

*Dreaming of
South America with Akorn*

March 2021

**Safe
travels**

by

WORLD
TRAVEL &
TOURISM
COUNCIL

Akorn

AKORN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

RECOMMENDED

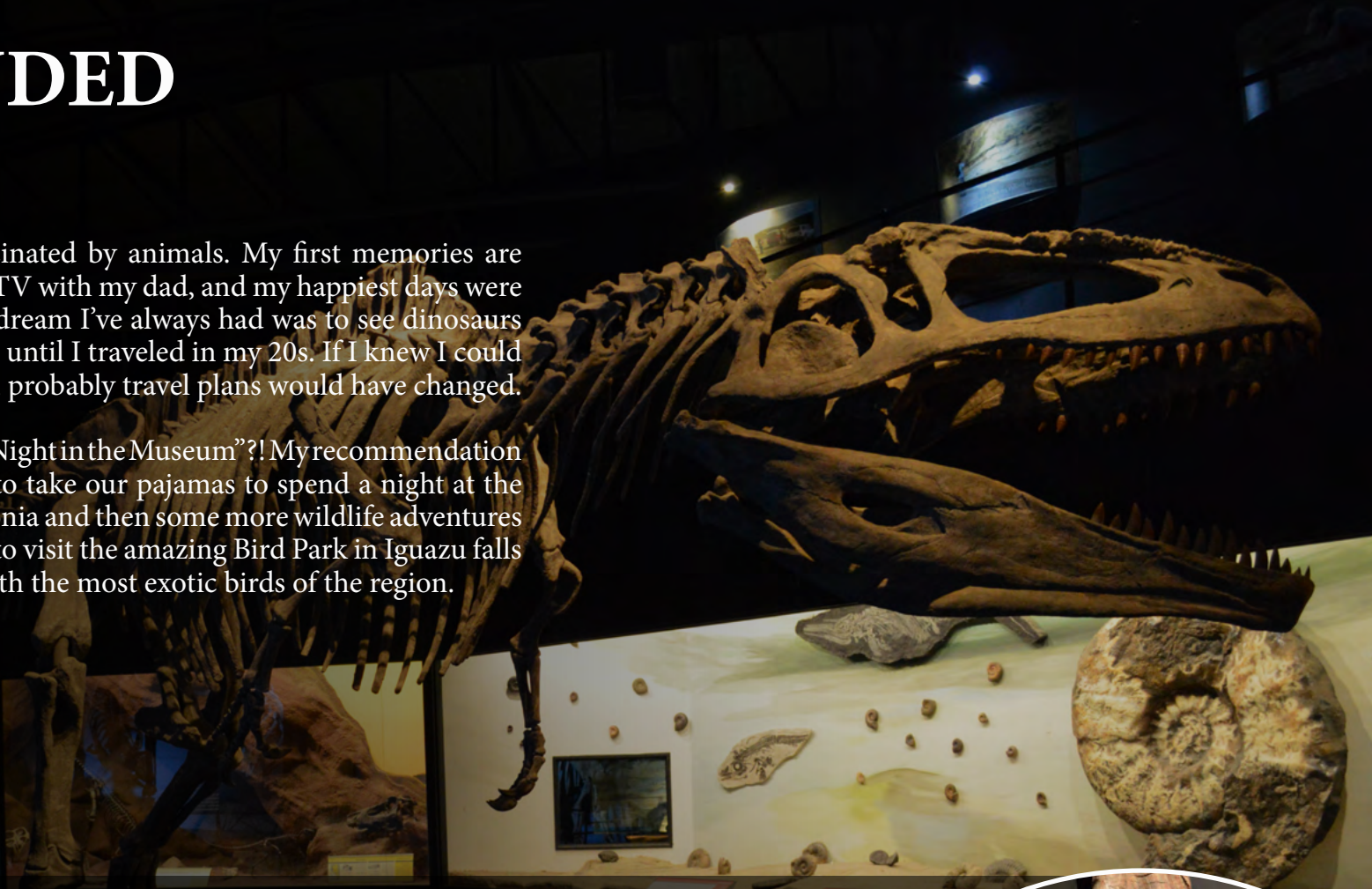
BY Akorn

Since I was a little girl, I've been fascinated by animals. My first memories are watching Nat Geo or similar shows on TV with my dad, and my happiest days were when he took me to the zoo. But, one dream I've always had was to see dinosaurs (skeletons), and I didn't get to see them until I traveled in my 20s. If I knew I could visit them closer to home in Argentina, probably travel plans would have changed.

