

# MONTEVIDEO - URUGUAY'S NUMBER ONE TOURIST DESTINATION



The capital of Uruguay, Montevideo, is not only the largest city with nearly 40% of the country's population, it is also the main commercial and cultural centre of this South American country. Throughout its history, it has been much influenced by European culture; when strolling down its charming streets, tourists can enjoy the picturesque blend of colonial Spanish, Italian, and Art Deco styles.

The city was founded by Bruno Mauricio de Zabala, then governor of Buenos Aires, in 1726. In 1828 Montevideo became the country's capital. Now, its character is mainly formed by miles of beautiful white sandy beaches, structurally-complicated buildings and exciting nightlife. It could be said that, here, the modern meets the old in a most surprising way.

The Palacio Salvo and the Palacio Estevez are among the tallest buildings in Southern America and create a spectacular skyline for the city. Palacio Salvo was originally intended to be a hotel, however nowadays it houses offices and private residences.

The Teatro Solis, inaugurated in 1856, is now the centre of Montevideo's cultural life and hosts many artistic events. It offers tango and milonga lessons twice a week, providing an ideal opportunity to get a true taste of the Latin passionate character.

Other sites worth visiting are the Plaza Constitucion, where the Iglesia Matriz, the earliest public building of the city stands. Art lovers should not miss a tour around the Museo Romantico and Casa Lavalleja; both are part of the Museo Historico Nacional. Those willing to pay tribute to the famous Italian hero Garibaldi may visit the popular Casa Garibaldi.

A must-see place for Saturday at noon is El Mercado del Puerto. This market in the port area is a place to walk around and listen to the traditional music of candombe, and on Sundays, the Parque Rodó fair is another place to investigate.

Date: 2007-04-03

Article link:

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