

TRAVEL + LEISURE

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Honoring the Innovators at the
Forefront of Sustainable Travel



A sunchoke mille-feuille at Sacro, in Buenos Aires. Left: Mudrá, a vegetarian restaurant in the Villa Crespo neighborhood.

GARDEN AND GRILL

As the appetite for plant-based cuisine grows in Buenos Aires, top chefs are putting a fresh spin on Argentinean dining. **By Nora Walsh**

FOR MORE THAN a century, high-quality grass-fed beef has been Argentina's gastronomic calling card. But in Buenos Aires, chefs are catering to an increasing number of vegetarians—and as a result, plant-focused eateries are cropping up all over the city.

“For years, I sent my vegetarian clients to the same places,” says Maita Barrenechea, a T+L A-List travel advisor based in Buenos Aires. She cites her long-running favorites, **Donnet** ([instagram.com/donnet_te_ama](https://www.instagram.com/donnet_te_ama); entrées \$4–\$10), which specializes in mushrooms, and **Sacro** ([sacro.com.ar](https://www.sacro.com.ar); entrées \$14–\$27), known for its haute vegan cuisine and pleasant patio. “But now there are many new options to choose from.”

The hottest table is **Marti** ([instagram.com/marti_barra](https://www.instagram.com/marti_barra); entrées \$8–\$17), a meatless fine-dining restaurant that opened in December 2021 from acclaimed (and now vegetarian) restaurateur Germán Martitegui in the tony Recoleta neighborhood. The airy, terrarium-like venue is lined with tall

plants growing behind glass panes, while a buzzy 60-person bar frames the open kitchen. Diners can watch as chefs prepare seasonal sharing plates such as pineapple carpaccio sprinkled with marigold powder and black garlic and cured beets with smoky ricotta.

“Taking meat off the menu has challenged me to innovate with different spices, textures, and contrasts,” Martitegui told me in his restaurant one evening. In the wine cellar, he cultivates five varieties of fungi, which he cooks, ferments, or dehydrates for dishes like mushroom shawarma and cheese soufflé.

A short drive away in the Palermo district is **Bocha** ([bochapolo.com](https://www.bochapolo.com)), a food hall in the Campo Argentino de Polo stadium. Two stalls are standouts: **Narda para Epicúreo House** ([bochapolo.com/comida](https://www.bochapolo.com/comida); entrées \$6–\$15) from celebrity chef Narda Lepes highlights fresh produce—as in her tomato and peach salad with cucumber, mint, harissa, and yogurt—while **Planta**

Cocina Vegetal ([instagram.com/planta](https://www.instagram.com/planta); entrées \$7–\$14) recasts traditional recipes, like *locro*, an Andean stew incorporating pumpkin, white corn, and lima beans.

The city is also attracting international players on the vegetarian scene. In 2020, Los Angeles-based chef Matthew Kenney and creative director Ailin Malimowcka partnered with local restaurateur Marcelo Boer to open **Mudrá** ([instagram.com/mudraplantbased](https://www.instagram.com/mudraplantbased); entrées \$4–\$14), a design-forward rooftop venue in the Villa Crespo quarter. The menu skews Japanese-Peruvian, with bites like shiitake sushi and inside-out kale rolls. Its more casual sister location, **Mudrá Express** ([instagram.com/mudraplantbased](https://www.instagram.com/mudraplantbased); entrées \$4–\$12), serves takeout snacks like portobello empanadas. At **Chuí** ([instagram.com/chui.ba](https://www.instagram.com/chui.ba); entrées \$8–\$19), another meat-free haunt in Villa Crespo, locals sip chestnut-infused Negronis and graze on dishes like clay-oven potato-confit pizza in an airy industrial hangar and adjacent tropical garden.

Dessert is part of the movement, too. In the residential Belgrano neighborhood, **Sablée Vegana** ([instagram.com/sablee_vegana](https://www.instagram.com/sablee_vegana)) offers riffs on traditional confections like *alfajores* (sandwich cookies with dulce de leche), sugar-dusted churros, and *medialunas* (sugar-brushed croissants). Get there early or order in advance—the pastries sell out quickly.