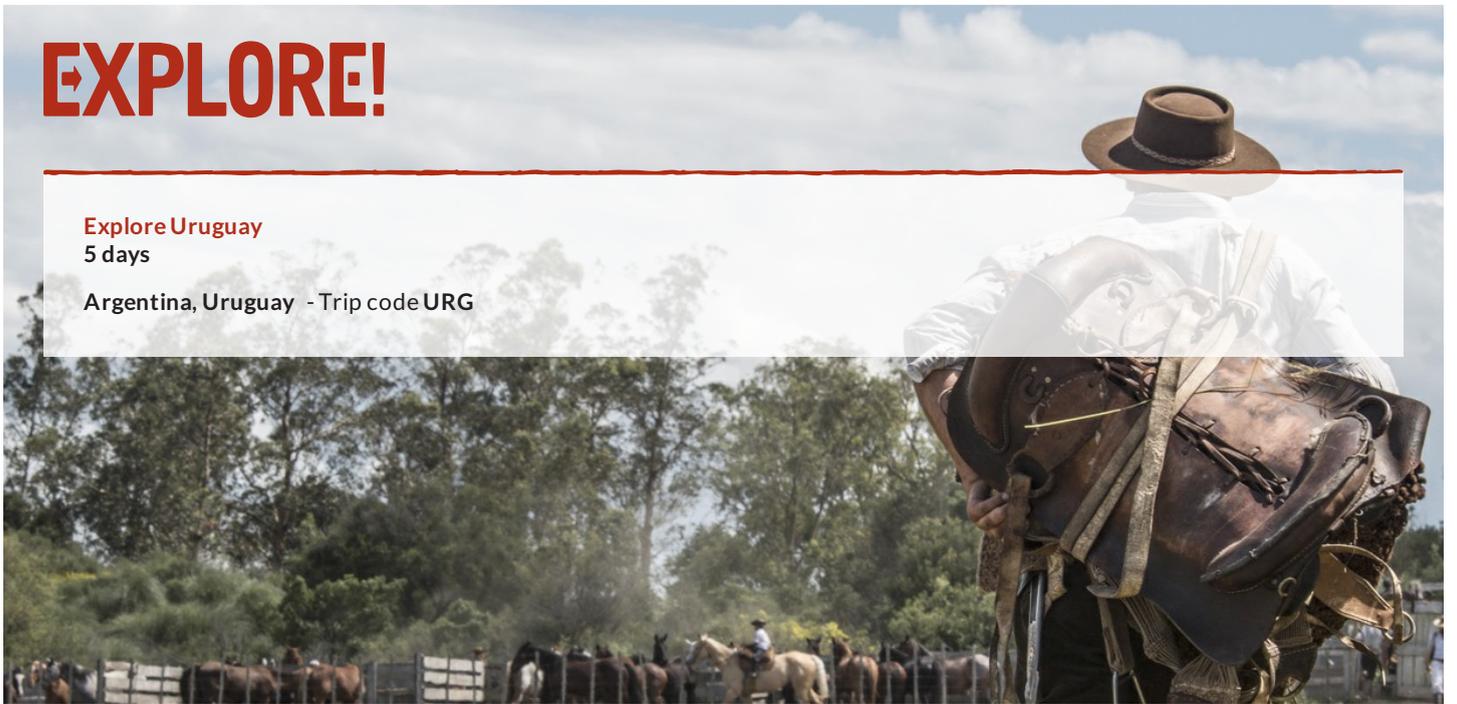


EXPLORE!

Explore Uruguay
5 days

Argentina, Uruguay - Trip code URG



Explore Uruguay

The small but perfectly formed country of Uruguay is often forgotten, situated peacefully between the larger countries of Brazil and Argentina. This hidden gem is well worth a visit though, particularly as its laidback pace and sleepy atmosphere provides the perfect relaxing extension to a full-on trip to one of its more boisterous neighbours.

