **CUSTOM PROGRAMS**

We have worked with many individuals and groups to organize custom programs in Aconcagua. Whether its different dates or additional days before or after a trip, we're [here](#) to assist you.

### **CLIMBING SKILLS**

Prior knowledge of ice axe arrest, cramponing and rope team travel is required. Past experience with cold weather camping, multi-day expeditions and some altitude experience is also quite helpful. This climb is not overly difficult technically but does require excellent physical conditioning and the ability to carry a heavy mountaineering pack.

### **CONDITIONING**

You cannot over train for high altitude climbing. Concentrate on your heart, legs and lungs. If you are in a position to do any hiking or climbing at higher elevations, do so. An aerobic program of running hills, stair climbing, bicycling, etc. plus a conditioning program for quad, glute, and calf muscles is necessary. You will be better prepared, increase your chances of success and enjoy the trip more if you are properly prepared. Summit day on Aconcagua is as or more demanding physically than the summit day on Denali.

## EQUIPMENT

The enclosed Equipment List is for your guidance. Most items are required, a few are optional. Please consider each item carefully and be sure you understand what its function is before you make any substitutions. Keep in mind that this list has been carefully compiled after years of Aconcagua experience. If you have questions, please call.

## FOOD

Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided to climbers while on the mountain. While climbing above basecamp, IMG will provide breakfast and dinners and we ask each team member to bring his/her own snack food for in between these meals. The common phrase in the mountains is, "lunch starts after breakfast, and finishes right before dinner." These snacks will be used during the hours on the trail and summit day. You should plan on bringing 8-10 days worth of snacks at about one pound per day. Hot drinks will be offered during group breakfasts and dinners which will include cocoa, tea, cider, coffee etc. Starbucks Via packets have become very popular in the mountains and if you're a big coffee drinker make sure to throw a few in.

## WEATHER

Aconcagua is a mountain of extremes. Historically, the best weather windows for an ascent of Aconcagua are December through February. Extremely hot weather can be expected on the approach, in the arid high-desert climate of the Horcones Valley. As the group ascends higher on the mountain, very cold and windy weather should be expected. Chill factors high on the mountain can be as cold as those encountered on Denali. Our required equipment list reflects these extremes which will allow the team to show up prepared and ready for all conditions.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

Please consult with your physician regarding the **required medications** in the gear list. It is always nice to have a physician in the group, but we cannot guarantee one's presence. Oxygen will not be available at any time during the expedition. Each team member must bring their own personal first aid kit containing frequently used items (see equipment list) and we will supply a group first aid kit. Each member should also bring a small bottle of iodine crystals or tablets for water purification. Steri-pens can be useful for the trek into basecamp but are not worth the extra weight higher on the mountain and should be left at basecamp.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Please review the recommendations of the CDC for travelers to Argentina:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/argentina>

In particular we recommend that you update your routine vaccinations, and get vaccinated against Hepatitis A and B. IMG requires all team members to have Covid vaccination.

## PASSPORTS

If you do not already have a passport, or if your current passport is due to expire within 6 months of the start date of the expedition, you must obtain a new one. **A CURRENT PASSPORT IS REQUIRED FOR ENTRY INTO ARGENTINA, WITH AT LEAST ONE BLANK PAGE.** We also suggest that you carry a photocopy of the front pages of your passport and a couple of extra passport photos. This simplifies replacement if a passport is lost. Carry these in a place separate from your passport. We like to take a photo of our passport with our smartphone as well!

## VISA INFORMATION

Entry into Argentina no longer requires an advance visa. You will only be asked to fill out an embarkation/disembarkation card (provided upon arrival).

## AIR TRAVEL

International Mountain Guides has worked for many years with Ms. Pirjo Dehart and her staff at CTT Destinations to provide professional travel service for participants in our programs. We urge you to contact CTT Destinations at 800.909.6647 or [img@cttdestinations.com](mailto:img@cttdestinations.com) for help with your plans.

## PACKING AND TRAVELING SUGGESTIONS

Most of us will pack our gear in two duffel bags. Put your climbing pack in one of these bags. Most airlines limit checked luggage to two pieces each weighing no more than 50 lbs, depending on the airline. Use zip ties or TSA-approved locks to close the zipper tabs on your bags to prevent any pilfering. In addition to these two bags, it's nice to use a small backpack as your carry-on. Try to pick a carry-on that can also be used as your day pack for the 3-day trek into basecamp and the trek out at the end of the trip. Mules will carry all of our equipment to basecamp, so this backpack should be large enough to carry items similar to what you would bring for a day hike.

