

culture

TOP TANGO SHOW

Rojo Tango Many of the city's dance shows are schlock, but the two-hour "history of tango" show (bottom), held nightly at the Faena hotel, is the exception that proves that rule—sultry twosomes, big production numbers, sequins and feathers, and a diva who is BA's answer to Cher. The dancers are Balanchine-caliber, the musicians captivating, and the room red-curtained and intimate-feeling (it seats 120). It's spectacular in the literal sense. **Martha Salotti 445, 54-11-5787-1536, www.rojotango.com**

SURE-FOOTED VENUES

Porteños of all stripes twirl with gusto at *milongas* (dance halls), which get going late—don't turn up until 11. Here are the best.

Confitería Ideal An institution that's admittedly touristy. But it has offsetting qualities: a formerly glorious, now dilapidated but dignified 1912 building; a live band of old-timers every night; and a sprinkling of professional dancers whose brief performances clear the floor. Go to the second-floor ballroom after midnight on Saturday for the most dynamic mix of locals and visitors. Can't stay up that late? There are afternoon *milongas* five days a week. **Suipacha 380, 54-11-5265-8069, www.confiteriaideal.com**

Salon Canning The atmosphere is community center, but the corps of amateurs is spellbinding, all swiveling hips and lightning-fast feet. Until 4 a.m. Best night: Monday. **Scalabrini Ortiz 1331, 54-11-4832-6753**

La Catedral It's scruffy—a kitsch-strewn onetime warehouse that resembles a rock club—but it's BA's most colorful tango venue, where blue-haired kids dance with elderly gentlemen and the café serves vegetarian food. Liveliest on Tuesdays. **Sarmiento 4006, 54-11-5325-1630**

CONCRETE PROGRESS

Colección de Arte Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat "If you ask how much is the investment, I reply that I have no idea," Maria Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat told journalists at the long-delayed opening of her museum last October. The "cement queen," as she's known because of the product that underpins her fortune, can afford to be breezy: She's one of Argentina's wealthiest people.



A modernist warehouse (above left) designed by Uruguayan architect Rafael Viñoly holds her self-curated collection: Egyptian antiquities, old and modernist masters (Turner, Brueghel, Dalí, Rodin), a broad survey of Argentine art (left, an Emilio Pettoruti painting), and that emblem of fame, a Warhol portrait. **Olga Cossettini 141, 54-11-4310-6600, www.coleccionfortabat.org.ar**

THE SPECIALISTS

Museo Xul Solar Kabbalah, astrology, tarot, the I-Ching—it was all fodder for Symbolist painter Alejandro Xul Solar (1887–1963). Redesigned in 1986 to create the museum, the century-old mansion, once the artist's home, is just as trippy, with multiple levels and recurring staircases that bring to mind an M. C. Escher drawing.

InsideTrack

I had an invaluable ally in ferreting out the best of Buenos Aires:

Vanessa Guibert

Heitner, who founded the bespoke travel consultancy **LIMITLESS ARGENTINA** in BA five years ago. A Porteña with a Ph.D. in Hispanic literary studies, she has impeccable taste, knows everyone, and can provide all sorts of entrée: private chef's

dinners, antique-buying trips with a specialist who earned an M.F.A. at Harvard, gallery visits with the organizers of the prestigious **ArteBA** art fair, and private lessons with some of the world's best polo players. Heitner, who plans trips throughout Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, declines to describe the unusual requests she's fulfilled—her discretion is limitless, too. **BA Itineraries from \$850 for two people per day, including hotel. 202-536-5812, www.limitlessargentina.com**



Encouraging visitors to wander freely, the layout evokes the journey of the imagination Xul Solar's works inspire. **Laprida 1212, 54-11-4824-3302, www.xulsolar.org.ar**

Museo de Bellas Artes de La Boca **Quinquela Martín** Figurative painting is the draw here, especially Benito Quinquela Martín's (1890–1977) vivid scenes of the La Boca docklands. The museum, which he donated to the government in the '30s, is refreshingly unslick: loose organization, Spanish-only signs, and gallery walls in vibrant colors like the tin houses outside. The rooftop garden has panoramic views. **Don Pedro de Mendoza 1835, 54-11-4301-1080**

Fundación Proa The city's best contemporary-art museum mounts exhibitions of Latin American artists and international provocateurs such as Marcel Duchamp and Jenny Holzer. Housed in a sleek new steel-and-glass building in La Boca. **Don Pedro de Mendoza 1929, 54-11-4104-1000, www.proa.org**

