



UNIVERSIDAD TORCUADO DI TELLA

BUENOS AIRES

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WHY TO GO

Buenos Aires is the most beautiful city of South America I've seen. It is a great mixture of Argentinian culture, Parisian buildings, Berliner cafes and bars and a stunning nightlife. The city is so big and diverse that you can always discover new corners, but it also allows you to feel at home in the cosy and street art dominated "barrio" called Palermo. In addition, it is very international, so that you can easily find friends from different internationalities and improve your Spanish by strolling around the city and involving yourself into school projects. The city also invites you to explore the history of Argentina and South America by offering lots of museums and sights. Plus, here comes the final argument: the meat. It is going to be a time of endless "asados" (barbecues) with friends and great meat for a low price.

UNIVERSITY

COORDINATION

The Universidad Torcuato di Tella is a rather small private university located in Buenos Aires. Although it is rather small, around 90 exchange students are coming each semester. When I was there, there was a great mix of nationalities. You would not find too many Germans, but many French, Italian, Spanish, American students. Tatiana is the coordinator for incoming exchange students and she is doing a great job. She is helping you with everything you need (Class selection, Auslands-Bafög documents, travel tips). She is the best coordinator you could imagine. You should keep in mind that most students who are coming to the university, are students on a Bachelor level. We were 4 Master students, but as the network is great you easily get in touch with the Bachelor students from the di Tella and with other exchange students in Buenos Aires. This should definitely not be a deal breaker for you. Before coming to Buenos Aires I was a little bit nervous about the small amount of Master students, but there was absolutely no reason to be.

If you're choosing the Universidad Torcuato di Tella as a Master Student, you can select from a vast variety of classes and additionally you can participate in a Spanish class before the semester starts. But this Spanish class starts in the beginning of July, so it's too early if you also want to write exams in Cologne. The university does not offer an equivalent Master program, so you can choose classes from different degrees. Whatever you choose I highly recommend you to come to Buenos Aires when the semester starts (around the 1st of August), because that will make your start in Buenos Aires way smoother, as that's the time when all the exchange students in Buenos Aires are coming and when good flats/ houses are still available.

- a. MBA classes: The Argentinian students are working and are having classes in the evening. Classes only last for 4 weeks and the first round of classes starts in August. To me the classes were very basic and easy to follow, even though my Spanish was not the best.
- b. Master classes e.g. in Economics or Finance: The Argentinian students are working and are having classes in the evening. Classes also do not last for the whole semester. Classes start later, I think end of September. I didn't choose them.
- c. Bachelor classes from the last Bachelor semester: You can get credits from those classes even though they are Bachelor classes. They take place twice a week, normally you write a midterm and a final. To me that was a good chance to get in touch with Argentinians at my age. The first two weeks of a semester are a drop period, so that you can easily add and drop Bachelor classes.
- d. International classes: Only international students are participating in those classes. You cannot transfer any credits from those classes to Cologne. Nevertheless, I recommend choosing one, if you have time. They mainly deal with Argentinian/ South

American history/ culture/ literature and are a good way to practice your Spanish and to understand the country you're living in.

MY CLASSES

1. MBA classes: To me they were a very good option, they only take place once or twice a week in the evening and after 4 weeks you're done with a class. You write your final exam or hold your final presentation and if you pass, you already have 10 CP. Additionally, you can choose classes very spontaneously. I had the deal with Tatiana, that I told her whether to participate or not one week before the class actually started.

Análisis Financiero

The professor is a famous finance expert in Argentina who knows how to speak and to encourage people to listen. The subject itself is not too hard, although in the beginning it was a little bit hard to understand all the Spanish terms. The exam is a written one, which is always very similar to the past ones. So just prepare them well and ask whether you can write in English if you're insecure about your Spanish.

Estrategia empresarial

The class is a good summary of major management concepts. If you want to refresh your knowledge in this area or you want to take a not work-intensive class, this one should be your choice. We did some group works preparing cases and our final was a written strategic analysis of a company we could choose.

2. Master Classes: All the master students did not choose any of those classes.
3. Bachelor classes: I chose one class.

Liderazgo

It was a basic class talking about leadership concepts. It is easy to follow in Spanish and generally interesting. It was by far the easiest class I took. We wrote a midterm and had a final oral exam.

