

ADI in Argentina and Chile, 2024



It was our pleasure and honor to attend the ADI South American Section convention in Mendoza, Argentina, the last weekend of August. Our convention and convocation were held at the Esplendor by Wyndham Hotel, known as the hotel of the wine route, because Mendoza is famous in the world for Malbec. It is not an easy destination, but well worth it. After traveling from San Diego to Dallas and



Miami, we boarded an 8-h night flight to Santiago, Chile, arriving early morning. Later that day, we met up with South



American Regent Dr. Edgardo Ávila for a short flight over to Mendoza, Argentina.

Chair for Argentina and Vice Regent for South America Section, Dr. Javier Higuera, and his lovely wife, Marisol, had all the bases covered as a very well-planned meeting in a very comfortable environment. The 8-h CE course on Laser basics and treatments was well received, and we all learned so much. Dr. Higuera had asked me to present a shortened version of



my missions course for a short presentation in Spanish during the CE. After the presentation, I was surprised to see several of our colleagues in tears, having been touched by our mantra of service to humanity. Our convocation inducted four new FADI Fellows into the Academy, President Jacob Park officiating. This was followed by a gala banquet in a separate section of the hotel restaurant, and unlimited Mendoza Malbec was provided for the celebration. Judging from what I saw and the faces present, everyone had a wonderful time welcoming the new Fellows into the Academy.



Saturday, we met in the lobby and boarded two buses to wine country, where we were dropped off at the Zuccardi winery for some real treats. We first toured the Olive factory, where we were shown how extra virgin olive oil is produced, even being able to taste one of their products that had a special after taste burn. We then walked across the street again to tour the Bodega (winery) and get some instructions on tasting. On returning to the main area, we were served appetizers outside, where I thought that was the promised lunch. However, we were then invited into a section of the restaurant and served the main meal, consisting of a variety of meats, for which Argentina is famous. We returned to the hotel stuffed to the brim with an amazing variety of Argentine food.

Because we had an evening flight back to Santiago, Chile, Dr. Ávila, Dr. Patricio Romero, incoming Chile chapter chair, Dr. Zachrisson and son, took a city bus tour of Mendoza, with spectacular views and information about the city. Back to the hotel and out to the airport for our flight back to Chile.

Dr. Ávila and Dr. Romero canceled patients so they could spend time with us and Zachrissons and show us around. I felt so fortunate to have this add-on time with Dr. Ávila, the extra time together in Chile, the meals, and the sights; all so enjoyable.

I discovered that the tallest building in South America is in Santiago, the Gran Torre Santiago, with a beautiful view of the huge city and the snow-capped Andes. We were able to visit beautiful Valparaiso on the coast for a delicious waterfront lunch. On Tuesday evening, Dr. Ávila had arranged an ADI conference of Fellows along with former Regent Dr. Christliebe Pasini. He asked me to please present again my shortened course on missions, and it was warmly received with everyone coming up to speak appreciation to Vicky and me.

Dr. Ávila had a loco (crazy) idea to take us South to the coast and visit his twin brother and stay at his boutique hotel. Remember, this is still winter, and the water and weather are cold! It was a beautiful time with relaxing meals, sightseeing, rest, and feeling treated like royalty! We reached as far south as the beautiful coastal town of Pelluhue.

On this earth, all good things, in fact, all things, come to an end. We didn't want to leave, but American Airlines was





calling and our California home needed attention, so teary-eyed, we bid farewell to a wonderful 10 days in South America and the warm hospitality of Dr. Ávila and his colleagues. I once again, as on every mission project, realized we are all more alike than different, and humanity runs as a common thread through all of us. This is what ADI is about: spending time with colleagues who think like we do and approach life in a similar way to serve others. It was medicine for my soul to have this special time in Argentina and Chile.

I am here to tell you the South American section is in very good hands and strong, with Dr. Ávila, and Dr. Higuera and

colleagues; all on the same page for ADI success. We are stronger together! ADI Forever!

Ronald E. Fritz, DDS, MPH, FADI

Footnote on Malbec grapes:

Malbec is a grape variety that produces a full-bodied, deep-colored red wine. It is also known as Côt or Auxerrois. Malbec grapes are thick-skinned and black and are known for their ripe plum flavors and notes of dark fruit. They are also known for their robust tannins and inky dark color. Malbec grapes originated in France, where they were primarily used as a blending grape to make Bordeaux. However, Malbec is now considered one of the most popular red wines on the market. Malbec grapes are sensitive to the climate and require ideal growing conditions, including ample sunshine and a dry climate. Too much sunshine can turn the wine into a flabby fruit bomb with little structure. Malbec grapes are also vulnerable to disease and rot. In the 19th century, the pest Phylloxera destroyed vast areas of European vineyards. The Great Frost of 1956 also wiped out most of the vineyards on both banks of Bordeaux.

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