

**ASA**

*Location-Specific*

**GUIDE:**

**Buenos Aires**

*For parents and students*

## In this guide:

- Student Visa
- Helpful Local Information
- Host Institution & Housing
- Medical Care
- Cell Phones
- Mail, Computers, Internet

## Please read our ASA Guide to Study Abroad for information about:

- Contact Information
- Payment and Financial Aid
- Passport
- Keeping Your Important Documents Safe
- Vaccinations
- Prescription Medication
- Medical Insurance
- Money and Banking
- Travel Arrangements / Airport Pick-up
- What to Pack
- Orientation
- Safety
- Homesickness and Culture Shock
- Reverse Culture Shock

## ***Student Visa***

All students must have a passport that does not expire for at least 3 months after their proposed return date from Argentina.

♦ **All U.S. citizens have to pay a “Reciprocity Fee” of US\$140 upon arrival at EZE airport. This can be paid in U.S. dollars cash, by credit card, or with travelers checks.** Once paid, the fee permits multiple entries into Argentina for ten years, in accordance with United States visa reciprocity.

♦ **All students will also have to apply for a VISA after arriving in Buenos Aires – our Site Director will assist you with this process. The cost of the visa is approx. US\$108 (325 pesos).** Cost of the visa will vary based on the exchange rate. For the current exchange rate, go to [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

♦ **Please read the document “Student Visa Information for Argentina” for complete details on how to apply for your Student Visa, the cost and the required documents.**

## ***Helpful Local Information***

ASA students in Buenos Aires will have a Site Director to assist them during their stay:

**Gabriela Gamper** cell phone: 011 54 9 11 5452 7104\* [gabrielagamper@yahoo.com.ar](mailto:gabrielagamper@yahoo.com.ar)

*\*This number includes the U.S. int'l code and Argentine country code, so it's the number you would dial if you are in the U.S. If you're in Argentina and want to call Gabriela, simply dial 15 5452 7104.*

*NOTE: 011 is the int'l dialing code from the U.S., 54 is the country code for Argentina, and 11 is the city code for Buenos Aires. To call an Argentine cell phone from the U.S., you also have to use a prefix of 9, between the country code and the city code. To call an Argentine cell phone from the U.S., you would dial 011-54-9-11-plus the local number. If the local number is listed beginning with 15, omit the 15 when calling internationally, since that is the local dialing prefix not to be used when calling internationally. For example, Gabriela's local number is 15 5452 7104. To call her from the U.S., you dial 011-54-9-11-5452-7104. Calling South America can be a bit of a challenge at first, so be patient, and if you don't get connected the first time, try again.*

### **Weather in Buenos Aires**

The weather in Buenos Aires is favorable practically year round. The average annual temperature is approx. 64°F.

**Since Argentina is in the southern hemisphere, the seasons are opposite of North America:**

**Spring: September 21 – December 21**

**Summer: December 21 – March 21**

**Autumn: March 21 – July 21**

**Winter: July 21 – September 21**

The coldest month in Buenos Aires is July, with an average temperature between 37°F and 46°F. The hottest month in Buenos Aires is January, with an average temperature of 82°F. The Summer (Dec. 21 – March 20) is hot and humid. In the summer, temperatures remain mild even at night. Rain is most frequent in the Spring and Autumn.

## ***Host Institution & Housing***

**ASA students in Buenos Aires will attend:**

### **Universidad de Belgrano**

Address:

Oficina de Movilidad Internacional

Universidad de Belgrano

Zabala 1837 Piso 17 Oficina 23

C1426DQG Capital Federal

Tel: 54 11 4788 5400 internal extensions 2128 y 2085

Fax: 54 11 4576 3930

*Students can choose to attend a semester with or without a month-long Spanish language intensive course that takes place prior to the regular semester.*

### **Contacts at the Universidad de Belgrano:**

Marcela Porto: Vice Director, Department of International Relations:

[marcela.porto@ub.edu.ar](mailto:marcela.porto@ub.edu.ar)

Silvia E. Maggiorini, Enrollment:

[silvia.maggiori@ub.edu.ar](mailto:silvia.maggiori@ub.edu.ar)

Luís Alfredo Martínez, Student Services, Housing:

[studyabroad@frontdeskub.com](mailto:studyabroad@frontdeskub.com)

