

The Telegraph



Estancia Vik

José Ignacio, Uruguay [View on a map](#)



9/10

Telegraph expert
rating

" This working estancia is also a sophisticated art-filled hideaway, with just 12 unique suites designed and decorated by Uruguay's finest artists. It feels like you're staying at the fabulous home of a friend, where the food is gourmet and there's a host of outdoor activities "

By [Sarah Gilbert](#), TRAVEL WRITER

9/10

Location

Perched on a hilltop surrounded by serene pampas where horses and cattle roam free. It's just a 15-minute drive from the beaches, bars and chic boutiques of José Ignacio, 40 minutes from glitzy Punta del Este and two hours from Montevideo, while top Argentine chef Francis Mallmann's renowned restaurant in Garzon is a 30-minute drive away.

9/10

Style & character

The first of three Vik properties in Uruguay began life as a country ranch for family and friends. From the outside, this low-slung white building was designed to resemble a traditional hacienda with a terracotta-tiled roof and shady courtyards, while the interior is filled with stunning artworks from the Vik family's personal collection. The vast living space boasts a sculpture by Pablo Atchugarry, outsized amethyst geodes and a cathedral-high ceiling with Clever Lara's painting of Uruguay (inspired by Google Earth), along with two sculptural fireplaces and plenty of squishy sofas.



9/10 **Service & facilities**

There's no shortage of complimentary activities, including biking, kayaking on the lagoon, two tennis courts and a driving range. The stables offer riding for all abilities with a gaucho guide and experienced riders can try their hand at polo. Lounge by the pool and book a massage, or work off the culinary treats in the small gym. Inside, there's table tennis, table football, a pool table, a DVD library and lots of books to enjoy. Guests also have access to the beachfront Bahia Vik and Playa Vik in José Ignacio.

- ✓ Beach
- ✓ Laundry
- ✓ Pool
- ✓ Room service
- ✓ Tennis court
- ✓ Fitness centre
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Sauna
- ✓ Wi-Fi

9/10 **Rooms**

Each of the distinct suites is named after the artist. The Musso Suite is covered with vibrant figures, with a metal four-poster bed, while the Duarte Suite is all neutral tones and textures. Bathrooms are equally spacious and diverse – perhaps a wooden bathtub or a one-of-a-kind stone sink. None of the suites have televisions – soak up the stellar views instead – but you can request one. And they all have outside space, the four Master suites come with private terraces and other suites have access to the wraparound patio.

7/₁₀

Food & drink

The lavish buffet breakfast – served in the vaulted-ceilinged, brick-walled dining room, complete with Colonial-style furniture – includes just-baked pastries, seasonal fruit, fresh juices, pancakes and eggs-to-order. Lunch and dinner are à la carte, perhaps the estancia's own beef or catch-of-the-day, with vegetables from the organic garden. The weekly *asado* sees the grill fired up in the barbeque room, with its corrugated iron walls covered in artist Marcelo Legrand's colourful graffiti. This communal meat feast is paired with organic salads and often eaten under the stars. Try a wine tasting in the impressive cellar and don't miss a Caipiroska with the Vik's Norwegian vodka, Christiania.

8/₁₀

Value for money

Double rooms from US \$550 (£435) in low season; and from US \$650 (£514) in high. Prices double around Christmas and New Year. Breakfast included. Free Wi-Fi.

Access for guests with disabilities?

Ground-floor rooms are wheelchair accessible although not specially adapted. There are two lifts and ramps available.

Family-friendly?

Yes, very. There's a childrens' menu, child-friendly activities and a fabulous games room that adults will enjoy too. Cots are free of charge, extra beds for children aged three and above are charged at US \$150 (£119) in low season, and US\$300 (£237) in high; babysitters available on request.

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