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TOUR UPDATE



The Newsletter of mikesworldtour



Tour Highlight:

March 2023
Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Land of Messi and Empanadas

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A QUICK HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, & SOCIAL OVERVIEW

Argentina officially declared its independence from Spain in 1816 following the revolution started in 1810. After independence the military had a stronghold in the government, and the country went to war with Brazil in 1825 under President Rivadavia who lost the war dissolving the government. Throughout the rest of the 1800s the government consolidated and economic growth started to be seen. A radical regime replaced the conservative regime in the early 1900's, but was replaced in the 1930s by a military sponsored conservative reformation. Perón ruled from 1943-55 under an authoritarian and personalistic rule. His wife Eva undertook social welfare during his presidency. The military government from 1966-73 was then replaced by Perón's second presidency. Following this was the dirty war in the 1970s with congress closed, censorship, military rule, and thousands of citizens were disappeared and killed. This ended with the Falkland war which restored democracy in the 1980s. The EIU lists Argentina as a flawed democracy, and economic problems continue to cause social unrest (In March 2023 inflation was 100%).

Buenos Aires, Argentina



Some quick tips for Buenos Aires :

- The Subte (the metro) is super easy to get around, getting the card can be hard so you might have to go to a few shops for it
- Wear a fanny pack/bag with your valuables, everyone here does it so you will fit in
- If you can fly into AEP over EZE shorter lines and overall easier to get through

FOOD

CANG TIN



Located right next to the train tracks is this fabulous Vietnamese/Thai/Southeast Asian restaurant. We started off with spring rolls and I had a maracuya beer (absolutely fab). Highly recommend sitting at the bar and watching them make your food. for the vibes of course/ This super trendy restaurant is a must go to in Buenos Aires, and for a relatively cheap price is so so good.

KOI DUMPLINGS



Another asian restaurant that was so so good. They have bao buns which were fabulous (baco for my Nola peeps). Above is the array of dumplings you can get. I recommend getting this and then trying to guess which ones are which, honestly a very fun game and you get to eat great food. A win win if you are asking me.

FAYER



With restaurants only in Buenos Aires and Madrid (ah the mems) this is a great place to get Israeli/Mediterranean cuisine. We had hummus, falafel, salad, and this pizza (kinda) and all were so good. Somehow I never went here while I studied in Madrid, but guess an excuse to go back. Also thought it was funny that Fayer is located next to the US embassy in BA :)

EMPANADAS



If you read my Madrid blog you know my obsession with empanadas (especially Argentinian style). I got some empanadas on the street that were fuego. These empanadas are from a stall in San Telmo Market (more about that later) which were actually so delicious. They had my favorite flavor of empanada which is humita which has sweet corn, cheese, and other veggies (chefs kiss). I forgot how much I love empanadas, and these empanadas in San Telmo Market were just so good and satisfied the months I have been craving them.

Buenos Aires, Argentina

EXPERIENCES

Okay so after you fill your stomach with all that wonderful food I listed above it is time to walk it off in the amazing places around Buenos Aires. From famous monuments to upscale neighborhood like Palermo or Belgrano there really is so much to do in the city. With the Subte you can see so much in a short period of time so take advantage of it!

OBELISCO



Created in 1936, this has now become one of the most iconic landmarks in the city. It was made to commemorate the quadricentennial of the foundation of the city, and was designed by Alberto Prebisch. 680 cubic meters of concrete was used to build it and 1,360 square meters of stone were imported from Córdoba. Interesting enough after the mayor that commissioned this was replaced in 1938, the city tried to remove it in 1939 for economic, aesthetic, and public safety reasons, but was vetoed as it was considered a national monument. People have graffitied on it throughout history, and in 1973 it was decorated as a Christmas tree. Today you probably know it for the iconic picture of the streets after Messi and Argentina won the World Cup.

Considered one of the best opera houses in the world due to its acoustics, it was finished being built in 1908. Classical musicians, ballets, and many famous artists have performed inside this theater. In 1946 under Peronism, the theater was used to promote popular music and democratization of music. This policy was reversed under the military rule after. It is over 8000 meters in area and can hold almost 2,500 people for a show. In 1990 it was listed as a national historic monument in Argentina. It was restored from 2001 to 2010 to make improvements overall. Unfortunately the theater was closed for 15 months during the Covid-19 pandemic, but luckily it re-opened again to the public today!

