

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Overview

Introduction

Buenos Aires, Argentina, is a wonderful combination of sleek skyscrapers and past grandeur, a collision of the ultrachic and tumbledown. Still, there has always been an undercurrent of melancholy in B.A. (as it is affectionately known by expats who call Buenos Aires home), which may help explain residents' devotion to that bittersweet expression of popular culture in Argentina, the tango. Still performed—albeit much less frequently now—in the streets and cafes, the tango has a romantic and nostalgic nature that is emblematic of Buenos Aires itself.



Travel to Buenos Aires is popular, especially with stops in the neighborhoods of San Telmo, Palermo—and each of its colorful smaller divisions—and the array of plazas that help make up Buenos Aires tours.

Highlights

Sights—Inspect the art-nouveau and art-deco architecture along Avenida de Mayo; see the "glorious dead" in the Cementerio de la Recoleta and the gorgeously chic at bars and cafes in the same neighborhood; shop for antiques and see the tango dancers at Plaza Dorrego and the San Telmo Street Fair on Sunday; tour the old port district of La Boca and the colorful houses along its Caminito street; cheer at a soccer match between hometown rivals Boca Juniors and River Plate (for the very adventurous only).

Museums—Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA: Coleccion Costantini); Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes; Museo Municipal de Arte Hispano-Americano Isaac Fernandez Blanco; Museo Historico Nacional; Museo de la Pasion Boquense (Boca football); one of two tango museums: Museo Casa Carlos Gardel or Museo Mundial del Tango.

Memorable Meals—A drink, elegant tea or snack at Cafe Tortoni; the best beef at a *parrilla* (steak house) such as Cabana Las Lilas or La Cabrera; delicious wood-oven-baked pizza at Siamo Nel Forno in Palermo Soho; the trendy restaurants Olsen in Palermo Hollywood or Sucre in Belgrano; pasta at La Parolaccia; the unique dining experience of El Obrero in La Boca.

Late Night—Dancing in the huge Crobar disco or the Funky Room at Club Bahrein; samba in Maluco Beleza; quaffing a beer at The Kilkenny or Down Town Matias; enjoying the decks and gardens at Terraza del Este; exploring Puerto Madero's Asia de Cuba disco-restaurant and other lively haunts.

Tango—An over-the-top tango-and-dinner show at stylish Piazzolla Tango; intimate concerts in San Telmo bars; old-style tango dancing at the remaining *milongas* across the city, such as the Club Grisel or Salon Canning.

Walks—Calle Defensa from the Plaza de Mayo to Parque Lezama in San Telmo; stroll through the Rosedal rose gardens, particularly September-February; follow the trails in the Costanera Sur Ecological Reserve; Plaza Francia in Recoleta to browse the authentic handicrafts.

Geography

The city of Buenos Aires occupies 79 sq mi/127 sq km of flat terrain, bordered on the east by the Rio de la Plata. The central city streets are laid out on a grid pattern, with few diagonals, but outlying neighborhoods are more irregular. Greater Buenos Aires sprawls in all directions across the humid pampas and contains roughly half the country's population.

The city is made up of 48 distinct barrios, or neighborhoods, and those nearest the Rio de la Plata hold the most interest for tourists. The downtown area, also known as the Microcentro, is the banking, business and government district. Plaza de Mayo, together with the neighborhoods of Monserrat and San Telmo toward the south, make up the city's historical heart. To the north and northwest are the middle- and upper-class residential districts of Retiro, Barrio Norte, Recoleta, Palermo (the city's largest) and Belgrano. The southernmost barrio most tourists will visit (usually in daylight, when it is safest) is La Boca, a colorful working-class neighborhood with strong Italian roots.

History

After it was permanently settled in 1580, Buenos Aires had 230 years—its colonial period—of erratic growth. After Argentina broke from Spain's rule in 1810, Buenos Aires evolved rapidly as a commercial hub and seat of political power, becoming the federal capital in 1880. Europeans recognized the potential of the port city: The British poured money into the area, and the Spanish and Italians arrived in droves, along with French, eastern European and German settlers.

When immigration from the Old World was all but halted after 1930, those of Spanish-South American mestizo origins migrated from the interior and filled many jobs. From this influx arose conflicts with the existing urban population and the problem of crowded city slums and shantytowns.

It was from these throngs of poor people that populist President Juan Peron, along with his wife Eva (Evita), found their greatest support. They often stirred huge crowds of Argentines in speeches from the balcony of the Casa Rosada, which overlooks the Plaza de Mayo. Peron's presidency (1946-55) was followed by decades of truculent military rule, with only brief periods of respite.

The Plaza de Mayo is still the site of demonstrations, although the famous annual marches calling for a full accounting of events in the so-called "Dirty War" of 1970-83, when the country was run by a military junta and more than 30,000 dissidents "disappeared," now occur only on 24 March. On Thursday afternoons, the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo still march in their distinctive head scarves embroidered with the names of the missing, demanding information about their children and grandchildren who were taken by police and military death squads.

For most of the 1980s, economic problems, including hyperinflation, limited the city's progress, but Carlos Menem's 1990s presidency tamed inflation and brought some stability. Redevelopment took place, including in the Puerto Madero waterfront. The downside of Menem's legacy was an overvalued peso and systemic corruption that brought financial collapse. Marches and demonstrations by the unemployed and the middle class, who lost their dollar-denominated savings to devaluation, have diminished but still occur on occasion.

The election of the late Nestor Kirchner in 2003, along with subsequent judicial and foreign-policy reforms, went a long way toward turning things around. Although elected by a slim margin, Kirchner was popular, and the economy rebounded, albeit temporarily. In October 2007, Kirchner died of heart complications. However, in late 2010, his widow, Cristina, was handily elected as his successor. Thanks to a heavy-handed policy of almost autocratic decision-making, Cristina Kirchner immediately alienated many important constituents. Forced to back down on several key economic issues in the face of open hostility and threats of violence, the country—and Buenos Aires in particular—continues to face an uncertain economic future.

Port Information

Location

Cruise ships stop at Buenos Aires on round-the-world cruises, Argentina-Brazil summer cruises (the summer months there being November-March) and the popular Argentina-Chile cruises, which stop over in Patagonia en route.

Located in the Puerto Nuevo area, north of the Puerto Madero development zone, the Terminal de Cruceros Benito Quinquela Martín is on Avenida Presidente Ramón Castillo, between Avenida de los Inmigrantes and Avenida Antártida Argentina. The biggest port in South America, it has a tourist-information office, shops and cafes. Nearby there's a *locutorio* for phone and Internet access, and taxis are usually parked in the vicinity. Phone 4317-0600.

Potpourri

Buenos Aires boasts one of the world's largest concentrations of psychiatrists and psychologists in the so-called "Villa Freud," an area overlapping Barrio Norte and Alto Palermo. It is also the site of nearly 18,000 cosmetic surgery procedures every year.

Alto Palermo's Museo Evita is the first Argentine museum honoring a woman.

Dating from 1913, the Subte was South America's first underground rail system, and many original wooden cars still run on Line A, from Plaza de Mayo.

Retiro's Kavanagh Building, which overlooks Plaza San Martín, was the city's first skyscraper (1935).

Jose de San Martín is clearly the country's main hero, with statues, streets and plazas named after him. He is also referred to as simply El Libertador. His tomb in Buenos Aires' Metropolitan Cathedral is treated as a shrine.

Although it can get really cold in the winter months (June-August), it has only snowed twice in Buenos Aires in the past 100-plus years, in 1918 and 2007.

Because of the heavy Italian influence on their culture, Argentines speak Spanish with an Italian accent. They are also the only Spanish speakers who pronounce words with "ll" as "shhh." For example, *llamas* would be pronounced *shamas*.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Upon arrival in Buenos Aires, many visitors make a beeline for Plaza Dorrego in the San Telmo neighborhood of colonial and tango fame, whether or not the Sunday flea market is in progress. Many put the Recoleta Cemetery high on their list of things to see: You can pay your respects to Evita if you look for the tomb marked Familia Duarte.

As you take in the city's displays of civic grandeur, absolutely do not miss the Teatro Colon: try to watch a performance, or at least take a guided tour of its labyrinthine interior. The view of the building from anywhere on the Avenida Villamonte is stunning.

Make time to see the delightful greenery in the Parque Tres de Febrero (in Palermo Chico), which houses many Japanese gardens, a rose garden, art museums, a lake with paddleboats, a horse track and more.

Those drawn to the water should stroll around the Puerto Madero area, which harbors a yacht club, expensive restaurants, two museum ships, several hotels, offices, movie theaters and a university campus. Or, for a less upper-crust look at the water, head to the old port neighborhood of La Boca, Buenos Aires' colorful version of Little Italy.

Those who happen to be in Buenos Aires on a Sunday should take a car service or bus to the Mataderos Fair to watch folk dancing and the gaucho displays. There's plenty to eat: Try some empanadas or the hearty meat-and-corn stew.

Museum enthusiasts won't want to miss the National History Museum, although it steers clear of controversial events since the 1970s, or the Isaac Fernandez Blanco Museum of Spanish-American Art, a replica of a Peruvian colonial mansion complete with gardens. Alto Palermo's Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA) is definitely worth a visit.

For those wanting to take in some classical art, Recoleta's National Fine Arts Museum is the destination of choice. Palermo's Eduardo Sívori Museum exhibits more contemporary works. The country's cultural heritage is explored at the Jose Hernandez Museum of Popular Argentine Motifs. La Boca's Museo de la Pasión Boquense traces the history of Boca Juniors, soccer player Diego Maradona's club, and there are two tango museums—the Museo Casa Carlos Gardel and the Museo Mundial del Tango—for fanatics of this famous Argentine dance.

Museum admission prices are a bargain, generally ranging from "a small donation requested" to several pesos in most cases.

Historic Sites

Avenida 9 de Julio

Named for the day in 1816 that Argentina declared independence from Spain, this main north-south thoroughfare is 460 ft/140 m wide and lays claim to being the widest boulevard in the world. It is now more pedestrian-friendly, although one can cross underground near the landmark Obelisco as well.

Basilica Nuestra Senora del Pilar

Junin 1904, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4803-6793 or 4806-2209

<http://www.basilicadelpilar.org.ar>

This 18th-century church is considered one of the best-preserved examples of Argentine colonial architecture. Its ornate silver altar, tile work and chapels deserve more than a quick look, and don't miss seeing the skulls and bones at the entryway—they're the remains of some of the area's early inhabitants. See it in conjunction with the Recoleta Cemetery, which is right next door. Its former monastery is now the Recoleta Cultural Center and the Buenos Aires Design Center. The small Museo de los Claustros del Pilar, located in the original cloisters of the monastery, has a beautiful selection of religious artifacts, and you can enjoy the excellent views of the cemetery from upstairs windows.

Church open daily 7:30 am-10 pm; museum Monday-Saturday 10:30 am-6 pm, Sunday 2:30-6 pm. Museum admission 4 P; church admission is free.

Cabildo de Buenos Aires

Bolivar 65 (opposite Plaza de Mayo)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4334-1782

<http://www.cabildonacional.gob.ar>

Dating from the mid-18th century, this building was the place where, on 25 May 1810, locals capitalized on the Spanish crown's political woes in Europe and launched the independence movement by deposing Spanish viceroy Baltasar Hidalgo de Cisneros. The structure's left and right wings were demolished to make way for the Avenida de Mayo in 1889 and Diagonal Sur (Avenida Julio Roca) in 1931. The building now houses a rather unexciting museum, guarded by sentinels in period uniforms, that offers a fine view of Plaza de Mayo.

Wednesday-Friday 10:30 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11:30 am-6 pm. Admission 10 P.

Catedral Metropolitana

On Plaza de Mayo (at San Martin 27)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4345-3369

<http://www.catedralbuenosaires.org.ar>

This cathedral facing Plaza de Mayo has been rebuilt many times during the past four centuries. The current building, completed in 1827, has a neoclassical facade and an eclectic interior, in which a colonial-era altar coexists with Italian Renaissance paintings. An adjacent chapel contains the mausoleum of national hero Gen. Jose de San Martin guarded by statues representing Argentina, Peru and Chile.

Monday-Friday 7 am-7 pm, Saturday and Sunday 9 am-7:30 pm.

Cementerio de la Recoleta

Junin 1760, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4803-1594

<http://www.cementeriorecoleta.com.ar>

One of the most important sights in B.A., the elaborate tombs in the 19th-century Recoleta Cemetery cover 13 acres/5 hectares. The miniature Gothic cathedrals, neoclassical temples and art-deco shrines are the final resting places of illustrious founding fathers, local aristocracy and important families. You could easily spend a day or two there and never get bored by all the graceful angels adorning the tombs. The most famous resident of the cemetery is the firebrand wife of President Juan Peron, Eva Duarte de Peron, known simply as Evita. For many, a visit to her family vault (Duarte, not Peron) is a pilgrimage. The municipal tourist office offers guided tours (in Spanish) at irregular intervals. Call 5614-8869 for reservations.

Daily 7 am-5:45 pm.

El Zanjon

Defensa 755
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4361-3002

<http://www.elzanjon.com.ar>

When real-estate developers started excavating this San Telmo property, they had to call in an archaeologist to organize and restore all the colonial and postcolonial artifacts and structures they found—including brick tunnels that once channeled a tributary of the Rio de la Plata. Guided tours are the only way to visit the monument.

Monday-Friday 11 am-3 pm, Sunday 1-6 pm. Reservations required. Tours range from 50 P to 150 P. Children under 10 free admission. No credit cards.

Iglesia Parroquial San Pedro Telmo

Humberto Primo 340 (between Balcarce and Defensa), San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4361-1168

<http://iglesiasantelmo.galeon.com>

This beautiful colonial parish church with an ornate, blue-and-white facade belonged to the Jesuits until they were expelled from Argentina in 1767. It faces the neocolonial Guillermo Rawson school. Its interior has a variety of gilded altars. To the left, just before the entrance, a small museum shows interesting relics, paintings and documents.

Open Saturday 10 am-12:30 am, Sunday 3:30-6:30 pm. Guided tour Sunday at 4 pm. 2 P.

Iglesia y Convento de Santo Domingo

Defensa 422 (a few blocks south of Plaza de Mayo)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4331-1668

<http://www.curiosamonserrat.com.ar/iglesia/domingo.html>

This church's altar (carved from a single block of white marble) and huge organ (one of the country's largest and oldest) are worth a look. Note the bullet marks on one of the belfries—it was fired on by incensed locals in 1807 when English troops who had invaded the city occupied the building and flew the Union Jack there. English flags captured during various battles, along with artifacts, are on display inside the church.

Basilica open Monday-Friday 7 am-6:30 pm, Saturday for Mass at 6:30 pm, Sunday 11 am. Entrance free. To visit the convent during the week, call ahead to arrange a guided tour. It also opens on Sunday for free guided visits.

Obelisco

Plaza de la Republica (at the intersection of Avenida 9 de Julio and Avenida Corrientes)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

http://bsas.gov.ar/areas/med_ambiente/obelisco_01.php

Considered a symbol of Buenos Aires, this monument was erected in 1936 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the city's first (albeit not permanent) founding. It stands 220 ft/67 m high, making it a useful landmark when navigating the city.

Palacio Barolo

Ave. de Mayo 1370
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4381-1885

<http://www.palaciobarolotours.com.ar>

This restored office building was the tallest building in Latin America (and one of the tallest in the world) when it was completed in 1923. The architecture can best be described as a mix of neo-romantic and neo-Gothic, but also is said to derive some of its inspiration from Dante's *Divine Comedy*. It's worth a stop if only for the 22-story-high views of the city. Bilingual, guided tours are offered during the day, but an even better option might be the evening guided tours, when the lighthouse on the top floor is turned on and the tour ends with wine and a local delicacy.

Monday and Thursday 4-7 pm, Saturday 3-6 pm. Day tours 135 P, night tours 260 P.

Palacio del Congreso Nacional

Hipolito Yrigoyen 1849 (Western end of Avenida de Mayo)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4010-3000

<http://www.congreso.gov.ar>

Begun in 1888 and opened in 1906, the Italianate Congress building has a towering copper dome that is illuminated at night. Both the upper-house Senate and the lower-house Chamber of Deputies are open for guided tours. Take a photo ID or passport. Enter at Hipolito Yrigoyen 1849.

Guided tours of both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies take place Monday-Friday at 11 am and 4 pm in English and Spanish.

Plaza de Mayo

Microcentro, Monserrat
Buenos Aires, Argentina

This plaza is a little less grand than you might envision, although the monumental obelisk and soaring palms are attractive. The lack of shade means it's not really a place for relaxed people-watching. You're more likely to set foot there on your way to see one of the sites bordering the square: the Cabildo (first city council building), Catedral Metropolitana and the Casa Rosada (the presidential palace). The plaza has been the site of many political demonstrations (see it in the morning, when there's less chance of running into a gathering), as well as public addresses by presidents and other leaders.

Teatro Colon

Tucuman 1171
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4378-7100 for tour information

<http://www.teatrocolon.org.ar>

Opened in 1908 and modeled on Milan's La Scala (but actually larger), this is the architectural and cultural heart of Buenos Aires. Since the beginning of the 20th century, opera stars from Maria Callas to Luciano Pavarotti have sung on the stage of the Colon, considered one of the world's top opera houses for its natural acoustics and infrastructure. Seats 2,400 people.

Ticket office for tours open 10 am-8 pm. Tours in English daily 9 am-5 pm. Tours 110 P.

Torre de los Ingleses

Ave. del Libertador 49, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4311-0186

<http://museos.buenosaires.gob.ar/torre.htm>

Presented to the city by British residents in 1916, this clock tower stands 195 ft/60 m tall and offers some of the finest panoramas of downtown. The square where it stands was renamed Plaza de la Fuerza Aerea (Air Force Square) in the wake of the Falkland Islands War, but the new names given to the tower (Torre Monumental and Torre del Reloj) haven't stuck—Englishmen's Tower it remains.

Open Monday-Friday noon-6 pm; Saturday, Sunday and holidays 10 am-6:30 pm. Call during the week to make reservations for the tour.

Museums

Museo Casa Carlos Gardel

Jean Jaures 735
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4964-2071 or 4964-2015

<http://museos.buenosaires.gob.ar>

The former home of the legendary baritone Carlos Gardel has been turned into a shrine. Posters, vinyl records, song sheets and old black-and-white photos of this waggish national hero decorate the walls of the small house he shared with his mother.

Monday and Wednesday-Friday 11 am-6 pm, Saturday, Sunday and holidays 10 am-7 pm. Admission 30 P.

Museo de Arte Espanol Enrique Larreta

Ave. Juramento 2291 (go north on the metro D line), Belgrano
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4783-2640

<http://museos.buenosaires.gob.ar/larreta.htm>

It's worth a trip to the outlying barrio of Belgrano to see this elegant mansion, built and owned by an Argentine novelist who admired Spanish culture. It is packed with grand old furniture and his collections of Renaissance and modern Spanish art. The Andalusian gardens out back are draped with climbing plants, and a native *ombu* tree stands at the center.

Open Monday-Friday 1-7 pm; Saturday, Sunday and holidays 10 am-8 pm. Guided tours Saturday and Sunday at 4 and 6 pm, available during the week by reservation only. 5 P, free on Thursday.

Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA)

Ave. Figueroa Alcorta 3415 (between Salguero and San Martin de Tours), Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4808-6500

<http://www.malba.org.ar>

This world-class museum in the Palermo neighborhood is home to the renowned collection of Eduardo Costantini. Works by Latin American artists are the focus: Some (such as Frida Kahlo and Diego de Rivera) are better known than others, but all are interesting. Check out the works of Argentine artists Xul Solar and Antonio Berni. The top floor hosts traveling international modern art exhibits. The building itself is airy and filled with natural light, which makes viewing the art a pleasure. The adjoining cafe is popular.

