

SEASIDE SWELLS: BRAZIL + URUGUAY

carla hunt

Swell places for clients to be by the sea
in South America.



Opposite page: The Pousada Estrela D'Agua, a Relais & Châteaux property in Brazil. Left: Playa Vik in Uruguay.

uruguay is making waves

A bit farther down the Atlantic coast, Uruguay's making waves in the U.S. travel market, surfacing as a top new destination pick by *Condé Nast Traveler* and *National Geographic Traveler*.

A major attraction are the beaches that stretch south from the Brazilian border to reach Punta del Este, a world-famous resort town that has served for decades as the Hamptons of Latin America, as in January and February it becomes the playground for a glittery mix of international personalities, beautiful people and wealthy South Americans. But for clients visiting Buenos Aires and in need of a grand-finale place in the sun, just across the Rio de la Plata (by plane or hydrofoil) and 12 miles north of the famous beach destination of Punta del Este is San Ignacio, a laid-back bohemian, fishing village that's now the "go-to" place on the coast.

What to go for is long, wide expanses of sand bordered by white dunes and deep pine forests, plus a low-key luxury lifestyle laced with impressive sunsets, outstanding food and **Playa Vik**, the newest and most spectacular of luxury seaside properties in the country.

To call Playa Vik a work of art doesn't begin to describe this stunning property. Designed by Montevideo-born architect Carlos Ott (heralded for his work on Paris' Opera Bastille), the super-contemporary and super-creative hotel occupies a sculptural glass-and-titanium main building, surrounded by six light-filled, 2- and 3-bedroom castles—walled in glass and roofed with sea grasses. Within the main building are an additional four suites, and all rooms are decorated with murals or hung with abstract oils; floors are hand-painted; and each item of furniture a work

of art including hull-shaped bathtubs of jacaranda wood. Other over-the-top features include a wall of pulsating light by artist James Turrell in a dining area overlooking the beach; a 40-ft. wine cellar; a pampero dining pit on deck for BBQs; and a 75-ft. cantilevered pool that juts out to the ocean, seemingly meeting Playa Mansa below.

Clients will want to venture out of the resort to walk into the village for a seafood lunch or go horseback riding at **Estancia Vik**, sister property and nearby luxury ranch on 4,000 inland acres. Rates at Playa Vik start at \$1,050.

getting to uruguay

American Airlines offers nonstop flights to Montevideo, the country's capital, from Miami. ●

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Bogota, Colombia (August 2013)

contact information

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Nannai Resort & Spa: nannai.com.br

Playa Vik: playavik.com

Pousada Estrela D'Agua: estreladagua.com.br