

Uruguay's Bilingual Heritage and Portuñol

by **Norman Berdichevsky** (November 2011)

Like Belgium, Uruguay was established as a buffer state between two major nations (Brazil and Argentina), near the strategic mouth of the La Plata River, where the Rio Parana and the Rio Uruguay join. At the beginning of Uruguayan independence in 1828, the country had a scarce population of only 75,000. Only one major city, the capitol, Montevideo existed. The rest of the population was scattered in a northwestern, Portuguese speaking region and Spanish speaking South.