



TOUR UPDATE



The Newsletter of mikesworldtour

Tour Highlight:

March 2023
Montevideo, Uruguay



Rambla, Rambla, Rambla

Contributed by Michael Davis



A QUICK HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, & SOCIAL OVERVIEW

Uruguay got its independence from Spain in 1811, and was annexed by Brazil until 1825. In 1828 the treaty of Montevideo was signed, and Brazil/Argentina recognized Uruguay as independent. The 19th century has political division between the conservative whites and liberal Colorado (reds). A civil war started in 1864 turned into a South American crisis with other nations intervening but ended the next year with the Colorado party winning with support of Brazil. The Colorado party ended up ruling until 1958 including internal struggles and a large wave of European migration. The country had authoritarian rule from 1875-1890 with a military power sharing agreement with the government, in 1933 with a coup due to the great depression leaving Gabriel Terra in charge, and in 1973-1985 during a military dictatorship in the country. During the military dictatorship many were disappeared, and their families never found out what happened to them. Today, Uruguay is known as the only full democracy according to the EIU in Latin America. It is a very egalitarian society with low levels of inequality and poverty, and a middle class of 60%.

Montevideo, Uruguay



Some quick tips for Montevideo :

- Taxis from the airport are kinda pricy so either negotiate the price or arrange it before
- Montevideo is super walkable and there is a massive path on the ocean to walk on

EXPERIENCES

Montevideo is often overlooked by travelers for other popular South American travel destinations, but the city is a must see! It is extremely walkable so you can see all of the sights super easily. There is a pedestrian path in the old town allowing for scenic walks through the city during the day. The city also has an ocean walkway called the Rambla that is path on the ocean stretching for miles. Let this be your inspiration to book your next trip to Montevideo!

PLAZA INDEPENDENCIA & ARTIGAS MAUSOLEUM

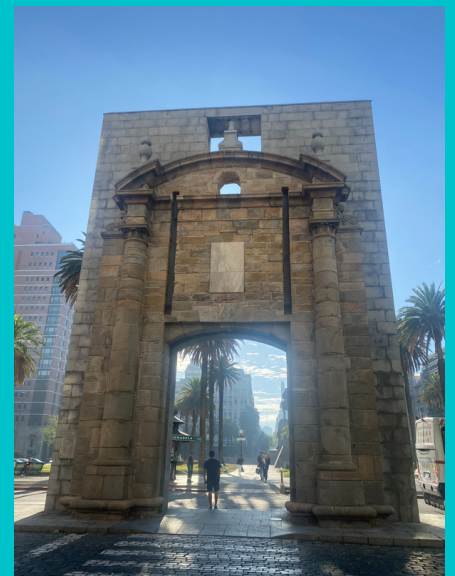


In 1837 when the new city was designed by Carlos Zucchi he took inspiration from Paris to build what would become the most important place of the seat of Uruguay's government. In the 20th century, green spaces were added to make it more usable for the public. In 1974 during the civil military dictatorship, the mausoleum for José Artigas was built and his remains were returned from Paraguay. Artigas was political leader and national hero of the country. Today the plaza is used for presidential inaugurations and was featured in the Netflix series conquest.



GATEWAY OF THE CITADEL

Montevideo used to be a fortified city with walls and a gateway that led to the entrance to the city. Modeled after Spanish architecture, the walls were built in the 1700s and took over 40 years to finish. 4 years after the nation's independence in 1829 the walls were finally taken down to allow the city to expand. The gate was part of the citadel city and represents the effects of the Spanish influence during their colonial rule within the country. This over 400 year old gate is living history of the colonial times within the country and is a timeless monument. I recommend getting here early in the day (was here at 8am because my flight got in at 6am jaja) because during the day there are crowds taking pictures inside the gate (cringe) and ruin the perfect photo.



Montevideo, Uruguay

SALVO PALACE



Built in 1928 by an Italian Architect Mario Palanti who was living in Buenos Aires as an immigrant, this building stands at 330 feet and was the tallest building in Latin America for a point in time. The Salvo brothers had big plans for this building paying 650,000 Uruguayan Pesos for the land (about \$15,000 USD). At first the building was intended to be a hotel, but the original plan did not real work out (sorry to their great plans), and is now home to office spaces as well as private residences. The building used to have antennas on top, but they were removed in 2012. Sitting directly in the Plaza de Independencia, the Salvo brothers have prime real estate with their building which continues to shine in the old city skyline today.

