

Cruiser's Port Guide

To

Piriapolis, Uruguay



***Compliments of Seven Seas Cruising
Association (SSCA)***



Updated March 2008

Welcome to Puerto Piriapolis, Uruguay!

If any word describes the country of Uruguay and its people, the word is “tranquilo”. Founded as a resort town for wealthy Argentinos by entrepreneur Francisco Piria in the 1930’s, Piriapolis is a no-hassle, low-key spot to leave your boat for an extended period or do boat work, but make sure you bring your supplies with you.

Approach & marina: Hail Piriapolis Port Control on Channel 16. It’s hit or miss whether they will answer. The entry is straightforward, but watch for shallow areas between the beach and breakwater. Waypoint for the breakwater is 34S52.5/055W17.0. Tie-up is fore and aft with two mooring buoys aft and wharf tie-up on bollards forward. There is no help from any marina staff or the Prefectura so be prepared to tie up yourself although many times other cruisers are available to lend a hand. If you come in at night, there is a fuel dock just south of the Travelift at which you can tie up till morning.

Formalities: A Prefectura representative will usually be waiting on the dock for you to accept your “zarpe” paperwork. If arriving from another country, you must visit Customs (located in the building behind the marina complex), the marina office on the premises, the Prefectura’s office (1/2 mile from the marina) and Immigration, which is a cab or bus ride away at the Punta del Este airport. There are no fees. FYI...unlike Brazil (4 months, but 2 years is promised soon) and Argentina (8 months), there is no set limit to length of stay for the boat although an annual tax is imposed on boats remaining on the hard for 8 months or more. Immigration visas are for 90 days and renewable upon re-entry.

Time Zone: -3UTC (-2UTC during summer Daylight Savings) – Note that Uruguay changes its clocks for Daylight Savings and Argentina does not.

Currency: Uruguayan peso; a/o 03/08 the exchange rate was \$1US = \$20.10 UrP

Services:

- **Marina:** Marina fees are based on boat LOA; water and electricity at dockside are extra. Check with the office as the fees are adjusted monthly. During our stay, we paid ~\$10US/day total. On-the-hard fees are less expensive. Either pay in advance or before the end of each month to avoid “interest” fees and the monthly adjustment. Cash (Uruguayan pesos) and credit cards are accepted.
 - Haul-out – Separate in and out fees assessed at ~\$250US roundtrip. Travel Lift to 100 tons! Logs and wedges are used for supports and additional cross bracing is necessary. Wooden planks can be bought and delivered (~\$1800Ur) or if you’re lucky, secured from previous cruisers. Clean, paved work area. You must apply at the Prefectura’s office and pay a small fee (~\$10US) prior to haul out. When you wish to return to the water, there is an “inspection” fee paid at the Prefectura’s office (~\$15US) prior to Travel Lift movement.
 - Living aboard while “on the hard” is now allowed, however there are strict rules regarding maintaining cleanliness of the work area and the ability to leave anything on the ground beneath your boat.
 - Marina amenities are limited: Showers are available at a charge (\$1US) and there is limited access during the off-season (April – Nov); women’s/men’s bathrooms with toilets/sinks; trash disposal; public phone requires Antel phone card.
 - Marina contact: dnhpiria@adinet.com.uy

