how to spend it

Boho hotspots in Uruguay and a new Chilean vineyard

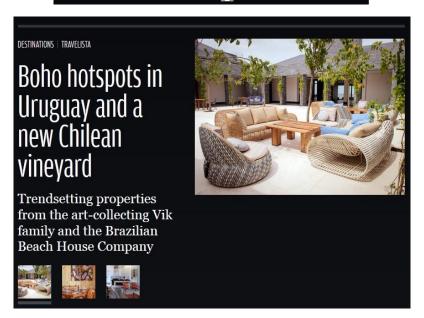Trendsetting properties from the art-collecting Vik family and the Brazilian Beach House Company

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For beach houses in Trancoso, the Brazilian Beach House Company (*www.brazilianbeachhouse.com*) has been the go-to agency ever since owner Steven Chew decamped from London to set up shop in Rio in 2007. In Brazil, he has built up a portfolio of 90-odd homes to rent, from private islands off Salvador to film director Walter Salles' home in Angra dos Reis. Now Chew is riding a new wave with the addition of Uruguay to his books and 30 fully staffed properties. The epicentre is the fishing village of José Ignacio, where his villas (*from $12,500 per week*) will be competing for the same crowd who chase rooms at Bahia Vik José Ignacio (*www.bahiavik.com; from $800*), a new hotel-and-villa property from the art-collecting Viks, opening this month. This Norwegian family also owns Playa Vik (*www.playavik.com; from $900*), a super-modern beach hotel 500m away in the same fishing village-turned-global Boho hotspot. Bahia Vik is less about look-at-me architecture than relaxed natural wood and low-lying structures built into the dunes, with views across the Atlantic Ocean towards Punta del Este (a 19km drive away). The 11 two- and three-bedroom bungalows are set amid the undulating sands and beach grasses, while next door is the Viks' first standalone restaurant, La Susana (*www.lasusana.com*). Fashioned from simple rustic woods, it recalls Club 55 in St Tropez, and the menu features the best local fare, from grass-fed Uruguayan beef to piquant ceviche. Meanwhile, over the Andean backbone in Chile, the upcoming Viña Vik (*www.vinavik.com; from $1,200*), which occupies an 11,000-acre vineyard a two-hour drive south of Santiago, opens next month. For 10 years, the Viks have been working towards creating the best wine in South America; for travellers, April marks the first time to get an early taste of their endeavours while staying at this new 22-room hotel with 360° views of the vineyard in the Millahue Valley or "place of gold" – so named by the indigenous people.

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