TEATRO SOLIS



Designed by Carlo Zucchi (wow two major landmarks designed, go Carlos!) the theater was opened in 1856. In 1833 a committee was created because they wanted to build a theater in the city, and the government approved their plans in 1840. The theater is named after Juan Díaz de Solís who is the first European explorer to land in what is now today Uruguay. It is one of the oldest and most important theaters in South America, and has been used for hundreds of years to put on concerts, musical shows, and other musical/artistic events. Located in the independence Plaza (like everything else lol) it is also in the center of the city.

CONSTITUTION PLAZA & ZABALA PLAZA



One thing the Uruguay has a lot of is Plazas in the center of the city. It was nice to enjoy my morning coffee (or 2 cups, sorry I had an overnight flight) in the plazas. On the left, Constitution Plaza was founded in 1726 two years after the city was founded and was the original main plaza of the city (until independence plaza) and held the city's major events at that time. On the right Plaza Zabala was built during the dictatorship of Colonel Lorenzo Latorre in 1890. The plaza is named after Bruno Mauricio de Zabala who was the founder of the city.



Montevideo, Uruguay

FOUNTAIN OF THE PADLOCKS



The owners of Bar Facal which is one of the most famous restaurants in the city installed a fountain outside their restaurant on the street corner. Ever since, two people in love have put their initials on a padlock and threw the key into the fountain. The owners of the restaurant never intended for this to happen with the fountain, but has now become a great sight on one of the largest streets in the city. The owners played into their lock fans and put a sign on the fountain explaining the padlocks and ever since the number of padlocks on the fountain continues to grow.

MIRADOR PANARAMICO

When I visit a new city i generally make a list of famous places to go in the city and see (for you guys of course) to make sure that I do not miss anything. The mirador panaramico represents me walking on the street and stumbling upon something that is really cool. I saw a sign for a viewpoint, so I walked into a government building (it was kinda strange at first) but the elevator took me to the top and it had fantastic panoramic (hence the name) views of the city. The best part... is that it is absolutely free! I am really happen that I stumbled upon this place because I was able to get free views of the city of Montevideo and the roof was very empty so you will generally get the place to yourself. Let this be a lesson to always keep your eye out and never stick to much to a schedule.



PUNTA CARRETAS LIGHTHOUSE



Also called the Punta Brava lighthouse, this building was built in 1876 (old I know!). Every ten seconds with a light flash it can reach up to 15 nautical miles into the ocean. In 1962 the lighthouse became electric helping it to modernize. It was very important historically as the lighthouse would guide boats into the Banco Inglés, Buceo Port, or the entrance of the Santa Lucía River. I had this entire lighthouse to myself and enjoyed the ocean views and being able to walk through history.



Montevideo, Uruguay

LA RAMBLA



If you love outdoor spaces, Montevideo is for you! I enjoyed my morning coffee overlooking the ocean while sitting on the Rambla. Walked to the lighthouse for about an hour and a half each way on the Rambla. Oh! La Rambla is a street in Montevideo that has a huge sidewalk, walking path, and bike path alongside the road next to the ocean. It is actually one of the nicest walks I have been on in a while, and I could have easily took an Uber or cab to the lighthouse, but I was enjoying walking on La Rambla so much. There are beaches that are also connected to it as well. Its length is uninterrupted for 13.7 miles (wow), and is an integral part of the identity of the people living in the city.

Also I wanted to make a finally note that I landed in Montevideo after an overnight flight at 7am, and left the next day at 11am. I wish I could have spent more time in the city because there truly was so much for me to do. In this almost 24 hours I had a super action packed day where I was trying to see as much as possible. I ended up walking 42,000 steps that day which is about 20 miles! I would recommend 3 days minimum to really see the city as well as enjoy the food here. Well that is all so I will...



See You On the Next Stop on the Tour!