

ARGENTINA

Capital: Buenos Aires
Population: 44 million
Official language: Spanish

The vast majority of Argentines are the descendants of immigrants who arrived on Argentina's shores from the nineteenth century onward, mainly from Italy and Spain, but also from the Ottoman Empire. After the 1860 Mount Lebanon civil war, thousands of Christian Arabs arrived in Buenos Aires. They were joined by thousands of Ottoman Armenians in the 1920s and 1930s.

The majority of them settled down in Buenos Aires, but a large community also formed in Córdoba, with smaller gatherings in Rosario and Mar del Plata. Today, it is thought that almost 150,000 Argentines are descended from one of these original Armenian immigrants. In Argentina, Armenians are first and foremost represented by their gastronomy. Behind Los Angeles, Beirut and Moscow, Buenos Aires is fourth in the world in terms of cities with the highest number of Armenian restaurants. In addition to the twenty or so restaurants, Armenian cooking classes are also very popular, as you can see on the Facebook page *Cursos de Cocina Armenia* (proudly sporting 50,000 likes), which teaches Armenian specialties that anyone can recreate at home. The businessman Eduardo Eurnekian, to whom the modernization of Yerevan's Zvartnots airport is credited, is the fifth richest man in Argentina.

Every Armenian traveling to Argentina's capital should start in the Palermo area. This Armenian neighborhood is famous for its restaurants, street art, nightclubs, shopping, and Jorge Luis Borges. Similar in atmosphere to New York's SoHo or Paris 'Marais, Palermo takes on a whole other dimension when you stroll along the street that crosses through its heart: Armenia Street. The "Plaza Immigrantes de Armenia" (or "Plaza Armenia") serves as a reminder of the first Armenians from the 1920s, who settled in a neighborhood that was once just a modest suburb of the capital.