### **Where will students live?**

Students can choose to live with an Argentine host family or in a shared student apartment in Buenos Aires. The host families provide daily breakfast and dinner; no meals are included with the shared student apartment option. Laundry is NOT included with either housing option, but some host families allow students to use their washer for a small fee. Laundromats are also available. Bedrooms may be shared or individual. *Internet is NOT available in the residences.*

The Universidad de Belgrano has its own housing office for international students, called the Front Desk UB. All of the host families are carefully screened by the Front Desk UB staff, and the majority has hosted students for years. The hosts' residences are located as close to school as possible, in safe areas of the city; however, some hosts are located further from the school than others. Living in a Argentine home is considered the best form of housing because it provides an immediate introduction to life in Argentina. **Students find that speaking Spanish at home is the single greatest factor in increasing their facility with the language.**

**Living arrangements and the composition of families vary. The term "host family" should not be interpreted too narrowly. Increasingly, about 50% of the hosts are childless couples or divorced women with children who enjoy having a student living with them. The host families come from a cross-section of society; they belong to no particular professional or social milieu.**

Living arrangements and the composition of families vary. Keep in mind homes in Argentina are not as large as most homes here, so space, especially storage space, can be limited. **The vast majority of students love living with a host family and report that it was one of the best aspects of their study abroad experience.**

Students usually have their own room. Some hosts take only one student at a time, and others more. So, you may be the only student in your homestay, or you may have a housemate from the U.S. or from another country. In the shared student apartments, your housemates could be from the U.S. or from another country (but in any case will be international students who are attending the Universidad de Belgrano). If you have a particular preference, please note this on your Housing Questionnaire.

### **How does ASA select host families?**

The Front Desk UB staff in Buenos Aires is responsible for interviewing, selecting, and matching host families with students. All the hosts must complete a detailed questionnaire and interview with the Front Desk UB staff in their home. Each host is asked a variety of questions about their background, occupations, family composition, previous experience with students, habits, living arrangements, pets, and more.

All ASA students will complete a Housing Questionnaire after being accepted, which collects information that help us match the student with a compatible host family. *Students must be sure to indicate any allergies, dietary restrictions, or other special needs on the Housing Questionnaire.*

**Students will receive their host family assignment by email, about 1-2 weeks prior to departure.** If you have any concerns about your living arrangements after you arrive, please don't hesitate to bring it to our attention. Many times a concern can be a cultural misunderstanding or a communication problem that is easily resolved. If, for any reason, we are unable to settle an issue between a host family and a student, we will move the student to a new family as soon as possible. The welfare of our students is always our highest priority.

### **I have pet allergies/special dietary needs/other special needs. Can this be accommodated?**

In most cases, yes. We will make every effort to accommodate each student's needs! It is extremely important that students indicate any allergies, dietary restrictions, or other special needs on their Housing Questionnaire.

### **How will I get to class from my residence?**

Some students will be able to walk back and forth from the university, and others will take the bus or subway. Either way, the commute usually takes about 20 minutes on foot, bus or subway (or combination thereof). Buenos Aires has a modern and inexpensive public transportation system. Although Argentina is a safe country, we recommend that students take taxis after 10 pm.

### **Do I need to bring sheets, pillows, blankets, towels, etc.?**

No – pillows, sheets, blankets and towels are provided by the host families or your apartment.

♦ **You may not move in early to your program housing or stay after the program ends. Students who choose to arrive early or stay late must make their own lodging arrangements for any extra days. OVERNIGHT GUESTS ARE NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.**

## ***Medical Care***

### **What happens if I get sick while I'm in Argentina?**

Our students' health and safety is always our number-one priority. The first and most important step to take is for the student to notify the Site Director, Gabriela Gamper, if they are ill. She will help the student in any way possible – by locating medical care, translating, accompanying him/her to the doctor, etc. Modern medical facilities and medications are available in Buenos Aires and in all urban areas of Argentina. In rural areas, however, modern medical facilities may be harder to find, so if you're traveling to a rural area, you can always call Global Rescue for help (617-459-4200).

