



Living in
**BUENOS
AIRES**

THE VERTO EXPERIENCE
LOCATION GUIDE

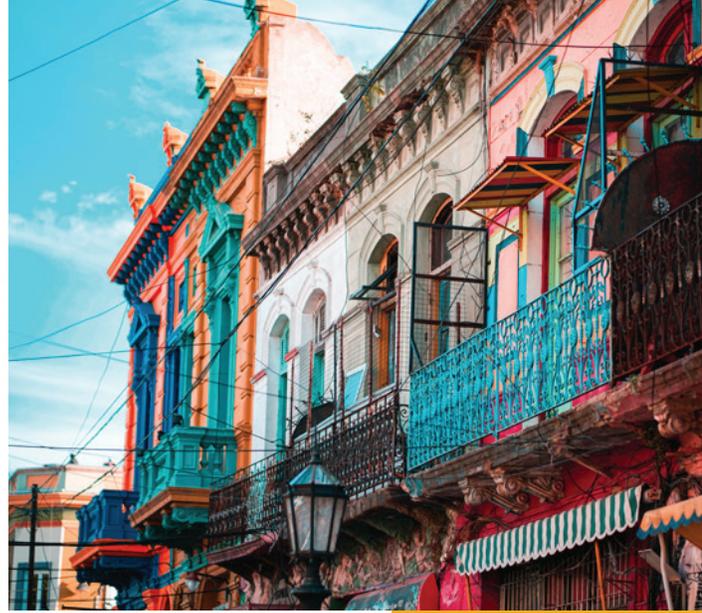


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Life in *Buenos Aires!*



Buenos Aires is the city that never sleeps in Latin America.

Home to more than 14 million people - with a lively café culture, famous cuisine, gorgeous architecture, and wide, tree-filled avenues leading to breathtaking parks, it's no wonder Buenos Aires is one of the most popular destinations for study abroad in the world.

It has a unique blend of Latin and European culture, so you can expect an awesome fusion of foods, lively tango music and dance, and of course, futbol (soccer)! There are endless activities for your free time including markets, restaurants, parks, theaters, art galleries, museums, shopping, and music festivals. Buenos Aires is also an ideal city for biking, running, walking, and most importantly, dancing.



What will *Buenos Aires* be like?



Buenos Aires is a fast paced, loud, and bold city. A force to be reckoned with, if you will!

It has 48 neighborhoods, each one with its unique charm and interesting spots.

The birth of Buenos Aires is a story of war and patriotism; however, this history has transformed the city into one of the most multicultural cities in the world. A true melting pot, the city has historically been a landing point for migrant families from different regions of Europe and South America. Buenos Aires is known as a country of immigrants and it's part of the constitution to grant temporary and permanent residence as a right to those who wish to live in this beautiful country.

The culture of Buenos Aires is not vastly different from that of the rest of the country, however, due to its multicultural influence, you will find a greater variety of faiths, ethnicities, and communities than throughout the rest of Argentina.

Surrounded by the Río de la Plata, Buenos Aires is a port city, and although port activity is not as active as it used to be, you can still see boats loading and unloading from parts of the river. A fun fact is that within just a 2-hour ferry ride along the river, you can reach a small town in Uruguay!

From Corrientes Avenue with the most famous theaters in Latin America, to the restaurants of the Palermo neighborhood, and the parks and squares of Belgrano and Villa Urquiza, Buenos Aires has a variety of activities to keep you busy.



What will *Buenos Aires* be like? Cont.

Porteños are generally very kind and friendly, and tend to be highly passionate people who take topics such as politics, futbol teams, and the economy seriously. You may want to choose some lighter topics of conversations when you are first getting to know someone. If those topics come up, keep in mind that there's no right "side" to be on- don't be afraid to voice your opinion!

Living with a local family homestay will offer you a once in a lifetime opportunity to dive deep into another culture and way of life. With your hosts, you'll live how locals live, eat what they eat, speak Spanish, and more!

