

SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO PROGRAM –ENJOY THE BBASKET FESTIVAL AND TERMAL SPRINGS

Northwest Region - Santiago del Estero, Termas de Río Hondo, 4 days/3 nights - Cultural and hot springs tourism

✓ **DAY 1 –SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO**

Arrival at the airport.

Transfer to Santiago del Estero City.

Due to an earthquake, Santiago del Estero really had little architecture left of its long colonial past to justify the nickname "Mother of Cities". Located in a plain with no more scenic attraction than a river of very variable flow, with a hot and dusty climate in summer and mild in winter, capital of a province that is characterized by the Rio Hondo Reservoir and the hot springs. The public spa La Olla is the only place where you can enjoy the thermal water for free, all other thermal baths in the city are inside the hotels.

It is a provincial capital of affable character, where Spanish is spoken at the same time some Quechua words are used, arrived with the missionaries and the Spanish conquest. It is also rich in history, with some interesting museums that reveal a pre-Columbian past of rare richness in Argentinean territory, prodigal of folklore and it is exciting to get into its history and that of its territory, rich in myths and legends.

Overnight at the selected hotel.

✓ **DAY 2 – SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO - CITY TOUR / TERMAS DE RÍO HONDO – FIESTA DEL CANASTO**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Half Day Santiago del Estero City Tour

In front of Libertad Square is the Basilica Cathedral Church, the oldest in Argentina and the first episcopal seat. Of neoclassical style, the construction of the original building began in 1591. Beyond the obligatory visit to Libertad Square and the Basilica Cathedral Nuestra Señora del Carmen, it is also advisable to visit Aguirre Park and the waterfront on the banks of the Dulce River.

Centro Cultural del Bicentenario (Bicentennial Cultural Center)

Remarkable recycling of the former Government House, with three museums: the Provincial Historical Museum, which exhibits sacred art, the reconstruction of a post, furniture, busts and portraits and old photos of the city; the Museum of Anthropology, which contains a remarkable collection of pottery and urns from the Sunchituyo culture and others from the Northwest; and the Museum of Fine Arts, with its permanent collection and temporary exhibitions. The three museums of the Cultural Center bring their visitors important collections with a modern museum design.

San Francisco Church and Museum of Sacred Art.

A temple from the end of the 19th century with a neo-Gothic facade, where the Museum of Sacred Art is located and which preserves colonial carvings and relics.

Departure to Termas de Río Hondo City.

Fiesta del Canasto (The Basket Festival)

Decorative basketry, one of the most important crafts in Santiago del Estero, dates back to time immemorial in the territory now known as Northwest Argentina. It is an activity that, according to archaeological findings to date, has been carried out for more than 5,000 years in the region.

The National Basket Festival in Termas Río de Hondo, which has been held for more than 40 years, is a tribute to the hard work of local artisans who sustain with their daily effort the validity of a millenary art based on the use of native vegetable materials. It is an important event from a touristic and artistic point of view, but fundamentally from an emotional point of view because it is linked to the oldest productive activity and reflects the culture that is basketry. The handicrafts are made with natural materials from the region such as corn leaves and other plants, with which pieces of unique beauty and color are made.

The distinction to the basket makers will be made on Caseros Street between Sarmiento and Rivadavia and in the Plaza Eva Perón. The opening of Expo Canasto is at 6 pm. Ticket prices for the event vary according to the day. This celebration also combines musical shows, traditional food and folkloric dances. The opening of the artistic show will be at 8 pm, where you can enjoy the performance of different artists from local dance academies, folk musicians, among others. Regarding the gastronomic offer, it will offer the classic tamales, locro, humitas and empanadas of Santiago del Estero, in addition to the kid roasting contest.

Return to hotel and overnight.

✓ **DAY 3 – TERMAS DE RÍO HONDO – CITY TOUR – FIESTA DEL CANASTO**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Termas de Río Hondo City Tour

We recommend the Museum of Fine Arts and Crafts, which exhibits various paintings by artists from Santiago and Argentina, and the Paleoanthropological Museum Rincon de Atacama, with objects on display related to the archaeology and fossils of the region.

Outside the city center, a visit will be made to the Río Hondo Frontal Dam and Reservoir, inaugurated in 1967 with its 206 meters in length and 20 spillways that form the largest artificial lake in the Northwest. It is the place for silverside fishing and water sports. Next to the lake there is a large racetrack.

Fiesta del Canasto (The Basket Festival)

As on the previous day, the opening of the event will take place at 6:00 p.m. and the artistic show at 8:00 p.m. Tourists will be able to visit the basket makers' stand. There will also be a children's recreation, a basket-making workshop and an exhibition of distinguished pieces.

The National Basket festival will end with the election of the queen of the event and the awarding of prizes to the artisans, whose production will be evaluated according to the quality of the confection and the artistic and aesthetic value of the object.

Return to hotel and overnight.

✓ **DAY 4– TERMAS DE RÍO HONDO / SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Departure to the airport of Santiago del Estero City.

****END OF OUR SERVICES****