

Why You Need to Visit This Design-Centric Corner of South America

Aesthetes are increasingly traveling to this welcoming, underrated part of the continent, where an open-fire meal, great bottle of wine, and stunning scenery are all within easy reach

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Santiago, Buenos Aires, and Cartagena often grab the glory as South America's meccas of design, but a younger cousin is emerging. Uruguay, with a population of 3.4 million, blends surfing culture with gastronomy and architecture. The communities of Garzón, Punta del Este, and José Ignacio easily fill a long weekend or luxurious week. Winery tasting rooms, restaurants, shopping districts (laden with woolen items, clothing, antiques, and crafts), and architectural marvels—such as the jaw-dropping Casapueblo—harness the country's cultural history with modern tweaks on design. And for travelers intent on a beach retreat, boutique design-oriented hotels steps from the sand are not hard to find, including in the boho-chic town of José Ignacio. Escape the winter season in the north by fleeing to this luxurious corner of South America, where its countless charms make the trek well worth the long flight.

STAY AND EAT



If you're looking for a luxury chain hotel, there aren't any, but luxury does abound at quite a few boutique properties. In the laid-back surfer town of José Ignacio—often compared to Montauk, attracting celebs like Mark Zuckerberg and the Rolling Stones, as well as Argentina's elite—you have your choice of *playa* or *pueblo* via the 10-room *Playa Vik* snug on the beach or the 37-room *Bahia Vik* (open since late 2015). The charming *Posada del Faro*, which offers breakfast delivered to your room, ocean views, and a chill pool scene, is another option.

