Travel Tips & Frequently Asked Questions

Your practical guide to visiting Uruguay • November 2026

Money & Payments

What currency is used in Uruguay?

The official currency is the Uruguayan peso (UYU). Everyday purchases are usually priced and paid in pesos. US dollars are also used for some high-value transactions, such as property and cars; do not assume shops will accept dollars.

Can I pay with credit or debit cards?

Yes. Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted at hotels, supermarkets, restaurants and shops. Contactless payments, including Apple Pay and Google Pay, are common where supported. Check international fees with your bank. Some places, such as small businesses, may accept only debit cards (in Spanish: *débito*) or cash (*efectivo*).

Should I carry cash?

We recommend carrying some Uruguayan pesos for public buses, markets and smaller purchases. Cash is accepted almost everywhere.

Where can I withdraw cash?

ATMs are available at banks and shopping centers. Abitab and Redpagos are extensive local payment networks, but cash withdrawals there depend on the banking service and are not a reliable option for every foreign card.

Where can I exchange currency?

Currency exchange offices (*casas de cambio*) are common in Montevideo, including commercial and shopping areas. Compare exchange rates and fees.

Are there tax benefits for tourists?

Non-resident visitors may qualify for VAT benefits on eligible accommodation, dining and tourism services. Conditions and validity periods can change; check the latest official tourism information before traveling.

Are there any benefits to paying with a credit card?

Yes. Foreign visitors who pay with a credit or debit card issued outside Uruguay generally have a reduced IVA (Uruguay's value-added tax) on certain tourist services, such as restaurants, bars and cafés, and car rentals without a driver. The discount is applied automatically when you pay, so there is no paperwork or refund process. For hotels, IVA is also waived for non-resident foreign visitors; it is usually enough to show

your passport at check-in, and in some cases you must book directly with the hotel. This does not apply to regular shopping, where the tax is included in the price.

Transportation

How can I get around Montevideo?

Uber, Cabify, taxis and public buses are available. Many neighborhoods are also enjoyable to explore on foot. Taxis are safe and reliable, and fares are charged by the meter, so there is no need to worry about being overcharged. Just make sure the meter is running when the ride starts.

Can I pay for taxis and ride-hailing with a card?

Uber and Cabify offer payment options through their apps. Many taxis accept debit cards, but confirm before starting the ride.

How do I pay for public buses?

Montevideo city buses generally accept cash in Uruguayan pesos or the local STM transport card. Do not count on paying directly with an international bank card or phone. Small bills are useful. A standard one-hour ticket costs UYU 64 in cash (UYU 52 with an STM card). Fares are adjusted periodically.

How do I get to the hotel from the airport?

You can get there by bus, taxi, or ride-hailing app (Uber or Cabify). The bus stop is outside the Arrivals terminal. Taxis wait outside the airport, or you can book one at the booth next to the arrival gate. The Uber and Cabify pick-up point is at the Departures terminal, on the second floor of the airport (look for the Uber sign). The airport is small and very easy to navigate, so don't worry, you won't get lost.

Prices depend on distance and demand, but a taxi usually costs around UYU 2,000 and a ride-hailing app around UYU 1,000. The bus costs around UYU 100–120, payable in cash to the driver, and the trip takes about an hour.

Mobile Phones & Internet

Will my mobile phone work in Uruguay?

Most modern unlocked smartphones work with local mobile networks. Check compatibility and international roaming rates with your provider before departure.

What are my options for mobile data?

You can use international roaming, buy a local prepaid SIM from a provider such as Antel (bring identification and ensure your phone is unlocked), or purchase a travel eSIM if your device supports it (check that your phone model is compatible before paying for one).

Is Wi-Fi widely available?

Wi-Fi is common in hotels, cafés, restaurants and shopping centers. Mobile data is still useful for maps, ride-hailing and event updates.

Can I keep using WhatsApp?

Yes. WhatsApp is widely used in Uruguay. You can generally keep your existing WhatsApp number when using a different SIM or eSIM for data.

How will Pan So Am communicate updates?