4. International classes: I took one without transferring the Credit Points to Cologne. That means that I didn't register officially to the class but I asked the professor, whether I could sit in and participate out of interest.

Dictadura y militancia

The professor has a profound knowledge about the history of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay and is able to build up an understanding for the causes and consequences of the latest dictatorships in those countries. To me it was the class where I learnt the most and which helped me the most to understand the roots of the Argentinian way of thinking. Additionally, it was a good way to practice Spanish, as she is very easy to follow.

UNIVERSITY LIFE

The university is not a Campus university, it is located in a rather richer family area in Belgrano in Buenos Aires. Therefore, university will be the place, where you will have classes, but not the place, where you will live or hang out much. There are some sports team you could join, which is a great possibility to connect with Argentinians. I highly recommend you to join the so called "acciones sociales". It is a student group, that goes to the "villas" of Buenos Aires, the poorest neighbourhoods,

and helps kids with their homework. To me that was a great experience, as you can easily forget how poor Argentina is if you live in beautiful and hip Buenos Aires.

LIVING IN BUENOS AIRES

STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

When I was in Argentina, I met a lot of people from other universities. One reason for those friendships are two student associations, which work independently and offer activities for all exchange students. Although some of the events are badly organized, they are a good opportunity to get to know the city and people, to get free access to main attractions and parties of Buenos Aires and to get inspired what to do in the city. The organizations are called BAIS and Argentina for All. We preferred BAIS due to better events and offers.

They also offer trips. Generally, I preferred to travel by my own with friends, but we joined the first BAIS trip of the semester which was a trip to Iguazu. In the end, I became close friends with many of the persons I met during this trip. After two weeks in Buenos Aires it was the perfect time to go to a trip like this. If you want to meet a lot of people and have a fun party weekend while seeing the stunning waterfalls, this trip could be an option for you.

WHERE TO GO/ WHAT TO DO

Those were some of my favorite spots, maybe they are interesting for you, too:

- a. Cafes: La Panera Rosa, Oui Oui, Ninina, Le Pain Quotidien, Dain Usina Cultural
- b. Events: Bomba del Tiempo, Fuerza Bruta, PM festival, Plaza Dorrego (Sundays for Tango)
- c. Bars: Reina de Copa, Bar Sheldon, Frank's Bar, Floreria Atlantico, Chupitos
- d. Restaurants: El Banco Rojo, Burger Joint, La Cabrera, Don Julio, La Hormiga, Las Cabras, Heisenburger
- e. Clubs: Club 69 on Thursdays, Caracas, Kika, L'arc, Makena Cantina

WEATHER

The weather is reverse than in Germany. If you're flying to Buenos Aires in August, you will experience a rather cold Buenos Aires (between 5 and 15 degrees). After a time it gets warmer and warmer and in November and December you can spend your days with chilling at the pool and eating "asados" (that's the Argentinian Spanish word for barbecue). It's a lot of fun to enjoy summer in Buenos Aires.

SAFETY CONCERNS

I experienced Buenos Aires as a very safe city. I never felt insecure, if home was close, I walked home. You can easily take ubers or taxis without any concern. The only negative experience I had was the robbery of my phone. If you come to Buenos Aires, you should be aware of the fact, that if they pickpock you, they will normally only take your phone. In Argentina, phones are very expensive and for example iPhones cannot be bought. When it happened to me, I did not even realize that someone robbed me. Normally they are very fast. That is why I recommend you to get yourself a travel insurance, if you have a good phone. Additionally, you should bring a second phone under any circumstances. It is just too expensive to buy a new one in Argentina. Pick-pocking often happened during nights out. If you want to be 100% safe, you can also wear a fanny bag with your phone in it. Anyhow, don't worry about safety too much, all those phone tips they should just avoid the hustle of not having a phone and trying to get a new one in Argentina.

PRICES AND HOW TO GET MONEY

When I went to South America I had low prices in my mind. Unfortunately, the economy in Argentina suffers from high rates of inflation. Thus, you have to expect European prices for food, accommodation, transport and activities. You can only withdraw a certain amount of money per day and you always have to pay a fee. Therefore, we all used the online service “azimo” to get cash. It works very fast and convenient and is safe. You can order money via this platform and pick it up at an office in Buenos Aires.