Exploring the stunning UNESCO-protected centre of Colonia del Sacramento, enjoying the sensory delights of Montevideo's Port Market, and relaxing at a traditional estancia in Gaucho-country, this trip uncovers some of this small country's many contrasts.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Colonia del Sacramento** - Soak in the atmosphere by wandering the cobbled streets and beautifully preserved buildings of this sleepy town
- ★ **Traditional estancia** - Get to know Gaucho-country on a working ranch
- ★ **Typical food** - Watch the chefs slaving over 'asado' (typical barbecue), and taste the delicacies washed down with a local red wine, at Montevideo's Port Market

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Ferry from Buenos Aires to Colonia del Sacramento

Our trip starts early this morning with a pick-up from the Waldorf Hotel in Buenos Aires (Explore can arrange accommodation the night before if desired), and a journey to Buenos Aires' port for our 1.5 hour boat trip to Colonia del Sacramento, Uruguay. It's important to mention that this extension trip will not be led by an Explore Leader. You will have expert local guides in each location, and transport (public buses and ferries) between locations will be unguided.

Originally founded by the Portuguese in 1680, the picture-perfect UNESCO heritage site of Colonia changed hands many times between Spanish and Portuguese rule due to its strategic position on the River Plate. Today the different architectural styles in the tiny old city are so well-preserved that a trip here feels like being transported back in time. We explore the city on foot with our local guide. It's very easy to get around in the centre and all of the most beautiful and interesting sites are within easy walking distance on the cobbled streets. After our walking tour we'll have some free time to explore - you could climb the lighthouse staircase for a 360 degree view of the city, visit one of the city's old museums or simply watch the world go by over a flask of traditional yerba mate, a bitter tea that is particular to Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. After this relaxing start to our Uruguayan adventure, we take a 2 hour public bus journey to our hotel in Uruguay's capital, Montevideo.



Accommodation: Regency Way (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Explore Montevideo; public bus and private car to ranch

Uruguay's capital city is a modern, eclectic hub, filled with life and culture from the historic buildings in the old centre to the bustling waterfront along the Rio de la Plata. We spend the morning discovering the city on foot and by bus, including visits to the Independence Square, the Cerro de Montevideo hill and the Gaucho Museum. Our last stop will be at the fantastic Port Market, a hubbub of craftsmen, coffee-shops and traditional clothes stalls. The key to this market is in its interior, where we will find Uruguay's most special export - meat. Despite Uruguay being overshadowed by Brazil and Argentina, their love of the asado (traditional barbecue) knows no bounds. You can smell the smoky flavours as you wander through the market, which is a complete maze of restaurants and food stalls. To really enjoy the atmosphere just grab a seat at one of the bars, order a glass of wine, take your pick of the various cuts of meat available, and enjoy watching the chefs at work as they manage to cook about 50 different things at the same time.

In the afternoon we take a public bus to Cerro Colorado town. Our guide in Montevideo will make sure that the bus driver also knows where you have to get off, and you will be picked up by a driver to continue the 30 minutes to our 'estancia' (a local term for ranch) by car.



Accommodation: San Pedro Timote (or similar)



Standard Ranch



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 3 - Full day at the ranch; activities include horseback riding and biking

Today we have a full day to enjoy the Uruguayan Pampas. At the ranch you have the chance to go horseback riding, hiking or biking around the property grounds, as well as 'zorra' riding on the back of a traditional horse-pulled tractor, or fishing. There is also a swimming pool at the hotel to relax in. The estancia provides everything on a full-board basis, so at lunch and dinner you'll have the opportunity to taste some traditional specialities, such as locro (corn), guisos and ensopados (warming stews) and the famous asado. There are also Mediterranean options as a change from the local food, as well as some delicious tarts and desserts. Activities at the ranch are flexible - you can do as much or as little as you like. The grounds are extensive, so you could spend your time exploring these on foot.