Wednesday noon-9 pm, Thursday-Monday noon-8 pm. 170 P adults.

Museo de Arte Popular Jose Hernandez

Ave. del Libertador 2373
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4803-2384

<http://museohernandez.buenosaires.gob.ar>

The most comprehensive collection of folk art and gaucho (cowboy) silverwork in Argentina can be seen at the Jose Hernandez Museum of Popular Argentine Motifs. A reproduction of a 19th-century *pulperia* (country general store and bar) awaits visitors in an old house that was donated in 1938.

Tuesday-Friday 1-7 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-8 pm. 30 P.

Museo de Artes Plasticas Eduardo Sivori

Ave. Infanta Isabel 555, Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4774-9452

<http://www.museosivori.org.ar>

This museum specializes in Argentine art. It mounts exhibits dedicated to contemporary visual arts, and its extensive permanent collection concentrates on works from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Tuesday-Friday noon-8 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-9 pm. 30 P.

Museo de la Casa Rosada

Hipolito Yrigoyen 219, Plaza de Mayo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4344-3804

<http://www.casarosada.gov.ar>

Built on the site of the city's first permanent fort, this eclectic Italianate building is the seat of national government. It has been pink since 1873, when (as some historians claim) President Domingo F. Sarmiento decided that would be the best way to pacify two warring political factions, whose colors were white and red. The current paint job is an attempt to re-create its original shade of pink. Free guided tours of the museum (where you can see some personal belongings of past presidents, as well as some of their carriages and excavated portions of the original fort) are given throughout the day, and tours of the actual Casa (where government functions are carried out) are given in the late afternoon.

Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday 2 am-6 pm. 1 P, free on Wednesday and Saturday, with free guided tours in English.

Museo de la Ciudad

Defensa 219, Monserrat
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4331-9855

<http://www.museos.buenosaires.gob.ar>

The City Museum's exhibits showcase Buenos Aires' architectural heritage and document the everyday life of its inhabitants throughout history. The museum itself is at the top of a narrow marble staircase in a late-19th-century building. The display windows of the well-preserved La Estrella pharmacy on the building's ground floor serve as a sort of permanent exhibit, as well.

Monday-Friday 1-6 pm. 2 P, free on Monday and Wednesday.

Museo de la Pasión Boquense

Brandsen 805
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4362-1100

<http://www.museoboquense.com>

You'll see a century of shirts, programs, posters and other ephemera bearing the badge of Boca Juniors, Buenos Aires' most famous working-class soccer club. One room is a 360-degree panorama of fans, giving you the feeling of being there without the fear of getting crushed in the crowd. The tour includes a visit to the "candy box" stadium next door, after which you can pick up any number of souvenirs, from mugs and towels to Boca deodorant. Renowned soccer player Diego Maradona honed his skills there, and his face is on almost everything.

Daily 10 am-6 pm; guided tours hourly 11 am-5 pm, including English. Museum visit 40 P adults, 25 P for children younger than 12. Stadium tour and museum 55 P.

Museo Evita

Lafinur 2988, Alto Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4807-0306

<http://www.museoevita.org>

This museum, a former mansion, is dedicated to Eva Peron, the most controversial Argentine woman in history. Some of her personal items, film clips of her public appearances and movies, and excerpts from her speeches are on display. The building was once a shelter—established by Evita—for unwed mothers and their children.

Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-7 pm. 20 P admission, 40 P guided visit.

Museo Historico Nacional

Defensa 1600, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4307-1182

<http://www.cultura.gob.ar/museos/museo-historico-nacional>

Located in a colonial mansion in the Parque Lezama, the National History Museum's collection of documents, paintings and weapons gives in-depth insight into Argentine history until 1930. Be sure to see the paintings of the founding of the city and the magnificent silverwork of the colonial period.

Wednesday-Sunday and holidays from 11 am-6 pm. Free.

Museo Mundial del Tango

Ave. Rivadavia 830, First Floor (Palacio Carlos Gardel), Monserrat
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4345-6968

<http://www.anacdeltango.org.ar/museo.asp>

This museum preserves the history of the genesis, evolution, boom years (1910-30) and decline of Buenos Aires' best-known export. The fantastic collection includes old tango scores garnered from the National Academy of Tango (which also is housed in this building), as well as *funyi* (fedora-style) hats (including one of Carlos Gardel's, of course), old suits, shoes and other paraphernalia.

Monday-Friday 4-8 pm.

Museo Municipal de Arte Hispano-Americano Isaac Fernandez Blanco

Suipacha 1422, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4327-0228

http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/areas/cultura/museos/dg_museos/mifb.htm

If you love all things Spanish, this is your museum. The Museum of Spanish-American Art holds Cuzco-school colonial paintings, furniture and the most important colonial silverwork collection in South America. It is housed in the Peruvian-style neocolonial mansion that once belonged to socialite and collector Isaac Fernandez Blanco. A brief rest in the traditional Spanish garden is an important part of the experience.

Tuesday-Friday 1-7 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-8 pm, closed Monday. entrance General \$ 20. Wednesday free.

Museo Nacional de Arte Decorativo

Ave. del Libertador 1902, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4801-8248

<http://www.mnad.org>

Baroque furniture and tapestries, Chinese porcelain, and paintings from the Renaissance, Spanish mannerist and French impressionist schools are on display at the National Museum of Decorative Art. See the decorations wealthy landholders chose for their town houses at the turn of the 20th century.

January Tuesday-Saturday 2-7 pm; February-December Tuesday-Sunday 2-7 pm. 15 P adults.

Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes

Ave. del Libertador 1473, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-5288-9900

<https://www.bellasartes.gob.ar>

The National Fine Arts Museum is considered Argentina's most important art museum, with an 11,000-piece permanent collection of pre-20th-century paintings and sculptures, including many European masters. It periodically exhibits works by contemporary artists.

Tuesday-Friday 11 am-8 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-8 pm. Free.

Parks & Gardens

Although there are other, smaller parks in town, the area in Palermo alternately referred to as Parque Tres de Febrero, Parque de Palermo and Bosques de Palermo is an enormous complex of parks and green spaces in the Palermo neighborhood. It's a gem within the city. Look for the distinctive native *ombu* and *gomer* trees, the jacarandas with their purple flowers, and the cherry trees from Japan. From the central Plaza Intendente Seeber, you can easily reach the Rosedal (rose garden), the Japanese garden and, to the south, the zoo and botanical gardens. The area is abuzz with activity, especially on weekends. Phone 4800-1135.

http://www.buenosaires.gov.ar/areas/med_ambiente/parque_3_de_febrero/resena_historica.php?menu_id=18892.

Carlos Thays Botanical Garden

Ave. Santa Fe 3951, Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4831-4527

<http://jardinbotanico.buenosaires.gob.ar>

This garden contains several thousand plant varieties, arranged by continent. Three-quarters of the space is devoted to Argentine plants. Three greenhouses are used for tropical plants, one for cacti. It's a great place to stroll or relax on a bench with a book, as long as you aren't allergic to cats—an incredible number of feral cats call the garden home.

Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 9 am-7:30 pm. Free.

Japanese Garden

Ave. Casares 2966, Alto Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4804-4922

<http://www.jardinjapones.org.ar>

Feed the fish from arched bridges, savor sushi, tea and cakes in the restaurant and tearoom, or visit the plant nursery.

Daily 10 am-6 pm. 24 P adults, free for seniors and children younger than 12.

Parque Lezama

Avenida Almirante Brown, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

http://www.buenosaires.gov.ar/areas/cultura/casco/recorridos/circuito_parque_lezama.php?menu_id=24104

Though run-down in parts, this handsomely designed park, the former grounds of a mansion built by Charles Ridgely Horne in the mid-19th century, is widely believed to be the site of the founding of Buenos Aires. On the park's south side is the mansion, which now houses the National History Museum; on the northern side are the imposing Russian Orthodox Church and the murky Bar Britanico cafe, where scenes for Argentine TV series are often filmed. Drummers and other musicians sometimes perform, and artisans hawk their wares.

Rosedal

Avenida del Libertador at Avenida Sarmiento, Alto Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/areas/med_ambiente/parque_3_de_febrero/rosedal

These rose gardens are a popular place to stroll, especially September-February, when the flowers are in bloom. You can also rent a paddleboat and take to the adjacent lake.

Daily 8 am-8 pm, shorter hours in winter.

Recreation

Buenos Aires offers plenty of green space to enjoy. The enormous (890-acre/360-hectare) Costanera Sur Ecological Reserve is east of the Microcentro and Puerto Madero. In good weather, it's a great place to go for bird-watching, bicycling and more. Phone 4342-6003.

http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/areas/med_ambiente/reserva.

The Costanera Norte runs alongside Jorge Newberry Airport and is more for strolling and easy cycling or fishing. It has two distinct areas—the northern reserve and the southern reserve.

http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/areas/med_ambiente/bsas_rio/costanera_norte.php?menu_id=9283.

If you fancy a swim, there's Parque Ribera Sur, a huge pool and park near the Autodromo, Buenos Aires' speedway, in Villa Lugano, as well as a more family-friendly pool called Parque Norte, north of the airport. And the Parque de Palermo (<http://www.argentinaviajera.com.ar/espanol/buenosaires/palermo.html>), somewhat surprisingly the most-visited section of the city, is a wonderful area for a variety of activities:

ride a bike, visit a planetarium (or zoo or botanical garden), go for a walk or jog, rent a boat, smell the roses or bet on the horses. It's a great place to people-watch, too.

Tennis courts are free and are everywhere in the more upscale neighborhoods and in several parks. Some hotels also have their own courts, and there are several tennis clubs in town that offer day passes.

Several companies offer bike tours of the city. A trip to an estancia outside the city will include horseback riding.

Nightlife

Going out at night—until the small hours of the next day—is a cherished *porteno* custom. In the beginning, there were (and still are) tango music and dance halls, then nightclubs and discos. Now, British pubs, high-end cocktail lounges, angular dance clubs and theme cafes are the rage.

Nightspots are everywhere, but there are pockets of particular interest along the Costanera Norte riverside drive and in Puerto Madero, the Microcentro, Palermo and Belgrano. Palermo Viejo, along with its immediate neighbors Palermo Chico, Palermo Hollywood and Palermo Soho, has a particularly good assortment of places to hang out—you can easily hop from one bar to another without having to walk very far.

Nights in Buenos Aires begin late and often end in the wee hours of the morning. Many people dine late, have a drink or coffee and then hit the clubs shortly after midnight (although 2 am is when the dance clubs really get going). Clubs don't close before 5 am (when the subway starts running again) and most close well after dawn, so you can pick up breakfast before heading home.

The gay and lesbian club scene in Buenos Aires is the most developed and open anywhere south of Miami.

Bars, Taverns & Pubs

Buller Pub & Brewing Company

R.M. Ortiz 1827
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4313-0287

<http://www.bullerpub.com>

In an area of forgettable faux-Irish pubs serving local lager, this attractive brewpub is a bustling place from sundown until almost sunrise. The interesting beers are made on-site in the German style, accompanied by filling takes on pub food. There is a second location at Ave. Paraguay 428 (phone 4313-0287).

Monday-Friday from noon and Saturday from 9 pm. Most major credit cards.

Down Town Matias

San Martin 979, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4312-9844

<http://www.matiaspub.com.ar>

The dean of Buenos Aires' pubs, Down Town Matias was serving happy-hour beers long before they became fashionable. Dark wood is everywhere, and a downstairs room plays host to parties and private dinners with Celtic music. Multiple locations throughout Buenos Aires.

Monday-Wednesday noon-midnight, Thursday and Friday noon-1 am. Most major credit cards.

Druid In

Reconquista 1040, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

During the week, many patrons walk over to this cozy pub for a bite to eat and more to drink after hitting the Kilkenny.

Monday-Friday noon-1 am, Saturday from 8 pm.

Gran Bar Danzon

Libertad 1161, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4811-1108

<http://www.granbardanzon.com.ar>

This slick wine, cocktail and sushi bar attracts sharply dressed patrons. Sink into the leather sofas and prepare to flirt by candlelight.

Monday-Friday from 7 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 8 pm. Reservations available.

La Cigale

25 de Mayo 597
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4893-2332

<http://www.facebook.com/lacigalebar>

This French-themed bar is supremely popular and thus often packed beginning at 1:30 am (B.A.'s time to go out), sometimes with a long line waiting outside. Still, it's a big bar with good drinks and definitely a place to see and be seen.

Monday-Friday noon-3 pm and 6 pm-3 am, Saturday and holidays 10 am-3 am. No credit cards.

Milion

Parana 1048, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4815-9925

<http://www.milion.com.ar>

The mansion setting is grand and gorgeous, and the garden out back, reached by palatial staircases, is a memorable place to quaff cocktails or imported beers. Take it easy on the serene terraces or mix it up at the hyperactive bars.

Monday and Tuesday 10 am-2 am, Wednesday 10 am-2:30 am, Thursday 10 am-3 am, Friday 10-4:30 am, Saturday noon-4 am, Sunday 8 pm-2:30 am.

Mundo Bizarro

Serrano 1222, Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4773-1967

<http://www.mundobizarrobar.com>

This low-key bar has friendly bartenders, cool art on the walls and no pretension. If you're in the Palermo neighborhood, this local watering hole is an inviting option, although the music can be loud.

Monday-Wednesday 8 pm-3 am, Thursday 8 pm-4 am, Friday and Saturday 8 pm-5 am.

The Kilkenny

Marcelo T. De Alvear 399, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4312-7291

<http://www.thekilkenny.com.ar>

Big, noisy and comfortable, this popular pub serves good beer and food, and really seems Irish, with live Celtic music and Guinness on tap.

Monday-Friday noon-5:30 am, Saturday 8 pm-5:30 am. Live music nightly 11 pm-2 am.

Dance & Nightclubs

Cover charges for clubs vary according to the night, the DJ and the clientele. Expect to be charged roughly 20 P-50 P.

Asia de Cuba

Pierina Dealessi 750, Puerto Madero
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4894-1328

<http://www.asiadecuba.com.ar>

This combination disco and restaurant has a privileged view in the heart of lively Puerto Madero. A predictably Asian ambience, it has become one of the best nightspots in Buenos Aires, with an attractive clientele, fun dance floor, good food and a party all night long.

Open daily from noon.

Club Bahrein

Lavalle 345
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4310-52403

<http://www.bahreinba.com>

This is a huge, happening dance club housed in a former bank building. Go to the Yellow Bar, where you can get started with drinks, then head to the Funky Room on the main floor for dancing to diverse rock and other music stylings, or downstairs to the XSS Room, where hip youngsters groove to electronic beats.

Open from 12:30 am Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

Crobar

Marcelo Freyre s/n, Paseo de la Infanta (at Avenida Infanta Isabel)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4778-1500

<http://www.crobar.com.ar>

This is an enormously popular disco and more, with four expensive bars, VIP lounges, and overhead balconies and walkways. Expect a huge crowd on Friday nights when famous DJs (often visiting from abroad) spin techno remixes and U.S. pop. The Friday night Rheo party in the side space is popular with the gay crowd.

Friday and Saturday from 1 am.

La Confiteria Ideal

Suipacha 384, Microcentro (corner of Corrientes)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-5265-8069

<http://www.confiteriaideal.com>

Emblematic 1912 art-nouveau cafe with a dilapidated tango salon upstairs, often used for movie shooting. Go once just to experience the highly melancholic atmosphere, but by all means avoid the restrooms.

Milonga shows Monday 3:30-8:30 pm, Tuesday 10 pm-2 am, Wednesday 3 pm-midnight, Thursday 3-8:30 pm and 10:30 pm-2 am, Friday 2-8:30 pm and 10:30 pm-3 am, Saturday 3-8:30 pm and 10:30 pm-3 am, Sunday 3-9 pm. Cover 30 P (shows extra). No credit cards.

La Viruta

Armenia 1366 (corner of Jose A. Cabrera), Palermo Soho
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4774-6357

<http://www.lavirutatango.com>

On Friday night, when the skills shown by the experts at Salon Canning start to depress you, head over two *cuadras* for some serious fun in this huge, friendly basement club. People dance tango there, too, but rules are a rather optional thing. DJs mix tango with rock, salsa and *cumbia*, which is perfect for shy beginners. This may be the only place in Buenos Aires with a queue developing at 4 am on Saturday morning, when the entry fee is waived. When the old folksy guitar tunes of the *chacarera* (the rural version of tango) start playing, everybody storms the huge dance floor.

40 P-45 P (includes dancing, classes and/or shows).

Maluco Beleza

Sarmiento 1728
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4372-1737

<http://www.malucobeleza.com.ar>

If you prefer Brazilian samba and reggae to tango, this is your place. Upstairs, it plays relaxed house music. The club attracts a lot of saucy Brazilian girls, who in turn attract a lot of Argentines and tourists. Be aware, though, that quite a few are *garotas de programa* (working girls) on their day off. Or maybe not.

Wednesday and Friday-Sunday from 1:30 am, but Wednesday and Sunday nights are best. Dinner and a show on Wednesday from 9:30 pm (starts at 60 P).

Pacha

Avenida Costanera Rafael Obligado y La Pampa
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4788-4280

<http://www.pachabuenaosaires.com>

This multilevel, pink superclub inside the Costa Salguero riverfront industrial complex, along the Rio de la Plata on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, has copied the success of its hedonistic Ibiza namesake and is still going strong. Expect a long line, a large, hot and crowded dance floor vibrating with electro and house music, and men in black with fat wallets courting dolled-up women with thin waists at several bars, on the patio or on the VIP chill-out terrace upstairs.

Open Saturday 1-8 am. Cover 60 P.

Terrazas del Este

Ave. Costanera Norte Rafael Obligado 2221 (corner of Sarmiento), Punta Carrasco
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4807-1010

<http://www.terrazasdeleste.com>

One of the top nightspots in the city, it's a huge space with varied kinds of music blared on four different dance floors with a tremendous terrace overlooking Rio de la Plata, making it the perfect spot on a summer night. The Wednesday after-office party (starts around 7 pm) has become especially popular, and is a great way to mix with the locals. But the Saturday night scene is the really big party.

Open Wednesday from 7 pm and Saturday from midnight. Cover 50 P.

Live Music

Niceto Club

Niceto Vega 5510, Palermo Soho
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4779-9396

<http://www.nicetoclub.com>

Hot and hip dance club with two rooms (Side A and Side B), three bars and a VIP area. Lots of techno, trance, hip-hop and indie music, with Latin beats such as salsa and reggaeton thrown in for good measure. On Thursday night, the scantily clad and flashy drag dance troupe of Club 69 takes over Side A, while Side B vibrates with urban beats. This is a big, classic spot to hear mostly emerging rock bands, but also jazz, reggae and other music genres.

Open Thursday-Saturday 9 pm-6 am, but don't bother to go before midnight. The atmosphere boils over at 3 am. Cover from 25 P.

Other Options

Club Gricel

La Rioja 1180, Boedo (corner of San Juan)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4957-7157

<http://www.clubgriceltango.com.ar>

The now-declining art of tango dancing has long been a large part of Buenos Aires' fame, and this is where you can experience one of the last of the old-style, untouristy tango clubs. Tables circle a dance floor where common *portenos*, as Buenos Aires folk are called, dance tango in high style. Singles should go on Friday, couples on Saturday.

Open for dancing on Monday 8:30 pm-4 am, Tuesday 10 pm-3 am, Wednesday 8:30 pm-2 am, Thursday 8 pm-3 am, Friday 10:30 pm-5 am, Saturday 10:30 pm-4 am, Sunday 9 pm-2 am. Tango classes on Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 8 pm; Saturday from 6:30 pm and Sunday from 7:30 pm. Monday-Saturday 25 P, Sunday 20 P. No credit cards.

El Balcon

Humberto Primo 461, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

One of many well-known tango cafes in the San Telmo neighborhood, this one is notable for its reasonable restaurant prices and shows in the afternoon and early evening. It is especially popular during the Plaza Dorrego Sunday market, with shows running continuously 1-7 pm.

