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## Playa Vik - José Ignacio

Calle Los Cisnes y Los Horneros, Faro José Ignacio, José Ignacio, Maldonado, Uruguay

*A sister property to the ranch-like Estancia Vik, Playa Vik opened in 2010 in the oceanfront resort town of José Ignacio, Uruguay, a calmer alternative to the nearby city of Punta del Este, which is about 15 minutes away by car.*



A strikingly contemporary property that incorporates natural elements, Playa Vik José Ignacio is instantly recognizable from a distance, thanks to its so-called "living roof" planted with Uruguayan wild flowers, setting a unique architectural tone created by Uruguayan architect Carlos Ott, who has also worked on the Paris Opera House, the National Bank of Dubai and the Carlos Curbelo airport in Punta del Este.

Unlike its sister property, Playa Vik sits in a village, providing a relaxed, small-town ambiance where it's easy to go for strolls through the neighborhood and along the beach. With its distinctive style, Playa Vik is ideal for travelers who appreciate contemporary architecture and art, in the form of a quiet, relaxed oceanfront getaway with casas that feel something like chic urban apartments.

Contemporary artwork from Uruguay and beyond (by artists including Zaha Hadid, Anselm Kiefer and James Turrell) graces the walls of the central building, which has a dramatic, 55-foot inclined façade, a giant,



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sculpted bronze door, and wide expanses of glass that maximize the ocean view. Indeed, the architectural style appears to be designed as a work of art in its own right, complementing the original pieces that hang inside (the central building, in fact, has been dubbed "the Sculpture").

The Sculpture building is divided into several public areas, including a living room furnished with sofas, semi-precious stone tables and offbeat sculptural pieces, a formal dining room, and a library furnished with a small selection of books.



The property's six casas are divided into several sizes, ranging from two to three bedrooms in size. Each casa is distinct in layout and design, but the décor is consistently contemporary, and they all have a fireplace, original artwork and hand-painted floors. The largest, the Valentina Suite, is located within the Sculpture building, with eye-catching red, black and white theme, while original photography and interesting paintings characterize the other casas.

You may swim in the ocean at Playa Mansa, a beach with gentle waves that lies just in front of the property, or make use of the 75-foot cantilevered swimming pool, a strikingly minimalist structure made of Uruguayan black granite that juts out toward the ocean, giving you the impression you just might make it all the way to the Atlantic if you make it to the very end of the pool. A fiber optic celestial map of the southern hemisphere on the pool's floor brings additional drama to the setting.



Cuisine is similar to that served at the sister Estancia Vik property, with a heavy focus on expertly prepared, freshly caught seafood, locally grown vegetables, and plenty of Uruguayan beef. The property's indoor dining room has large glass windows that look out on the beach, as well as a bold painting called "The Secret Life of Plants" that envelops one entire wall.



The parillero dining room, which is designed for meals centered around Uruguay's famed beef dishes, features an attractive stone wall made of shiny Agatha stones, and Lapacho wood floors that run outside to the adjacent outdoor terrace. In this outdoor area is plenty of barbecue space, a 14-foot dining table and a fire pit surrounded by comfortable seating, ideal for warming up on chilly evenings. A 40-foot wine cellar that stretches beneath the casas, housing some 5,000 bottles, provides liquid refreshment.

You may exercise in the small but functional gym, which offers inspiring ocean views, and sign up for treatments in one of the two spa treatment rooms. The hotel's game room features table tennis, Wii, chess and other games. Playa Vik also offers visits to Estancia Vik, for horseback riding, polo playing and classes, as well as lunch and dinner.

Web Address: [www.vikretreats.com/](http://www.vikretreats.com/)

Total Number of Rooms: 6

Published rates: From \$800 in low season, from \$1,500 in high season

Review by Mark Chesnut, photos courtesy of Playa Vik

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