

Three great honeymoon spots in the Americas



Photographer: Cristobal Palma

Located on the most coveted point on the Uruguayan coastline, the exclusive Playa Vik retreat merges design and art with an incomparable setting. Rates start at \$1,600.

By Jody Schmal

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Planning a wedding can be a stressful experience, but planning a honeymoon should be considerably more fun. And for Houston-based brides and grooms looking to stay somewhat close to home, there is a plethora of relaxing post-nuptial respites in North, Central and South America. Here are three hip honeymoon spots to consider booking in 2013.

FOR JET-SETTERS: José Ignacio, Uruguay

South America touts an abundance of varied landscape for all types, from wineries in Argentina to Peru's Machu Picchu and the sexy beaches of Brazil. But two idyllic properties in Uruguay boast the best of it all, a harmonious mix of nature, art, luxury and design.

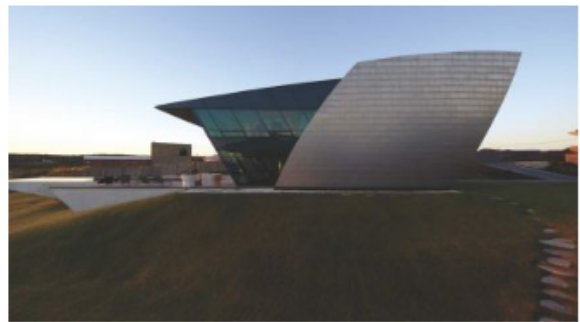
Located on 4,000 rolling countryside acres around the bohemian fishing village of José Ignacio 12 miles from the Atlantic coast, the ecofriendly **Estancia Vik** resort (rates from \$650) comprises a 50,000-square-foot, 12-suite Spanish colonial style ranch house, designed by Uruguayan architect Marcelo Daglio and featuring the site-specific work of more than 20 local artists. Not only are the sweeping views of the valley and sunsets stunning, other retreat amenities include a pool with a floor dotted with fiber optic lights mirroring the constellations above.

Five miles away on the gloriously jagged beach, Estancia's sister property **Playa Vik** is a designophile's dream, showcasing work by contemporary artists and designers such as James Turrell and Zaha Hadid in six unique "casas" surrounding a dramatic central "Sculpture" building designed by Uruguayan architect Carlos Ott (rates from \$1,600 for a Sculpture suite, \$1,700 for a casa). The latter has a cantilevered pool hanging 32 feet over the beach garden below.

Between the two retreats, honeymooners may choose to simply relax by the pool or sunbathe on the beach - or get active with kite surfing, canoeing, mountain biking or by taking polo lessons. Houstonians traveling to the Vik hotels can connect in Miami in order to catch a flight into Montevideo, which is about one and a half hours away from the resorts. There is also the much closer Punta del Este airport, which is serviceable by daily flights from airports in Argentina and Brazil; vikretreats.com.

FOR BEACH LOVERS: Cabo San Lucas, Mexico

At the tip of the Baja Peninsula, Cabo San Lucas has long



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