Dinner with a show Friday-Sunday at 8 pm. No credit cards.

Piazzolla Tango

Florida 165, Microcentro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4344-8201

<http://www.piazzollatango.com>

Although there are certainly better values in town, some consider this the classiest place in Buenos Aires to see a tango dinner show for the rhythm and quality of its show, fanciful decoration, food and service. It's a museum as well as a glitzy cabaret venue, but the dancing is high quality. It is fascinating to see how dancers cope with the tricky signature tunes of Astor Piazzolla, the great innovator of tango from 1960 to his death in 1992.

Shows daily at 10:15 pm.

Salon Canning

Scalabrini Ortiz 1331 (corner of Jose A. Cabrera), Palermo Soho
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4832-6753

<http://www.parakultural.com.ar>

If you can only experience one *milonga* in Buenos Aires, opt for this one. The Canning is one of the most traditional tango venues in the city. On Monday nights you can take tango lessons and stay to check out the *milonga* at midnight, attended by many young *portenos*. It's also popular on Friday at midnight.

Casual attire is the norm, but on Sunday, the old professionals take over, dressed up to the max to show the young how it all was done back then. Do visit the restrooms, which stock just about everything a tango dancer could need, from fishnet stockings to perfumes.

Classes Monday 9-11 pm, Tuesday and Friday 7-11 pm.

Shopping

You'll find abundant shopping opportunities in Buenos Aires. Be prepared for some genuine sticker shock on many retail items, but leather goods are among the best deals, perhaps as little as one-third the price you would pay at home. Typical Argentine gaucho handicrafts can be found easily, often in specialty stores called *talabarterias*. Such items tend to be leather belts and hats, which are often trimmed with silver.

Street markets in Mataderos, Plaza Francia and Plaza Dorrego are some of the best places to shop. More establishments are concentrated in the barrios of Recoleta, Retiro and Barrio Norte. Home decorations, along with elegant, expensive and European-imported clothes, can be found in several shopping malls, but especially in Palermo Viejo. (Prices have risen on imported goods, though, so don't expect to find many deals on them.)

Paraphernalia for the preparation and consumption of *yerba mate* can be found everywhere. Wine is naturally high on a lot of shopping lists, although you will have to lug it home, as well as claim your value-added-tax refund at the airport, which can be a maddening process if you're in a hurry.

Buenos Aires is also one of the best places in the world to find antiques, but shipping some antiques out of the country can require a special permit from the government's cultural office. The packaging of these goods is also an important consideration. Check with your antiques dealer on these and other shipping issues.

Shopping Hours: Shops in town are generally open Monday-Friday 9:30 or 10 am-8 or 9 pm (many also close 1-3 pm for siesta), Saturday 9 am-1 pm. Shopping malls with food courts and cinemas are generally open daily 10 am-10 pm with no siesta. Note that many shopping malls in Buenos Aires also have cinemas, which are very popular during the humid summer.

Antique Stores

If you like shopping for antiques and secondhand goods, go to Plaza Dorrego on Sunday for the bustling flea market. The rest of the week, visit the antiques stores around the plaza, on Calle Defensa, in particular. You'll find old lamps, toys, phonographs and more—it's like poking around your grandmother's attic, if your grandmother had been from Buenos Aires. Treat these recommendations as a starting point only; there are dozens of shops clustered in the area.

Antiguedades Pantin Decoraciones

Defensa 1180, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4361-6452

<http://pantinantiques.com.ar>

This shop offers an interesting selection of old lamps and assorted decorative items, including porcelains and items of religious interest.

Open daily except Monday 10 am-6 pm.

Candido Silva Antiguiedades

Defensa 1066 (local 15), San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4361-5053

<http://www.candidosilva.com.ar>

This shop sells colonial as well as 18th- and 19th-century objects and artworks, especially those strong in silverwork. Don't ignore its adjacent crafts shop.

Open daily except Monday 10:30 am-7 pm.

Joe Camello

Defensa 1140, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4300-5088

<http://usuarios.advance.com.ar/joecam>

Located in the heart of San Telmo, this place has everything. The staff can arrange delivery outside the country.

Daily except Saturday 10:30 am-6 pm.

Silvia Petroccia Antiguiedades

Defensa 1002, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4362-0156

<http://www.sp-antiques.com>

This is your source for one-of-a-kind pieces. Rare furniture abounds, but you will also see a host of other decorative items, mostly of European style, from chandeliers to mirrors to candle holders.

Monday-Friday 10:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-1 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-6 pm. No credit cards.

Galleries

Alicia Brandy Galeria de Arte

Charcas 3149, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4827-1511

<http://www.arte-brandy.com.ar>

The gallery focuses mainly on paintings, but you'll also find sculpture, engravings and photographs.

Monday-Friday 3-8 pm, Saturday 10 am-1 pm.

Appetite

Chacabuco 551, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4331-5405

<http://www.appetite.com.ar>

This avant-garde gallery of contemporary art features assorted styles and has become a hot spot and a must-visit for art lovers. It also has branches in New York City and Beijing. There is a second location at Venezuela 638.

Monday-Saturday 2-7 pm.

Daniel Maman Fine Art

Ave. Libertador 2475, Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4804-3700

<http://www.danielmaman.com>

This gallery has gained prominence for its increasing role in promoting young Argentine artists worldwide.

Monday-Friday 11 am-8 pm, Saturday 11 am-3pm.

Ruth Benzacar

Florida 1000, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4857-3322

<http://www.ruthbenzacar.com>

This is the most prestigious gallery for Argentine art. For more than 30 years, Ruth Benzacar made it her mission to bring contemporary Argentine art to the world. Her renowned subterranean gallery continues to do so.

Monday-Saturday 2-7 pm.

Zavaleta Lab

Venezuela 571 (second floor lofts 11-12-13), San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4342-9293 or 11-4589-5315

<http://www.zavaletalab.com>

As another of the top contemporary art galleries in the city's burgeoning art scene, this up-and-coming gallery showcases new artists. There are some impressive paintings there.

Monday-Friday 11 am-8 pm, Saturday 11 am-2 pm.

Markets

Mataderos Fair

Ave. de Los Corrales 6500 (a 30-minute cab ride from the Microcentro), Mataderos
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4342-9629

<http://www.feriademataderos.com.ar>

If you're in town on a Sunday, don't miss this fair, which is certainly Buenos Aires' most authentic in terms of handicrafts and traditional wares. You can shop for handicrafts when you aren't sampling the great food or watching locals dance. There are gaucho displays, too.

Sunday 11 am-8 pm in winter, 6 pm-midnight in summer.

Plaza Dorrego Market

Humberto Primo and Defensa, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

<https://turismo.buenosaires.gob.ar/es/attractivo/plaza-dorrego>

Sunday brings a fun, flea-market atmosphere (along with every tourist in the city) to this epicenter of the tango world. If you can tear yourself away from the dancing, you may stumble upon a find or two—there are handicrafts, as well. Note that most of the "antiques" there are for the tourist trade and not originals.

Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Plaza Francia Fair

Avenida Libertador and Avenida Pueyrredon (near Recoleta Cemetery)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

<http://www.feriaplazafrancia.com>

This is a fine place to look for crafts and leather goods.

Open Saturday and Sunday 11 am-8 pm.

Plaza Italia

Avenida Santa Fe and Uriarte, Palermo Chico
Buenos Aires, Argentina

http://www.365buenosaires.com/d2351_feria-plaza-italia-libros.html

Normally a used-book emporium, it is also a market for inexpensively priced handicrafts.

Saturday and Sunday noon-8:30 pm.

Shopping Areas

Avenida Santa Fe

Avenida Santa Fe between avenidas Uruguay and Pueyrredon
Buenos Aires, Argentina

<http://avenidasantafe.com.ar>

In this 12-block area, shoppers will find a bewildering number of quality shoe and leather-purse stores, with reasonable prices.

Calle Morillo at Avenida Scalabrini Ortiz

Calle Morillo (at Avenida Scalabrini Ortiz)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

This area at the southwestern edge of Palermo contains a multitude of discount leather shops far away from the tourist masses. You can buy off-the-rack, get jackets custom fitted, or even select your style and

color and have a coat custom tailored. Very little English is spoken there—take along a phrase book or dictionary.

Most shops will accept credit cards, but prices are 10%-15% lower if you pay cash. No extra charge for hotel delivery.

Galerias Pacifico

Florida Street and Cordoba Avenida (between Florida and San Martin), Microcentro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-5555-5100

<http://www.galeriaspacifico.com.ar>

This is one of the ritzier shopping malls in the city—the landmark building is famous for the Mexican-inspired friezes on the central cupola. The gorgeous building is reason enough to have a look-see, even if you're not really shopping.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday noon-9 pm.

Materia Urbana

Defensa 702, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4361-5265

<http://www.materiaurbana.com>

This upstairs gallery has been busily adding new stores and artists under its umbrella. There are already more than 100 local artists and designers on display there, the vast majority specializing in contemporary sculpture, ceramics, painting, photography, jewelry, home decor and design. It may be a bit too hip for the over-40 crowd, but it has some of the best prices in town.

Daily 11 am-7 pm.

Patio Bullrich

Ave. del Libertador 750 and Posadas 1245, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4814-7400

<http://www.shoppingbullrich.com.ar>

Several floors of upscale shops are located in a former livestock auction house. There's a lovely cafe in which to refuel.

Daily 10 am-9 pm.

Specialty Stores

Abraxas

Defensa 1092, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4361-7512

<http://www.abraxasantiques.com>

This shop features a great selection of art-nouveau and art-deco jewelry pieces and decorative antiques.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday 9 am-8 pm.

Arandu

Paraguay 1257
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4816-3689

<http://www.arandu.com.ar>

In addition to leather clothes, hats, accessories and luggage, this *talabarteria* sells equipment for polo and other equestrian sports. There are additional locations in Recoleta at Ayacucho 1924 and in Arandu Atalajes at Talcahuano 949.

Monday-Friday 9:30 am-8:30 pm.

Artepampa

Defensa 917, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4362-6406

<http://www.artepampa.com>

Unique, Argentine-styled sculptures, paintings, tapestries, furniture and other goods made imaginatively from various materials including leather and paper.

Open daily 10:30 am-7 pm.

Balthazar

Gorriti 5131, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4834-6235

<http://www.balthazarshop.com>

This is one of the city's more chic—and expensive—men's clothing shops. High-end ready-to-wear collections with a European accent. If you pay in cash, you are offered a 20% discount. There is a second location in Palermo Viejo at Gorriti 5131.

Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-8 pm.

Club de Tango de Oscar B. Himschoot

Parana 123, Fifth Floor (No. 114), San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4372-7251

<http://www.clubdetango.com.ar>

The late Oscar B. Himschoot, a tango institution in Buenos Aires, knew and collected just about anything related to tango. Now his granddaughter, Jimena Vazquez Acuna, runs the crammed little tango store of "Oscarcito," which should be the first stop for every aficionado. There you can buy everything tango, from CDs to original scores, books, postcards, videos and other memorabilia. Jimena throws in her knowledge and anecdotes for free.

Monday-Friday noon-6 pm.

Dalla Fontana

Reconquista 735, Microcentro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Custom leather clothing, tailored in as little as three hours. The staff is fluent in English.

Monday-Friday 9 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-7 pm.

Humawaca

Posadas 1380, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4832-2662

<http://www.humawaca.com>

This firm's leather accessories are in such demand that you can now buy them at Harrod's the next time you're in London. But first, browse in Buenos Aires to see the creative, high-quality leather bags. There is a second location in Palermo Soho at El Salvador 4692.

Open daily 10 am-8 pm, until 7 pm on Saturday.

Marcelo Toledo

Ave. Humberto 462 (first floor), San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4362-0841

<http://www.marcelotoledo.net>

One of Buenos Aires' better-known (and very high-end) silversmiths. The store has every conceivable item you can imagine in silver, and then some. One of the best places to buy a luxury *mate* kit. The store itself is a work of art.

Martin Fierro

Santa Fe 992, Retiro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Named for the hero of an epic 19th-century Argentine poem, this *talabarteria* (not to be confused with the string of convenience stores under the same name) sells custom ladies' clothing as well as ready-to-wear items, with native *barracan* wool and cotton fabrics. Onyx and rhodochrosite figurines, too.

Open Monday-Saturday 10:30 am-7:30 pm.

Mishka

El Salvador 4673
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4833-6566

<http://www.mishkashoes.com.ar>

This urban footwear shop has shoes that are original, unique and colorful to the extreme (its hallmark), all of which have complex linings and distinguishing characteristics. The shoes are quite popular, but also quite pricey. There is a second location in Paseo Alcorta.

Monday-Saturday 10:30 am-8:30 pm. Sunday 2-8 pm.

Musimundo!

Ravignani 1470
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4555-8600

<http://www.musimundo.com>

This well-stocked store—easily the largest music store in the city—contains electronics on the ground floor and an extensive CD and DVD selection up the escalators. The store now also carries books. Staffers will open and play anything you are interested in hearing or seeing before you buy. Go there to stock up on tango music—from old favorites to the latest electronica. Several locations throughout the city.

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm, afternoon hours on Sunday.

Puntos en el Espacio

Peru 979, San Telmo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4307-1742 or 11-4307-5665

<http://www.puntosenelespacio.com.ar>

Another ultrahip, only-in-Buenos-Aires store. Everything in this shop comes from an exclusive collection; all the items are produced in a very limited edition. The small number of shoes and other fashion accessories on display means constant rotation and makes sure that you will always find clothing representing the latest from the Argentine fashion world. You will also find a good selection of wallets, belts, bags and other objects. With a second San Telmo location on Independencia at Defensa.

Daily 11 am-8 pm. Most major credit cards.

Sabater Hermanos

Gurruchaga 1821, Palermo Soho
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4833-3004

<http://www.shnos.com.ar>

Only in Buenos Aires would one find a store that sells soap and nothing but soap—but in every imaginable color and myriad shapes and designs. And it's easy on the wallet, as well.

Open daily 8 am-8 pm.

Dining

Dining Overview

Buenos Aires, with its strong European tradition, offers a symphony of cuisines, many melded in unexpected ways. Italo-Argentine pizzas, for example, have more ingredients and greater variety than the Italian originals. A growing number of restaurants specialize in "new cuisine," or fashionable fusion creations by big-name chefs. Others serve up dishes from the chefs' countries of origin. Asian—particularly Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese and Indian—restaurants have answered the demand for exotic food.

The country has a way with meat, and *parrillas* (steak houses) in particular are good places to see how the locals get their protein. Make sure you go with a healthy appetite—the variety of grilled meats is remarkable. Popular cuts of steak include *bife de lomo* and *bife de chorizo* (not to be confused with the sausage of the same name).

Since the 1990s, a large group of young chefs and restaurateurs has been challenging the meat hegemony. In barrios such as Las Canitas and Palermo Viejo, Vietnamese, Mexican, Japanese and sushi, Greek and Catalan restaurants have opened. In addition, pizzerias such as Filo are upgrading the standards. It is easy to avoid steak and salad, if that's what you want to do, and the ethnic cuisines are fairly vegetarian-friendly.

Argentine wines are regarded highly, especially red wines produced in the Mendoza subregions of Cuyo and Lujan, near the Andes. White and sparkling wines have improved and are also winning international awards. Bodega Norton varieties in particular are highly regarded. Red Malbec and white Torrontes are unique to the country.

The city's leading restaurant districts are in and around the Microcentro area (including Retiro), trendy Puerto Madero, chic Recoleta, Palermo Viejo and Las Canitas (northern Palermo).

Breakfast is usually served 7-10 am, and lunch is eaten noon-3 pm. Argentines dine very late in the evening. Until 9:30 or 10 pm, most places are empty. *Parrillas* are best visited after 10 pm, when the grill is warmed up and the dining area is jumping. There's little hurry once you're seated; you won't be rushed along. Most restaurants don't close until the last customer leaves, and 2 am is not too late to order coffee or cognac.

In Argentina, the Spanish word *carne* doesn't mean "meat," but specifically "beef." If you say you don't eat *carne*, a server might suggest chicken or pork (sometimes called *carnes blancas*, or white meats). If you are a vegetarian, say "*soy vegetariano/a*."

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax or tip: \$ = less than 60 P; \$\$ = 60 P-85 P; \$\$\$ = 85 P-150 P; \$\$\$\$ = more than 150 P.

Local & Regional

Club del Progreso

Sarmiento 1334, San Nicolas
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 511-4372-3380

<http://www.restorandelprogreso.com.ar>

Billed as the "historic Argentine restaurant," it is a favorite spot for the movers and shakers of Buenos Aires. Power meals in an old, classic building with a "new classic" take on Argentinean beef, chicken and seafood dishes such as calamari with house-made pappardelle or rib-eye steaks in a black pudding crust with wild potatoes.

Open Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for dinner only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$.
Most major credit cards.

El Sanjuanino

Posadas 1515, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4804-2909

<http://www.elsanjuanino.com.ar>

This is one of the best spots in town to try traditional empanadas from the San Juan area. These semicircular pies are filled with tangy ground beef, corn, chicken or ham and cheese. The decor is warm and cozy at this friendly place, and, considering its posh address, it's surprisingly cheap.

Daily noon-4 pm and 7 pm-1 am. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Fervor

Posadas 1519, Recoleta
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4804-4944

<http://www.fervorbrasas.com.ar>

A small restaurant in Recoleta quickly winning fans for its finely prepared beef and seafood dishes. It is sometimes hard to get a table, but it's worth the effort to check it out.

Open daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Miramar

San Juan 1999, San Cristobal
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Out of the way and seemingly suspended in the 1950s, this barrio favorite makes no concessions whatsoever to fashion—not even fresh paint—but the kitchen produces flavorful pastas, stews and seafood. Sample local delicacies such as partridge, oysters, rabbit and anchovies. The *rabo de toro* (oxtail soup) is highly recommended. Excellent wine list. The service is exemplary, but the wait can be long and the space crowded, so try to time your arrival to this much-loved eatery. Tango fans should go on Sunday evening, as Julio Pane occasionally performs with his *bandoneon* (accordion).

Tuesday-Sunday lunch and dinner. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Puratierra

3 de Febrero 1167, Belgrano
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4899-2007

<http://puratierra.com.ar>

A sophisticated but inviting restaurant that uses fresh, seasonal ingredients for its ample menu featuring South American cuisine. Choose from a variety of highly recommended meat, fish, pasta and vegetarian dishes. The wine selection is also extraordinary.

Monday-Saturday 8 pm-12:30 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$.

Sucre

Sucre 676, Belgrano
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4782-9082

<http://www.sucreresaurant.com.ar>

Although no longer the "in" place it was in years past, Sucre is still a fashionable place to eat. It's big, with trendy decor, and the diverse, contemporary menu boasts pasta dishes such as ravioli in rabbit and black-olive sauce or organic chicken filled with couscous, apples and nuts. Or try a traditional Argentine plate—the Patagonia leg of lamb. That is, if you can get in the door; the room is perpetually packed.

Daily noon-4 pm and 10 pm-1 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Tegui

Costa Rica 5852, Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 5291-3333

<http://www.tegui.com.ar>

Don't be fooled by the concrete-wall exterior with stickers and graffiti; beyond the black front door is a first-rate dining experience. Impeccable service and some of the best contemporary cuisine on the continent. Famed chef German Martitegui has incredible food. Try the *merluza negra* ("black hake," commonly known as Chilean sea bass).

Open Tuesday-Saturday for dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$.

