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# A FAR

WHERE TRAVEL CAN TAKE YOU

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New Zealand  
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Sweden

## Authentic Travel

LOCAL SURPRISES IN BARCELONA

WANDER:  
WHERE TO  
GO NOW  
AND WHY

SPIN THE  
GLOBE:  
TRAVEL  
WITHOUT  
A PLAN

EAT, DRINK,  
AND SHOP  
IN SICILY

January/February 2011

afar.com

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## Wrangle a Room

**ARGENTINA**  
 Tipiiluke Lodge  
 Estancia Cerro de los Pinos  
 San Martín de los Andes,  
 Neuquén Province  
 tipiiluke.com  
 54/11-4808-8877 ext. 101  
 From \$370 per person,  
 including airport transfers, all  
 meals and drinks, winetasting,  
 and horseback riding.

**The sun sinks behind** the foothills of the Andes as I gallop on horseback toward the riverbank. My horse splashes into the rushing water, and I cling to the reins with frozen fingers. In the distance, smoke curls up through the evening sky. It's a sign that I'm nearing Tipiiluke Lodge, the center of the sprawling Estancia Cerro de los Pinos, a cattle ranch in northern Patagonia. After several hours of exploring mountainous, wind-whipped terrain and barreling through apple orchards, I'm ready to lounge in front of the crackling fire.

When I arrive at the lodge, a deer-hunting party made up of physicians from Buenos Aires is already on a second round of cocktails. I'm instantly spotted. "¡Che, gringa!" they call to me. "Vení, ¡tomate una copa!" ("Come, have a drink!") Within a minute, a portly ophthalmolo-



gist pours me a pisco sour and our hostess, María José Tiemersma, walks in with a huge wooden tray of smoked wild boar and salmon.

Like me, the hunters have returned from the far corners of the 48,000-acre estancia, or ranch, a patchwork of pine forests and bare hills crisscrossed by the Chimehuin and Quilquihue rivers. French-Argentine pioneer Jacques de Larminat settled here in 1909. Today, his descendants and a team of gauchos run the estancia, which is home to several thousand cattle and

three herds of horses. Since 1997, María José and her husband, Kevin, have managed the lodge.

Argentine estancias abide by a certain old-fashioned decorum: Regardless of the day's activities, everyone arrives at the evening meal looking perfectly put-together. I notice my dirt-caked boots and slip away for a quick soak. My room's vaulted ceilings, hardwood floors, and wrought-iron bed hint at its homestead history; while fine cotton sheets, vases filled with pink roses, and the bathroom's oversize claw-foot tub suggest a romantic retreat. I pour aromatic salts into the bath and relax in the warm waters as candlelight flickers around me.

I'm freshly scrubbed when I take my seat at the long wooden dining table, but I feel unso-

phisticated next to the glamorous María José. Draped in a cream-colored shawl, she presides over the meal with warmth and humor, making sure no glasses go empty throughout the courses of homemade linguine, braised pork, and chocolate soufflé.

I awake before dawn the next day for a fly-fishing lesson. Martin, my instructor, outfits me with a pair of rubber waders and leads me by the hand into the Rio Chimehuin. "Keep your eye on the shadows. There are fish resting in the river's coolest, darkest places," he says. After hours of standing silently in waist-deep water, I feel a yank on the line. To our shared surprise, I've hooked a 21-inch salmon. (Full disclosure: Martin had to reel it in.)

At lunchtime, the guests reconvene on a stretch of lawn bordered by towering pines. A traditional Argentine asado always includes steaks and red wine, but at Tipilike the barbecue is a more elaborate affair. Under a white tent, other novice anglers pass the choro while the hunters laugh about their fruitless pursuit of a wild boar through the forest. As we socialize, the grill man roasts large cuts of *chivito* (goat). The meat—like the pork and beef we ate earlier—was raised on the estancia.

It's a reminder that despite the crisp lines and gleaming silver, we're still on a working ranch. I might not have broken a sweat, but after playing pioneer for a day, I'm ready for a Malbec-induced siesta. ▲

## Ranches Around the World



Echo Valley Ranch & Spa, Canada



Borana Ranch & Safari Lodge, Kenya



Cortijo El Sotillo, Spain



Las Casitas del Colca, Peru

### CANADA

**Echo Valley Ranch & Spa**  
Clinton, British Columbia  
(800) 253-8831  
evranch.com

Echo Valley Ranch encompasses a diverse landscape—from desert canyons to glaciers. Hike in the protected grasslands near the legendary Gang Ranch, one of British Columbia's first cattle spreads, or climb to the top of the 7,460-foot Mount Bowman. From \$395 per person.

### INDIA

**Krishna Ranch**  
Badi Village  
Udaipur, Rajasthan  
91(0) 98-28-059505  
krishnaranch.com

A Dutch-Indian couple runs this farm, where they prepare Rajasthani dishes with organic vegetables and lead horse treks into the Aravalli mountains past small villages and pristine lakes. From \$22 per person.

### KENYA

**Borana Ranch & Safari Lodge**  
Samangua Valley, Laikipia  
254/20-211-5453  
borana.co.ke

An expansive cattle ranch, the upscale Borana has eight family-friendly cottages. Look for views of snowcapped Mount Kenya and elephants bathing in a nearby lake. Guests can accompany the manager on his daily rounds to see lions outside the cattle *bomas* (corrals) and explore the far reaches of the property. From \$560 per person.

### MONGOLIA

**Anak Ranch**  
Selenge Aimag  
976/99-099762  
anakranch.com

Forget free Wi-Fi and Egyptian cotton. The Anak Ranch—spread across steppes and taigas (subarctic forests)—is the real deal. Activities include lessons in herding cattle and cracking bullwhips. In the evening, down shots of Grand Khaan vodka

during a Mongolian-style barbecue before retiring to your yurt. From \$39 per person.

### NEW ZEALAND

**Poronui**  
Taupo, North Island  
64/7-384-2080  
poronui.co.nz

Hunters and anglers head to this wilderness retreat in pursuit of sambar deer and huge rainbow trout. Set on 16,000 acres in the Kaimanawa Mountains, Poronui provides a classic ranch experience, including roaring campfires and clay pigeon shooting, plus upscale extras like the 10,000-bottle wine cellar. From \$570 per person, including all meals.

### PERU

**Las Casitas del Colca**  
Parque Curifia, Arequipa  
51/1-610-8300  
lascasitadelcolca.com

Situated inside one of the world's deepest canyons, this Orient-Express property offers horseback riding on

Peruvian Paso steeds, fly-fishing, and trips to see rare Andean condors. Feed baby alpacas at the resort's farm or take a walk along the Colca River to the Chacapi thermal springs. Despite all the outdoor activities, it's tempting to stay indoors when your own little casa has an open fireplace, heated floors, and a private terrace with a warm plunge pool. From \$1,000 for doubles, including all meals and activities.

### SPAIN

**Cortijo El Sotillo**  
San José, Andalucía  
34/950-611-100  
cortijoelsotillo.es

After riding through Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park—where scenes from *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Indiana Jones* and the *Last Crusade* were shot—return to the adobe hacienda for homemade *guruños* (pasta stew) with rabbit. From \$103 for doubles, including breakfast.