TEATRO COLON



CASA ROSADA



The head of the executive branch, and office of the President is located here. Construction began here in 1898 and was finished that year. It was partly demolished in 1938. There has been many buildings on this land before from a Royal Fortress in 1594 to the customs and post office building in the early 1800s. The government and post office were two separate buildings, but they united them in construction. Its name comes from the building being pink on the outside (tbh looked more red).

Buenos Aires, Argentina

PALACIO BAROLO



Designed by Italian architect Mario Palanti, this building was the tallest in Buenos Aires for a decade until 1936. It has a sister building in Montevideo, Uruguay called Salvo Palace (check out volume 22 where it is featured) and they have the same basic design and style as well as being developed at the same time. At its completion in 1923 it was the tallest building in all of South America! Today inside the building is mostly lawyer's offices, travel agencies, and a Spanish language school. In 1997 the building was declared a national historic monument by the government. The design of the building was following a style that goes in accordance of Dante's "Divine Comedy".

PLAZA DE MAYO

Created in 1884, this plaza is the home to the Casa Rosada which is where the executive of Argentina works. It was created by the union of Plaza de la Victoria with Plaza del Fuerte when the building separating the two plazas was demolished. Many important national events have occurred within this plaza as well as famous protests that have altered the history of the country. The name comes from the May revolution that occurred in Argentina which helped the country achieve its independence. On June 9 in 1942 it was declared a historic site by the government.



CONGRESO NACIONAL



The national congress building was constructed from 1898 to 1906 and designed by Italian architect Vittorio and Argentinian architect Julio Dormal. It is the kilometer 0 point for Argentinian highways. The aesthetic details of the building were not finished until 1946. Besides being a popular location for tourists to visit, protesters from around the country make their voice heard in the plaza across from the building (I saw a few!). The building cost \$6 million which was paid by the government.

There used to be a statue representing a famous Argentinian comic whose protagonist was El Loco Chávez. Unfortunately after a 45 minute scavenger hunt for the statue I only found the plaque and they have recently taken the statue down :(



EL LOCO CHÁVEZ

Buenos Aires, Argentina

SAN TELMO MARKET



Built in 1897 to centralize the fruit and vegetable shops in the city, this market has now transformed housing various restaurants and artisan shops as well. The neighborhood around the market has also adapted to its location, and you can expect to see salsa dancers and murals on the streets as you leave the market into the neighborhood. I had some killer empanadas here (check out the food section) and there were so many great food options that I was overwhelmed with the possibilities of deliciousness.

CHINATOWN

Located in the Belgrano neighborhood, the Barrio Chino (Chinatown but in Spanish) consists of three blocks where you feel absolutely transformed into a new world. Full of street vendors, stores, and other knick knack shops I would not have believed for a second that I was in Argentina while walking through the streets. Although its called the Barrio Chino, Taiwanese is the most prominent group within the neighborhood (sensing some possible geopolitical tension) and there is representation of Korean, Japanese, and ... you guessed it Chinese. In 2009 the main arch was built, and in 2015 the streets were made accessible to only pedestrians (oh yea there are no cars going through super nice!).



MALBA ART MUSEUM



Opening in 2001, the museum is home to art from the early 20th century to present day. Every season the museum has exhibits of Argentinian, Latin American, and International art. Every year the museum has eight exhibitions and they work with national as well as international artists. I was lucky enough to see their Frida Kahlo exhibit titled Diego and I which explores the marriage between Frida and Diego through art.

Buenos Aires, Argentina

LA RECOLETA CEMETERY



Located in the Recoleta neighborhood, the cemetery is home to noble people within Argentina. It is home to noble prize winners, former presidents, and Eva Perón. The cemetery was built in 1732, and was the first public cemetery in Buenos Aires. There are over 4,500 vaults in here (spooky), and 94 have been listed as National Historic Monuments. Rich families still use the vaults as mausoleums, but some have grown to despair as some families can no longer pay for upkeep.

JAPANESE GARDENS



Probably my favorite place I went to in Buenos Aires, the Japanese Gardens are like an oasis inside a big and bustling city. There are so many things inside from food vendors to origami making to a wall you can write your wishes on for them to come true. It is just so serene and peaceful inside here that I could have stayed all day long. It is among the largest Japanese Gardens in the world outside Japan, and is managed by the non-profit Japanese-Argentinian cultural foundation. It was completed in 1967, and inaugurated by the current Crown Prince and Princess of Japan at the time.

See You On the Next Stop on the Tour!