Tomo 1

Carlos Pellegrini 521, Centro
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 4326-6698

<http://www.tomo1.com.ar>

This is a perennial favorite among experts on Buenos Aires cuisine; sisters Ada and Ebe Concaro opened this now-legendary restaurant in 1971 out of a Belgrano-neighborhood home. Their quality cooking was appreciated, and they moved in 1994 to the mezzanine of the centrally located Hotel Crowne Plaza Panamericano. The menu changes constantly, but the plates are always lively takes on beef, Patagonian

lamb, pork, duck, quail, foie gras, seafood and pasta. It's not a place for intimate dining, though, so just go for the food and quality wines.

Monday-Friday noon-midnight, Saturday 7:30 pm-midnight. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Vegetarian

Krishna

Malabia 1833 Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4833-4618

<http://krishnaveggie.com>

A popular vegetarian option with a cozy neighborhood feel, this casual Palermo eatery with low tables specializes in healthy, organic dishes such as Indian *thalis*, soy burgers and various vegetable platters. Try the ginger lemonade or house chai.

Monday and Tuesday 7 pm-12:30 am, Wednesday 8 pm-12:30 am, Thursday-Sunday noon-12:30 am. \$\$-\$\$\$.

Seafood

Centro Vasco Frances

Moreno 1370
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4381-6696

<http://www.rvascofrances.com.ar>

French-Basque restaurant founded in 1895, located in the former ballroom of the Basque Cultural Centre. Specialties are excellent traditional garlicky fish and seafood dishes, probably the best in Argentina. Try *mar y tierra* made with two kinds of rice, one blackened with squid ink. Service can be slow.

Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Steak Houses

Cabana Las Lilas

Ave. Alicia Moreau de Justo 516, Puerto Madero
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4313-1010

<http://www.laslilas.com/restaurant.php>

This popular, upscale steak house raises all its beef on a ranch west of the city. You can order a tender rib eye or well-prepared beef spare ribs, blood sausage, sweetbreads or pork flank steak, among other favorites from the grill.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. American Express and Visa only.

El Obrero

Agustin Caffarena 64 (at Caboto)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4362-9912

<http://www.bodegonelobrero.com.ar>

Local dockworkers, celebrities and tourists rub shoulders in the great social leveling of this much-loved crumbling steak house decorated with Boca Juniors football memorabilia. The grill offers every cut you can imagine—truly some of the best steaks in town. In winter, the soups are recommended. The wine list is good, as are the classic Argentine desserts such as bread pudding and creme caramel with *dulce de leche*. It's in a dicey area, so take a taxi.

Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$. No credit cards.

La Cabana

Alicia Moreau de Justo 380, Puerto Madero
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4314-3710

<http://www.lacabana.com.ar>

Run by the Orient Express group, this elegant place serves the swankiest, priciest steaks in town, treating each piece of meat like a precious commodity. This old supper club was revamped into a temple to old-style dining. Check out the baby beef, ogle the stuffed cows and grandiose furnishings, then insert your bar code into a kiosk to learn the origin of the steak you just ate. Those wishing to take a turn at the grill can join the chef for a master barbecue course.

Daily noon-1 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

La Cabrera

Jose Antonio Cabrera 5099, Palermo Soho
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Phone: 11-4832-5754

<http://lacabrera.com.ar>

The best *parrilla* in Palermo, and probably one of the best in town, though it's very small. Try the huge *bife de chorizo*, which would cost you four times as much in North America, and wash it down with a bottle of Malbec. Many other excellent cuts are available, all juicy and tender. Another house specialty is *provoleta de queso de cabra* (grilled goat cheese), and the more adventurous should also try *chinchulines de cordero* (small intestines of lamb) or the *mollejas* (sweetbreads).

Monday 12:30-4:30 pm, Tuesday-Thursday 8:30 am-1 am, Friday and Sunday 12:30-4:30 pm and 8:30 pm-2 am. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Security

Etiquette

Although it derives its language and much of its heritage from Spain and Italy, Argentina reflects a wider range of cultures than many of its South American neighbors. It also tends to be a bit more cosmopolitan, adopting some of the customs and styles of Europe and North America. As a result, many visitors will find that, with rare exceptions, most etiquette rules are similar to those they're familiar with.

Appointments—Set your business appointments at least a couple of weeks in advance, if possible. In general, punctuality is practiced and expected in business, but more so of the guest than of the Argentine business contact. Social events, on the other hand, almost always assume a start time at least 30 minutes after the time on the invitation. If possible, avoid business trips in January and February, when many workers take their summer vacations.

Personal Introductions—A firm Western-style handshake is customary. Maintain direct eye contact. Titles are important: If your acquaintance has a professional title, you will learn it when introduced; if not, *senor* (male), *senora* (married female) or *senorita* (unmarried female) is appropriate. The title and the person's last name should be used until you are instructed otherwise. Note that it is typical for a person to have two surnames, one from the father and one from the mother. The father's surname will be given first during the introduction, and that's the name that is used to address or speak of the person. Thus, "Senor Juan Guerra Fernandez" would be addressed as "Senor Guerra."

Negotiating—Business is about building relationships. Personal ties and contacts are important. Expect small talk and the accompanying issues to precede business. However, initial contacts usually carry an air of seriousness and formality. Expect to build a rapport over time. Your second, third and even fourth meeting will likely remain formal, though friendly. If you have met in a personal context, the warmth of the relationship is likely to increase more rapidly. Although the business world in Argentina remains male-dominated, women are making significant progress.

Business Entertaining—Expect dinner to start late—often as late as 11 pm. Although the majority of business meals occur at dinner, the business lunch is becoming more common; these are often extended affairs that begin between 1 and 2 pm. People also meet at midmorning over coffee. Regardless of when the gathering takes place, don't expect to make a lot of progress on a deal: Meals are considered a time to build relationships, not to conduct business.

Body Language—Personal body space is close. It is common for participants in a conversation to politely touch each other on the arm or back, and a light kiss on the cheek is customary, even after the first meeting. Take your cue from your acquaintance. Do not stand with your hands on your hips, as this seems overly bold and might imply a challenge. The act of yawning in public is considered rude, so be sure to cover your mouth, turn slightly away from your hosts and apologize.

Gift Giving—Gift giving in business situations is common and appreciated. Fine, imported alcohols are a good choice (Argentines pay a heavy duty on such items). Don't give imported wine, however, as it would be considered a slight to the country's own vintages. In social settings, flowers or imported candies are appropriate.

Conversation—Small talk is important. Soccer, culture, art, food, children and all things Argentine are appropriate, with a few exceptions. In your first few conversations, avoid the subject of religion. Politics, such as any remark about Eva Peron, the *desparecidos*, or the Falkland Islands conflict, is a risky topic,

so try to avoid the subject. *Portenos* are very proud of their city and culture (some would say to the point of arrogance), so avoid direct criticism of Buenos Aires when possible.

Health

No vaccinations are required to enter the country. Tap water is good in Buenos Aires, food is safe, and sanitation standards are fine in reputable restaurants.

Most pharmacies are open weekdays and Saturday mornings. When they pull down their shutters, they post addresses of pharmacies in the neighborhood that are supposed to be open on a rotating basis during the weekend. All too often, you will find the posted pharmacies closed when you get there. Consult your hotel's front desk staff for directions to a pharmacy that is open.

The top hotels have English-speaking doctors on call, although not necessarily on the premises. In general, the free public hospitals and clinics have some English-speaking doctors on their staffs, but not always in their emergency rooms. The hospitals have excellent doctors but are understaffed when it comes to the enormous numbers of patients they must see, and they suffer from miserly funding. Hence, you may be asked for a contribution to replace the medicine and disposables used. Private hospitals and clinics are excellent, with first-rate English-speaking doctors.

People with health problems who speak no Spanish should learn at least a few key words—*ambulancia* and *socorro* (first aid)—and carry on them the address of their hotel or the hospital where they think they might have to be taken.

Hospital Britanico, at Perdriel 74, is a private hospital where English is spoken (phone 4309-6400; <http://www.hospitalbritanico.org.ar>). Hospital Aleman, at Pueyrredon 1640, is a private German hospital that has English speakers in the emergency room (phone 5777-5568 for emergencies; <http://www.hospitalaleman.com.ar>). Free public hospitals include Hospital Argerich, at Pi y Margall 750 (phone 4121-0700; <http://www.hospitalargerich.org.ar>) and Hospital Fernandez, at Cervino 3356 (phone 4808-2600; <http://www.hospitalfernandez.org.ar>).

For free municipal ambulance service to a hospital emergency room (*sala de guardia*), dial 107 or 4923-1052. There are 70 ambulances stationed throughout the city.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

Ease of travel for disabled people in Buenos Aires has improved somewhat since the arrival of modern U.S.-based hotels, with their wide doors and specially appointed rooms and baths. Some older hotels have added ramps and other amenities. Ramps have been installed on street curbs in town, and each of the major bus lines has added a few low-floor vehicles with wheelchair bays and safety belts. New subway stations have elevators for wheelchairs. Be advised, though, that the tiled sidewalks are in a constant state of disrepair, even in the wealthiest neighborhoods.

Transportes de Discapacitados Motrices (TDM) provides transport in three special minivans that carry up to three wheelchairs with companions. Offers airport pickup, city tours and other excursions, including fishing. They speak English and Portuguese and operate 24 hours a day. Phone 15-4446-9883.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do take a gift if you are invited to an Argentine's home for dinner, and do dress nicely—shorts are never appropriate (unless you are a college student). In clothes-conscious Buenos Aires, they're not a good idea on the street, either. Sandals are definitely out.

Don't expect Argentines to arrive punctually for social engagements. They'll probably be as much as 30 minutes behind schedule.

Do remember that grand churches are more than museums. Although women no longer have to cover their heads or even shoulders, it's still polite to be conservative in dress.

Don't talk about international political matters. It's not a good topic in the best of circumstances, and many Argentines still resent the U.S. government's lukewarm support for their country after the 2001 economic collapse.

Do pamper yourself in a *peluqueria* (beauty salon). Their services are cheap and fabulous.

Don't order wine from any other country when in Argentina (unless in a fine French restaurant). Argentine wine may not be the world's finest, but you will be told—unceasingly—that it is.

Do feel free to sit and people-watch in cafes after you've finished your coffee. This is a time-honored custom in Buenos Aires, and servers expect it.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Only a passport and proof of onward passage are required of citizens of Canada, the U.K., Australia and the U.S. for visits of up to three months. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

All U.S. citizens must have a passport when traveling by air to or from Bermuda, Canada, the Caribbean, Central and South America and Mexico.

Population: 13,527,800.

Languages: Spanish.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Roman Catholic), Jewish.

Time Zone: 3 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (-3 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is not observed.

Voltage Requirements: 220 volts.

Telephone Codes: 54, country code; 11, Buenos Aires city code;

Money

Taxes

Argentina applies a 21% value-added tax (called IVA) to most goods and services (books, medicines and some foods are excluded). Purchases made with credit cards may have an extra 10%-15% tacked onto the price, reflecting the high rates that credit-card companies charge local shops.

Some businesses may offer discounts for cash payments. Note that hotels also charge (or at least should charge, by law) a tax of 21%. This is not always disclosed in the hotel's literature, so be sure to ask before booking.

The process for getting an IVA refund can be complicated, so some people don't bother, but the refund amounts can add up if you're doing a lot of shopping. (You'll probably find that stores in the Microcentro are more accustomed to the process than stores in outlying areas.)

First, you have to spend at least 70 P at a shop that displays a "tax-free" sticker. The shop must give you a special tax-free sales slip along with a Global Refund check, which a staff member must fill out, together with an envelope with the address of Global Refund (in case something goes wrong at the airport). At the airport, you show your purchases (so don't pack them inside your suitcase) along with the sales slips at customs. They stamp the check, which you take to a Global Refund stall in the airport to get your cash refund.

At land border crossings where there are no such stalls to give you a cash refund, write on the back of the customs-stamped check whether you want the money credited to your credit card or sent to you in the form of a bank check. Then drop the postage-paid envelope into a mailbox. You should have the refund within four weeks.

Taxes on goods when leaving the country are exempt up to 1,200 P, plus an additional 1,200 P if the goods were purchased in a duty-free shop.

The airport tax for all flights is 127 P. There is also a 5% tax on the purchase of airline tickets purchased within Argentina.

Tipping

In restaurants, tip 10% of the bill. Movie ushers and bus terminal porters get a 1 P tip, air terminal porters 2 P per suitcase. Cab drivers get no tip, though it is common to round up the fare to the next 1 P-5 P amount. Add a few pesos for help with baggage. Tip bellhops and concierges at hotels when warranted: A good rule of thumb is to tip in pesos what you normally would in dollars or euros at home.

Weather

Seasons in B.A. are exactly opposite of those in North America: Summer in B.A. is December-February and winter is June-August. In recent years, however, late August and September have been unseasonably warm and pleasant, too.

The climate seems increasingly to be melding into one long warm-to-hot season and one shorter cool-to-cold season. Buenos Aires summers are hot (averaging 82 F/28 C) and can be oppressively humid, though once in a while there might be a cool evening. Winters are mild (averaging 40 F/5 C), but there can be at least a couple of very cold and wet weeks. Rain can occur any time of the year, often as thunderstorms.

What to Wear

Buenos Aires is far more clothes-conscious than any other city in Latin America, which is saying a great deal. The city is a dressy place, so businesspeople should wear suits year-round. But with the younger crowd, shorts, jeans and sneakers are surprisingly common. Typical attire for adults in Buenos Aires would best be described as sophisticated, just shy of formal. Although women should avoid revealing clothing if they don't want extra attention, clothing is no more modest there than it is in the U.S. or Europe.

In summer (the North American wintertime) women will want to take separates and a few dresses; a light sweater or wrap is suggested to combat the air-conditioning. A casual jacket with slacks and short-sleeved, collared shirts are fine for men. Leisure travelers with no social obligations will do best with nice jeans (always pressed) or linen slacks, and T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts and a light sweater. Practically nobody wears a hat in Buenos Aires, so sunglasses and lots of sunscreen will be a help. Although there aren't any strict dress codes for visiting churches, showing too much skin is considered disrespectful.

In late July and August, you'll need a warm coat with a scarf and gloves, as well as heavy pants and a warm sweater for informal occasions. Leisure travelers need a parka, a midweight jacket for warmer days, jeans, wool slacks, sweaters, hats and gloves. The rest of the winter, that new leather jacket you purchased there will do just fine.

A lightweight raincoat and folding umbrella are also handy year-round.

Communication

Telephone

To place a call to Buenos Aires, you must first dial your country's international access code, followed by the Argentine country code, 54, and then the Buenos Aires city code, 11. To dial a Buenos Aires number from within Argentina but outside of the city, first dial 011.

The number of digits in area codes and phone numbers varies. Most phone numbers begin with 4. Cell phones begin with 15, which is dialed before the number. Most toll-free numbers begin with 0800.

Most public phones operate with phone cards purchased at a kiosk; those accepting coins or tokens (called *cospels*) are nearly extinct. Try to make your calls from a private phone center—a *locutorio* or *telecentro*—which will be much cheaper than calling from your hotel. In these centers you are assigned a closed booth where you sit and call your number. The phone has a meter you can read, and you pay for all calls when you leave. If you want to make an international call, you may have to tell the attendant before entering the booth. These phone centers also send faxes, and some provide Internet access. There's no charge if you don't get through.

Nearly all phones in the city are direct dial. Dial 0 first for a domestic long-distance call, 00 for a foreign country; and then the country code and number.

You can use prepaid calling cards (*tarjetas prepagas*), sold in most *kioscos* and small supermarkets, to make local and international calls from public phones, but not *locutorios*. All cards have a scratch-off panel, which reveals a PIN. You dial a free access number, the PIN and the number you wish to call.

Many cell phones (dual-band GSM 850/1900 Mhz) will work in Argentina (with expensive international roaming charges), but check with your specific carrier. If you have an unlocked GSM phone from North America, buy a prepaid Argentinean SIM card (*tarjeta SIM*) on arrival—rates will be cheaper than renting

a phone. You can top up credit by purchasing *tarjetas de celular* at *kioscos*, supermarkets and gas stations, or by *carga virtual* (virtual top-up) at *locutorios*.

You can also rent a phone at the airport from Phonerental (<http://www.phonerental.com.ar>), which also delivers to hotels. This is only recommended for very short stays. If you stay a bit longer, you can avoid the higher rates of a rental phone by buying a cheap basic phone with a SIM card included for around 175 P. You only pay for outgoing calls. Of the three main mobile phone companies in Argentina—Movistar (<http://www.movistar.com.ar>), Claro (<http://www.claro.com.ar>) and Personal (<http://www.personal.com.ar>)—Claro seems to have the best coverage.

Internet Access

If you need to check your email or surf the Web, visit almost any *locutorio* on main streets in the city: There is one every block or two. Prices are extremely low, but connection speeds vary greatly. Look for *velocidad alto* signs indicating high-speed connections.

Wi-Fi is becoming more widely available, especially in cafes, restaurants and bars. Most hotels rated four stars or more now offer Wi-Fi in public areas and/or guest rooms, but they usually charge for it. Many cheap hostels offer free Wi-Fi.

Transportation

Air

Buenos Aires has two airports. Ezeiza International Airport (EZE), officially called Ministro Pistarini, 32 mi/50 km southwest of the center of town, handles most of the international flights (phone 5480-2500). Jorge Newbery (AEP), also called Aeroparque, 5 mi/8 km northwest of the Microcentro, handles mainly domestic flights. Phone 4576-5300. <http://www.aa2000.com.ar>.

The airports have no direct rail or subway links with the city center or with each other.

Connecting Transportation

Best way:

For a passenger with luggage, we recommend hiring one of the car services at the desks beside the customs exit at both airports (60 P-80 P from Ezeiza International). Be advised that transfers booked with a five-star hotel will be up to 250 P.

Other options:

Taxis charge around 200 P-270 P (or run the meter) for the 40-minute ride from Ezeiza to the Microcentro but are not always as dependable or safe as car services. Taxis from Aeroparque charge according to the length of the trip, but you can expect the fare to be less than 45 P for a ride to one of the northern neighborhoods (Recoleta or Palermo) and 50 P-80 P to Microcentro or San Telmo. A car service is 100 P.

The cheapest way (but not by much) is to take one of the minibuses run by Manuel Tienda Leon. From its terminal near Puerto Madero the bus ride costs 80 P to Ezeiza, 30 P to Aeroparque. Toll-free 0810-888-5366. <http://www.tiendaleon.com.ar>.

Car

We don't recommend getting behind the wheel in Buenos Aires. Traffic is fast and frantic, fatal accidents are all too common, and parking is difficult. You must always be on your guard for drivers who run red lights, weave in and out of lanes or hug your tail to force you to move over to let them pass. The closer you get to Buenos Aires on the wide highways that approach the city, the more of this you will see.

Driving is on the right with overtaking on the left. Traffic signals are the same as in most countries, although drivers are very aggressive. Running red lights is commonplace. On main roads, left hand-turns are not allowed unless specifically stated. When arriving at an intersection in Buenos Aires, drivers honk their horns; the first one to honk gets the right of way. Seatbelts are mandatory at all times.

If you do choose to rent a car, know that private cars (rentals included) are not supposed to enter the central area of town bordered by Corrientes, Carlos Pellegrini, Santa Fe and Libertador Monday-Friday, and note that street parking in Barrio Norte and Palermo is almost impossible to find. You'll be better off in a parking lot, which costs about 3.50 P per hour.

To rent a car, you must be 18 (although no rental agency seems to rent to anyone younger than 21) and have a valid license; an international driving permit is helpful (although not required). You'll also need a valid passport and some proof of insurance (including third-party fire and liability insurance).