Who doesn't love "Jurassic Park" and "A Night in the Museum"?! My recommendation (and next on my travel list) would be to take our pajamas to spend a night at the Paleontology Museum (MEF) in Patagonia and then some more wildlife adventures on the coast. And combine with Brazil to visit the amazing Bird Park in Iguazu falls to have an insider access experience with the most exotic birds of the region.

T-Rex hug!

Dalia Gibu
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Our Recommendation of the Month

MEF Museum in Trelew, Argentine Patagonia

One thing you just cannot miss out on your next visit to the Argentine Patagonia, is the opportunity to see face to face and stand side by toe, next to some of the world's largest dinosaur fossils, found in the MEF Museum (some of them so large, that a new building is being constructed to house them!). This will be an opportunity to get our inner children dreaming about what it would have been like to see real dinosaurs or even discovering their fossils, while we learn about the different time periods in Patagonia, and how this place has been a sanctuary for nature for millions of years already! However, the experience does not just stop there, after all this is Akorn. In order to complement your visit to the museum, our local team may arrange a night in the museum for you, special meals in the company of the dinosaurs, and we can even team up with the museum's staff and bring to life a glamping experience, for a full adventure in this beautiful piece of wild Argentine Patagonia!



Our Recommendation of the Month

Bird Park in the Brazilian Side of Iguassu

Parque das Aves is an internationally recognized rescue and conservation center for birds, located in the middle of the rich and exuberant Atlantic Rainforest, a neighbor of the Iguassu National Park. The Backstage Experience is an exclusive opportunity to have a look inside at the parks work during a one and a half hour tour. Gain access to restricted areas and have privileged contact with selected birds, including the feeding of toucans and other species, as well as the opportunity to learn more about the conservation and rescue programs at Parque das Aves. This experience is just perfect for families, couples and all nature enthusiasts!



WHAT'S NEW IN SOUTH AMERICA

Chile Becomes a Vaccination World Leader

With more than 5.6 million inhabitants already vaccinated and the world's fastest COVID vaccination rate, Chile has officially become a global referent! Their goal is to immunize 80% of the population (15 million), by the end of June 2021, and they are already sharing tips and plans with other countries. This is excellent news for our local team, and for our guests looking forward to come, as we will be able to offer an even safer destination to enjoy!



Visit Ecuador on Your Vaccination Card

As of March 22nd 2021, visitors who have been immunized, may enter Ecuador on their COVID-19 vaccination card. On the other hand, those who have not yet been vaccinated, will now need to present a PCR or antigen-negative test result, taken at least 3 days before arrival in Ecuador (10 days before the announcement). Please note that all travelers will still be scanned for fever and/or other COVID-associated symptoms, and they may be subject to a rapid antigen test.

*The above requirements are not mandatory for children under 2 years.

Galapagos: Phase 1 of Vaccinations is Completed

As Galapagos was one of the provinces that best handled the pandemic, the government decided that it should be here where Phase 1 should be fully implemented first of all. With this in mind, we are happy to share that 23,9% (4,500 people) of the population have already received the first COVID vaccination. Phase 1 prioritizes medical staff, senior citizens, teachers, police, military, firefighters, vulnerable groups, waste management professionals and strategic sectors.



