

ADVANTAGE

Live Unconventionally

EMBRAER QUARTERLY
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Journey East

Take to the wild on a game drive in the enchanting state of Rajasthan

Make It Yours

Redefine private flying with the all-new Embraer configurator

Evolving Design

Bill Bensley on sustainable hotel design and debuting as an artist

THE SCENIC ROUTE

Andean culture, monumental rockscapes and high-altitude wines are but a few of the many high points on a road trip through Argentina's rugged northwest region at the foot of the Andes

The provinces of Salta and Jujuy, once part of the Inca Empire, have a markedly different feel than the rest of the country. Here, a fusion of indigenous traditions and colonial influences are just as distinctive as the outsized rock formations and striated ravines carved by the ancient hand of time. A network of legendary highways careens through a diversity of landscapes that transition from lush valleys and subtropical forests to burnt ochre ridges, arid highlands and shock-white salt flats, all within a day's drive.

"This remote region has a huge sense of place," shared Maita Barrenechea, Founder of Mai10, a premier luxury outfitter based in Buenos Aires. "It's great for travelers who want to get off the beaten path and explore a lesser-known area of Argentina."

To navigate the gravel roads and hairpin turns, a 4x4 vehicle is essential. If you'd rather be behind a camera than a wheel, enlist local travel expert Fernando Escudero, Owner of Auténtica Salta—a boutique tour operator specializing in Northwest Argentina—to be your private driver, guide and unofficial personal photographer (a particular talent of his). Block off a week or more to immerse yourself in the vastness of the scenery and vibrant local customs. Bespoke itineraries follow a circuitous north-to-south route or vice versa depending on traveler preferences.

WORDS NORA MAISCH IMAGE © HOUSE OF JASMINE R&C



A panoramic view along Route 68 between Cafayate and Salta overlooking the Quebrada de las Conchas—a two-million-year-old fossil-filled nature reserve in the Calchaquí Valley



Above: Tucked at the base of the Andes, House of Jasmunes is an idyllic base to explore the various landscapes of northern Argentina

Below (top): Learn how to make traditional empanadas with seasonal ingredients in chef-led cooking classes at House of Jasmunes

Below (bottom): The sunbaked village of Purmamarca is a great place to buy colorful textiles and handicrafts carved from fallen cacti

Whether you're flying directly into Salta or taking a two-hour flight from Buenos Aires, make your first stop House of Jasmunes, an elegant Relais & Châteaux estancia located just 10 minutes from the airport. The 100-year-old adobe mansion, once owned by actor Robert Duvall, sits on an idyllic 247-acre estate boasting mountain views, flowering gardens and a standalone spa with a Turkish bath.

For a jolt of high-desert adventure, head north to Purmamarca, a sunbaked adobe village in the province of Jujuy. Book yourself into El Manantial del Silencio, a colonial-inspired boutique hotel featuring Cusqueña oil paintings, a tiny chapel and large windows framing mountain views of the Humahuaca Gorge. The sound of live music spills out of the pocket-sized pueblo's folkloric *peñas*, while markets vend colorful textiles and handicrafts carved from fallen cacti. Rising above the village is the famous Hill of Seven Colors named for its rainbow of mineral tones—hike the Los Colorados trail for a closer look. Set aside a full day to visit the UNESCO-protected Quebrada de Humahuaca. Check out Uquia's remarkable 17th-century chapel hung with rare paintings of arquebus-toting angels before venturing to Las Señoritas trail with a local guide to trek cinematic red rock formations, narrow gorges and quiet caves. Its colossal bluffs, salmon-colored chasms, towering cardones (candelabra cacti), and wind-sculpted peaks inspire a sense of timelessness and awe. If your schedule permits, take a road trip north to visit El Hornocal, a striking geological wonder dubbed the "14-Colored Mountain" for its layer cake of multihued sediments.



IMAGES (left page) © House of Jasmunes R&C; (left page, bottom) © Fernando Escudero; (right page from top) © House of Jasmunes R&C; © Nora Walsh

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Another day, navigate a series of scenic switchbacks to reach the Puna, a highland plateau sitting at 13,500 feet in the Andes range. (Pack some coca leaves to help with the altitude.) Near the borders of Chile and Bolivia, you'll arrive at impossibly photogenic salt flats cradled by mighty massifs. Pop into Pristine Camps for a gourmet lunch. The new high-end glamping site serves up multicourse dishes like llama carpaccio and goat provoleta. It is recommended to book a reservation well in advance.

Heading south, stopover at family-run El Bordo de Las Lanzas to experience true Salteña hospitality and gaucho-led horseback riding adventures. The 300-year-old working estancia is brimming with rural artifacts like horse-drawn carriages and filigreed sterling spoons. Guests experience authentic asado barbecues hosted by the estancia's affable owner and feast on provincial homemade dishes like carbonada and huaschalocro followed by digestive burro tea from the garden.