Public Transportation

Buses

Although they aren't normally recommended for tourists (because of their complexity, not likelihood of crime), on occasion buses represent the most convenient and economical means of transport. Buses run various routes throughout the city. Drivers don't tend to stop at each marked stop, so when you see an oncoming bus, be sure to wave. You purchase tickets from a coin-operated machine onboard. Buses operate 24 hours a day. Night service is frequent on heavily traveled routes. One ride typically costs 1.50 P-2.35 P. Keep your ticket. . Ave. Roque Saenz Pena 846 Piso 3. Buenos Aires, Argentina. Phone 131 for information in Spanish. If you plan to use buses a lot, buy the Guia T, which is available at any *kiosco* for 20 P. Ave. Roque Saenz Pena 846 Piso 3, Buenos Aires. Phone 11-4018-0055.

<http://buenosairesbus.com>.

Subways

Subways (called *subte*) are much quicker than traffic-bound buses or taxis, but the five lines don't cover every area you may want to get to. Get a subway map and study where you're going before you decide on a means of land transport. Single and multitrip tickets have replaced metal tokens. Lines run Monday-Saturday 5 am-10:30 or 11 pm, Sunday 8 am-10 or 10:30 pm. The fare is 2.50 P. Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Taxi

Car services (*remises*) called by your hotel or restaurant are your safest option, but most of the taxis plying the streets are also these same radio taxis. Look for a lighted *libre* (free) sign on the roof or in the front window. The cars are new, and most have air-conditioning. Drivers charge 10 P to start and 1 P per 0.20 km and will wait for you for a fee. Your hotel can make arrangements for you, too.

If you're going to take one of the city's black-and-yellow cabs, you'll have better luck flagging one down in the street than boarding one at a taxi stop. Radio taxis are run by private companies that coordinate the drivers. For a small extra charge, they'll pick you up at a specified address. Make sure the driver turns on the taxi meter when you get in the vehicle. Drivers rarely speak English.

When handing a large bill to the driver, mention the size of the bill to avoid inconveniences or argument in making change.

You can calculate the probable cost, according to routes, of your cab fare beforehand at <http://www.taxistavirtual.com.ar>.

Reputable radio taxi companies include Annie Millet (phone 4816-8001); Eleven (phone 4807-6666); Mi Taxi (phone 4931-1200); Radio Taxi Ciudad (phone 4923-7007); Radio Taxi Siglo XXI (phone 4633-4000); and Remises REB (phone 4863-1226).

Train

Trains run to points outside the city, allowing for a number of day trips. Put the ticket bought at the ticket window (*ida* one way, *ida y vuelta* round-trip) through the electronic turnstile; if that's not working, a ticket taker will punch it. You must surrender the ticket upon leaving the system.

The Mitre line runs north to Tigre from Retiro Station. The Roca line travels to points south and Mar del Plata from Constitucion Station. The Tren de la Costa extends from Olivos (north of the city center) to Tigre. Fares for all routes run 2 P-2.50 P.

For More Information

Additional Reading

And the Money Kept Rolling In (and Out) by Paul Blustein (PublicAffairs).

The Argentina Reader: History, Culture, Politics by Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo (Duke University Press).

Borges: A Life by James Woodall (Basic Books).

Sin Patron: Stories From Argentina's Worker-Run Factories by Lavaca Collective, foreword by Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis (Haymarket Books).

Tourist Offices

Argentina Central Office of Tourist Information

This office provides information on all of Argentina, though it's of limited use beyond the most basic questions. Other locations: Ezeiza International Airport and Jorge Newbery Airport; Ave. Presidente Quintana 596, Recoleta; Terminal de Omnibus de Retiro (Local 83); Florida 100; Ave. Alicia Moreau de Justo 200 (Dock 4), Puerto Madero; Defensa 1250, San Telmo.

Daily 9 am-noon and 2-7 pm. Santa Fe 883, Centro.Buenos Aires, Argentina. Phone 11-4315-5115. Toll-free 0800-555-0016. <http://www.turismo.gov.ar>.

Buenos Aires Cultural Center

This organization provides literature and advice at sidewalk kiosks and offices throughout the city. Main office is open Monday-Saturday 8 am-10 pm. Sarmiento 1551, Fifth Floor, Centro.Buenos Aires, Argentina. Phone 11-4312-2232. <http://www.buenosaires.gov.ar>.

Sao Paulo, Brazil

Overview

Introduction

Sao Paulo—or Sampa, as residents call it—is one of the largest cities in the world, sprawling like a land-guzzling monster. It's full of high-rises, and the streets are an endless bustle of sidewalk traders, shoppers and sharp-suited business folk. Traffic jams in Sao Paulo are ubiquitous.

Sao Paulo's residents, or Paulistanos, work hard—the city is one of Latin America's most important industrial and economic centers—but they play hard, too. At night, the city throbs with laughter and music. There are top-notch restaurants and a wealth of cinemas and theaters, not to mention world-class nightclubs and DJs. And whatever else they do, residents of Sao Paulo are united in their appreciation of *futebol*. It's *the* sport in town.



Highlights

Sights—A walk around downtown near Praca da Se and Praca da Republica; a stunning view of the city from the Banespa Building; strolling Avenida Paulista, with its cultural centers, museums and skyscrapers; a day at Parque do Ibirapuera or a day trip to Horto Florestal.

Museums—Works by Van Gogh, Rembrandt and other European masters at the Museu de Arte Sao Paulo (MASP); some of the continent's finest colonial art at the nearby Museu de Arte Sacra; contemporary and modernist Brazilian art at the Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM) or the Museu de Arte Contemporanea (MAC); a fascinating interactive exploration of Brazilian Portuguese at the Museu da Lingua Portuguesa; the historical and cultural legacy of Africans in Brazil at the Museu Afro-Brazil; more than 2,000 reptilian residents at the Instituto Butanta snake farm.

Memorable Meals—Traditional barbecue at Fogo de Chao; award-winning contemporary cuisine at D.O.M.; contemporary Brazilian fare at Brasil a Gosto; authentic pizza at Cantina e Pizzeria Speranza; *feijoada* (black bean and pork stew) at Bolinha.

Late Night—Sipping caipirinhas to the sounds of bossa nova and samba at Bar Brahma; checking out the view from Skye or The Terraco Italia; dancing at one of several venues: Canto da Ema for Brazilian *forro*, Madame Sata for rock, Traco de Uniao for samba and D-Edge for the latest DJ selections; barhopping in the Vila Madalena and Pinheiros neighborhoods.

Geography

The sheer size of Sao Paulo can make navigating the city a daunting prospect for the first-time visitor. Apart from the Catedral Metropolitana—the geographical center of the city—in the old center, there are few landmarks, and the overall impression is a never-ending jumble of homes and high-rises. The center is just about the only place in the city where older architecture has been preserved, and like much of downtown in general, is now zoned for pedestrians, so your only choice is to explore it on foot.

A major street, Rua Augusta leads out of downtown to the southwest, passing through an up-and-coming area of hipster hangouts and new apartment buildings before reaching Avenida Paulista, an important financial and commercial center. Crossing Paulista, Rua Augusta descends through the attractive, upper-class residential area of Jardins (Gardens)—home to plush hotels and restaurants, designer boutiques and a vibrant nightlife—to another significant commercial area on Avenida Faria Lima. This marks the beginning of the popular residential district of Pinheiros and Vila Madalena, while at the southern end of Avenida Faria Lima lie the business districts of Itaim Bibi, Vila Olimpia and Berrini.

History

Sao Paulo was founded as a mission in 1554 by Jesuit priests Jose de Anchieta and Manuel da Nobrega, but religion was quickly overshadowed by the activities of the *bandeirantes* (those who follow the banner). Both revered and reviled, these tough pioneers pushed the Portuguese frontier ever deeper into the interior. At the same time, they enslaved indigenous people to work on farms built on the rich agricultural land surrounding the city and in other parts of Brazil.

The city's first economic boom came in the 1870s, when landowners amassed incredible wealth by cultivating coffee. With the city soon turning to manufacturing as its economic base, as well as the development of the nearby coastal town of Santos into Brazil's most important port, Sao Paulo became an industrial and commercial center.

Beginning in the 1950s, Brazil's rural poor began flocking to the city, encouraged by the prospect of finding work in Sao Paulo's booming construction industry. But many of the working poor ended up in the city's sprawling favelas, or slums. These are home to millions, while the city's elite travel from posh mansions to work in bulletproof luxury cars and even private helicopters (of which Sao Paulo has one of the largest urban fleets in the world).

Mayor Fernando Haddad faces an uphill battle to address the key problems of poverty, security, pollution, water shortages and traffic. A network of bicycle lanes and an expansion of the bus lanes have improved mobility to some degree, while the future of a high-speed train running between Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro has yet to be decided upon. Former mayor Gilberto Kassab's controversial Cidade Limpa, or "Clean City," decision to ban all visual advertising in the city is gradually being circumvented, with ads appearing on bus shelters and digital display clocks.

Potpourri

Although the number is decreasing because of pollution, ornithologists have recorded some 260 species of birds that still make their homes inside city limits, many of them in Sao Paulo's numerous green areas.

An economic powerhouse, the state of Sao Paulo is responsible for 33% of Brazil's GDP.

Sao Paulo's population includes the largest number of Japanese people outside of Japan—more than 1 million of the city's estimated 12 million inhabitants—and the biggest Lebanese community outside of Lebanon.

There are more than 8 million vehicles on the roads in Sao Paulo, with an average of one car for every two people.

The area contained within Sao Paulo's city limits alone is staggering: at nearly 1,000 sq mi/1,600 sq km, it is one of the largest cities in the world, more than three times the size of Paris.

Both essential to the local economy and universally despised by motorists, motorcycle cowboys called "motoboys" weave in and out of traffic to express-deliver the city's packages. An estimated 150,000-200,000 (mostly) young men earn a living this way. They even have their own trade fair.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Although at first glance Sao Paulo might seem like a chaotic, modern, polluted megalopolis, there's actually plenty to see. The theme parks—Hopi Hari, in particular—are great fun, the city's zoo is one of the best in the world, and there are several pleasant parks.

Arts are also big in Sao Paulo: Some fine public galleries hold excellent collections with works by Brazilian and international artists. Make time to see the Museu de Arte Sao Paulo (known as MASP) and the Museu de Arte Contemporanea. Almost all of Brazil's leading private galleries are based in Sao Paulo, where you'll find world-class contemporary Brazilian art.

Get a taste of the Paulistano lifestyle in the vibrant nightlife of the Itaim, Moema, Vila Madalena, Pinheiros and Jardins neighborhoods. Visit the stores and restaurants in the Japanese district of Liberdade, and the Italian ones in Bixiga.

You should also plan to take a stroll downtown, particularly in the historic center. It is one of the only areas in Sao Paulo with buildings that date from the 19th century, and it's where you'll find the most interesting architecture in the city. Of note are the Catedral Metropolitana in Praca da Se, the Teatro Municipal (modeled after the Paris opera house Palais Garnier) in Praca Ramos de Azevedo, the Copan building (designed by the late Oscar Niemeyer), and the Banespa Building with its panoramic rooftop viewing area, open to the public mid-week. Centro is also undergoing something of a cultural transformation, with a handful of edgy art spaces and bars popping up over the past few years.

Plan to spend some time in Brazil's former business epicenter on Avenida Paulista, which still buzzes at lunchtime and after work, although most major company headquarters have since moved to the region around Avenida Faria Lima. Highlights along Avenida Paulista include the Casa das Rosas cultural center, the Itau cultural center, the elegant Conjunto Nacional (Latin America's first shopping center) and the Trianon—a surprisingly tranquil park and a remnant of the ancient Atlantic forest that once covered the entire region.

Historic Sites

Banespao Building

Rua Joao Bricola 24 (Centro)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-2196-3730

<http://www.cidadedesao Paulo.com/sp/br/o-que-visitar/atrativos/pontos-turisticos/178-banespao-edificio-altino-arantes>

At 36 stories, it's not the tallest building in town, but set on high ground, the Banespao Building offers the best view of the sprawling city. With the building's privileged location, visitors can see as far away as 25 mi/40 km. Officially known as Edificio Altino Arantes, it opened in 1947; its architecture was inspired by New York's Empire State Building. There's a museum on the third floor.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm.

Catedral Metropolitana

Praca da Se (Centro)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Step out of the downtown bustle and into the quiet of this magnificent cathedral (also known as the Se), which was established in 1913, opened in 1954 and was completed in 1967. It was renovated in 2002. Built in neo-Gothic style, it has room for 8,000 worshippers. It is the official center of the city; the numbers of all streets and other municipal designations are set from this landmark.

Sunday-Friday 7:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 7:30 am-5 pm. Free.

Edificio Italia

Ave. Ipiranga 344 (Centro)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 2189-2929

<http://www.terracoitalia.com.br>

The city's tallest building was inaugurated in 1967, with 42 floors. The Terraco Italia restaurant on the 41st floor has a good Italian menu, but the real attraction is the incredible view of Sao Paulo (particularly romantic at sunset or at night). If you don't want to eat at the restaurant, there's also a piano bar on the 42nd floor, open daily from 6 pm. Nonpatrons can admire the view from Terraco Italia's panoramic veranda, but only Monday-Friday 3-4 pm.

The restaurant is open daily for lunch and dinner.

Memorial da America Latina

Ave. Auro Soares de Moura Andrade 664 (Barra Funda)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3823-4600

<http://www.memorial.org.br>

The memorial was designed by the late Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer. The neighboring pavilions house a permanent exhibition of handicrafts from all over Latin America and an extensive library of books, magazines, newspapers and videos. There's a self-service restaurant and free concerts on the weekends.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-6 pm. Free.

Museu de Arte Sacra

Ave. Tiradentes 676 (Luz)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3326-3336

<http://www.museuartesacra.org.br>

Built in 1774, this is one of the city's few remaining colonial buildings. It houses a sacred-art museum with relics dating from the 16th-19th centuries. It's also the site of a special Catholic ritual: The convent was built by a Franciscan friar who was asked to cure a man's kidney stones. The friar wrote a prayer on a piece of paper and gave it to the man to swallow. When he did, the stones left his body. Now the resident nuns pass out around 1,000 paper pills every month to devotees.

Wednesday-Friday 9 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-6 pm. R\$6.

Pateo do Colegio

Praca Patio do Colegio 2
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3105-6899

<http://www.pateodocollegio.com.br>

This complex is a reconstruction of the first college and mission built by the Jesuits, who founded the city in 1554. It retains some of the original walls. Its museum, Casa de Anchieta, features sacred-art exhibits, objects recovered from the mission, and maps and photos documenting Sao Paulo's history. There's also a pleasant restaurant set in the museum's leafy courtyard, serving snacks and lunch.

Daily 9 am-4:45 pm. R\$6.

Museums

Fundacao Maria Luisa e Oscar Americano

Ave. Morumbi 4077 (Morumbi)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3742-0077

<http://www.fundacaoscamericano.org.br>

Situated in the elegant suburb of Morumbi, this modernist house is full of paintings, 18th-century furniture, religious sculptures and collections of imperial-era silver, china, coins and tapestries. Sprawling gardens make this an excellent place to escape the city.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-5:30 pm. R\$10.

Instituto Butantan

Ave. Vital Brasil 1500 (Butanta)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-2627-9300

<http://www.institutobutanta.com.br>

This pioneering research farm, best known for its collection of Latin American snakes, is a leader in the production of vaccines in Brazil. Among its various small museums is the excellent Museu Biologico of venomous vipers, spiders and scorpions from around the world. There's an open-air snake pit where you can watch the animals in action.

Museums Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-4:45 pm; park Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-6 pm. Admission is free.

Museu Afro-Brasil

Parque do Ibirapuera, Portao 10 (Ibirapuera)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3320-8900

<http://www.museuafrobrasil.org.br>

Located in Parque do Ibirapuera, this museum—in a building designed by Oscar Niemeyer—offers a fascinating overview of the rich historic, artistic and cultural legacies of Brazil's large African population.

Aside from a fascinating collection of paintings, photographs, sculptures, clothing, artifacts and videos, there are insightful temporary exhibits by black artists from Brazil and abroad.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-5 pm. R\$6 adults.

Museu Brasileiro da Escultura (MuBE)

Ave. Europa 218 (Jardim Europa)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 2594-2601

<http://mube.art.br>

The MuBE, Sao Paulo's sculpture museum, is famed for its unique architecture, made up of brutalist slabs of concrete typical of many buildings designed by Sao Paulo's own, Paulo Mendes da Rocha. It showcases not only the best in contemporary sculpture and plastic arts, but also plays host to numerous exhibits. It also houses a small auditorium where plays and concerts are occasionally hosted.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-7 pm. Free.

Museu da Imagem e do Som (MIS)

Ave. Europa 158 (Jardim Europa)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-2117-4777

<http://www.mis-sp.org.br>

As of April 2017, the museum was in the process of constructing a new building at Copacabana's Avenida Atlantica. Check the museum's website for updates.

The museum of image and sound is home to a large archive of films, photos and records, but has become better known in recent years for hosting crowd-pleasing itinerant exhibitions, including Stanley Kubrick and David Bowie retrospectives on global tours. The modern building, which neighbors the MuBE, has a large outdoor courtyard, often used on Saturdays for afternoon sunset parties, as well as book fairs and food festivals. The vibrant restaurant, Chez Mis, serves lunch and dinner, in addition to excellent cocktails.

Tuesday-Saturday noon-10 pm, Sunday 11 am-9 pm. Free.

Museu da Lingua Portuguesa

Praca da Luz (Centro)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3322-0080

<http://www.museudalinguaportuguesa.org.br>

Even if you don't speak Portuguese, you'll be fascinated by this innovative and imaginative museum. It relies on engaging interactive exhibits and multimedia to examine the fascinating history of the Portuguese language in Brazil. Housed in the Luz train station, this shouldn't be missed.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm. R\$6 adults.

Museu de Arte Contemporanea (MAC USP)

Avenida Pedro Alvares Cabral 1301
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-2648-0254

<http://www.mac.usp.br>

This vast seven-story building is home to one of Brazil's finest collections of modern and contemporary art. Representative works of modernist masters such as Picasso, Kandinsky, Miro, Matisse and Modigliani share wall space with Brazilian artists such as Portinari, Di Cavalcanti and Tarsila do Amaral. More than 8,000 works displayed in chronological order provide a great overview of 20th-century art.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-9 pm. Free.

Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM)

Parque do Ibirapuera, Portao 3, Avenida Pedro Alvares Cabral (Ibirapuera)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-5085-1300

<http://www.mam.org.br>

The city's modern art museum houses an excellent collection of more than 2,000 paintings and sculptures by Brazilian artists dating back to the early 20th century. The museum's restaurant overlooks the sculpture garden. Its cinema often has free screenings.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm. R\$7 adults.

Museu de Arte Sao Paulo (MASP)

Ave. Paulista 1578 (Cerqueira Cesar)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3149-5959á

<http://www.masp.art.br>

The MASP has possibly the finest collection of Western art in the Southern Hemisphere. It has permanent collections of works by European painters and sculptors, including some by the old masters, and also some by Brazilian artists. Take time out for the museum's restaurant and gift shop.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm, Thursday 10 am-8 pm. R\$25 adults.

Museu Lasar Segall

Rua Berta 111 (Vila Mariana)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-2159-0400

<http://www.museusegall.org.br>

One of Brazil's most important modernist painters, Lasar Segall was born in Latvia but moved to Brazil and became a citizen. His background explains his art: German expressionism mixed with tropical influences. The museum was his home and studio from 1932 until his death in 1957.

Monday-Friday 10 am-10 pm. Free.

Pinacoteca do Estado de Sao Paulo and Estacao Pinacoteca

Praca da Luz 2 and Largo General Osorio 66 (Luz)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3324-1000 (Pinacoteca). 3335-4990 (Estacao)

<http://www.pinacoteca.org.br>

The city's oldest art museum is housed in a beautiful neoclassical building, restored in the late 1990s by Sao Paulo architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha. There are more than 5,000 permanent works of 19th- and 20th-century Brazilian paintings and sculpture, as well as temporary exhibits of international caliber. Purchasing a ticket also gives you access to its sister gallery, Estacao Pinacoteca, which is located nearby in a building that was used to hold political prisoners during the military dictatorship. It has a small but fine collection of modern works along with temporary exhibits.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm. R\$6 adults, free on Saturday.