In your homestay accommodations, you can expect a 30-40 commute by public transit and foot – a typical commute for Porteños. Homestays will be located in Barrio Norte, Recoleta, Palermo and Belgrano neighborhoods and will be within walking distance of pharmacies, grocery stores, and shops. Each homestay is slightly different depending on the hosts, so we encourage you to come in with an open mind and flexible attitude. All host families are carefully vetted by Verto staff to ensure your safety and comfort and the families love to host international students!



Boroughs & Neighborhoods *in Buenos Aires*

Among the 48 neighborhoods of Buenos Aires, the most well-known are those located near downtown: Palermo, Belgrano, Recoleta, Retiro, Caballito, Almagro, Villa Crespo, and San Telmo.

The distances between neighborhoods are short and you may find yourself walking 4 miles without even realizing it thanks to the many exciting stops along the way!

Each neighborhood has its own vibe— some are more bohemian, others more student-life oriented. Some are very European-looking, while others are distinctly Latin. The contrast in styles is very evident when you cross the dividing line between Palermo and Recoleta, two vastly different zones most visited by tourists.

Palermo is a neighborhood primarily of young professionals. There are over 1,801 restaurants and cafes and it boasts both lots of street art and modern buildings with cutting-edge technologies. The neighborhood is home to trade offices and big businesses such as marketing agencies, TV production companies, architecture studios, and an entire audiovisual district.

Recoleta, on the other hand, is the neighborhood of European architecture that receives millions of tourists walking along the famous avenues of 9 de Julio, Santa Fe, and Alvear. Nearby, is the iconic Obelisco, a must-see in the city. Recoleta is where you can find the houses and boutiques of local designers, and the most elegant hotels and most exclusive galleries in the city. The famous Floralis Genérica structure and the National Museum of Fine Arts are also in this neighborhood.

Another key neighborhood is San Telmo. Every Sunday, this neighborhood comes to life with 270 stalls of antiques and relics at truly affordable prices. In its colorful streets you will also find traditional food restaurants.



Your Experiential *Education*

Your Study Center will include classrooms, study space, social space, and wifi throughout. It will be in the Barrio Norte neighborhood and nearby to cafes, banks, shops, public transportation and more.

While you are here, you will be immersed in the life of the city –and use it as your classroom! Imagine practicing your conversational Spanish during a trip to El Ateneo, one of the most beautiful bookstores in the world, or learning about history while exploring the city’s colonial architecture!

You will visit sites not known to the average tourist and will have the opportunity to attend events which will engage you in vital and contemporary issues such as multiculturalism, immigration, and identity. Take every chance to open your mind to new people, new ideas, and new cultures!



Packing for Your *Experience*

- **Don't pack more than you can carry.** You may have heard this before, but it becomes a reality when you arrive and need to carry your suitcases.
- **Be selective in what you pack.** Spaces are generally smaller in Argentina and storage space will be limited in your residence. The more you pack, the less personal space you will have in your room.
- **But— keep Argentinian prices in mind.** Clothes, shoes, electronics, and imported items are more expensive in Buenos Aires than in the U.S., so we recommend you bring those items from home.
- **Pack good walking shoes.** You'll be grateful after a day of exploring the streets of Buenos Aires!
- **Bring some USD!** You may want to bring a few \$50 and \$100 bills to exchange in Buenos Aires. It is preferable to exchange money from USD to Argentine Pesos after arriving in Argentina since the rate will be better there. You can also use the ATMs once in the country, though you may want to have some cash on arrival in case you need it for travel.
- **Inform your bank of travels.** Make sure you inform your bank you'll be living in Argentina before you arrive in order to avoid any issues.
- **"Unlock" your phone with your current cell provider.** This will allow you to purchase an Argentinian SIM card to use in your current phone. You will not be able to use an Argentine SIM card without having unlocked your phone prior to your arrival.
- **Bring your medications:** Prescription medications need to be supervised by a doctor in Argentina and some medications may not be available for purchase, or will be sold under a different brand or name. Medications can not be shipped internationally. As such, it is best to bring the full amount you will need for your entire stay.



