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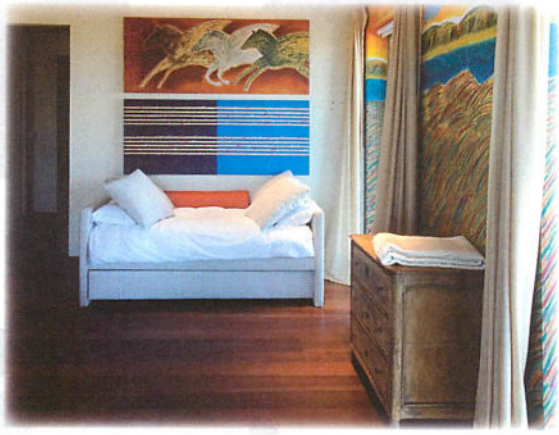
Playa Vik Jose Ignacio – Uruguay
M Daglio & Associados

A retreat on the Mansa beach that defines eclectic, this property, though small in size, is gargantuan in imagination. Within the chic bohemian context of Jose Ignacio village, Playa Vik sets a benchmark for interior design, presenting a series of differentiated spaces that seem, in specific terms, to have little to do with each other, or even to actively contradict each other. But that's precisely the game here, and experienced as a whole, the Playa Vik is very clever at unifying a vision of the world at play. Taken as a kind of 'living' art gallery, the rooms and spaces become opportunities for displaying artworks by many of Uruguay's leading contemporary painters and sculptors. These interact with the materials of the building in a witty tango of architecture and art, providing guests with a constant visual adventure. The building boasts a long, inclined glass facade that affords spectacular coastal views. Giant sculpted bronze doors by Pablo Atchugarry recall Ghiberti's famed work at the Florence Baptistery. Lateral walls of curved titanium panels backdrop floors in Patagonian ebony. In the main building are living and dining spaces, three bedroom suites, a library and a kitchen. Six small multi-bedroom casas flank this building. These, too, are filled with original art. Running underneath the buildings is a long cellar for wine, a gym, a spa and a playroom, as well as a dining space that opens onto the Playa Mansa. The relationship between interior and exterior spaces is elaborated throughout the resort, with large openings and a constant visual connection to the external site.

In many cases the spatial envelopes or building materials used are simple. The spark in terms of design here is ignited by the original approach taken to decorating those spaces and surfaces, the role of the artworks themselves – integral to the architecture to a high degree – and the interplay of the different spaces. To reside here, even temporarily, is to undergo an intense aesthetic experience, albeit one that calms.