REVIEW: Four Seasons Buenos Aires



It’s not the Ritz. But it might still be just as good.

On a recent trip to four South American countries – Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Colombia, I tried to stay at as many Ritz Carlton’s as I could find. Turns out, I couldn’t find many.

Being as how this was my first time to Buenos Aires, I started off on Tripadvisor and looked up the best 4 and 5 star hotels. It all came down to three choices if you were looking for the top-ranked luxury hotels in the city – The Alvear, the Park Hyatt, and the Four Seasons. I ended up choosing the Four Seasons because of its centralized location, the quality of the restaurants that it contained, and because of the relatively competitive rate. What I have never liked about

the Four Seasons, however, is their lack of a competitive loyalty program. It's not a part of a large chain like the Ritz is (Marriott), or something like the St. Regis (SPG). That meant that the $1800 or so I would spend over a few nights would only go onto my Chase Sapphire as double hotel points, but I would not receive any preferential treatment as I would have with my Marriott or SPG status'.

The hotel is awfully pretty at night, and as is the case with Buenos Aires there was always something going on until the wee hours of the night. I returned from a discoteque one morning at 3AM just to see that the lobby bar was still relatively crowded and full of people dancing and drinking.



As for the rooms and service it was the small things that counted and made me smile. The bathrooms contained L'Occitane products, the building, although retro in character, had upgrades throughout. The gym had a barbell which is very rare in many places (I'm often relegated to weight machines which I hate), and the staff went above and

beyond during m stay. For example, the spa was supposed to be open when I had come back from a day of sightseeing, but 25 minutes before the steam room/spa amenities were supposed to be closed the doors were already locked. A quick visit to the front desk and security came to open up the entire spa – which ended up being a private spa experience. In another instance, I needed extra travel power adapters. I asked for a few and the front desk sent up a total of five!

With luxury hotels so close in 90% of the experience, it is always the extra few small touches that set aside one property from another. It was nice to see that the Four Seasons took those extra steps to make their guests' experience stellar and above and beyond!



You can’t have proper tea/coffee time if you don’t have trays for those tea cups!



Incredible Alfajores that the hotel made in-house. These are a national snack in Argentina, they’re a flaky pastry-like cookie with dulce de leche in the middle.

PROS:

- Check out the gym – not everyone works out when they're traveling but this one is especially nice and has a great view out the rooftop of the hotel
- The concierge's really know what they're talking about. Came to Buenos with a list of things I already wanted to do based off of other friend's suggestions and tripadvisor but the concierge's had some really good insight and other similar places to suggest based on my list coming in

CONS:

- There was a lapse in service when we tried to get reservations at either the lounge or the restaurant last minute. The concierge and front desk were not able to accommodate our small (2-person) party even though we were guests of the hotel – you don't see this often at a 4-5 star property

SECRETS:

- Argentina is known for its meat, and the steakhouse in the hotel lobby is impressive. Be sure to have a meal in Elena which is downstairs – but make reservations if it's a Thursday-Saturday because they do get booked.

OTHER STUFF TO DO IN BUENOS AIRES:

- Food is superb here but by far my favorite thing in Buenos Aires (After going to about 10 different restaurants) were the empanadas at 1810. Try the Humitas, a corn ground and wrapped in husks then stuffed. It's a contentious issue when you ask the locals who makes the best Empanadas but more times than not 1810 is at the top of most of the local's lists.
- Check out Uruguay! Take the BuqueBus Express which for about $150 R/T gets you to Uruguay and back for a day

trip in Colonia del Sacramento. It’s a beautiful UNESCO heritage site, and eat at the quaintly beautiful Charco Hotel. It’s right on the water and has an amazing selection of wines and beautifully executed flavorful dishes.