For a list of doctors recommended by the U.S. Embassy, go to <http://argentina.usembassy.gov/doctors.html>

## ***Cell Phones***

### **What is the time difference between Argentina and where I live?**

The following are the number of hours BEHIND Argentina each region is *during Daylight Savings Time* (March-November):\*\*

Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
5 hours	4 hours	3 hours	2 hours

\*\* (Add one hour after Daylight Savings Time ends – November through March.)

So, during Daylight Savings Time, if it is 6pm in Argentina, then it is 4pm Eastern, 3pm Central, and 1pm Pacific.

### **Dialing Instructions for Argentina**

011-INTERNATIONAL CODE 54-COUNTRY CODE (ARGENTINA)

--To call a landline from the U.S. to Argentina, dial 011-54 + the city code + the local landline telephone number. The city code for Buenos Aires is 11. (If you are calling a different city, be sure to verify the code for that city.) Local landline telephone numbers in Buenos Aires have 8 digits and are usually listed without the city code. So, if the landline tel. you have been given is 9999-9999, from the U.S., you would dial 011-54-11-9999-9999.

--To call a cell phone number in Argentina, it's a little more complicated. 011 is the int'l dialing code from the U.S., 54 is the country code for Argentina, and 11 is the city code for Buenos Aires. To call an Argentine cell phone from the U.S., you also have to use a prefix of 9, between the country code and the city code. To call an Argentine cell phone from the U.S., you would dial 011-54-9-11-plus the local number. If the local number is listed beginning with 15, omit the 15 when calling it internationally, since that is the local dialing prefix not to be used when calling internationally. For example, Gabriela's local number is 15 5452 7104. To call her from the U.S., you dial 011-54-9-11-5452-7104. Calling South America can be a bit of a challenge, so be patient, and if you don't get connected the first time, try again.

--To call the U.S. from Argentina, dial 001 + area code and number.

--To call an Argentine number within Argentina, leave off the int'l code, country code and city code. (Most Argentine cell phone numbers begin with 15. Landline phone numbers in Buenos Aires have 8 digits, so to call a Buenos Aires landline phone while you are physically in Buenos Aires, dial just the 8-digit local number.)

### **How do the cell phones work?**

Each student receives a pay-as-you-go cell phone. ASA provides the phone, while students are responsible for the cost of all calls. It is a pay-as-you-go system, which means that students first have to add talk time before they are able to make and receive calls. This pre-pay system makes it easy for students to keep track of how much they are spending on phone calls. The rates for calls and text messages are described in the phone's instruction booklet, which they will receive after they arrive in Argentina. Students can purchase talk time using a debit or credit card. **Incoming calls from inside Argentina are free, so for example, calls from your friends in Argentina will be free to**

**receive. However, incoming calls from outside Argentina (including the U.S.) are NOT free and you will be charged a per-minute fee to receive calls from outside Argentina.**

Please note, it may take 24-48 hours for the phones to be up and running, since students have to purchase talk-time and charge the battery.

### **What is the best way to call to/from Argentina?**

Many students use **SKYPE** which gives you **free international calls** over the Internet. For details, go to [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com).

You can also contact your long distance provider about their international calling plan. Or, use an international pre-paid calling card. To use an international pre-paid calling card, you dial the access number, enter your PIN number/calling card number, then enter the number you want to call.

Try [www.nobel.com](http://www.nobel.com) or [www.tel3advantage.com](http://www.tel3advantage.com) for international pre-paid calling cards for calling U.S. – abroad. Try [www.enjoyprepaid.com](http://www.enjoyprepaid.com) for international pre-paid calling cards that parents or students can use to call each other, anywhere in the world.

### **TIPS ON CHOOSING A GOOD CALLING CARD:**

- Make sure the rate you're looking at is for a mobile phone and not a landline. Usually the rate to call a mobile phone abroad is higher than the rate to call a landline.
- Check to see if the card has a connection fee or disconnection fee.
- Some cards charge a small weekly or monthly MAINTENANCE FEE that is deducted from your balance.
- Watch out for MINUTE ROUNDING. For example, if your card has 3-minute rounding and you make a 1-minute call, you will actually be charged for 3 minutes of talk time; if you make a 5-minute call, you will actually be charged for 6 minutes of talk time; if you make a 7-minute call, you will be charged for 9 minutes of talk time. So, 1-minute rounding is much more desirable than 5-minute rounding.
- Most cards will give you a toll-free OR local access number to use. Try to use their LOCAL ACCESS NUMBER, if possible, because some cards charge a per-minute or flat fee for using their toll-free access number.
- Normally, the fewer "fees" a card has, the higher the per-minute rate. Conversely, the more "fees" a card has, the lower the per-minute rate. If a card seems "too good to be true," with no fees AND a super low rate...then it probably is! Therefore, it's important to READ ALL OF THE FINE PRINT before purchasing any phone card, and don't be afraid to call the company to ask questions before purchasing anything.
- Don't forget that you may have to pay for the call you make to the access number. If you call the access number from your cell phone, that call uses your minutes.