- Marina will hold mail. Address:
Your Boat Name/ Your Name
Puerto Piriapolis
C.P. 20200
Direccion Nacional de Hidrografia
Maldonado, Uruguay
- **Fuel:** There are two gas stations in town. Ancap is on the Ramblas heading towards Montevideo and Shell is up the hill on Piria next to DeVotos Supermarket. Petroleum products are quite expensive. Diesel (gas/oil): \$35Ur/liter, Motor Oil: \$4.50US/liter (!!)
- **Propane:** 13Kg propane tanks are available at Ancap and you can fill your own tanks (gravity feed). Arrange in advance to pay the deposit for the tank (\$960Ur); keep your receipt for a deposit refund. Propane itself costs an additional \$300Ur.
- **Laundry:** There are several lavanderias in town on Piria with same-day service.
- **Banks/ATMs/Money Exchange:** Bank of Uruguay on the Ramblas has an ATM outside as well as money exchange inside; will also give advances on credit cards/debit cards. ATM just outside DeVotos dispenses both Ur pesos as well as US\$. There is a money exchange (cambio) inside DeVotos that gives better rates than the bank.
- **Medical:** Small clinics in town offer emergency and regular services
- **Pharmacy** – at DeVotos as well as several on Piria
- **Entertainment** –
 - Local cinema on Ramblas is open during “high” season and sporadically during low season.
 - DVD rentals available at shop on Piria and at DeVotos
- **Restaurants:** (many closed during low season or open only on weekends)
 - Drakar – good food, reasonably priced across from marina entrance
 - La Passiva – mediocre food chain; on the Ramblas; open year round
 - La Goleta – parrilla, pizza, etc. plus “chop” (draft beer); on the Ramblas
 - La Langosta – on the Ramblas; nice ambiance, more upscale; okay food
 - Lots of small places, pizza and “parrillas” (BBQ)
- **Copies/Stationery supplies** – Chart size copies and basic stationery supplies around the corner from Movistar on Tucuman
- **Dentist:** Dra. Susana Werner speaks good English and does a good job with modern equipment. We had regular cleaning done, but also required a root canal which was handled efficiently, painlessly and economically. Located just off Piria on Buenos Aires between Sanabria & Sierra. 043-23223. Basic cleaning/checkup costs \$450Ur.
- **Hotels:** Some cruisers have either rented small houses, apartments or stayed at nearby hotels.
 - Miramar Hotel on the Ramblas is one alternative...Ada and Lula there speak English
 - Contact Cristina at the tourist office for information on rental houses and apts, which may be available.
- **Provisioning/Supplies:** (Note most small stores close between 1PM-4 or 5PM and reopen for the evening till about 8pm).
 - DeVotos – top of the hill on Piria; modern, big, well-stocked supermarket chain. Large orders can be delivered at no charge to your boat.
 - El Dorado – ½ block off the rotary on Piria;
 - Fresh fish market daily on the malecon southeast of marina
 - Lots of tiendas (small stores) for picking up basics, fresh fruits/veggies
 - Weekly fresh market on Saturdays behind the bus terminal near the park...note that some of the larger vendors will deliver large orders to the boat for you at no charge. Ask in advance.

- **Communications:**
 - Lots of internet and phone access locations at ~\$.75-\$1/hr.
 - Antel near bus terminal offers local & international calls as well as internet (\$20Ur/hr); also sells phone cards for use in public phones. Movistar offers a “cuponera” which entitles you to 10 hours of internet for \$150Ur.
 - Post Office – on Piria ~\$1US to mail a postcard to the U.S.
- **Transportation:**
 - Taxi stand at the bus terminal...usual fee seems to be \$50Ur from bus terminal to marina (Puerto Piriapolis)
 - Airport:
 - Punta del Este for local flights from Montevideo & sometimes charters
 - Montevideo for international flights serviced by American, United, Pluma
 - Bus:
 - COT and Copsa both have several buses daily to and from Montevideo and Punta del Este/Maldonado. Both will stop at the airport on the way into Montevideo on request. Ask the conductor when he takes your ticket.
 - Local buses to Pan de Azucar and Maldonado – get schedule from tourist office.
 - Rental cars available locally thru Piriatur. Gas is expensive.
 - Bikes, motor scooters, etc. all readily available at several places. Bike rental about \$30US/month.
 - Buquebus offers a combination bus/ferry service to Buenos Aires from Montevideo, Piriapolis and Punta del Este. Buses leave from the bus terminal in Piri. Most buses from Piri to Montevideo terminate at the Tres Cruces terminal. The first floor houses a large modern bus terminal and the second floor is a modern mall with grocery.
- **Ferreteria** (Hardware stores) – several along Piria
- **Chandlery** – None in Piri – see last section following on specialty services available in Montevideo/Maldonado
- **Paint, Varnish** – Basic one part enamels and varnish, paint supplies – several along Piria
- **Boat Services:**
 - Bottom Power Wash /Topsides Polishing/ Bottom Painting – See ChiChe (chee-chay) in the boatyard to arrange for any of these services. Quality and cost were reasonable, but monitoring is required to insure you get what you want done properly.
 - Carpentry – Figi – no contact info. Ask ChiChe
 - Machining shop – Basic machining, welding and lathe work at a small shop directly behind DeVotos

Things to Do & See:

- Get free maps, brochures and local info at the tourist office on the Ramblas; Cristina Nieto is friendly and speaks good English and can point out highlights to see in and around Piriapolis.
- Lots of restaurants, boutiques, hotels and shops along the Ramblas as well as *artesan* crafts.
- We enjoyed the local zoo! Free admission; open daily
- Several good hikes to the tops of nearby hills including San Antonio for great aerial views of the marina
- Note that “high season” is December through Easter and many shops/restaurants are closed in the low season except for special holidays or events.
- Montevideo, probably South America’s most laid-back capital city, is a 2-hour bus ride and has several museums worth visiting including the Gaucho Museum, a fun restaurant area, Mercado del Puerto, in the old port and interesting architecture.
- Punta del Este, a high-class resort area, offers exclusive boutiques and shopping, a wide range of restaurants and a signature sculpture “La Mano” of a huge hand sticking up out of the sand

on the beachfront. Punta Shopping is a large American-type mall with an upscale supermarket, Inglesa, and a multiplex cinema.