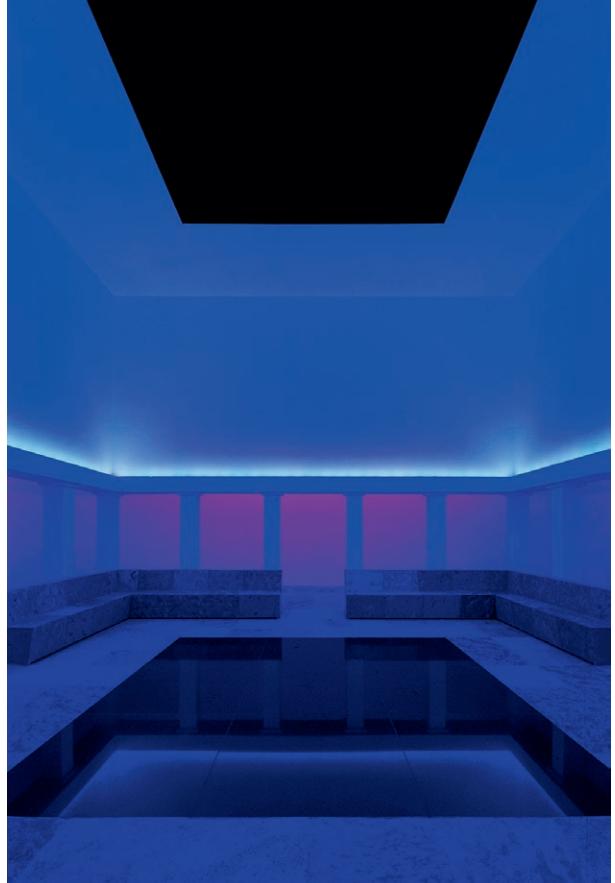
Driving through the Calchaquí Valley's ever-changing scenery, take in the dramatic landscapes of Quebrada de Escoipe and Cuesta del Obispo to Los Cardones National Park. Make La Merced del Alto your base to explore Cachi, a cobblestone Spanish-colonial town oozing with charm. In the company of a local guide, explore the area's fertile lands fed by snowmelt rivers and dotted with wild guanacos and giant cardones backed by snowcapped peaks.

While cruising the gravel tracks of Route 40 towards Colomé, visit El Camino de Artesanos, a recently upgraded artisan trail in Seclantás where weavers sell handmade llama and lambswool shawls, ponchos and interior decor right from their homes. Next, head to Molinos, a pretty colonial village with a small vicuña-breeding farm.



Top: Spanning 160,000-some acres, Los Cardones National Park gets its name from the gigantic candelabra cacti dotting the landscape

Bottom: Pristine Camps is a new high-end glamping site in Argentina's high-altitude salt flats serving multicourse dishes like llama carpaccio and goat provoleta



Above: High in the Calchaquí Valley, the James Turrell Museum contains six of the artist's site-specific works that play with light, space, color, and perception
Below: Like the snow-dusted peaks of Nevado de Cachi, La Merced del Alto dominates the breathtaking valley's fertile lands, cactus-sprinkled hills and snowmelt streams



IMAGES (left page from top) © James Turrell / Photography Florian Holzherr, © Matthew Williams-Ellis, (right page from top) © Grace Cafayate / La Estancia de Cafayate, © Fernando Escudero

High in the Calchaquí Valley sits Estancia Colomé, home to a nine-room lodge and the country's oldest continuously working winery. Now owned by billionaire art collector Donald Hess, the ecological bodega produces some of the world's top high-altitude wines. The estancia's stunning vineyards and lavender fields are the perfect place to idle with a glass of aromatic Torrontes, the region's emblematic white wine. Art lovers will revel in exclusive access to the onsite James Turrell Museum, which contains six of the artist's site-specific works that play with light, space, color, and perception. The mind-bending experience is reason enough to pilgrimage here. At night, gaze upon an infinite dome of stars sparkling from horizon to horizon like falling snow.

The winding drive from Colomé to Cafayate will have you scrambling for your camera at every turn to snap shots of rocky ridges overlooking rural grasslands and large fields of handpicked red peppers drying in the sun. Stop off at Quebrada de Las Flechas, a surreal sandstone monument whose jagged arrow-like structures evoke a lunar landscape. When arriving in Cafayate, the viticultural heart of Salta, check into winery-cum-hotel Patios de Cafayate or the spa-centric Grace Cafayate. Taste your way through the city's exceptional cuisine at Piattelli Winery and Bad Brothers restaurant. Pair outstanding dishes with homegrown varietals like malbec, cabernet sauvignon and Torrontés.



Above: Grace Cafayate Hotel offers horseback riding experiences in the vineyards of La Estancia de Cafayate, a private residential retreat boasting spectacular mountain views

Below: Between Colomé and Cafayate, Quebrada de Las Flechas is a surreal sandstone monument whose jagged arrow-like structures evoke a lunar landscape

Head to Cafayate's Quebrada de las Conchas nature reserve for spellbinding hikes that weave through copper-colored gorges and mineral-streaked summits shaped by eons of elemental forces. On the drive north back to Salta, each bend in the road reveals a view that will make your jaw drop. Plan for a series of requisite pit stops along Route 68 including Mirador Tres Cruces—a panoramic lookout over a mountain-ringed valley; El Anfiteatro, a soaring natural amphitheater; and Devil's Throat canyon.

In the city of Salta, bed down at the fashionable Legado Mitico and get your culture fix at La Casona Peña where live folkloric music like *chacarera* and *zamba* are served up alongside mouthwatering humitas, tamales and oven-baked empanadas. Learn more about the province's Inca heritage at the High-mountain Andean Archeological Museum (MAAM) before strolling down Caseros Street to shop regional souvenirs like handmade gaucho knives and leather bags to remember a trip where the journey truly is the destination. ↗



EMBRAER TIP

With an impressive reach and maximum endurance of nearly eight hours, the Praetor 500 is the only aircraft in its class—the fastest, too—that can reach South America from Cancún in one stop.

