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Lonely Planet Argentina, Uruguay & Paraguay (2nd Ed.)



Synopsis

Find out where to spy on penguin colonies at Peninsula Valdes, enjoy a relaxing afternoon in Gaiman's Welsh tea houses, detour to the vast white reaches of Antarctica or heat up the night tangoing in Buenos Aires. Covering Argentina, the Falkland Islands/Islas Malvina, Uruguay and Paraguay, this indispensable guide is packed with countless insider tips to help independent travelers make the most of this diverse area.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The information on anything but the major cities was fairly skimpy. It was organized reasonably well by geographic location, but within a location was difficult to use. The maps were decent and conveniently placed. Recommendations on restaurants were sparse and inaccurate.

Written for Lonely Planet, Bernhardson's book is, like most LP books, a thorough guide to a region of the world. Numerous places to stay and eat from a variety of price ranges are listed, and the LP tradition of offering extensive historical and cultural background along with dozens of activities appealing to all interests is maintained. This book, as is the case with most LP publications, has as its target audience the "respectful" traveler, who is seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the places he or she visits than the tourist who simply stays in four or five-star hotels and sees travel as one big shopping spree. Nevertheless, all audiences are well served by the enormous quantity of material present in Bernhardson's book, especially the parts dealing with rural/small-town Argentina

and the Falklands/malvinas. Therein lies my sole complaint about the book. The section on The Falklands/Malvinas Islands is enormous, in comparison with the section on Buenos Aires. One would get the impression that the Falklands/Malvinas are the center of all Southern Cone activity, while Buenos Aires is at best a second-class city. The section on Buenos Aires is somewhat impoverished in comparison with write-ups on huge cities in other LP books; it seems one almost HAS to resort to buying the LP Buenos Aires book in compensation. The main scarcity is in the area of things to do in Bs. As.; Bernhardson does well in his list of hotels and restaurants, but really doesn't describe the city in any striking detail or provide a very adequate rundown of what there is to do there (unless all that is mentioned REALLY IS all there is to do in Bs. As., in which case I recant my criticism). Overall, the book is well researched and up to date. To reiterate, the only area in which the book appears unbalanced is in the wealth of information on the Falklands/Malvinas alongside the skimpy information on Buenos Aires. The section on Montevideo, on the other hand, was very informative and complete. I can't speak on the quality of the sections on paraguay and rural Uruguay, because I didn't make it to either place on my trip. Overall, this book is a fine example of the Lonely Planet tradition of top notch travel guides

This guide badly needs updating! I found that a lot of addresses for museums and tourist information have changed (I visited Argentina in October-December 1999). Though the included local maps are usually very good and easy to read a first stop should always be the tourist office (ask locals for present address) for more up to date information. Background information on history is excellent. Generally I found the guide very helpful but it lacks enthusiasm for this beautiful country and does not really entice one to go. More descriptions about the essential character of individual towns would help.

It is certainly a useful book to have with you when travelling in these places, but I was a bit disappointed on the "opinion" side of it. I.e. it's a very useful reference resource in your backpack, but it's rather hard to plan a trip relying on it. In city descriptions, the author tends to get carried away by colonial history and gives hardly any insight at all WHY would someone want to go to these places. So: have one with you when you leave home, but get some others to back you up before you decide where to go.

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