

American Alpine Institute, Ltd

Aconcagua Expedition Itinerary

Ascent and Traverse via the
Upper Guanacos Traverse

Meeting Location: Mendoza Argentina at the Hotel El Portal, Avenida Necochea 661, 5500 Mendoza; the phone is (54 261) 438-2038.

Day 1: Arrive at Hotel El Portal in Mendoza, Argentina and complete an equipment check. Change money for the remainder of the trip and pay for the climbing permits. After this business has been taken care of, the group will go out to dinner.

Day 2: Pick up the climbing permits and then drive approximately 3 hours to the town of Penitentes, spend the night at hotel Ayelen (approximately 8000 feet).

Day 3: Organize gear in Penitentes and then trek to Papa de Lenas (9,330 feet). During the trekking portion of the trip, mules will carry the heaviest gear. We will carry light packs on the approach to the basecamp. This 7-mile trek will require 4 to 5 hours.

Day 4: Trek to Casa de Piedra (10,665 feet). This 9-mile portion of the trek affords the first views of the mountain. From camp one can clearly see the Polish Glacier on the mountain. (5-6 hours).

Day 5: Hike to basecamp at Plaza de Argentina (14,000 feet). This portion of the trek will take us into the Relinchos Valley. This 7-mile section requires two major river crossings. Occasionally we will arrange to have mules carry us over the river if it is too high to cross on foot.

Day 6: Rest day. Organize food for the carry to Camp I. Great hiking and bouldering may be found a short walk from basecamp.

Day 7: Carry to Camp I at 16,400 feet. This carry requires approximately 2 miles of climbing and 4-6 hours.

Day 8: Another rest day at basecamp to help acclimatize for the rest of the expedition.

Day 9: Move to Camp I.

Day 10: Carry to Camp II (18,000 feet). Camp II is known as both Chopper Camp as well as Guanacos III camp. It is here that we connect with the Upper Guanacos route by crossing Ameghino Pass on a gentle traverse.

Day 11: Rest day or move to Camp II.

Day 12: If at Camp 2, Carry to Camp III (19,600 feet), also known as the White Rocks Camp. If we take a rest day on Day 11, move to Camp 2

Day 13: Rest day or carry to Camp III

Day 14: Move to Camp III.

Day 15-18: These days are either for summit day or for the move to White Rocks Camp. Summit day begins at 5:00 am. It takes about 7-10 hours to get to the top and then another 3-4 to descend back to camp. For the Polish Traverse, we climb north to the Independencia Hut at approximately 21,400 feet, meeting up with the Ruta Normal. Then we traverse the West Face and climb up into the Canaleta (a couloir) that leads to the summit ridge.

Day 19: Hike to Plaza de Mulas, the basecamp for the Ruta Normal.

Day 20: Hike to Penitentes and spend the night.

Day 21: Return to Mendoza.

Day 22: Fly home