Although we will be wearing mountain clothing for the bulk of the expedition, bring along some casual clothing and nicer attire for meals out in Mendoza. Mendoza can be VERY warm so plan accordingly for the time spent there before and after our climb. Our accommodations in Mendoza have a pool, so don't forget a swimsuit and flip-flops.

## MONEY TO BRING

Cash should be carried in the form of U.S. dollars. Well-known credit cards are also accepted at better business establishments throughout the world. Plan to take about \$2000 for spending money and your climbing permit. This is likely more than you'll spend but it's always nice to have extra dollars. **You will also need to bring cash to pay for the Aconcagua permit that we will acquire in Mendoza prior to our expedition. We are expecting a fee of \$900 plus/minus, and will let you know the exact amount when it becomes available to us. You will need to bring crisp new \$100 bills to pay for your permit.**

**DEPARTURE LOGISTICS** After the expedition ends, you will be required to get another Covid test before flying home. We will assist you to do this on the final day on the way back to Mendoza after the climb. Currently, we are planning on getting the COVID PCR-RT from a lab in Mendoza which will give enough time for the results to come back. We will then plan on staying at a hotel near the airport. We would suggest making your departing flight from Mendoza in the afternoon of the departing day on the itinerary.

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*“I want to write to thank you for the great Aconcagua trip. It was the best climbing I ever had, both in terms of sheer pleasure, good companionship and as a learning experience...”*

—John N.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: [mountainguides.com/comments.shtml](http://mountainguides.com/comments.shtml)

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## Aconcagua Required Equipment List -- Please Read Carefully

Item	Examples/Notes
Internal frame mountaineering backpack	
2 duffel bags	
Small carry-on/travel bag	
Ice Axe (60-70 cm)	
Crampons	
Adjustable ski poles	
Climbing Harness	
Climbing Helmet	
1 locking and 1 non-locking carabiner	
Sleeping bag rated between 0F and -20F	
Inflatable sleeping pad	
Closed cell foam pad	
Double climbing boots	
Gaiters	
Light hiking shoes or boots	
Sandals for river wading	
3 sets of wool climbing socks	
3 sets of light hiking socks	
Light hiking shirt	
Light hiking shorts and pants	
4 Pairs of synthetic underwear	
2 sports bras (ladies)	
Synthetic base layer for legs (long underwear)	
Soft-shell climbing pants	
Waterproof Gore-Tex pants with full-length leg zippers	
Insulated climbing pants	
2 Synthetic upper body base layers	
1 or 2 medium weight insulating layers	
Soft-shell jacket	
Insulated parka	
Waterproof Gore-Tex jacket	
Wool/fleece beanie hat that fits under your helmet	
Light weight gloves	
Medium weight gloves	
Heavy weight gloves	
3 Buffs	
Sun hat	
Glacier glasses	
Goggles	
Sunscreen and lip balm (at least 30 spf)	
2 wide-mouth Nalgene water bottles	
2 water bottle insulating covers	
Thermos	



<b>Pee bottle</b>	
<b>Female Urination Device</b>	
<b>Plastic cup, bowl and spoon</b>	
<b>Headlamp with extra batteries</b>	
<b>Camera</b>	
<b>Toiletries</b>	
<b>Ear plugs</b>	
<b>Personal first aid kit and REQUIRED medications:</b>	Consult with your doctor to acquire medications and to complete IMG Physician's Certificate in the application package.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High altitude and travel medications:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Acetazolamide (14 tablets @ 125mg)</li> <li>-Dexamethasone (4 tablets @ 4mg)</li> <li>-Nifedipine (2 tablets @ 30mg)</li> <li>-Azithromycin (2 regimens)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Aspirin</li> <li>• Antacids</li> <li>• Imodium</li> <li>• Moleskin or second skin for blisters</li> <li>• One roll of athletic tape</li> <li>• Band-aids</li> </ul>	
<b>Iodine for water purification</b>	
<b>Pocket knife</b>	
<b>Small travel towel</b>	
<b>5 Large trash compactor bags</b>	
<b>Alarm wrist watch</b>	
<b>Casual clothes</b>	Make sure to bring some comfortable clothes for hanging out and going out to dinner. Leave the black tie/dress at home, but classier attire is appropriate at some of the meals we will be having in Mendoza. Don't forget a bathing suit and flip flops.

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***“I had the time of my life on Aconcagua. The trip was absolutely incredible — two weeks that I will treasure for the rest of my life...”***

—Nicky M.

***“The professionalism demonstrated by IMG's guides as well as the high standards that they hold their clients up to maximized our chances of reaching the summit...”***

—Greg Y.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: [mountainguides.com/comments.shtml](http://mountainguides.com/comments.shtml)

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