Neighborhoods & Districts

Avenida Paulista

Business, culture, and pure hustle and bustle (as well as traffic) are concentrated along "Paulista," the 1.7-mi/2.8-km thoroughfare that constitutes the city's main drag. Cultural attractions abound, notably the Museu de Arte Sao Paulo (MASP) and the SESC Paulista, SESI, Itau and Casa das Rosas cultural centers, and many cinemas. A few of the mansions built by coffee barons around the beginning of the 20th century still dot the scene. The famous Tenente Siqueira Campos park—a small but lush patch of the native Atlantic forest that once covered the area—is there, as well. The elegant 1950s Conjunto Nacional shopping center features movie theaters, bookstores, bars and cafes. Whenever someone scores a big victory, be it a politician or a football club, partisans flock to Avenida Paulista, closing it down for an all-night celebration.

Bixiga (Bela Vista)

Nestled between Avenida Paulista and the old city center, this compact neighborhood is Sao Paulo's Little Italy. Known popularly as "Bixiga," but sometimes labeled "Bela Vista" on maps, it also boasts one of the city's most traditional samba schools, Vai Vai, as well as the famously vanguard Teatro Oficina. There's also a high density of bars and restaurants. Bixiga old-timers, especially those with Italian monikers, jealously guard their neighborhood's ambience and social institutions. At night, cantinas and bars—many now seedy or hopelessly touristy—take over. Though Bixiga has lost some of its charm and popularity, it remains an icon to 20th-century immigration and bohemia.

Higienopolis

The central neighborhood is one of the most attractive and traditional of Sao Paulo's old residential *bairros*. Aside from its tree-lined streets, pretty squares, bars and boutiques, it is famous for its stunning mid-20th century architecture. In fact, Higienopolis boasts one of the largest concentrations of modernist buildings in the world. Highly recommended for architecture buffs.

Itaim Bibi

On the south side of the city, this is one of Sao Paulo's newer upscale neighborhoods, replete with contemporary art galleries and some of the best restaurants in town. True to its reputation as a retail shopping paradise, it is best known for its famous mall, Shopping Iguatemi. Considered safe and friendly, it is very popular with tourists, although more as a commercial and retail center than a residential one.

Jardins

A must for any visitor. Bordered by Avenida Paulista, Rua Estados Unidos, Avenida Reboucas and Avenida Nove de Julho, Jardins (Gardens) is a leafy, wealthy residential and commercial neighborhood that remains the playground of Sao Paulo's rich, famous and trendy. Aside from luxury apartments and mansions, its pretty streets are home to world-renowned restaurants, atmospheric bars and a shopper's dream of mostly upscale boutiques hawking the fashions of Brazilian and international designers. The biggest concentration of shops is on Rua Oscar Freire.

Liberdade

The first Japanese immigrants began to settle in Liberdade in 1912, but it was following World War II that the Japanese, along with Chinese and Koreans, became a major presence in the neighborhood. Today, Sao Paulo is home to the largest Japanese community outside of Japan, and the streets of Liberdade are full of specialty stores and supermarkets where you can purchase everything from kimonos and jade statues to bubble tea. There are also many dining options, from humble soup kitchens to plush sushi bars. On Sunday, there is a lively street market with traditional crafts and food.

Pinheiros/Vila Madalena

These two adjacent neighborhoods are famed for their eclectic restaurants, boutiques and art galleries, as well as their decidedly bohemian vibe. Until the 1970s, this region was a modest working-class area with lots of small villas and bungalows. Then professors from the nearby University of Sao Paulo began to flock to the area for its affordable housing. A neo-hippie style took hold, and the neighborhood began to attract artists, musicians and writers. At night, young people of all types converge on the innumerable bars and nightclubs. On Saturday, there's a popular arts- and-crafts fair in the Praca Benedito Calixto.

Parks & Gardens

Jardim Botânico

Ave. Miguel Stefano 3031 (Agua Funda)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-5067-6000

<http://www.jardimbotanico.sp.gov.br>

The city's botanical gardens are about an hour's drive (in Monday-Friday traffic) from the city center, but are well worth the trip. The grounds include pleasant lakes and picnic sites, short walking trails and a large orchid farm that is stunning when the flowers bloom in November and December. Museu Botânico has several types of indigenous plants; a collection of products extracted from Brazil's many plants, fibers, oils, woods and seeds; as well as pictures and photos showing the state's several ecosystems.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-5 pm, except holidays. The greenhouse is open 9 am-noon and 2-5 pm. R\$10 adults.

Parque da Agua Branca

Ave. Professor Francisco Matarazzo 455 (a short walk from Barra Funda metro station, Agua Branca)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3865-4131

<http://www.parqueaguabranca.sp.gov.br>

Chickens and ducks roam free in this city park, making it a popular place for a family stroll. Tropical plants, pavilions, a well-stocked aquarium and an organic market (Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday mornings) are further attractions.

Daily 8 am-5 pm. Free.

Parque da Luz

Praca da Luz (next to Pinacoteca do Estado)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3227-3545

http://www.sampa.art.br/parques/jardim_daluz.php

Adjacent to the Pinacoteca do Estado and across from the Luz train station is Sao Paulo's first public garden (also known as Jardim da Luz), which was created in 1798. Ornate wrought-iron fences, Victorian bandstands and goldfish ponds hint at its former elegance. A recent reform has brought new life, landscaping and a sculpture garden, restoring to the park much of its Victorian-era beauty. Security is good, and there is a playground for children, making the park a green haven in the center of town.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-6 pm. Free.

Parque do Ibirapuera

Entrances on Avenida Pedro Alvares Cabral, Avenida Republica do Libano and Avenida IV Centenario
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 5574-5045

http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/meio_ambiente/parques/regiao_sul/index.php?p=14062

Half the population seems to descend on the city's biggest park on sunny weekends, and its wide walkways get crowded. Paulistanos refer to the enormous park as their beach. It has pleasant lakes, trees, cafes, trails, sports facilities and wide-open spaces. You can rent bikes by the hour at the main entrance to explore the park.

Free concerts by top performing artists are regular features. You'll also find the modern-art, Afro-Brazilian and contemporary-art museums there. Many of these buildings, including the futuristic Auditorio, were designed by Oscar Niemeyer.

Daily 5 am-midnight. Free.

Parque Teniente Siqueira Campos (Trianon)

Rua Peixoto Gomide 949 (Jardins)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3253-4973

http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/meio_ambiente/parques/programacao/index.php?p=5773

More commonly known as Trianon after an exclusive social club that once stood on this 12-acre/5-hectare expanse, this is one of the few spots of green around Avenida Paulista. It's also one of the last remnants of the Atlantic forest that formerly covered much of the Brazilian coast. Opened in 1892 as a

carefully guarded haven for families of high-rollers and coffee barons then living in the immediate neighborhood, this beloved park features native plants, birds and insects in a natural setting, and offers a respite from the chaos and cacophony of the street.

Daily 6 am-6 pm. Free.

Recreation

Sometimes Sao Paulo seems tiresomely business-driven, but a closer look reveals that there are plenty of distractions. Parque do Ibirapuera on Avenida Pedro Alvares Cabral is the city's biggest park and a popular hangout on sunny weekends. Paulistanos walk, run, ride and skate around the park's lakes, trees and wide-open spaces. Elsewhere in the city, you'll find facilities for soccer, tennis, squash, golf and bicycling, even baseball and rock climbing. About the only public recreational facilities you're not likely to find are swimming pools, which are rare in Sao Paulo.

If you're in Sao Paulo for any length of time, the moment may come when you simply want to get out of town, and a good choice is to head for the Serra da Cantareira. Its walking and mountain-biking trails, which wind through lush, green forest, are within the city limits, just a 30-minute drive from downtown. The Serra is the world's largest urban forest, as technically it falls within Sao Paulo's municipal boundaries.

Climbing the short trail to the top of the 3,724-ft/1,135-m Pico do Jaragua, the highest peak above the city, affords stunning views (not to mention a well-deserved breath of fresh air). Another option is a day trip to the lakes of Pesqueiro Conquista, which lie 22 mi/35 km from the city center. There you can fish, ride horses, hike, swim under waterfalls and take a scenic helicopter ride. And it's always worth remembering that the beautiful coastline is only a short car or bus ride away.

Bicycling

Bike Tour SP

Sao Paulo, Brazil

<http://www.biketoursp.com.br>

This free audio tour covers a number of set one-hour itineraries by bike, with a bicycle, helmet and audio equipment all provided. Tours leave at 9 am, 10:30 am, noon, 1:30 pm and 3 pm from meeting points listed on the website. Participants are encouraged to donate nonperishable food to a local charity.

Sampa Bikers

Rua Diego Suarez 253

Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-5517-7733

<http://www.sampabikers.com.br>

This association of cyclists runs regular night outings in the city as well as trips outside of town.

Urban Bike SP

Join one of Urban Bike's weekly rides to take in the sights of Centro on two wheels, with Portuguese- and English-speaking guides providing the commentary. Rides leave from Rua Pamplona 796 (Jardins), Sao Paulo. Private tours can also be arranged.

The bike, helmet and a bottle of water are included in the price of R\$70 per person. Phone 9859-57172.

Golf

Golf is becoming increasingly popular among Brazilians, and the country is experiencing a small boom in golf course construction, partly because of the game's popularity among the large Japanese expatriate community.

FPG Kaiser Golf Center

Rua Deputado Joao Bravo Caldeira 273 (near the Congonhas Airport, Jardim Ceci)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-5070-4704

<http://www.fpggolfcenter.com.br>

Monday 2-10 pm, Tuesday-Friday 7 am-10 pm, Saturday and Sunday 7 am-8 pm.

Sao Francisco Golf Club

Ave. Martin Luther King 1527 (Osasco)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3681-8752

<http://www.golfsaofrancisco.com.br>

Tuesday-Sunday 7 am-6 pm.

Horseback Riding

Haras Cantareira

Estrada da Palmeiras 245, Mairipora (Serra da Cantareira)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-4485-1244

<http://www.harascantareira.com.br>

Haras Cantareira arranges horseback rides in the city, as well as out-of-town excursions.

Daily 8 am-5 pm. Occasional night outings on weekends. R\$50 for one hour.

Jogging

Paulista United Runners (CORPORE)

Rua Cristiano Viana 441 (Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3884-4188

<http://www.corpore.org.br>

The association organizes cross-country races two to three times each month.

Spas and Health Clubs

Traffic, pollution, security and convenience prompt many Paulistanos to move their workouts indoors at one of the many private health clubs that dot the city. Customary amenities include rooms full of the latest weight equipment, stationary bicycles and treadmills, and a full schedule of aerobics, spinning and Pilates classes. Many feature swimming pools, running tracks, sports courts and lessons in the Brazilian martial

art of capoeira. Most leading health clubs have several branches in different parts of town, and many offer day passes or temporary memberships for visitors.

Aigai Spa

Rua dos Macunis 397 (Alto de Pinheiros)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3034-3939

<http://www.aigaispa.com.br>

This spa, replete with pools and steam rooms, is pitched at a well-heeled clientele, offering massages and a hammam ritual.

Tuesday-Friday 9 am-10 pm, Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Ashram

Rua Jatoba 1200 (Serra da Cantareira)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-4485-5360

<http://www.ashramcantareira.com>

One of the first schools to teach Astanga Vinyasa yoga in Brazil.

Monday-Friday 7 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-1 pm.

Competition

Rua Dr. Albuquerque Lins 1080
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3660-8400

<http://www.competition.com.br>

This sports club chain has four locations in Sao Paulo.

Monday-Friday 6 am-10 pm, Saturday 8 am-2 pm, Sunday 10 am-4 pm. Daily pass R\$120.

Runner

Ave. Paulista 854
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3373-9400

<http://www.runner.com.br>

With 17 locations in the Sao Paulo metropolitan area, this is one of the biggest gym chains in the area, and is a safe bet.

Monday-Friday 6 am-11 pm, Saturday 9 am-5 pm, Sunday 10 am-2 pm.

Tennis & Racquet Sports

Play Tennis

Ave. Armando Ferrentini 671 (Aclimacao)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3207-2107

<http://www.playtennis.com.br>

This tennis and squash club has three Sao Paulo locations with courts available for nonmembers.

Shopping

Paulistanos *love* to shop, and there's nowhere they love shopping more than in the big malls throughout the city. If you're looking for international chains, or for Brazilian fashion labels (names such as Osklen, Iodice, Forum, Triton and Ellus), go to the malls.

Downtown, in the streets around Praca da Republica, you'll find the real bargains on electronics, leather goods and footwear. The streets are usually packed with hawkers selling gear brought in from Paraguay. Prices are low but often at the expense of quality. Be warned that if you see a big-name brand being sold on the street, and the price seems too good to be true, then it probably is: Famous-label knockoffs are big business in Brazil. City officials estimate that up to 90% of all name-brand products are fake, and they launch sporadic crackdowns on street trade in the downtown areas. So there's a chance the stalls may not be there when you visit, but it's usually not long before they return.

Several specialized shops offer authentic Brazilian gifts and souvenirs. Or you can browse one of the weekend arts-and-crafts markets.

Shopping Hours: Generally Monday-Friday 9 or 10 am-5 or 6 pm. Most malls stay open until 10 pm every night except Sunday, when they open late and close early. Even though the malls themselves are open on Sunday, some of their stores may be closed or have reduced hours.

Antique Stores

Juliana Benfatti

Rua Sampaio Vidal 786 (Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3083-7858

<http://www.julianabenfatti.com.br>

Precious antiques from Europe and Buenos Aires.

Monday-Friday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm.

Nobrega

PauloAlameda Ministro Rocha Azevedo 983
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3068-9388

<http://www.galerianobrega.com.br>

One of the city's oldest and most respected dealers. Now much more an art gallery than an antiques emporium.

Monday-Friday 9:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm.

Galleries

Galeria Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel

Rua Fradique Coutinho 1500 (Vila Madalena)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3032-7066

<http://www.fortesvilaca.com.br>

The home of cutting-edge contemporary art.

Tuesday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-6 pm.

Galeria Luciana Brito

Rua Gomes de Carvalho 842 (Vila Olimpia)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3842-0634

<http://www.lucianabritogaleria.com.br>

Represents many leading Brazilian contemporary artists.

Tuesday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 11 am-6 pm.

Galeria Luisa Strina

Rua Padre Joao Manuel 755, Cerqueira Cesar
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3088-2471

<http://www.galerialuisastrina.com.br>

Paintings and photography by national and international artists. More than 40 years of experience in the field.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm.

Galeria Nara Roesler

Ave. Europa 655 (Jardim Europa)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3063-2344

<https://nararoesler.art>

From the mainstream to the edgy. One of Brazil's leading galleries.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 11 am-3 pm.

Galeria Raquel Arnaud

Rua Fidalga 125 (Vila Madalena)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3083-6322

<http://www.raquelarnaud.com>

Perhaps the most venerated of Brazilian galleries of contemporary art.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday noon-4 pm.

Galeria Thomas Cohn

Rua Joaquim Antunes 187 (Jardim Paulistano)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 2528-0409

<http://www.galeriathomascohn.com.br>

German-born gallerist Thomas Cohn has helped start the careers of some of Brazil's leading artists throughout his thirty years in the business. After opening successful galleries in Rio de Janeiro, then Sao Paulo, he now deals in art and jewelry.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 11 am-4 pm.

Markets

Benedito Calixto

Praca Benedito Calixto (Pinheiros)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

<http://www.pracabeneditocalixto.com.br>

On Saturday, this pretty, tree-lined square hosts hundreds of stalls selling arts, crafts and antiques. Take a break at one of the stalls selling beer and Brazilian snacks, or head to one of the squares cafes and bars to drink and listen to live Brazilian folk music.

Saturday 9 am-7 pm.

Bixiga

Praca Dom Orione (Bela Vista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Crafts and antiques fair in the Italian quarter of Bela Vista. It's become rather touristy with inflated prices, but there are still some great deals to be had.

Sunday 8 am-6 pm; often Saturday and holidays as well.

Feira da Liberdade

Ave. Liberdade 365, Liberdade
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-4339-1578

<http://www.feiraliberdade.com.br>

In the heart of the city's Japanese quarter, this market has Asian arts and crafts. Stalls sell good Japanese food and medicinal plants and herbs.

Saturday and Sunday 9 am-6 pm.

Mercado Municipal

Rua da Cantareira 306 (Centro)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3313-3365

<http://www.oportaldomercadao.com.br>

An absolute must-see for anyone, this massive covered market was built in the 1930s and features stained-glass windows with agricultural scenes. Wonderful fresh produce from all over Brazil is sold there, as well as salt cod from Portugal, and cheeses from all over the world. Be sure to check prices before agreeing to buy; imported fruits in particular can go for vastly inflated sums. This is also a great place for a quick bite, coffee or beer.

Monday-Saturday 6 am-7 pm, Sunday 6 am-3 pm.

Vao Livre do MASP

Ave. Paulista 1578 (Cerqueira Cesar)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3251-5644

<https://masp.org.br>

This open-air market sells antiques and collector's items underneath the Museu de Arte Sao Paulo (MASP) on Avenida Paulista. Across the road, in front of the Trianon park, is a small arts fair where you can pick up bargain-priced paintings by Brazilian artists.

Sunday 10 am-5 pm.

Shopping Areas

Jardins

If money is no object, then look no further than the Jardins district behind Avenida Paulista. Stroll along Alameda Lorena, Rua Haddock Lobo, Rua Oscar Freire and Alameda Franca for the best Brazilian and international designers. There are also several galleries and antique stores.

Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-1 pm.

Rua 25 de Marco

Sao Paulo, Brazil

<http://www.portalda25.com.br>

This main downtown street (close to Metro Sao Bento) is known as the largest open-air shopping center in Latin America with more than 300 stores, close to 3,000 smaller shops and even more kiosks and stands. It has a crowded bazaarlike atmosphere, but you can buy everything under the sun there at astonishingly inexpensive prices.

Stores are open Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm, Saturday 8 am-1 pm.

Rua Jose Paulino

Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3361-9984

<http://www.bomretironamoda.com.br>

This street in the Bom Retiro garment district, close to the Estacao de Luz (Metro Luz), is home to hundreds of factory outlet and import fashion stores. You might spend a day browsing, but you certainly

won't spend a fortune—it has the least expensive prices in Sao Paulo, although some stores only sell wholesale, with a minimum purchase of 10 items, and most don't have changing rooms.

Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm, Saturday 8 am-2 pm. .

Shopping Frei Caneca

Rua Frei Caneca 569 (Cerqueira Cesar)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3472-2075

<http://freicanecashopping.com>

This chic shopping mall (popular with Sao Paulo's gay crowd) is just off Avenida Paulista. Aside from cinemas, art galleries and elegant boutiques, it has tasty fast food and a gourmet supermarket.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 2-8 pm.

Shopping Ibirapuera

Ave. Ibirapuera 3103 (Moema)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 5095-2300

<http://www.ibirapuera.com.br>

Four floors of shopping heaven, including an amusement arcade, a fresh-produce market and a multiscreen cinema, with the latest releases in English. Everything—from top fashion names to airline tickets—is under one roof.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 2-8 pm.

Shopping Iguatemi

Ave. Brigadeiro Faria Lima 2232 (Jardim Paulistano)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3816-6116

<http://www.iguatemi.com.br>

This grand shopping mall boasts a large Armani store as well as other international designer brands. Iguatemi is a favorite shopping location among businesspeople working in Pinheiros, along with ladies who lunch—a handful of the city's top restaurants have opened branches here in the past few years.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 11 am-8 pm.

Shopping Morumbi

Ave. Roque Petroni Junior 1099 (Brooklin)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-4003-4132

<http://www.morumbishopping.com.br>

This large shopping mall boasts more than 400 stores, including a tailor and shoe repair, beauty shops and a large gym.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 2-8 pm.

