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THE LEADING EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THE 9TH SALON DU CHEVAL D'EL JADIDA

CARRIES A MESSAGE OF REVIVAL TO
THE TRADITIONAL EQUESTRIAN ART



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POLO

LA AGUADA POLO & RESORT

THE ULTIMATE IN LUXURY AND SPORT IN ARGENTINA

By Maristella Mantuano

EXCLUSIVE AND UNRIVALLED. THESE ARE THE ADJECTIVES THAT
BEST DESCRIBE THE SPORT IN WHICH ARGENTINA IS THE
"NON PLUS ULTRA" WORLDWIDE: POLO.



Even in the vastness of an Argentinian “**estancia**”, like La Aguada Polo & Clinic Resort (300 acres and 5th largest grounds in the country), the sound of the horses’ hooves galloping and the screaming of the players in the midst of a busy match resound along the field where, seated on the scented grass, you can sip a fizzy drink in the red dusk of the Southern Hemisphere. But don’t make yourself too comfortable: at halftime, spectators are expected on the field to stomp the divots raised by hooves during the fray.

To take part in this golden world of **La Aguada** (translated as the “watering hole”), even if only for a weekend, is now possible, located as it is just 65 kilometers away from **Buenos Aires**, the capital. It is truly an unforgettable experience because it takes place in close contact with the players, the horses, and those who tend to their daily care, and with a professional and affectionate staff guided by **Florencia**, the Resort Manager. At the center of this beautiful setting of trees and rolling hills, what stands out is “**La**

Rosada”, the splendid mansion of the world famous **Novillo Estrada** family, which for 4 generations has been in the business of producing top-ranked polo players and polo ponies.

It is in this marvelous atmosphere that **four annual tournaments** take place, starting with one honouring the founder of this family tradition, **Don Julio Novillo Astrada**, in the Palermo Open in Buenos Aires. The formidable polo team “La Aguada” is composed of 4 brothers from this family and in **2003** won all 3 important world championships.

Tomas, the Polo Manager, will escort you on a visit to the four-legged stars in their stables. They sleep on soft beds, follow a particular diet, travel by plane, are washed, brushed and taken out for training daily: they are true athletes. The most famous one here is **Anonima** (curious oxymoron of the name). Her value is priceless, of precious lineage. Because of this, an entire area is dedicated to reproduction. After artificial insemination, the embryos of

these most valued horses are then implanted in the wombs of surrogate horses that carry on the pregnancy, an unnatural practice which allows these horses to continue playing and winning while continuing their lineage. Only when the moment arrives for them to retire from this sport are they completely dedicated to reproduction. Because of this (and their docile nature) they are preferred to males.

The youngest of the Novillo Astrada brothers **Alejandro**, 34, explains that they have decided to open the doors of their property offering deluxe accommodations, allocating 9 spacious and luxuriously decorated rooms for guests visiting from all parts of the world, even if only for a weekend.

You will be awoken by the chirping sounds of birds drinking from an outside pool facing your large glass windows, overlooking a flowering patio where you can sip “**mate**” (Argentine tea) accompanied by “**facturas y alfajores de maicena**” (flavoured rolls). The enormous grill is always

ready to prepare an unforgettable “**asado**” (BBQ) of tender Argentinian meat to be shared with other guests, served on the large wood table in the dining room, directly next to the square kitchen with its big cooking island and overhead pots and pans of every shape and dimension, and all around, the capable hands of cooks in uniform preparing delicacies of every kind for the guests. Truly, a unique experience where sport and luxury are combined in perfect chemistry, business as usual at the home of polo. ¹⁰

Info:

www.laaguadapolo.com

www.destinationargentina.com

Photos by Victor Liotine