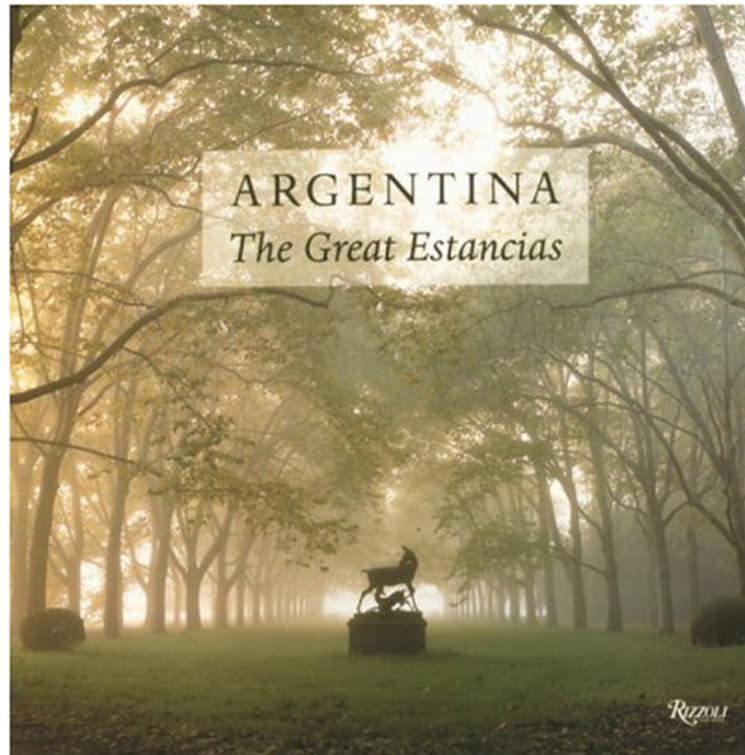


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Argentina: The Great Estancias

Cesar Aira

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Cesar Aira : Argentina: The Great Estancias before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Argentina: The Great Estancias:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Brenda very nice book!5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Magnificent Tour of the Wealth of ArgentinaBy Grady Harp Argentina is a fascinating country, a land of intrigue (the Peron years, the lingering mysteries of the Disappearing Ones), a land praised for the beauty of its vast landscapes and waterfalls and seemingly endless ranches where gauchos still stir the imagination, the home of the Tango, the home of the preminent Teatro Colon, etc. But this book of richly colorful photographs and interesting writing introduces yet another aspect of the country less known - the Great Estancias. Covering twenty two impressive estates/mansions throughout the land of Argentina author Cesar Aria shares the importance of these disparate estates. Just as the country has always been Euro-centric so are the variations of the homes here rendered. There are recreations of Italian, French and English 'palaces' (they are far too grand to be mere homes!) and the histories of the buildings combined with the histories of the families who created them. But Argentina also celebrates the vast land resources and the great captains of ranching whose country homes are equal in grandeur to the other more traditional 'museums' in the book. The photography includes not only the facades of the buildings but also the approaches and the grounds and the interiors. The variety is surprising and the quality of the color photography is excellent. For an insider's glimpse into a country of many facets, this beautifully designed and produced book makes a fine addition to the library. Grady Harp, April 072 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating

Glimpse Into Another World By SHILMOTU How often do you read a coffee table book cover to cover? Fascinating. After finishing this book I wanted to know more about this aspect of Argentine life. I wonder if the Estancias are open to travelers? This book makes me want to hop on a plane and travel through the rural regions of Argentina visiting these wonderful places. As other reviewers have mentioned, the photographs are excellent. Very evocative. The text provides very useful background information about each Estancia and additional descriptions of many of the photos. My favorite photo is Jackie at San Miguel in 1966 astride a big black horse, looking back with that enigmatic smile. She is so obviously in mourning. The Great Estancias fueled my imagination and created the feeling of almost being there. The photos make it easy to imagine what it would be like to live in this world, another time and place far away. What more can we ask of a book?

Argentina's magnificent estancias--country estates and working ranches--are guardians of the nation's cultural heritage, from its Spanish-colonial beginnings to the romantic legacy of the gaucho, to the contributions of early-twentieth-century naturalists and entrepreneurs who explored the rugged south. With their historical main residences, picturesque grounds, and beautiful collections of artwork and heirlooms, these estates preserve the genteel traditions cultivated by generations of landowning families. Adventurous settlers and Jesuits established the first estancias in the seventeenth century on vast, remote tracts of land ceded by the Spanish crown. Overcoming a harsh climate, solitude, and sporadic clashes with Indians, these missionaries and European immigrants began to raise cattle, sheep, and grain. By the turn of the century, many of their descendants headed important cattle-ranching and agricultural empires and were counted among an international elite of tastemakers, politicians, philanthropists, and art patrons. In this volume are twenty-two rarely glimpsed estancias, portrayed in rich color photographs with accompanying text that narrates the unique history of each estate and family. The distinctive main houses reflect a wide variety of architectural styles that include criollo (creole) mansions, English castles, Palladian villas, French chateaux, and Spanish palaces. The estates are surrounded by breathtaking terrain ranging from the snow-capped Andes bordering Chile to the golden plains of the pampa in the province of Buenos Aires, and south to the crystal waters of subantarctic Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego. Nearly all these estancias are owned today by descendants of the founding families, and most are published here for the first time. Complementing the photographs are eighteenth and nineteenth-century drawings, portraits, and paintings of life on the estancias, as well as photographs of celebrated guests over the years, including Edward, Prince of Wales (later Duke of Windsor) and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. The introduction discusses the early history of the estancias and their pivotal role in Argentine culture, and includes colorful excerpts from the journals of explorers and writers.

From Booklist A fascinating but strange place, Argentina: a land of great but unfulfilled promise, a South American country whose self-image is European. Argentinians' vision of themselves as European asserts itself in the architectural styles in which the houses on the great cattle-ranching estates were designed, many of which would look more at home in the French or English countryside. Twenty-two Argentine ranches are featured here, largely a different selection than that presented in the similar *Estancias* (1992). Following an introductory history of Argentine cattle ranching, particularly its place in the nation's economy, the reader makes brief but indelible visitations to each ranch by way of gorgeous photographs of houses, gardens, and mountain-backdropped pastures, as well as by text telling each place's history. Travelers and history buffs will linger over every striking page. Brad Hooper
About the Author Bonifacio Del Carril was one of Argentina's most revered historians, politicians, and cultural leaders of this century. He served as Argentina's Minister of Foreign Relations, as a special diplomatic envoy to the United Nations, and as President of the National Academy of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires. He was the author of more than seventy books and articles on subjects ranging from Argentine art and culture to constitutional law. He died in Buenos Aires in December, 1994. Csar Aira is a distinguished Argentine author, editor, and translator. He has published twenty novels, among them *Ema la Cautiva* and *La Luz Argentina*, as well as essays, literary criticism, and work for the theater. Mr. Aira lives in Buenos Aires. Toms de Elia and Juan Pablo Queiroz are natives of Buenos Aires and spent much of their childhoods on Argentina's estancias. They traveled for three years researching and photographing the estancias in this volume.