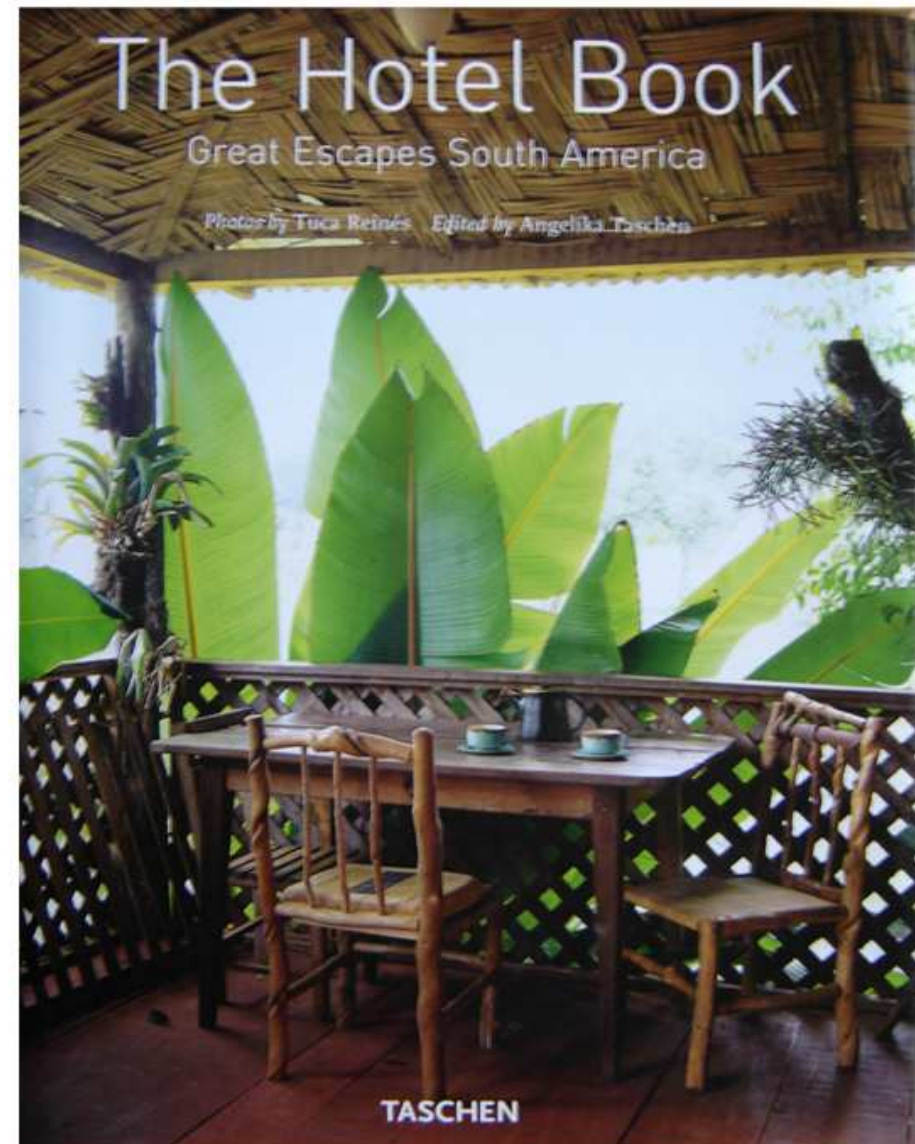


THE HOTEL BOOK
GREAT ESCAPES SOUTH AMERICA
ANGELIKA TASCHEN

264 274 : EXPLORA IN PATAGONIA
310 322 : EXPLORA IN ATACAMA

2004
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Simply beautiful...
 explora en Atacama, Atacama

explora en Atacama, Atacama

Simply beautiful

The country below this bleached-out sky is one of the hottest and most arid on earth – and one of the most intriguing, too. One feature of the Atacama desert in northern Chile is the Salar de Atacama, a salt lake some 300 square kilometres (114,000 acres) in area, containing vast reserves of lithium and offering a home to rare-colored flamingos. There are also mysterious volcanoes affording a suitable challenge to the practised climber, and the Tatio geysers that send great jets of water aloft every morning. Not least among the attractions is the explora en Atacama hotel, Chilean architect Germán de Sal built it at an altitude of 2,400 metres (some 7,900 feet) high in the oasis village of San Pedro de Atacama. With a main building and three courtyard groupings, it was conceived along the lines of a farmstead. Far from familiar civilisation, it affords every creature comfort, while at the same time reflecting the spartan simplicity of the landscape it is set in. The patios and buildings are linked by plain walkways and steps, large panoramic windows command views of the desert that can be enjoyed even from your bed, and the rooms have been done in regional materials such as black natural stone. The mild temperatures are perfect for excursions or for the hot, long, simply-designed pools, massages in the "Casa del Agua" or the "Temas de Paredones", hot springs at an altitude of 3,100 metres (over ten thousand feet) some 30 kilometres (or 20 miles) away. Then at night the hotel has a special treat in store for its guests: on the new "Piscina de Estrellas" observation platform there are three telescopes to scan the skies above the desert, a smooth expanse of blue-black velvet studded with glittering equinox.

Book to pack: "Claudio in Chile: The Adventures of Miguel Littin" by Gabriel García Márquez

explora en Atacama

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