



NEW HORIZONS

*New year; new destinations – it's time
to broaden your holiday hit list*

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Instead of Colombia... *Uruguay*

With Colombia submerged beneath a flood of North American tourism, seek out some South American summer in big-sky Uruguay instead. It's well worth a few days wandering Montevideo's jacaranda-lined streets and experiencing the tango bars and smoking parrilladas (grill rooms), but don't lose too much time before getting to the coast. It's good country for a road trip, as the contrasts between resorts such as gleaming Punta del Este and scruffy Cabo Polonio are striking. The beach culture is eccentric and welcoming, and for surfers it's a trove of secret spots. The influx from Argentina in high summer means popular resorts like Punta del Este become rather cheek by jowl, so

consider going February to the start of April for the vibe – and the weather – without the crowds.

Stay: *Playa Vik José Ignacio*

A gilded beach house for the European and American A-list, Playa Vik can come across as much modernist sculpture park as luxury boutique hotel. Designed by Uruguayan architect Carlos Ott, the six glass-walled and grass-roofed casas are awash with abstract art and sculpture-cum-furniture. Bright and fun on the



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inside, the outside is all about enjoying the endless ocean vistas and warm sea breezes, whether you're in the open-air restaurant or relaxing in the infinity pool angled towards the curving sands of Playa Mansa below.

From \$600 (approx. £450) per night, playavik.com