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

HOW TO SAVE MONEY

There are three tricks which helped us to save a little bit of money. First, if you go by bus, you can get a student discount of 15/20%. That is only possible if you buy your tickets directly at the bus station in Retiro and show a document as a proof that you’re a student. Don’t buy them online, then you will not get the discount. Second, if you go by plane, you can get a better price (the price for Argentinian citizens). Some airlines such as skyairline, aerolineas offer different prices for Argentinian citizens and for foreigners. Always choose the Argentinian tariffs. They will not control whether you’re Argentinian or not and you can save a lot of money with this strategy. Third, if you go by ferry to Uruguay, they (coloniaexpress) also offer different tariffs for Argentina and Uruguay. Change the homepage to the Uruguay one and the tariffs will be lower. Again, no one checked us when we did it.

DESTINATIONS

- a. Iguazu: Impressive waterfalls in Brazil. For me those were the best, I’ve ever seen.
- b. Patagonia: The southern part of Argentina with a lot of hiking opportunities. That was my favourite trip. The mix of snow and mountains and lamas is simply beautiful. We went to El Calafate, hiked the Fitz Roy in El Chaltén, visited the Puerto Natales and went to Chile to hike in Torres del Paine. For us, the best way to get around was renting a car and exploring the region by ourselves.
- c. Santiago de Chile and Mendoza: I did a girls roomie trip to Santiago de Chile. Santiago de Chile is a very western city with great views and cafes. Mendoza is the city in Argentina, if you’re into drinking wine and nature. You can visit a lot of wineries and enjoy the great nature by going kayaking or hiking
- d. Puerto Madryn and península: During the season you can see whales and sea lions and penguins here. As I’ve never seen whales before this trip was really impressive to me. You start in Puerto Madryn, rent a car there and then you can go to the beaches to see whales and spend a day and a night in the national park to do the boat tour the next morning.
- e. Uruguay. Beaches, sun and chill during November and December. For us, it was a great goodbye journey. We rented a car and went to different beaches and villages in Uruguay.

PREPARATION

SPANISH

As most classes are in Spanish, you will have to speak and study in Spanish. Although our university requires to have a certain level to go to Buenos Aires, you should not worry too much about your level of Spanish. There have been other exchange students, who didn’t speak a word of Spanish before coming. Speaking of me, I learned Spanish at school, but I hadn’t spoken it for 5 years before knowing that I would spend half a year in Buenos Aires. Obviously, it makes your exchange easier if you already

have a good level of Spanish. But I would like to encourage you to apply, even if you do not feel that confident about it, as you can improve it quite quickly when putting effort into it.

FLAT HUNTING

Without no doubt the best place to live in Buenos Aires is Palermo. It is very beautiful and close to parks, bars, restaurants and clubs. If you move to Palermo or “barrios” close by like Villa Crespo you save a lot of time and money, as you can walk or bike to many places.

I personally think that the best way to find a flat is to come a week before university starts, book a hostel and start looking in Buenos Aires. The owners of the houses will reply so quickly and offer you to come see the room the same day or the next one, so that you don't have to worry that you need much time in advance. For the majority of rooms it is true, that you can move in directly - the applicant who pays the deposit the first normally gets the room. You should check craigslist, compartodepto and Airbnb, when you're looking online. I preferred craigslist. Try to speak Spanish, that will open you doors to more houses. You have different options of houses/ flats to live in. You could move in a flat with friends, you could move in with the owners or you move in one of the houses where mainly international students live. I chose option 3 and for me it was the best decision ever. We lived in a house called “Casa Uriate”, which was located in Palermo. We had two terraces and a big barbecue, which is very common in Buenos Aires and is simply awesome during hot November and December. Sometimes, you can even find houses or flats with pools. The average price would be between 350 and 500 \$ per month. The earlier you arrive, the better. But generally speaking you will easily find something in the first two weeks of August.

VISA/FLIGHT

As a German citizen, you do not need any VISA or flight back ticket to enter the country. When entering, you will get a 90 days tourist VISA. The university obliges you to apply for a “residencia” once you're in Argentina. That officially allows you to stay there for 6 months as an exchange student. The process is easy, Tatiana will book the two appointments for you and help you through the process. It costs around 30 Euros and you can get discounts when traveling or entering Argentinian national parks.

Just text me, if you have any questions about an exchange in Buenos Aires. I'm happy to help.

