



PLACES OF INTEREST

When the Spanish and Portuguese realized that Uruguay had neither silver nor gold they were not sure what to do with it. This did not stop the two countries from fighting over it, however. Spain eventually established the first permanent settlement of Villa Soriano 1624. It would take just over a century for Spain to gain complete control of Uruguay.

In 1811 Uruguay rebelled against Spanish rule. Though having to continually struggle against Portugal and Brazil, Uruguay finally gained political independence in 1828. A large wave of European immigrants (primarily Italian and Spanish among many others) came to Uruguay in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Internal strife, political divisions, civil war, foreign intervention, failed governments, faulty economic theory, Marxist guerrilla movements and military coups all added up to many decades of hardship for the people of Uruguay. In 1985 civilian rule was restored under a Constitutional Republic system of government.

PUNTA DEL ESTE PLACES OF INTEREST

1 The Beaches of Punta Del Este and the surrounding area are some of the most beautiful and popular in all of South America. From Playa (beach) los Inglese near the southern point all the way up the coast to Playa Jose Ignacio...just pick a spot in the sand...you can't go wrong.

2 The Meteorological Station provides a great view of the surrounding area. The small museum has historic pictures of the city and an interesting collection of metrological instruments.

3 Plaza Artigas is a great street market where talented artisans offer visitors a wide selection of well made crafts.

4 Gorlero Avenue is lined with wonderful restaurants, cafes and chic outlets for those in need of serious retail therapy. It is the place to relax with a cold drink and people watch.

5 The Faro de Punta Del Este is located near the southern point and is the symbol of the city. This lighthouse was built in the mid 1800s and the views of the surrounding waters and coastline are simply beautiful.

6 The Ralli Contemporary Art Museum is home to a wonderful collection of sculptures and paintings by celebrated South American artists. A number of originals by the great Salvador Dali are on display.

Beyond Punta Del Este

7 Casapueblo is the amazingly designed and hand-built home of Uruguayan born, world famous artist Carlos Paez Vilaro. The house was built, perhaps sculpted is a better description, in the late 50s high on the terraced cliffs over looking the Atlantic.

8 Maldonado is just north of Punta Del Este and was founded in 1755 making it one of the first towns to be established in Uruguay. The town has a wonderful cathedral, a cultural museum and a military museum dedicated to General Jose Gervasio Artigas, a national hero of Uruguay. The Museum of American Art displays a beautiful collection of pieces from contemporary artists and others that date back 5,000 years to the pre-Colombian period.

9 The Museo Del Mar, just up the Atlantic coast in La Barra, is an interesting (strange in a fun way) marine museum that displays a wide collection of sea animals including the skeleton of a large whale.

10 Parque Municipal Zoologico Medina is a nice zoo with a number of inter-active displays and exhibits. The zoo is in San Carlos, just a short distance north of Punta Del Este.

11 Montevideo is the capital of Uruguay. It has a classic European feel to it. There are parks and plazas, monuments and open markets and beautifully designed "old world" buildings.

SHORE EXCURSIONS To make the most of your visit to Punta Del Este and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Brochure, Shore Excursion TV Channel or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, guests are advised to take with them only the items they need and to secure any valuables.

LOCAL CUSTOMS Bargaining: Prices are generally fixed.

Tipping: A 10% tip is customary at restaurants.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES Uruguay's cuisine has been directly influenced by the European immigrants that have come to the country bringing their favorite recipes with them. Mediterranean Spanish and Italian dishes are among some of the most popular. *Pascualina* is a spinach pie made with a filling of vegetables, cheese, milk and eggs, covered with dough and baked till golden brown. *Asado* is the way the Uruguayans BBQ, on a grill over an open flame or skewered and slow roasted close to hot coals. *Choripan* is a tasty, convenient and popular sandwich made with grilled sausage (chorizo) and covered with a mixture of oregano, parsley, garlic, red and black pepper, balsamic vinegar and olive oil...all served on a fresh baguette. *Caruso Sauce* is made with onions, ham, cream, nuts and mushrooms then poured hot over fresh pasta. Its origins are passionately debated.

Uruguay stakes its claim as having two of its Italian chefs create it in 1915 in honor of the great Italian/American opera tenor Enrico Caruso who was on tour in South America at the time. The sauce is certainly named for Caruso, who loved food second only to singing, but whether he created it himself or his chef friends in New York were the first or whether Uruguay has the honor...it is still a wonderful pasta sauce.

Grappa miel is Uruguay's national drink. A honey and alcohol concoction, it was introduced to the country by Italian immigrants. *Mate*, a hot herbal tea, is also very popular.

SHOPPING FACILITIES Avenida Gorlero is the primary upscale shopping area in Punta Del Este. Artigas Square is where visitors can find a wide variety of well made handicrafts. Many stores offer a discount if the purchase is made with cash rather than a credit card.

LOCAL CURRENCY The national currency is the Peso Uruguayo (Ur\$). Most banks have ATMs.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES The Post Office is located at 1035 Gorlero Avenue

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 000.410

MCI: 000.412

TRANSPORTATION Car rentals are available and reasonably priced, especially when compared to the taxis that are very expensive. A reliable shuttle bus covers all the major beaches along the Atlantic coast.

TOURIST INFORMATION Tourist Information Office is located at Centro de Información Turística, intersection of Gorlero Ave. and 25th Street.

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Yes - Si

No - No

Good Day - Buenos Dias

Good Bye - Adios

Thank-you - Gracias

You're welcome - De Nada