Exchanging Money, ATMs, & Using Cards



The local currency is the Argentinian Peso. The symbol for Argentine Peso is the same as the U.S. dollar sign (\$). In Argentina, the shortcut for the U.S. dollar is USD or U\$S.

Some stores in Buenos Aires accept credit and debit cards, but many are cash only. Establishments that accept cards will usually indicate it on the front window or door of the store.

Given that many stores do not take cards, you should always carry a small amount of cash with you. If you are paying for something low cost, you will be expected to pay using a small bill, as many places will not have exact change. Keep that in mind when deciding whether to pay with large or small bills.

In stores that take cards, U.S. credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Argentina. Depending on your bank, you may be charged a foreign transaction fee each time you use your card while abroad.

You will be able to use your debit card to withdraw cash from Argentinian ATMs, though the fees from the ATM's can be very expensive. Your home bank may waive ATM fees or may charge additional fees. We recommend that you address foreign transaction and withdrawal fees with your bank before you leave.

We recommend bringing USD with you to Buenos Aires. Rather than changing all of your cash to Argentine Pesos in the U.S., you may want to wait to change it in Argentina as you will get a better rate when in the country. We don't recommend changing it at the airport since those vendors will have higher service fees and lower exchange rates. Your on-site staff members will provide information on the best locations to exchange your cash.

You can also use Western Union, Xoom, Transferwise, or Venmo to send money.



Your Arrival & Orientation



If you travel to Buenos Aires by air, you will probably arrive at one of Argentina's main international airports, Jorge Newbery Airport or Ezeiza (Airport code EZE); or one of the big regional airports. The closest airport to our program in Buenos Aires is the International Ezeiza Airport.

Some airports are large and have several terminals, and you will need to follow signs to find your way out.

On entry into Ezeiza International Airport, you will pass through Immigration and at the border checkpoint you should be asked to present your passport. To participate in this program, you will need a signed passport that is valid for at least six months after the end of the program.

Students with U.S. passports:

For this program, students with U.S. passports will not need a visa. As you go through immigration, they will electronically register your entrance and stamp your passport with a Tourist Entrance Permission. If you receive a paper Tourist Card, paper-clip it to your passport, do not throw it away. Do not request a student visa as 'student visas' are issued to those people who are enrolled in an Argentine university – this is not the case for Verto Program participants.

Verto students will be entering on a Tourist Entrance Permission. In some cases, the duration of your tourist permission may be less than the full Verto program term. If that happens, don't worry. You can renew your tourist permission by crossing the border, which you will do during a Verto-organized excursion to Uruguay, or another neighboring country to reset your tourist visa.

If an immigration representative asks the purpose of your visit, please state that you are here on an educational excursion. Your Student Onboarding Advisor will send you an airport letter to print and bring with you to help answer any questions the airline or immigration may have regarding the length of your stay in Argentina. Please be sure to have this document with you and save a virtual copy on your phone as well.

If you do not have a U.S. passport, please be in touch with your Student Onboarding Advisor to plan accordingly.



Your Arrival & **Orientation Cont.**



Going through immigration control

If you arrive at an airport, you pass through immigration control first (before collecting your luggage).

There are usually two main lines:

- one for nationals,
- one for everyone else

As a Verto student you will need to wait in line to see a Border Agent or Officer to get a tourist passport stamp. As mentioned above, you are entering the country as a tourist, NOT on a student visa.

Once you have waited in line and it is your turn to speak with a border officer, they will look at your passport and then offer a tourist visa valid for 90 days.

Before leaving immigration control, check that the border force officer has put a dated stamp as mentioned above.