Some specialties of Uruguay:

- “Tannat”, a dry red wine varietal found only here and in France (although we recently saw some in Argentina).
- Media y media – a sweet, bubbly alcoholic drink
- Clerico – a sangria-type drink made with fruit and white wine served iced cold.
- Chivito – Dagwood-type sandwich comprised of steak, ham, fried egg, peppers, cheese, olives, tomatoes, etc. etc.
- Martin Fiero – a local dessert consisting of sweet membrillo (quince) served with cheese
- Local fresh fish includes brótola and linguado.

Boat Services Nearby:

- Montevideo – Maps of the city are available at the Tres Cruces bus terminal in Montevideo. Many basic services and supplies such as hydraulic repairs, electric motor and alternator repairs, refrigeration parts and supplies, stainless bolts, bearings, seals, gaskets, etc are available in the general area between Tristan Narvaja and Lavalleja on the north side of 18 de Julio. We wandered these streets extensively on several occasions and never felt threatened. In addition, the following services are available:
 - Life raft certification – UMS Uruguayan Marine Safety, Arturo Lezama 2228, between Diaz and Frieri, (02) 924 6025. Speaks English, can arrange pick-up and drop-off.
 - ICOM radio sales/service – Fleg,SA, Arzani 1640, 622 1900
 - Chandlery – Proamar, Miguelete 1453, (02) 924 7323, A good source of basic marine supplies, and if he doesn't carry it, he can tell you where to find it.
 - Flares – Pirotecnia, Arturo Lezama 2228
 - Stainless steel – A limited supply of tubing and rod, Antonio Barcia and hijo, Cuarem 1668, 908 3738
 - Bottom Paint – Hempel, Batavi 2123 (02) 924 3308
Jotun, F. Acuna de Figueroa 2192, 924 4236
email:cenmar@adinet.com.uy;
Also Jesus in the boatyard and Yuri Bondiuk (see below) can buy and deliver it to the port. Check prices before committing
 - Sika Caulk and adhesives – Canelones 1346
 - Refrigeration parts and supplies – Replast, Santa Fe near Agraciada
 - General mechanical repair, engines, transmissions, exhausts, stainless welding – Geomar, Richard Motta, Alejandro Fiol de Pereda 1420, cell: 099663144
 - Acrylic plastics – Alacril, F. Crespo 2207
 - Control cables – Montreal, La Paz 1258, 903 2500 (Cecilia Casulo, Directora)
www.kablesmontreal.com email:kables@adinet.com.uy
 - Marine electronics – Aeromarine, Cerro Largo 1497, 400 3962. Speaks English. Carries Raymarine, Garmin and others. Email: gc@aeromarine.com.uy
 - Stainless welding and fabrication, general marine repairs, Starsikol, Yuri Bondiuk, cell: 094 452 704. Speaks English and makes frequent trips to Piri. Also knows where most things can be located in Montevideo and will source items locally and deliver to Piri.
- There are two SSCA Cruising Station Hosts in Uruguay.
 - Jean Petley. Jean and her husband, Ralph, are U.S. ex-pats who live in Playa Hermosa, a few kilometers outside of Piri. Contact them by phone: (598)094 51 0082 or email: jfpetley@hotmail.com
 - Alberto Garcia Scheitler. Alberto and his wife, Gabriela live in Montevideo and have a summer home in Punta del Este. Alberto can be reached at (598) 094 443409

Not familiar with Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA)? It's the largest cruising organization in the world and offers tremendous benefits to cruisers. Visit the website at www.scca.org or talk to one of the SSCA Cruising Station Hosts for more information.

Note: This guide was originally developed by Marcie and David Lynn, the crew of the U.S. yacht "Nine of Cups" as a courtesy and aid to fellow cruisers who arrive in our wake. We visited "Piri" again in March 2008 and did a quick update. We found Uruguay and its people to be wonderful and thoroughly enjoyed our time here. This guide is accurate to the best of our knowledge and an original copy is available at the Cruising Station with Jean Petley. If you find shortcomings, please forgive the crew and then, rather than complain further, ask Jean to make the corrections and/or additions necessary to make this guide more helpful to cruisers who follow in your wake. Disfrutarte!