

Uruguay



🏠 **Estancia Vik** Camino Eugenio Saiz Martínez, km8; ☎ 094 605212; www.estanciavik.com; 🕒 Oct–Apr. Set on a hilltop with huge views, on a 4,000ha estate offering fantastic birdwatching & horseriding, the Estancia is a delightful maze of patios & buildings in various authentic rural styles; each bedroom is by a different Uruguayan artist, & the central living room is dominated by a 3.5m-high white marble piece by Pablo Atchugarry & a ceiling mural by Clever Lara, a bird's-eye view of the Uruguayan landscape. A superb breakfast is included, together with unlimited horseriding; you can also take polo lessons if you want. **\$\$\$\$\$**

🏠 **Playa Vik** Los Cisnes & Los Horneros; ☎ 094 605212; www.playavik.com. The Norwegian-Uruguayan businessman Alex Vik has created a pair of superb boutique hotels in & near José Ignacio, both packed with works by South American artists (& with huge rock crystals from Artigas). In the centre of the village, Playa was designed by Carlos Ott & consists of 6 linked 'houses', glass-walled & with sea-grass roofs, & a titanium-clad building aptly dubbed 'Sculpture', with massive oxidised-bronze doors by Pablo Atchugarry & a swimming pool cantilevered out to the west. Inside are artworks by Carlos Musso, Marcelo Legrand, Carlos Páez Vilaró, & the 19th-century painter Juan Manuel Blanes, as well as non-Uruguayans such as Zaha Hadid, Anselm Kiefer & James Turrell. There's a fine restaurant, & activities such as horseriding at Estancia Vik are included. **\$\$\$\$\$**