Shopping Paulista

Rua Treze de Maio 1947, Bela Vista
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3191-1100

<http://shoppingpaulista.com.br>

Avenida Paulista has a number of *galerias*, or mini-malls, but this is one of the biggest and best shopping centers in the region, with a cinema and food court.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 2-8 pm.

Specialty Stores

Amoa Konoya Arte Indigena

Rua Joao Moura 1002 (Jardim America)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3061-0639

<http://amoakonoya.com.br>

The owners sell only indigenous arts and crafts. They tour Brazil, visiting remote communities, to bring the best examples to this delightful shop. Great books, too.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm.

Espaco Havaianas

Rua Oscar Freire 1116 (Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3079-3415

<http://www.havaianas.com.br>

Brazil's favorite flip-flops can be bought all over the world these days, but for full immersion in the world of Havaianas, head to its concept store, where you can buy the newest designs and even customize your own pair.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.

Galeria Arte Brasileira

Alameda Lorena 2163 (Cerqueira Cesar)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3062-9452

<http://www.galeriaartebrasileira.com.br>

Crafts from all over the country. Popular with foreign tourists.

Monday-Friday 10 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-1:30 pm.

Granado

Rua Haddock Lobo 1353 (Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3061-2048

<https://www.granado.com.br>

A popular cosmetics brand from Rio de Janeiro, Granado does a great line in candles, soaps, shower gels and lotions scented with local fruits and essential oils. Their products can be found in most good pharmacies, but this vintage-style store in Jardins, where you can make up your own gift basket, is a delight.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday 9 am-3 pm.

Juisi by Licquor

Alameda Tiete 168 (Jardins)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3064-4661

<https://www.facebook.com/JuisibyLicquor>

One of the best vintage stores in town, Juisi is a treasure trove of dresses, shoes and retro accessories. Also worth a visit, to browse rather than buy, is its sister venue, Casa Juisi—part professional costume hire, part experimental space, in a recently renovated 19th-century building in the heart of the historic center (Rua Roberto Simonsen 108, Se).

Monday-Saturday 11 am-8 pm.

Mimosa

Rua Barao Do Triunfo 391, Brooklin Paulista (Brooklin)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 5561-6705

<https://mimosaarthouse.com>

It is perhaps Brazil's most complete handicrafts store, with an emphasis on native (including indigenous) works.

Monday-Friday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-1:30 pm.

Presentes Azussa

Rua Galvao Bueno 230 (Liberdade)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

In the heart of the Japanese quarter, this is a good (and affordable) address for those in search of precious and semiprecious stones and jewelry.

Monday-Friday 9 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 8:30 am-4:30 pm.

Dining

Dining Overview

Sao Paulo prides itself on the quality and variety of its cuisine, because dining out is a favorite pastime among Paulistanos. Restaurants cater to every taste and craving, but above all else, meat is king.

Some ethnic neighborhoods such as Liberdade (Japanese), Bixiga (Italian) and Brooklin (German) have earned reputations for certain cuisines, but today just about anything can be had anywhere in town. Jardins still provides sophisticated dining courtesy of some of the city's best chefs. Vila Madalena, a bustling nightlife district with a bohemian atmosphere, caters to the young and trendy with more alternative tastes.

At lunch in Sao Paulo, workers and businesspeople often go to a *quilo* restaurant, where diners pay according to the weight of their plate. Choose from an ample buffet of hot and cold dishes. Usually just more than R\$3 per 100 grams (about one-fourth of a pound), it's probably the least expensive lunch option. Look for the *quilo* signs that are plentiful throughout the city. Even when you go to a conventional restaurant in Brazil, you'll often be served gigantic portions that are enough for at least two. Half servings are often available but you might not find it listed on the menu; don't be afraid to ask for a *meia porcao*.

If you love meat, you must experience a *churrascaria*, or barbecue house. Choose an all-you-can-eat *rodizio*-style restaurant; you pay one price and get to help yourself to the cold salad buffet while waiters circle around the restaurant offering dozens of succulent cuts of beef, still on the spit, and other grilled meats.

Meal times are generally 7-10 am for breakfast, 11 am-3 pm for lunch and 7-11 pm for dinner. Dining hours in Sao Paulo vary, so always check first. Lunch may begin as early as 10:30 am or as late as 2 pm; dinner may start as early as 5:30 or as late as 10 pm. If you schedule an early dinner, you may find many restaurants closed or—at best—depressingly empty. Some restaurants continue serving food well into the early morning hours for the late-night crowd.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax or tip: \$ = less than R\$40; \$\$ = R\$40-\$80; \$\$\$ = R\$80-\$120; \$\$\$\$ = more than R\$120.

Local & Regional

A Figueira Rubaiyat

Rua Haddock Lobo 1738 (Jardim Paulista)

Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3087-1399

<http://www.rubaiyat.com.br>

Acclaimed by *The New York Times* as the most beautiful restaurant in the city, this has been a favorite since it opened in 2001. Owned by the proprietors of the legendary Rubaiyat grilled-meat houses, the restaurant is organized around an enormous 80-year-old *figuiera* (fig tree). The cuisine is original and inspired. Much of it—including roasted fish, seafood and giant paellas—is prepared in four specially made brick ovens.

Daily noon-12:30 am. \$\$\$\$ Visa accepted.

Bolinha

Ave. Cidade Jardim 53 (Jardim Europa)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3061-2010

<http://www.bolinha.com.br>

In 1946, when taxi driver Afonso Paulillo (whose nickname was Bolinha) decided to quit driving taxis and open up his own restaurant, he had no idea that his delicious *feijoada* would become a city institution. Sixty years later, Brazil's national stew of beans cooked with smoked and fresh meat over a wood-burning stove is considered the best in the city. As such, it is some of the most expensive in the city, and the place lacks the lively buzz of some of the more informal spots for *feijoada*.

Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-midnight. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Brasil a Gosto

Rua Professor Azevedo do Amaral 70 (Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3086-3565

<http://www.brasilagosto.com.br>

Chef Ana Luiza Trajano is the latest revelation on Sao Paulo's culinary firmament. Having assiduously researched Brazilian ingredients and culinary traditions, she revisits classic recipes from all over the country, mixing and updating them with unexpected and ingeniously modern twists. Not terribly fond of beef? Take note: Vegetables are key ingredients there. Slabs of *badejo* fish, encrusted with *baru* (a rare type of cashew nut) and accompanied by banana *da terra* puree is just one example of the creations served in this unassumingly stylish eatery.

Tuesday-Thursday noon-3 pm and 7 pm-midnight, Friday and Saturday noon-6 pm and 7 pm-1 am, Sunday noon-5 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Carlota

Rua Sergipe 753 (Higienopolis)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3661-9465

<http://www.carlota.com.br>

Super-hip and a Sao Paulo favorite, chef Carlota Pernambuco is one of the most inventive chefs in town. Her other restaurant by the same name is in Rio. Her imaginative contemporary cuisine is a favorite among Sampa's movers and shakers who flock to this charming mansion for the likes of ricotta gnocchi with shiitake and *shimeji* mushrooms, crunchy shrimp with prosciutto risotto and a legendary guava soufflé bathed in cream. Weekends especially are busy—be sure to book ahead.

Tuesday-Thursday noon-11 pm, Friday and Saturday noon-11:30 pm, Sunday noon-4:30 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Consulado Mineiro

Praca Benedito Calixto 74 (Pinheiros)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3064-3882

<http://www.consuladomineiro.com.br>.

Hearty dishes from Brazil's Minas Gerais state. With open-air seating facing a pretty, tree-lined square, the restaurant is jammed on Saturday when the area hosts an antiques and crafts fair and stages live Brazilian folk music. A second location is located at Rua Conego Eugenio Leite 504 (Pinheiros), and a third at Rua Professor Arthur Ramos 187 (Cidade Jardim).

Tuesday-Friday noon-midnight, Saturday noon-8 pm, Sunday noon-11 pm. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

D.O.M.

Rua Barao de Capanema 549 (Jardins)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3088-0761

<http://www.domrestaurante.com.br>

Vanguard chef Alex Atala has had enormous success with D.O.M. The open kitchen and modernist decor are seductive, but his highly imaginative contemporary dishes (made with ingredients sourced from all over Brazil) are the real stars of this restaurant. Amazonian river fish served with tapioca and *tucupi* (manioc root broth) or edible ants with pineapple are just two examples. Reservations are essential.

Monday-Friday noon-3 pm and 7 pm-midnight, Saturday 7 pm-midnight. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Fogo de Chao

Ave. dos Bandeirantes 538 (Vila Olimpia)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 5505-0791

<http://www.fogodechao.com.br>

No visit to Brazil is complete without a meal at one of the country's typical barbecue restaurants. This is one of the best. Pay one price and help yourself to the ample cold buffet. Meanwhile, waiters bring to your table fine cuts of beef, chicken and pork, roasted on the spit over a charcoal grill. See website for other locations (there are four, as well as several elsewhere in Brazil and in the U.S.).

Monday-Saturday noon-midnight, Sunday noon-10:30 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Rodeio

Rua Haddock Lobo 1498 (Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3474-1333

<http://www.rodeiosp.com.br>

One of the most traditional grills in the city, famous for its sliced *picanha* (pronounced *pee-cahn-ya*) prepared on mini-grills at your table. The dish has a strong flavor, but when cooked properly, it melts in your mouth. There is a second branch at Shopping Iguatemi.

Monday-Friday 11:30 am-3:30 pm and 6:30 pm-midnight, Saturday 11:30 am-midnight, Sunday 11:30 am-11 pm. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Tordesilhas

Alameda Tiete 489 (Jardins)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3107-7444

<http://www.tordesilhas.com>

Chef Mara Salles' specialty is Brazilian cuisine, with recipes garnered from her travels throughout the country. Aside from traditional regional dishes, there are some inspired creations such as carpaccio of *carne de sol* (sun-dried beef) and chicken bathed in *jabuticaba* (a dark berry) sauce. On Sunday, there is a buffet of regional dishes.

Tuesday-Friday 6 pm-1 am, Saturday noon-5 pm and 7 pm-1 am, Sunday noon-5 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Cuisines

Asian

Jun Sakamoto

Rua Lisboa 55 (Pinheiros)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Jun Sakamoto is considered one of the best sushi chefs in the city, and the fresh fish he sets his knife to are exquisite. Reservations are essential, especially if you want to sit at the counter and watch the master perform in front of you. Seating is limited to 36 for each meal.

Monday-Saturday 7 pm-midnight. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

French

Allez, Allez!

Rua Wisard 288 (Vila Madalena)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3032-3325

<http://www.allezallez.com.br>

This chic bistro in a small but charming house remains popular with couples looking for a romantic ambience. Dishes are French classics with creative twists, such as tongue bathed in black truffle oil and tempura of frog's legs in a provencal sauce.

Monday-Saturday noon-3 pm and 8 pm-midnight. Reservations available by phone. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Le Jazz Brasserie

Rua dos Pinheiros 254 (Pinheiros)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 2539-8141

<http://www.lejazz.com.br>

Simple French bistro fare and affordable prices have made Le Jazz an enduring hit, so arrive early or be prepared to wait at this, the original restaurant; Le Jazz also has branches in Jardins and Shopping Iguatemi. The likes of *moules frites*, steak and cassoulet are served to the sound of jazz, barely audible above the hum of contented diners.

Sunday-Thursday noon-midnight, Friday and Saturday noon-1 am. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Oui

Rua Vupabussu 71 (Pinheiros)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3360-4491

<http://www.ouirestaurante.com.br>

A relative newcomer to the city's dining scene, Oui is a diminutive, brightly lit space in an increasingly gourmet part of the Pinheiros neighborhood. The menu is refreshingly small and constantly changing, featuring meats such as lamb and veal that can be surprisingly hard to find for a city this size. Expect bold flavors and beautiful desserts.

Tuesday-Friday noon-3 pm and 7:30-11:30 pm, Saturday noon-4 pm and 7:30 pm-midnight, Sunday noon-4 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Italian

Cantina e Pizzeria Speranza

Rua 13 de Maio 1004 (Speranza Bixiga)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3288-3512

<http://www.pizzaria.com.br>

One of the city's best-known and most traditional pizza houses, with more than 50 years in the trade. Located in the heart of the Italian district in Bixiga, the restaurant is set in an old colonial house and serves up dozens of different pizza combinations, though it's hard to top the classic margherita. There is a second location on Rua Sabia 786 (Speranza Moema; phone 5051-7615).

Daily 6 pm-midnight (Saturday and Sunday until 1 am). Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Fasano

Rua Vitorio Fasano 88 (Hotel Fasano, Jardim Paulista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3062-4000

<http://www.fasano.com.br/gastronomia/fasano>

This Paulistano fine-dining establishment is located in the elegant Fasano family hotel. The classic Italian dishes, such as *risotto del contadino* (risotto with white beans, Tuscan sausage and red wine), that earned Fasano its fame are served on thematic tasting menus. Each menu offers four small dishes and a dessert. The reputed wine cellar boasts more than 4,000 bottles. The ambience is formal and elegant, all dark woods and marble, set beneath a retractable skylight.

Monday-Saturday 7 pm-12:30 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Roperto

Rua 13 de Maio 634 (Bela Vista)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-3288-2573

<http://www.cantinaroperto.com.br>

This classic cantina in the traditional Italian neighborhood of Bixiga has been around since the 1940s. The honest home cooking is as simple and unpretentious as the decor, with hearty fare such as roasted kid goat with broccoli and fusilli with calabresa sauce that will easily satisfy any hunger pangs. There is live music in the evening and on Saturday afternoon.

Daily from 11:30 am. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Terraco Italia

Ave. Ipiranga 344, 42nd Floor (Centro)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 11-2189-2929

<http://www.terracoitalia.com.br>

A favorite not just for the excellent Italian menu but also for the spectacular city view. Occupying the 42nd floor of Sao Paulo's second-tallest building, the restaurant is one of the city's most romantic. Popular with couples, who go for dinner and dancing (Wednesday-Saturday), it also packs out a business crowd at lunch.

Daily noon-midnight. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Vegetarian

Banana Verde

Rua Harmonia 278 (Vila Madalena)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3814-4828

<http://www.bananaverde.com.br>

One of the few vegetarian restaurants in town that stays open for dinner, Banana Verde has a simple, rustic feel, with exposed brick walls and a white-washed ceiling. The colorful dishes take full advantage of Brazil's ample natural larder, and are served in a set menu at lunchtime with a salad buffet, and a la carte in the evening.

Tuesday-Friday noon-3:30 pm and 7-11 pm, Saturday noon-11 pm, Sunday noon-4:30 pm. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

Cheiro Verde

Rua Peixoto Gomide 1078 (Cerqueira Cesar)
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Phone: 3262-2640

<http://www.cheioverderestaurante.com.br>

Considered one of the best vegetarian restaurants in this city of carnivores, Cheiro Verde creates tasty, creative dishes that continually surprise. Abundant salads, quiches, pizzas and special diet-conscious menus.

Monday-Friday 11:30 am-3 pm, Saturday noon-3:45 pm. \$. Most major credit cards.

Security

Etiquette

Remember one fact above all others: The colonial heritage of Brazil is Portuguese, not Spanish. Statements and actions that tend to lump the country's culture in with that of the Spanish-speaking nations of South America will not be well-received. Also, be aware of a subtle geographic distinction: People from the state of Sao Paulo are called Paulistas, whereas residents of the city of Sao Paulo itself are known as Paulistanos.

Appointments—Appointments should be made well in advance. Punctuality is not common, though it's better in Sao Paulo than in the rest of the country. Increasingly, Brazilians show up on time for business appointments, particularly ones with foreigners. As a visitor, you should be on time but expect to wait for your Brazilian counterpart. A wait of 30 minutes is considered quite normal, especially given the relentless traffic conditions and distances (even within the city) that most Paulistanos must travel daily. For social appointments, Brazilians still prefer to show up fashionably late, generally at least an hour, if not more.

Personal Introductions—For first impressions, wear conservative clothing, avoiding green and yellow in combination, as these are the colors of the Brazilian flag. Shake hands with everyone and maintain steady eye contact. Even with strangers, women often greet both men and women with kisses on each cheek, although men never do unless that person is related. If your acquaintance has a professional title, you will learn it when introduced. Until directed otherwise, use the professional title or the more standard titles (*Senhor*, *Senhora*). Brazilians will often use such titles with first names: for example, Senhor Bill. Note that it is typical for a person to have two surnames, one from the mother, followed by one from the father. Unlike Spanish America, the father's surname usually comes last (though this is not universal). Thus, "Senhor Joao Gaspar Figueiredo" would be addressed as "Senhor Figueiredo." However, "Senhor Joao" will normally work just as well.

Negotiating—Ten or 15 minutes of small talk nearly always precedes discussions of business. A solid personal foundation is used to build a rapport, and that takes time. Do not become impatient if negotiations fail to be direct and to the point. Relations tend to become relaxed and informal rather quickly, but allow your host to set the pace.

Business Entertaining—Business should take a backseat to socializing during meals. Dinner usually takes place between 8 and 10 pm, but formal dinner parties can last into the wee hours.

Body Language—Body space tends to be close, with polite gesturing and touching common. Know that the use of the "OK" sign (thumb and forefinger touching in a circle) is a vulgar gesture in Brazil. Instead, give the thumbs-up sign. To fend off beggars and roaming peddlers, wiggle your index finger back and forth. To get your check from a waiter across the room, gesture in the air as if signing a check.

Gift Giving—Gifts are not a major part of doing business in Brazil. Take along a small gift such as flowers, candy or wine if you're invited to a home.

Conversation—Standard cautions apply. Early on, avoid politics and religion. Ask questions about Brazilian culture rather than offering opinions about it. However, Brazilians are generally interested in what foreigners think of their country and may ask your opinion. You may want to prepare a diplomatic answer. You will probably be expected to know the names of a couple of Brazilian musicians and the fact that Brazil is a five-time champion of the World Cup soccer competition. Soccer (*futebol*) is a good icebreaker, especially among men, as is music and the latest developments of several hugely popular television soap operas (*novelas*).

Personal Safety

Sao Paulo is not only one of the biggest cities in the world, but it also has earned a reputation for being one of the most dangerous. Throughout the city, there is a growing trend of armed ATM holdups and kidnappings of people in vehicles stopped at traffic lights, so be on guard when withdrawing money and driving. It's best to withdraw money during the day and in busy areas. Don't flash or count money in public. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash and make photocopies of passports and other important documents. To be on the safe side, carry a money belt.

If you have a car (which you are advised to do without, if at all possible), keep the windows up and the doors locked at stoplights to avoid carjackings. At night, stoplights and parking areas are popular places for holdups and carjackings—most Paulistanos roll through stoplights at night, even in view of police. Also, be aware that pickpockets are common on crowded buses and underground trains, as well as in the busy streets of Centro. Rather than wearing backpacks, which are easy to break into, it's best to wear bags that cross over your body and can be carried in front of you.

Certain seedy areas of downtown are best avoided at night, especially Praca da Se, Praca da Republica and the area between Avenida Sao Joao and Estacao da Luz. Never, under any circumstances, venture into a favela (slum neighborhood) unaccompanied. Some of these are off-limits even to police. At night, it is always safer to take a taxi than walk, particularly if you are unfamiliar with the neighborhood.

In areas outside of the favelas, criminals generally are less threatening and will snatch or demand valuables and leave you unharmed—if you do not react. Although sometimes armed with knives, broken glass, guns or plastic toy guns, these criminals rarely use weapons if the victim stays calm and follows orders. If you find yourself in this kind of situation, it is important that you hand over valuables immediately without protest.

If you need to get in touch with the police, there is a special tourist police sector that deals with crimes involving foreign visitors: Delegacia de Turismo, Rua da Cantareira 390, Centro. Phone 3210-4417. For an emergency, phone 190.