Book your Air Cruise to Antarctica

We are thrilled to share that the 2022-2023 Air-Cruise programs, aboard Magellan Explorer are ready to be booked! Contact us, and get your clients exploring the White Continent, wondering at the mighty beauty of nature with every step taken, every penguin spotted and every mile flown over the mythic Drake passage for a full experience to tell and remember. You wish for it, we will make it happen!



Quarantine no Longer Needed in Peru

The Peruvian Government announced that quarantine is no longer a requirement for travelers! This was announced along with the resumption of aerial connectivity, and with the following measures for flights, valid through March 31st, 2021:

- *All flights from the UK, South Africa and Brazil, stay cancelled until further notice.
- *Non-residents from the above destinations, may not enter Peru until March 28th, 2021.
- *All passengers must take an antigen test upon arrival in Peru, and complete a 14-day isolation period. If the results come out negative, isolation may be finished.
- *Antigen and/or PCR test results are no longer a requirement for domestic flights.

WHAT'S HOT IN SOUTH AMERICA

Explora Hotels - News

We are happy to share that our hotel partner, Explora has announced great news for travelers ready to enjoy South America. The first big news is the announcement of the official opening and reopening dates of their properties (yes, that also includes the new Explora El Chalten in Argentina) and their redesigned Travesía Atacama – Uyuni, now featuring completely new accommodation during the journey in the Bolivian side. And the second big news is the confirmation of Explora, operating the exclusive Valle Chacabuco Lodge, in the Patagonia National Park!

With more than 30.000 hectares of Patagonian Land, the National Park is the living legacy of Douglas and Kristine Tompkins along with the Chilean Government, whose efforts to preserve the beauty of this land are now more tangible than ever! And it is in the heart of this National Park, in the Aysen area, that Lodge Valle Chacabuco was built, with the intention of offering a real experience embracing nature, while enjoying thrilling activities and top-notch service and accommodation. And being Explora the chosen operator of the lodge, we are especially sure of the latter!

It's time for your clients to -once again- gear up and start exploring this beautiful region, be it at one of the classic Explora properties or the Valle Chacabuco!

Remember:

- Explora Atacama: reopens on June 1st, 2021
- Explora Valle Sagrado & Machu Picchu: reopens June 15th, 2021
- Travesía Atacama & Uyuni: reopens June 15th, 2021
- Explora Rapa Nui: reopens July 15th, 2021
- Explora Torres del Paine: reopens September 1st, 2021
- New Explora El Chalten: opens September 15th, 2021

Book with Confidence Policy is Extended

With your client's comfort and your peace of mind as our highest priority, at Akorn we have extended the dates for our Book with Confidence policy, thus making it more flexible to book and plan your future travel. Book by April 30 for travel through December 31, 2022 and you may change or cancel up to 15 days prior to departure in the event of a COVID-19-related reason — whether at home or in your travel destination — and receive a credit toward future travel.

Conde Nast's Best 15 Countries for Adventure Travel

Truth be told, it is a thirst for adventure that makes us love travel so much! It is the thrill of discovering natural gems, the reward that comes after pushing ourselves to the limits and the mystery that makes our hearts beat faster when we hear the words -"ladies and gentlemen, we have arrived in South America!" And for this, we are happy to share **Conde Nast's list of the Best 15 Countries for Adventure Travel**, which features Argentina, Brazil and Peru. Enjoy!

Quito Airport: New Looks and Resumption of Services

Good news, along with the new and refreshing looks that have been recently unveiled at the arrival and departure halls of the Airport of Quito, we are happy to announce that, once again, we will be able to offer the Meet-and-Greet service here, for your guests to enjoy the benefit from more personalized attention, from the very second they step off the plane.

OUR TEAM IN SOUTH AMERICA

With more good news to tell every day, more experiences to enjoy and the exploring hearts of our team thirsty for travel, our Ecuador team recently visited the Northern Andes, on a FAM trip that allowed them to visit our favorite on-site partners and take part of some of the new activities that your clients will soon be able to enjoy.