## ***Mail, Computers and Internet***

### **Will students have Internet/email access while in Argentina?**

Yes. All students will have free Internet on campus at the Universidad de Belgrano, so **bring your laptop!** *Please note, the host families and student apartments will NOT have Internet access.* If you want to use the Internet while you're not on campus, you can use one of the many inexpensive Internet cafes in the city.

### **What kind of adaptor do students need in order to use their laptop in Argentina?**

In Argentina, the power supply is 220 volts/50 cycles, while in the U.S. it is 120 volts/60 cycles. Most laptops have a power supply that supports both 110 and 220 volts and 60 and 50 cycles (dual voltage). If your computer meets these requirements, you will only need to buy a plug adaptor so that the U.S. plug will fit into the Argentine wall socket. Voltage adaptors and converters can be purchased at most hardware stores or places like Target, Wal-Mart, etc.

### **Can students receive mail?**

Yes. However,

- We do NOT recommend mailing packages to Argentina unless it is absolutely necessary.
- All mail/packages must arrive AFTER the student has moved in. Neither ASA nor your host family can accept packages for you.

In general, it is problematic to receive packages in Argentina— the recipient is usually charged a customs tax to receive the package. Therefore, it is not advisable to mail anything— especially not items such as clothing, gifts, etc. that are of a non-urgent nature. The customs tax can be anywhere from 15 pesos (approx. \$5) to 750 pesos (approx. \$240), depending on the package's declared value and contents. It is difficult to predict what the tax will be when sending a

package. If you declare a value, it is not uncommon to pay fees as high as US\$60-\$150 to pick up the package! Remember that all insured packages require a declared value.

If you do choose to send something, the following information will assist you. On the customs form, you should mark your items as “used” whenever possible (i.e. “used books” or “used clothing”), or “FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY – NO COMMERCIAL VALUE,” as packages containing new items will be taxed exorbitantly. You will also have to declare a value on the customs form. The higher the declared value, the higher the tax will be on the receiving end. Declaring a value of less than \$10 may help to keep the customs tax to a minimum.

For sending packages, we recommend FedEx, UPS, or DHL because they will give you a tracking number. Although FedEx, DHL, and UPS are not the cheapest ways to mail items abroad, they are the fastest and most secure. You may contact any of these companies for a price quote and estimated transit time by giving them the weight, dimensions and destination of your package. For sending mail (letters, cards, papers, photographs, etc.), we recommend the U.S. Postal Service.

Please confirm the correct address BEFORE mailing anything. If you’re living in a student apartment, we don’t recommend mailing anything to that address because as a temporary resident, your name will not be listed on the mailbox.

***If you need to mail important paperwork, a replacement ATM card, etc., be sure to use FedEx, DHL, or TNT, and send it to your Site Director’s address rather than your apartment or host family’s address. Please contact our Boston office if you would like the mailing address of your Site Director.***

#### ► **OVERNIGHT MAIL**

“Overnight” from the U.S. does NOT mean overnight to Argentina. If someone in the U.S. sends an overnight document to Argentina, it will arrive in Argentina AFTER 2 DAYS OR MORE. For urgent documents, ATM cards, etc., use a reliable service such as FedEx or UPS. While the express or overnight USPS Global Priority service is reliable, it will actually take several EXTRA days to reach its destination because when the item enters Argentina, it is placed directly into the Argentine postal system, which delays its delivery.

*Example:* If a FedEx letter classified as “overnight” leaves the U.S. on a Monday morning, you will likely receive the item at the *earliest* on Wednesday or Thursday of the same week. Other couriers (UPS, USPS) may take longer.