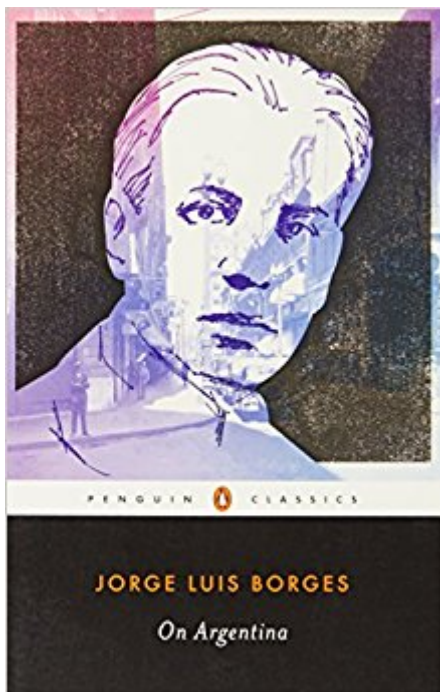


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# On Argentina (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

A literary guide to Argentina by its most famous writer Jorge Luis Borges wrote about Argentina as only someone passionate about his homeland can. On Argentina reveals the many facets of his passion in essays, poems, and stories through which he sought to bring Argentina forward on the world stage, and to do for Buenos Aires what James Joyce did for Dublin. In colorful pieces on the tango and the gaucho, on the card game truco, and on the criollos (immigrants from Spain) and compadritos (street-corner thugs), we gain insight not only into unique aspects of Argentine culture but also into the intellect and values of one of Latin America's most influential writers. Featuring material available in English for the first time, this unprecedented collection is an invaluable literary and travel companion for devotees of both Borges and Argentina.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jorge Luis Borges was born in Buenos Aires in 1899 and was educated in Europe. One of the most widely acclaimed writers of our time, he published many collections of poems, essays, and short stories before his death in Geneva in June 1986. In 1961 Borges shared the International Publishers Prize with Samuel Beckett. The Ingram Merrill Foundation granted him its Annual Literary Award in 1966 for his "outstanding contribution to literature." In 1971 Columbia University awarded him the first of many degrees of Doctor of Letters, honoris causa (eventually the list included both Oxford and Cambridge), that he was to receive from the

English-speaking world. In 1971 he also received the fifth biennial Jerusalem Prize and in 1973 was given one of Mexico's most prestigious cultural awards, the Alfonso Reyes Prize. In 1980 he shared with Gerardo Diego the Cervantes Prize, the Spanish world's highest literary accolade. Borges was Director of the Argentine National Library from 1955 until 1973.   
 Alfred Mac Adam (editor, introducer, notes) is a translator and art critic who teaches Latin American literature at Barnard College, Columbia University. He lives in New York City.   
 Suzanne Jill Levine (general editor) is a professor of Latin American literature and translation studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the distinguished translator of such innovative Spanish American writers as Jorge Luis Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Manuel Puig, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and Julio Cortázar. She lives in Santa Barbara, California.

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Penguin released five topic-based Borges titles in Spring '10 that to a great extent reprinted material from their three-volume Deluxe Penguin set of ten years before. Those earlier books were a massive dose of Borges, and one of them, *Selected Non-Fictions*, is a must buy. The other volumes, *Collected Fictions* and *Selected Poems*, are controversial as to the merits and even legality of the translations used. The only volume of the five new ones that contains an appreciable

amount of previously untranslated material is *On Argentina*, consisting mostly of essays about his homeland (though some readers might find the *Sonnets* volume handy, as translations of some of these haven't appeared in book form until now). The translation is muddy in places, but this is probably unavoidable; Borges' Spanish prose in his early years as a writer, when he was most concerned with Argentina's culture and landscape, is notoriously baroque and inaccessible. Those interested in early Borges will find the new material fascinating. I'd advise reading *Selected Non-Fictions* first if you're interested in Borges' essays in general, which are phenomenal. This is good as a supplement to that, and would also prove interesting to those whose primary interest is Argentina (c. 1900-1950) rather than its presiding genius.

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