In this opportunity it was Mirka, Jéssica, Alejandra, Jimmy, Iveth, Nancy, Ana Lucía and Diego, from the Sales, Operations and Cruise teams, that took part in the FAM trip.



Copper-pot ice cream is a must, on a visit to the North Andes! And our partners at Otavalo Hotel managed to bring it to a higher level, serving it in small copper-pot-shaped plates, for a full concept!

The ice cream, its changing notes when combined with golden berries and the experience of spoiling the palate with a different treat, will always be something to enjoy and remember here!



The team, at Otavalo Hotel, one of our recommendations to enjoy the city and its living culture. Be it out on the streets or enjoying the works of art by local artists, in the property.



Not every day one gets to meet an Andean luthier, learn the secrets behind the local compositions and then enjoy his performance.



This activity is done at a place that will relax your senses and allow you to become one with nature and its energy, as you fashion your own dreamcatcher, with the direction of an expert.



This is a typical dance by the Otavalo people, especially performed at Otavalo Hotel's lobby, for our team.

OUR EXPERT ADVICE ON BUENOS AIRES

About Buenos Aires

Population: 12 806 866
Weather: Min: 10°C (50°F) Max: 26°C (80°F)
Good for: culture, food, wine, sports, tango & folk



Mercedes Arando



"I am Mercedes. I was born and raised in the northern outskirts of Buenos Aires, and from 2001 to 2004 I worked as an au pair in New York, which allowed me to improve my English and later become admitted in the Queens College and Manhattan Marymount College. When I came back to Argentina for good, I entered La Suisse Guiding College and graduated as a Professional Bilingual Tour Guide. As a freelance tour guide, I worked for many travel agencies and institutions, such as the US Embassy, the Norwegian Embassy, the City Hall of Buenos Aires, the National Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, of course, Akorn Argentina. Just a couple of years later, during 2017's high season, I got to help in Akorn's Operations Department, and a year later, joined the team as full-time operator and on-call tour conductor. Another thing that I would like to mention about myself, is that I have been a Red-Cross volunteer for 3 years already! During the pandemic, I've been part of the Emergency Team, helping at COVID-19 Emergency Rooms in public hospitals, humanitarian flights and around shanty towns, all of which has been very fulfilling and lifechanging."



OUR EXPERT ADVICE ON BUENOS AIRES

My Favorite Hotel to Stay at?

The Four Seasons, because of the indulgent staff, the Elena Restaurant, the accommodation and their 1919 French-style mansion, built in by one of the most prestigious families of that time.

What is Your Favorite Restaurant in Town:

Fervor in Recoleta neighborhood, because of the varied menu. Enjoy a juicy steak, great seafood, tasty pasta "al dente" and delicious desserts, never leave a place here, before having dessert!

Top 5 Things to Do in Buenos Aires:

1. Learn the local history by touring the city, since most important events have taken place here.
2. Visit the MALBA Museum. It holds the most important Latin-American art collection.
3. Spend a day in Tigre, along the Parana Delta, enjoy a boat ride, learn about the local urban development and have lunch at a restaurant in one of the islands.
4. Visit the Isaac Fernandez Blanco Museum. Its collection reflects the Latin America's syncretism, between the local, Spanish and African cultures.
5. A private tour to Recoleta Cemetery. It is where Argentina's most outstanding characters lay, and also a genuine work of art! It surely is the jewel of Buenos Aires.

What to Bring on Your Trip:

Comfortable clothes and footwear. Buenos Aires is a beautiful city to walk around in!

My Local Advice:

Visit Colon Theatre, have ice-cream (it's really good, trust me), have a cup of coffee in a traditional café and visit El Ateneo bookstore, which used to be a theater in the 20th century.

My Favorite Local Thing to Do:

I grew up in the northern outskirts of Buenos Aires, where the shores of La Plata River are wide and relaxing. For this, my favorite activity will always be meeting friends, drinking mate or walking my dog Juani by the shore of the river. However, if time doesn't allow it, walking around the city is a must! Buenos Aires is great to walk in. You will love the streets and changing architecture.