We recommend keeping WhatsApp and mobile data available for event announcements, meeting points and last-minute changes. Follow the official organizer channels for confirmed updates.

Water, Electricity & Weather

Is tap water safe to drink?

Tap water in Montevideo is generally safe to drink. Follow any temporary local water-quality advisories. Bottled water is readily available.

What voltage and plugs are used?

Uruguay uses 220 V, 50 Hz. Round-pin plug types C, F and L are common. Bring a universal adapter and verify that your device accepts 220 V; an adapter alone does not convert voltage.

What is November weather like?

November is spring in Uruguay. Montevideo often has mild to warm days, cooler evenings, wind and occasional rain. Typical temperatures are around 14–24°C (57–75°F). Pack layers, sunscreen and a light rain jacket.

Because of the El Niño phenomenon, we might experience more rain than usual. Be sure to bring an extra pair of shoes and a change of clothes, just in case.

Are the seasons different from the Northern Hemisphere?

Yes. Uruguay is in the Southern Hemisphere, so November is spring rather than autumn.

Practical Information

What language is spoken?

Spanish is the main language. English is used in some hotels and tourist businesses, but a few Spanish phrases are helpful.

Is tipping customary?

A tip of around 10% is customary in restaurants for good service, but it is not mandatory. It is usually not included in the bill.

What is the time zone?

Uruguay uses UTC−3 year-round and does not currently observe daylight saving time.

What is the international dialing code?
The country code is +598.

What number should I call in an emergency?
Dial 911 for police or firefighters and 105 for public health ambulance. Travel insurance is recommended.

Is Montevideo safe for visitors?
Use normal big-city precautions: look after your belongings, choose well-lit routes at night and use reputable transportation.

What local food and drinks should I try?
Try *asado* (barbecue), *chivito* (steak sandwich), *empanadas*, *dulce de leche*, Uruguayan Tannat wine and *mate*. Enjoy a walk along the Rambla, Montevideo's waterfront promenade.

What are typical meal times?
Uruguayans eat later than in many other countries. Breakfast is usually light and early. Lunch is typically between 12:00 and 14:30. Dinner is often between 21:00 and 23:00, and many restaurants do not get busy until after 21:00.

What is "mate" and how do I try it?
Mate is Uruguay's national drink: an infusion of dried *yerba mate* leaves in hot water, drunk from a cup through a metal straw (*bombilla*). People carry a thermos of hot water everywhere and often share a single mate with friends. The taste is quite bitter, but if you would like to try it, just ask one of the event organizers.

Running & Outdoor Tips

What should I bring for outdoor activities?
Comfortable running shoes, breathable clothing, sunscreen, a cap, a refillable water bottle and a light wind/rain layer are useful.

With El Niño expected to bring extra rain, we recommend packing an additional pair of shoes and a change of clothes.

Anything special for the trails?
Some routes may include sandy terrain. Wear shoes you are comfortable running or walking in, stay hydrated, and follow the event organizers' trail instructions.

Bus transportation has been arranged for both Saturday trails (Winery and El Pinar). You can leave your belongings on the bus. We strongly advise bringing a change of clothes and a pair of dry shoes.

Should I bring cash for the event?
Yes. At registration, you will need cash (Uruguayan pesos or US dollars) to pay for T-shirts and extras at the winery. All money raised at the Red Dress Run will be donated to a local community kitchen.

Are there insects on the trails?

Yes, it is possible. Some trails cross grassy areas where you may find ticks, mosquitoes and other insects, especially after rain. We recommend applying insect repellent before the run and bringing it with you. After the trail, check your skin and clothing. Repellent is available at any pharmacy in Montevideo.

Can I store my luggage or leave valuables somewhere?

On Saturday, you can leave your belongings on the event bus during the trails. We recommend that you do not leave passports, large amounts of cash or other valuables there; keep them in your hotel safe if possible.

We look forward to welcoming you to Montevideo. ON ON!

Note: Travel rules, fares, tax benefits and service availability can change. Please check current official guidance before traveling.