

COMMUNITY TOURISM IN THE CALCHAQUÍES VALLEYS OF SALTA NEW EXPERIENCES AND CULTURES

Rural tourism is known as a form of tourism in which small producers are the protagonists of the activity. It is there where the traveller becomes a colleague who seeks to live an authentic cultural exchange, where he/she is part of and shares the daily activities of family and community life, a place that will allow him/her to value the customs, identity, productive diversity, gastronomy and landscape in the context of a pleasant relationship of mutual respect and care.

DAY 1: SALTA

Arrival at Salta airport. **Pick up vehicle rental, category to be selected.**

Check-in at the hotel and the rest of the afternoon at leisure.

Suggested visit: City Tour around the incredible city of Salta.

Lying on the Lerma Valley, Salta is the capital city of the homonymous province. It is situated in one of the most fertile and nicest sites ever created by nature in this region. It is located at 1,187 meters above sea level, at the bottom of Mounts 20 de Febrero and San Bernardo. The Hispanic architecture of the city outstands from the other cities in the country. The colonial spirit from the times of the foundation remains in its houses, streets, hundred-year-old monuments and narrow sidewalks surrounded by the mountains nearby.



The city tour includes sightseeing its numerous statues. The main points of interest will be the Cabildo (Town Hall), the Archbishop's Palace and Cathedral all around the main square (9 de Julio), San Francisco's church and San Bernardo's church and convent. The crafts market, actually an old mansion transformed into a museum and gift exhibition center, offers an excellent chance to observe authentic samples of the native artisans work.

Overnight in Salta.

DAY 2: SALTA – CAFAYATE – EL DIVISADERO

Breakfast at the hotel.

Suggested visit: Excursion to Cafayate.

Cafayate is located 183 kilometres away from the capital of the province along the Ruta Nacional Nº 68 National Route. It is the main town of the district and has become the most important site of the Calchaquí Valleys.

Located at 1,660 metres above sea level, Cafayate is known for its famous torrontés wine, a product of the exquisite combination of temperature and humidity that provides the ideal environment for the



growth of the sweet and deep flavour of the fruit. Among other interesting excursions, you can visit wineries, taste wines or visit the colourful ravine of Las Conchas.



We continue our journey to El Divisadero. The community can be reached by travelling 6 kilometers, entering through 25 de Mayo Street from the town of Cafayate, which later becomes Provincial Route Nº 1. This place has a beautiful view of the Calchaquí Valley. The community has several sectors such as an indigenous community, peasant families and parts of vineyard investment. The vehicle can reach the houses during the whole year; except in January and February, when the river blocks the way. In this case, the access is walking through a footbridge that goes approximately 800 meters to the houses.

In this place the locals will share with the visitors their land, their culture and their knowledge through tourist experiences. The daily activities in the countryside, visits to artisans in each community and cultural and nature walks are the daily options for the traveler during his stay in the communities. The guided trekking or horseback riding circuits are short routes that take from one to three hours and all of them are of medium to low difficulty without risks. Travelers can learn some handicrafts during their stay, such as weaving, making pottery or making sweets. The community offers a different form of tourism, cultural exchange and direct contact with nature.

The lodgings and eating places are the peasant houses themselves. Each house that offers services to tourists has one or up to three double rooms for travelers. The bathroom is shared, as it is generally the same as the one used by the peasant family. The little houses of stone, adobe and cane roofs maintain their typical architecture, maintaining their identity and guaranteeing the comfort, security and intimacy of the visitor. Each peasant family guarantees a respectful and friendly social, cultural and environmental coexistence.



Overnight with a community family in El Divisadero.

DAY 3: EL DIVISADERO

Breakfast at a family home.

Suggested activity: During the day, visitors can taste and prepare typical meals together with the peasant families, including local dishes (empanadas baked in a clay oven, locro, stews, humita, tamales, among others), regional desserts (anchi, cayote with nuts, seasonal fruits, arrope, cheeses with sugar cane honey, homemade sweets) or even special and vegetarian dishes.

Besides, the traveler is invited all year round to share the life of the artisan winemaker, among vineyards, among wooden barrels and steel tanks, among hand-placed corks and among friendly families. Some families in the community produce artisanal wines. Each one of these rural families take care of their vineyards and maintain their production based on entirely family work, and each one produces no more than 4,000 litres per year, with the care inherited from their grandparents. The traveller can spend several days with these families, getting to know the vineyards and the wineries, and if he comes between February and August, he can share the elaboration of these wines.



Overnight with a community family in El Divisadero.

DAY 4: EL DIVISADERO – SANTA ROSA

Breakfast at a family home.