What to See or Read Before Your Trip:

One of the most important Argentine writers, Jorge Luis Borges, as Buenos Aires is always present in his short stories, especially in the book "Fictions". He knew how to blend reality with fantasy, creating amazing tales that will keep you wondering which is which.

Akorn Experience Not to be Missed in Buenos Aires?

Our Polo Tour! Polo is played in "estancias" in the outskirts of the city. You can either get there by car, or by helicopter! Last time, I did the latter, and I absolutely recommend it! It is faster and allows great views of the city! Once there, we will learn the secrets of polo with a local expert, embrace the estancia life and pamper you with an all-Argentine lunch for an experience to remember.

FLAVORS OF SOUTH AMERICA

Argentine Medialunas

One thing must all agree on, is that there is no best feeling than looking out the window and seeing the peaceful white of snow, while we snug in a warm blanket and take a sip of our smoking-hot chocolate. For this, and while it is still winter in the northern hemisphere, today we bring you a typical Argentine pastry that will go just perfect with your chocolate, your coffee or tea, and will make you a cooking legend in the house.

What you will need for the dough

- 300 ml. of whole milk
- 14 grams of active yeast
- 525 grams of all-purpose flour
- 40 grams of sugar
- 15 grams of honey
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon of lemon zest (optional)
- 10 grams of salt
- 2 eggs (1 for the dough and 1 for the brush)

What you will need for the filling

- 40 grams of all-purpose flour
- 225 grams of butter, at room temperature

What you will need for the syrup

- 1/2 cup of water
- 1/2 cup of sugar

Directions

1. Warm the milk, add the yeast, stir until dissolved and let it stand for 10 minutes, until bubbly.
2. With a fork, mix the butter with the 40 grams of flour and spread over parchment paper in a square shape, and refrigerate for 15 minutes.
3. In a bowl, place the flour, sugar, honey, vanilla extract, lemon, salt, and one egg. Mix everything while adding the milk with the yeast from step 1, until the dough feels sticky and then knead.
4. Place the dough on a floured board. Stretch the dough into a square of about 30 cm (12”), place the butter for the filling in the center and fold the dough over it. Pinch to seal the edges of the dough, and roll into a rectangle, without exposing the butter. Fold in 3, like a letter, starting by the left edge. Place in a floured tin and refrigerate for 1 hour.
5. Remove the dough from the floured board and place with the longest side in front of you. Extend to make a rectangle and fold again in 3, always the left edge first. Refrigerate for 30 minutes, and repeat this process two more times. Once you have done for four times, move to the next step.
6. Stretch the dough on the floured counter into a rectangle of 45 x 30 cm (18”x 12”) with a thickness of 5 mm (0.20”). Cut three long strips of 10cm (4”) width each. Then cut each one in 3 and then diagonally, so you get 18 triangles. Extend each triangle and roll up. starting from the base.
7. Butter generously a baking sheet. Place each roll in the sheet and give it a croissant shape, pressing the ends on to the baking sheet.
8. In a small bowl, place the other egg and a little water or milk and beat until fully incorporated.
9. Preheat the oven to 180 °C (350 °F).
10. Leave the medialunas covered with a dishcloth in a warm place for 30-45 minutes, so they grow bigger.
11. Brush with the egg mixture and bake for 30 minutes, rotating if necessary.
12. Meanwhile, for the syrup, place the water and sugar in a small pot. Cook over medium heat, while stirring until the sugar dissolves. Let boil for 4 minutes to reduce.
13. Remove the medialunas from the oven. Plunge with a toothpick in several parts and brush with the syrup so that it is absorbed. Keep brushing until you use all the syrup.
14. Serve warm, and enjoy. Remember, they can be frozen and reheated for up to 3 days.



If you are looking for a place to wow all your Instagram followers, let us recommend you Pedra do Telegrafo, in Rio de Janeiro. In this photo, our Akorn Brazil Country Manager, Mikael Castro, shows us how it's done!

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