Heading to Your Accommodation

Verto will have an official arrival day where we will provide transportation to your accommodation from the airport during a 9:00 am - 8:00 pm (local time) pickup window. You are expected to share your arrival details with our team via email in your student portal.

The Verto team will be waiting to greet you in the arrivals hall. More information about this process will be provided during your Pre-Departure Orientation.

If you plan on arriving before the official arrival day, you will need to arrange your own transportation and accommodation in the city until the official arrival day. If you are arriving on the official arrival day but outside of the pickup window, you will need to arrange your own transportation. Please notify Verto about your arrival plans and we will share the address of your homestay so that you can arrive on your own on the official arrival day.



Your Arrival & Orientation Cont.



Travel delays and changes

Please notify buenosaires@vertoeducation.org with any changes regarding your scheduled travel such as missed, delayed, and canceled flights and trains.

First Days Onsite

Orientation will take place during your first week. You will receive important safety, wellness, and housing information and get to know your peers, care team, and city! All Orientation sessions are mandatory.

On arrival day, you will be given a schedule for Orientation Week. Orientation will include informational sessions, group discussions, walking tours, and excursions to a few monuments.



Getting a SIM Card *or* Phone Plan

Participants must have either an international phone plan from the U.S. or an Argentinian SIM card purchased onsite in Buenos Aires.

For international phone plans, talk to your phone company in the U.S. Rates will vary among plans and phone providers.

For a SIM card onsite, you **MUST** have your United States phone unlocked and not tied to any phone plan. If you do not have an unlocked phone, your Argentinian SIM card will not work.

You can purchase your SIM card at the airport, or wait until orientation where Verto staff will suggest locations where they can be purchased in the city. Any participant who chooses not to attend this excursion will be expected to purchase their own SIM card and provide their phone number to Verto staff within 7 days of arrival.

Commonly used mobile SIM providers are Movistar, Personal, and Claro. Prepaid SIM card plans generally cost around \$40 USD a month and include unlimited national calls and a certain amount of data (depending on the plan you choose). If your balance expires, you can find an authorized kiosk to top up. This is called “recarga virtual” and you can do it at most kiosks via easy-to-use machines.



Getting Around *in Buenos Aires*



Buenos Aires is a highly walkable city– walking is also an awesome way to take in the many diverse and eclectic neighborhoods!

Bus, subway, bicycle and taxis are available options as well.

Verto will provide you with a SUBE Card, which you can use to pay for rides on both the subway and city buses. The SUBE Card is a permanent reusable electronic ticket which is pre-loaded to have unlimited use for the duration of your program. To use this card: simply tap your card on the reader at the turnstiles in the stations at the start and end of your journey on the trains, and at the start of your journey in subways and buses.

Buses are very popular, run 24/7, and connect the entire city, though the subway is the fastest way to travel and the cost of a ride is less than \$0.50 cents USD! There are some helpful apps you can use to map out your route such as “BA Como Llego” and “Trenes Argentinos.” During Orientation your Verto on-site staff will provide more information about station locations and how to use the public transportation system.

A newer addition to the city is the BA Ecobici orange bicycles. They are free to use for short rides on weekdays and have different prices for weekends or longer rides. You can create an account on the “BA Ecobici” app for a live map of all the stations.

Additionally, taxis and ridesharing apps like Uber and Cabify are available and within reach of most budgets.



Budget *Guidelines*



*We recommend a budget of around **\$400–700 USD/month.***

This budget will vary based on your personal spending habits, particularly your budget for independent travel. Talk to your family about expectations for budgeting before you arrive. You will have 2 meals a day provided in your homestay, and otherwise can choose to cook or eat out. The “ferias” or street markets are a great place to get higher quality produce at a lower cost, or grocery stores tend to be open from about 8 am - 8 pm. Meals out tend to cost about \$10-20 USD on average.



If you have any other questions, don't hesitate to reach out to your Student Onboarding Advisor.

*We can't wait to welcome you to **Buenos Aires!***



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