Suggested activity: In the morning, departure to Santa Rosa, located on the same National Route 40, 35 kilometres away from the town of San Carlos. The farming families of this community grow paprika, aniseed, cumin, onion and vines. Some of them make wine in family wineries. The partner families of our cooperative here offer accommodation, gastronomy and guided tours, and the traveller's stay revolves around the elaboration of artisan wine and the traditional care of the vineyards.

Overnight with a community family in Santa Rosa.

DAY 5: SANTA ROSA – CACHI - SALTA

Breakfast at a family home.

Suggested activity: It is recommended to leave early in the morning for Cachi. *It is a beautiful town in the Calchaquí Valleys of Salta on the east slope of Nevado Hill at 6,720m above the sea. Nature as well as colonial aristocracy from the XVIII Century can be admired in this environment. There are white buildings, adobe houses, paved streets and impressive architectural and cultural constructions that make the tourist admire and contemplate the scene. Cachi means " salt" in quechua due to the fact that natives mistook the top of " El Nevado" with a salt mine.*



There are different touristic sites among which the " Valle Encantado" (Enchanted Valley) is found and where aeolian and pluvian erosion have depicted suggestive shapes in the rocks of the mountain and Los Cardones National Park presents a unique and beautiful desert landscape with important animal and vegetal species. The most outstanding places to visit are the Archeological Museum, Cachi Church and Antigales, where deposits of old native civilizations are found.

Return to the city of Salta and overnight in selected hotel.

DAY 6: SALTA - PURMAMARCA

Breakfast at the hotel.

Suggested visit: In the morning, departure to Purmamarca. Small village from the beginning of the XVII century, of prehispanic origin, located at 2192 meters above sea level and 3 kilometers away to the East of National Route Nº 9 which links it to the Capital City of Jujuy after riding 65 kilometers.

Purmamarca - meaning "Town of the Virgin Land" in Aimara language- is settled at the foot of the polychromatic " Cerro de los Siete Colores" (Seven Colors Hill) which provides the village with the ideal touristic contrast since it delights the senses of all the tourists that visit it.

The village, with adobe buildings of cardon roofs and mud tiles, was designed around the Main Church from 1648 consecrated as St. Rosa de Lima which has currently been proffessed as National Monument since it has a particular architecture as well as valuable paintings and images from Cuzco inside. In the Square, there is a crafts fair where you can get regional products such as pottery, carpets made with looms, ponchos, musical instruments and typical clothes from the Quebrada (Narrow path).

In the surroundings of Purmamarca, you can enjoy the landscapes by means of going hiking, horse riding or on excursions of contemplative tourism along the bed of the homonymous river or in the Colorados Tour which has wonderful views with rock formations that have been naturally carved.



Overnight in Purmamarca.

DAY 7: PURMAMARCA – SALINAS GRANDES: CARAVAN OF LLAMAS - JUJUY

Breakfast at the hotel.

Suggested visit: Half-day excursion: Llamas Caravan in Salinas Grandes. Visit to the community of Pozo Colorado (community-based rural tourism).

Important note: This walk starts in Pozo Colorado, on the eastern edge of the Salinas Grandes, where the community of Pozo Colorado is located within the framework of Rural Tourism.

Difficulty: medium difficulty (not recommended for children under 12 years old).

Maximum altitude: 3500 metres above sea level.

Total trekking time: 4 hs. (Trekking time: 2:30 hs. approx.)

Departure time: 11:00hs (in Pozo Colorado).

Meeting point: Pozo Colorado.

Time of year: it can be done all year round (in January and February there is a probability of rain).



Pozo Colorado is a beautiful spot with a small hamlet. It is located on the eastern side of the Salinas Grandes salt flats. Its 200 inhabitants (aboriginal community) have a productive activity based mainly on the extraction of salt and on the most famous livestock in our province: "the breeding of llamas". The community is currently working on the recovery of its cultural heritage: llama wool spinning and weaving; stone carving; salt stone handicrafts; and recently, the use of the llama as a pack animal. On the drive to the village of Pozo Colorado you can enjoy the spectacular scenery of the Cuesta de Lipán, with probable sightings of vicuñas and guanacos (wild South American camelids). Once in Pozo Colorado we get the llamas ready for the journey and start the Llama Caravan of approximately one-and-a-half-hour trek. We go deep into the salt flat, visit the salt extraction sites and enjoy lunch. After a well-deserved rest we return to the community to finish the trip.

Included: Community guide (Spanish); full lunch with good wine (regional picnic) and water during the trip.

We recommend to bring hat, coat, trekking shoes, sun protection and sunglasses.

Departure to Jujuy and overnight in hotel.



END OF OUR SERVICES

