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A pitfall of staying in posh hotels is hidden charges at every turn. Until cheap international internet phone companies such as Vonage. become more commonplace, get a SIM card for your mobile from www.textbay sims.net, which will only charge local rates. Also beware that, in the US, a simple request from front desk can result in an outrageous 22 per cent service charge.

boutique, freshwater pool, restaurant serving French-Caribbean cuisine and the island's longest beach bar. Kù, Shoal Bay East, Anguilla, British West Indies (01306 747733, www.kuoni.co.uk)

SOUTH AMERICA

The estancia-style El Colibri, in the heart of Argentina, has eight lavishly-furnished rooms, its own stable of 45 polo ponies and 12 criollo horses on which to canter around 170 hectares of farmland. The owners can also arrange classes in the art of asado — the celebrated Argentinian barbecue — there's a go-carting track for the children and tango dancers at night. Catalina, Córdoba, Argentina (00 54 35 254 658 88, www.estanciaelcolibri.com)

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