Accommodation: San Pedro Timote (or similar)



Standard Ranch



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - Public bus to Montevideo; return ferry to Buenos Aires

After a morning at the ranch, we set off in the early afternoon back to Cerro Colorado, the small town from which we will take our return bus to Montevideo. On our arrival here we take a bus back to Colonia and our return ferry to Buenos Aires. This journey from Montevideo will take approximately 4 hours. We will arrive in the evening to Buenos Aires, where we could spend the night eating a classic steak in one of the many great restaurants of the city. Details of your return airport transfer will be given to you this evening by the hotel reception.



Accommodation: Hotel Waldorf (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Trip ends in Buenos Aires

Our trip ends this morning after breakfast.



Why book this trip

This is Explore's only trip in Uruguay, and it offers the opportunity to stay on an 'estancia', or ranch, in Gaucho country, on a full-board basis. It's a great way to extend your stay in South America and see the highlights of an often forgotten country, which is well worth the time to visit.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 4
Lunch: 1
Dinner: 2



Transport

Car
Ferry
Public Bus



Trip staff

Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

2 nights standard hotel
2 nights standard ranch

Trip information

Country information

Argentina

Climate

Argentina has a climate that ranges from subtropical in the north to cold in the temperate south. The Andes has erratic rainfall and flash floods from December to May. From June to September spring like sunny days temper the cold nights.

Time difference to GMT

-3

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

Predominantly Roman Catholic.

Language

Spanish is the main language throughout this region, along with a number of indigenous dialects, of

Uruguay

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

Predominantly Roman Catholic.

Language

Spanish

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Buenos Aires - Tango Show/Dinner US\$ 120, without dinner US\$ 70.

Clothing

It could get cold at night in the countryside, so pack a thick jumper. Otherwise light layers are recommended, including a raincoat.

Footwear

Comfortable trainers or walking shoes to walk or horse ride in.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of luggage, plus a daypack. Remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage including on and off the public transport - don't overload yourself.

Equipment

No special equipment is needed, but we recommend insect repellent, high factor sun cream, sunglasses and lip salve. Don't forget your swim wear! The ranch is in the middle of the Uruguayan countryside so we'd also recommend taking a book or a pack of cards for some evening entertainment around the fire.

Tipping

Local crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly you should allow approx. US\$20 for gratuities for local staff. 10% is expected in restaurants.

Country Information

Argentina

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£11

Dinner price

£20

Beer price

£3-4

Water price

£2

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Peso

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange. You may wish to take extra cash as most optional excursions need to be paid in USD cash (not dispensed by ATMs in Argentina or Chile).

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Buenos Aires. In Patagonia some cards with Chip and Pin do not work in the ATM machines. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in some places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Uruguay

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Breakfast price

£5

Lunch price

£7

Dinner price

£10

Beer price

£2

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Uruguayan Pesos

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can carry money in USD or Argentinian Pesos (if coming from Argentina) to exchange. Uruguayan exchange bureaus do not charge commission, so it can be better to have cash to exchange rather than withdrawing money from an ATM (depending on your card fees).

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Colonia and Montevideo.

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are widely accepted in the major towns and cities.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Car, Ferry, Public Bus

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

During this trip we plan to stay at the San Pedro de Timote Estancia - this is always on request so occasionally there may be alternative accommodation. The historic building belonged to Jesuit priests from the early colonial period until 1767, at which point it passed into private hands. It has now been named a 'National Historic Monument', and staying in the estancia is a trip into the past. Expect rooms to be furnished in a no frills manner, and be prepared for plumbing standards to be somewhat erratic. A visit to this estancia promises a relaxing stay in Uruguay's interior, with outdoor activities on the working ranch followed by some delicious local food.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

No visa required in Uruguay for citizens of UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and USA. Valid passport required. If routing via USA check on latest visa situation.

USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit)

For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom. [Read more information about what travel insurance is required.](#)

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight

options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Argentina

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Uruguay

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Yellow fever is only recommended for those travelling to Iguazu falls. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.