Use common sense and be aware of your surroundings. Ask your hotel's concierge or front-desk staff for advisories concerning any areas you wish to visit.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

Tap water is safe to drink but heavily chlorinated and not too tasty. We recommend sticking to the bottled variety, which is available everywhere. The food is fine, and hot dogs and other food bought off the street can be superb, though you should avoid anyone selling *churrascaria de gato* (cat barbecue): The name is a joke, but the grilled meat on sticks is of very low quality, and proprietors often recycle the discarded sticks to the next customer.

General sanitation is good. However, the city does have a litter problem—gutters are frequently full of rubbish, and flooding often results from clogged drainage systems during heavy rains. There are occasional outbreaks of nasty water-borne diseases after heavy rains, so take extra care during the rainy season.

The public health system is run down, overcrowded and extremely frustrating—even if you speak good Portuguese. On the positive side, you can get emergency treatment at hospitals even if you have no medical insurance. If you do have insurance, Sao Paulo's private medical sector provides excellent care.

In the event of a medical emergency, phone 192 for an ambulance. Highly reputable private hospitals include Hospital Albert Einstein, Ave. Albert Einstein 627, Morumbi (phone 2151-1233; <http://www.einstein.com.br>) and Hospital Sirio Libanes, Rua Dona Adma Jafet 91, Bela Vista (phone 3155-0200; <https://www.hospitalsiriolibanes.org.br>).

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

Disabled visitors will find a trip to Sao Paulo extremely frustrating. Though some of the city's better restaurants and hotels will cater to disabled guests' needs, it's a different matter out on the street. Pavements are cracked and uneven, and accessible facilities on public transport are practically nonexistent, despite what the city's tourist board tells you. Bus companies claim to provide one vehicle per line with wheelchair access, but you'll be lucky if you see one in a weeklong visit. If you absolutely must take public transport, the metro is a little easier, but you'll have to ask staff for help to access the trains and stations—they almost all involve flights of stairs or escalators.

There is no official government agency that provides accessibility information. However, Centro de Vida Independente, a nongovernmental agency, can offer advice on traveling in Brazil with a disability. Rua Madre Cabrini 383, Vila Mariana. Phone 2359-7098. <http://www.cvi.org.br>.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do dress to blend in with the locals. You may be on vacation, but the thieves are not. The more you blend in, the better. Do not wear that new Brazilian national soccer shirt you just bought. Save it for the post-trip homecoming party, and never wear anything of significant value around your neck.

Do make a photocopy of the relevant pages of your passport and carry that instead of the original document. Leave the original in the hotel safe.

Do not assume that because Paulistanos are reveling with abandon during Carnival that you should, too. You certainly will be asked to join in the madness, but be aware that plenty of pickpockets and thieves are also doing the same thing.

Do try the local food and beverages. Brazil is a great place to eat and drink. But if you want local ambience, don't go to dinner too early. Brazilians don't eat dinner until around 9 pm.

Don't arrive on time for dates or informal social gatherings. If you arrive at a house party at the appointed hour, the hosts will still be in the shower or putting on makeup.

Don't take your sartorial clues from the natives. Paulistanos may dress very casually and without seeming concern for modesty, but following suit will only subject you to unwanted scrutiny.

Do show an interest in your host's family. Brazilians are extremely family-oriented and will warm up to you much faster if you take the time to meet each member.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports and visas. A yellow-fever vaccination certificate is recommended if you want to visit the Amazon region and required for travelers entering Brazil from other South American countries with Amazon territories, as well as certain African nations. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

Population: 20,262,493.

Languages: Portuguese.

Predominant Religions: Roman Catholic, with a growing minority of evangelical Protestants.

Time Zone: 3 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (-3 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from mid-October to mid-February.

Voltage Requirements: 110 volts.

Telephone Codes: 55, country code; 11,city code;

Money

Taxes

Sales taxes are always included in the price. Hotels charge a 10% occupancy tax and a 5% service tax, which are usually both included in the hotel rate. Airport taxes (currently around R\$86 for international flights) are almost always included in the price of your ticket.

Tipping

Most better restaurants add a 10% service charge, and waiters will go to great lengths to point out when the charge is not included. When it is included, you can still leave a small tip of loose change or small denomination notes at your discretion, though such extra tipping is nonexistent among Brazilians. As few people leave anything extra, any additional tip is likely to ensure friendly service on repeat visits. Taxi drivers do not expect formal tips, but they often do not have change, and passengers tend to round off on the high side.

Weather

Sao Paulo weather is usually mild, but can get hot, cold or wet. Summer (November-late February) is a sweaty, humid affair with temperatures in the high 90s F/30s C during the day and sometimes not much less at night. On summer afternoons, dark clouds used to roll in, and the city would be drenched in fierce but short tropical downpours. However, this phenomenon has become unpredictable. But when the rains do come, they tend to be focused, and localized flooding is common.

Either side of summer, the weather is more pleasant. Good months to visit are October and April or even May, when it should still be warm enough to catch some sun, but the storms and oppressive heat are gone.

In late June, July and August, it can get quite chilly, especially at night, when temperatures drop to 30-50 F/0-10 C—this is the result of cold-air systems that move into Brazil from Argentina. However, even in winter, the sun can tan (or burn).

What to Wear

In summer, take lightweight clothes made from natural fibers. In winter (June-August), days tend to be sunny and dry, although there is an occasional light drizzle. Nights can be chilly. Take a warm sweater and heavy jacket—even a hat and scarf to be safe. The heat is stifling in summer, but dress still tends to be a little more formal in Sao Paulo than in the more tropical, coastal cities of Brazil. You may find a hat useful—many Brazilians use baseball caps to keep the sun off. Summer afternoons sometimes bring drenching tropical downpours. Brave them with an umbrella if you want, but because the driving rain bounces off sidewalks, you'll be wet whether you have one or not. When a downpour hits, the best thing is to find some cover and wait out the worst part of the storm. In 15-20 minutes, the weather will likely improve.

For business, especially for meetings, people dress formally. Some companies, including branches of top international banks, have adopted a more relaxed attitude to everyday office wear.

Communication

Telephone

Local numbers in Sao Paulo have eight digits. Local and national calls can be made from public phone booths (known as *orelhoes*). You can buy a phone card at any *banca* that sells newspapers and magazines.

For long-distance calls, the caller must specify the carrier on each call. For instance, to call Rio de Janeiro from Sao Paulo, you'll need to dial "0" followed by the number of a carrier ("21" or "31," for example), followed by Rio's city prefix "21" and the number.

To make an international call, you'll need to dial "00" followed by "21" and then the country code ("1" for the U.S. and Canada), city code and number of your contact. Be forewarned that international long-distance calls are very expensive. Calling internationally from a hotel is even more expensive because of surcharges. It is possible to make a collect call overseas by calling the international operator at Embratel. Phone 0800-703-2111.

Cell phones have become enormously popular in Brazil, with coverage around most of the country. Mobile phone subscribers now outnumber fixed-line subscribers by 300%. If you will be in Brazil for some time, you're actually better off buying a phone (usually less than R\$200), available at any shopping mall. Also cell phone numbers begin with 9, and thus have a total of nine digits.

Internet Access

Internet cafes are becoming a rarity in Sao Paulo, as more cafes, bars, restaurants and hotel offer free Wi-Fi. Coffee shops, including Fran's Cafe and Cafeera, offer free Internet access. Most shopping malls—among them Shopping Morumbi, Shopping Iguatemi and Shopping Frei Caneca—also have Wi-Fi in their food court areas.

Cyber Games and Internet

This 24-hour chain has several cafes throughout the city, including one on Rua Augusta 2346 (Cerqueira Cesar), Sao Paulo, Brazil. Phone 11-3511-2580. <http://www.cyberlan.com.br>.

Transportation

The city is huge, the traffic is a nightmare, and together the two make for some severe headaches when it comes to getting around. If at all possible, try to avoid the worst rush hours (6:30-10 am and 4-8 pm). And do not schedule more than two business meetings in one day: You will never make them all.

If you need to get to the airport during these times, give yourself extra time. Luckily, many of the places you will want or need to visit—downtown, Avenida Paulista, Jardins and Vila Madalena—are served by Sao Paulo's endless fleet of traffic-seasoned inner-city taxis. Once you're downtown, you can explore it on foot—the layout is pedestrian-friendly. Taxis are available at all hours and are the safest option for getting around at night.

Driving a private vehicle—much worse, renting one—is not for the faint of heart or the thin of wallet. Although all of the major international and national car rental agencies have offices in Sao Paulo, prices are very high. The minimum age for rental is 21, and you will be asked to show your passport. The estimated cost of your rental (including mandatory insurance) will be levied against your credit card before you are allowed behind the wheel. Both a regular and international license are required to drive a rental car in Brazil, with the international license being different than those of other South American countries. Traveling outside of the city is considerably less nerve-wracking but still expensive.

Bus

Despite the growing popularity of low-budget commuter airlines, many Brazilians still get around the country by bus, some of which offer fully reclining seats and other amenities. Three terminals in Sao Paulo serve the entire country. All of the terminals can be reached by the metro, bus or taxi.

Tiete, in the Santana neighborhood, is the largest, and its buses run to the north and south of Brazil; Rio de Janeiro and the Rio coast; Brazil's central region, including Brasilia; cities in the interior of Sao Paulo state; its mountain region (Campos do Jordao); and towns along its north coast (Ubatuba, Maresias, Sao Sebastiao). Executive buses leave every 15 minutes for Rio de Janeiro, a five-hour ride. There are also buses to major cities in other South American countries, such as Buenos Aires (Argentina), Santiago (Chile), Montevideo (Uruguay) and Asuncion (Paraguay).

From Barra Funda terminal, located in the district of the same name, buses go to the northwest and south of Sao Paulo state; the north, northeast and southwest of Parana state; and the states of Rondonia, Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. Jabaquara is the smallest terminal and serves only a few coastal towns in Sao Paulo state, including Guaruja, Santos, Praia Grande and Bertioga.

Car

Driving in Sao Paulo can be a test of patience, will and, above all else, sanity. The number of vehicles competing for space has forced city authorities to impose a daily rotation system, where a fifth of privately owned cars are banned from the roads during rush hours. If the system has helped alleviate traffic jams and headaches, it certainly doesn't show.

In the city, bewildering one-way systems, crazy driving and death-defying bicycle, motor scooter, motorcycle and even skateboarding couriers can make life behind the wheel a white-knuckle ride. Expressways along the banks of both the city's rivers—the Tiete and the Pinheiros—are used like access roads. Each bank is one-way, however, which can be frustrating if you're unfamiliar with the bridges that span them. Also, keep an eye on your speed: Fines are high.

Parking space is at a premium—in popular areas, beggars work the streets guiding cars into available spots next to the sidewalk. They will then offer to "watch" your car. Sometimes they do; sometimes they don't. Often, they will demand to be paid in advance, but just tell them you'll pay when you leave. As for the amount, what's "fair" depends on the context. On a side street during a nonpeak period, R\$1.50 is fine. When there's a major event nearby, such as a soccer game or music concert, they may demand as much as R\$20. R\$5 is a common amount under normal circumstances. Parking lots are identified by the sign "*estacionamento*" and are the most secure parking option.

Some car rental agencies will require that a driver's license have been valid for at least two years before renting you a car. The use of cell phones while driving is permitted only when using a hands-free device.

Public Transportation

Sao Paulo's rather small subway (or metro) system is officially touted as spotlessly clean, inexpensive, safe and accessible to most destinations within downtown. Unfortunately, none except the last comment is true. Nor does it serve the rest of the sprawling city.

Tickets are sold in the stations themselves. Stations and trains operate 4:45 am-midnight. A single trip is R\$3.50. Stations are easily identifiable by name, color-coding and a symbol with two short arrows joined in the middle and pointing up and down. Phone 800-770-7722. <http://www.metro.sp.gov.br>.

The commuter train system has improved considerably in recent years, and the quality of service is now comparable to that of the subway. There are a series of transfer points between the two systems, although the commuter rail has fewer stops and tends to cover residential areas better.

For the first-time visitor, buses can be intimidating. They are often crowded and the routes can be confusing. Passengers enter the front of the bus, and the fare (R\$3.50) is paid at a turnstile inside the bus. You do not need exact change. An operator (not the driver) will make change for small bills, if they have it. The name on the front of the bus is the final destination. Along the side, major stops are listed, giving you (in a split second) a rough idea of the bus route.

Sao Paulo has an integrated transfer system—one trip, one fee (whether by bus, train or metro). Prepaid passes can be purchased at metro stations or at federal lottery offices, which can be found all over town.

Taxi

Taxis are plentiful. You should be able to hail one in the street at any hour of the day or night—except on Sunday or when it is raining. There are also taxi stands dotted about the city, usually identified by a sign "*ponto de taxi*" with a little shelter and a bench. Except for trips to the Guarulhos International Airport, all fares are metered—make sure the meter is switched on. Fares increase by 20% after 8 pm and on weekends and holidays. The system is called *bandeira 2*, and the electronic meter will show a small 2 underneath the fare when the driver switches it on. You should make sure he is not using *bandeira 2* during normal hours. Be aware that some taxi drivers will attempt to take advantage of foreigners by overcharging.

Drivers will know the locations of most hotels and the city's most popular districts, but if you ask to go anywhere a little out of the way, you may get a blank response. Try to make sure the driver knows where he's going before you get in the cab, especially if you're in a hurry. The older generation of drivers carry a city atlas called a *guia*, while younger ones tend to use GPS. If the driver pretends to not understand where you want to go, ask him to look it up in the *guia*. It also helps to write out your destination address on a piece of paper. Few drivers speak English.

For More Information

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Sao Paulo Convention and Visitors Bureau

Advice and information about area convention facilities and tourism. Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm. Alameda Ribeirao Preto 130, 12th Floor.Sao Paulo, Brazil. Phone 11-3736-0600.

<http://www.visitesaopaulo.com>.

Sao Paulo Turismo

There are eight tourist office centers around town. These include spots in Praca da Republica (facing Rua 7 de Abril), on Avenida Paulista (by Parque Mario Covas) and in the airports. Most are open daily 9 am-6 pm. Olavo Fontoura, 1209.Sao Paulo, Brazil. Phone 11-2226-0400. <http://www.spturis.com>.

Buzios, Brazil

Overview

Introduction

Buzios (pronounced *BOO-zee-ohs*) is a pricey, attractive resort area jutting into the Atlantic on the Cabo Frio Peninsula 125 mi/200 km northeast of Rio de Janeiro. The resort is made up of three settlements (Armacao, Ossos and Manguinhos) surrounded by nearly 30 idyllic beaches ranging from long, wide and crowded sweeps of sand to small secluded coves. Watersports include surfing, windsurfing at Ferradura (Horseshoe) Beach, snorkeling (Joao Fernandes and Joao Fernandinho beaches) and swimming. Sunbathers can avoid tan lines at Azeda and Azedinha, the resort's two topless beaches.



A tiny fishing village completely off the beaten track, Buzios was "discovered" by French actress Brigitte Bardot when she was touring the area in the 1960s, and it has been popular for years with wealthy Brazilians and Europeans. Development is continuing at a controlled pace: New buildings have a height limit of two stories and are designed to blend in with local surroundings—a neat trick for million-dollar villas in what was once a fishing village. Most lodging is in small *pousada*-style accommodations. Book as far in advance as possible, because it can get busy.

As befits an upscale resort, there are many fine shops and excellent restaurants (international and Brazilian cuisine). Be sure to sample grilled fish, fresh from the sea, on the beach—it's a special, inexpensive treat.

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Overview

Introduction

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil—sensuous, chaotic, sophisticated, open and friendly—is one of South America's gems. The Cidade Marvilhosa (Marvelous City), as Brazilians call it, displays a unique blend of contrasts: old and new, tremendous wealth amid crushing poverty, an urban metropolis nestled around mountains and a huge forest.

All of Rio de Janeiro is symbolically embraced in the outstretched arms of *Cristo Redentor*, the statue of Christ the Redeemer atop Corcovado Mountain.

The 2016 Summer Olympics were held in Rio, making it the first South American city to host the Olympic Games, and tourism to Brazil is has increased significantly.



Even with financial cutbacks and public skepticism, Rio undertook major infrastructure improvements at a blistering pace in efforts to upgrade its transportation system and adopt environmental initiatives in preparation for the Olympics. According to the Brazil Tour Operators Association, hotel capacity has more than doubled. Football (soccer) stadiums were rebuilt, world-class sports facilities have been designed, and the historic quarter and port area have been rejuvenated.

Rio de Janeiro plays host to what some call "the biggest party in the world" during the five-day holiday that is Carnival, which takes place just before Lent in February or early March. Street parties take place throughout the city, and the colorful samba schools parade through the city's Sambadrome to the sound of heavy drum beats.

But if the buzz of the city becomes too much—during Carnival or otherwise—there's always an easy escape to the beautiful coast or to the lush Tijuca Forest that surrounds Rio de Janeiro's mountainous slopes, where you can hike, bike or jump under a waterfall.

Highlights

Sights—Copacabana and Ipanema beaches; sunset from Arpoador rock; the view from atop Pao de Acucar (Sugar Loaf) or Corcovado Mountain; nature in Tijuca Forest and Jardim Botânico; a soccer match at the Maracana stadium.

Museums—Museu de Arte Moderna; Instituto Moreira Salles; Museu Chacara do Ceu; Museu de Arte Contemporanea-Niteroi; Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil.

Memorable Meals—An all-you-can-eat barbecue at a *churrascaria* such as Fogo de Chao, Marius or Porcao; *feijoada* (black-bean stew) at the Casa da Feijoada; fresh seafood at Satyricon; coffee and pastries at the belle epoque Confeitaria Colombo; sushi with the celebs at Sushi Leblon; brunch in Parque Lage; a tropical *suco* at any of the juice stands around the city.

Late Night—The lively bars in Ipanema, Leblon and Copacabana; a quiet drink at one of the outdoor cafes near the Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas; live samba in Lapa; a beer at Jobi at Madrugada.

Walks—A Sunday stroll by the beach along Avenida Atlantica in Copacabana or Avenida Vieira Souto in Ipanema; a walk around Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas; a leisurely walk around the colonial neighborhood of Santa Teresa.

Geography

Rio lies on the southeastern coast of Brazil. The city has everything it could want within arm's reach: ocean, mountains and the world's largest urban forest (in Tijuca National Park). The city is divided into four parts: Zona Sul (South Zone), Zona Oeste (West Zone), Zona Norte (North Zone) and Centro (downtown).

Bordered by Zona Sul, Zona Norte and Guanabara Bay, Centro is the commercial and historic heart of the city. Edging Zona Sul, with beaches fronting the Atlantic and extending southward on the coast, are the famous *bairros* (neighborhoods) of Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon. The Barra da Tijuca, with its giant malls and extensive beaches, is farther southwest, in Zona Oeste.

Rio's slums, called favelas, are found throughout the city. Many are in Zona Norte, but the largest in Brazil (and in South America) are in Zona Sul.

History

The name Rio de Janeiro, which means "River of January" in Portuguese, alludes to the fact that Portuguese sailors thought Guanabara Bay was a river delta when they first sailed into it on 1 January 1502. After successfully battling the French for control of the bay, the Portuguese established a fortified city, which in 1568 became the city of Rio. Initially eclipsed by Salvador, Brazil's first colonial capital on the coast to the north, as well as other cities in the gold-rich interior, Rio became the capital of Brazil in 1763.

With the beginning of the coffee boom in the early 1800s, Rio began to prosper. In 1808, the Portuguese royal family fled from the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and settled in Rio, initiating one of the city's golden ages. For more than 10 years, Rio was the seat of the Portuguese empire, which turned the colonial outpost into a cosmopolitan city.

In 1822, when Portugal granted independence to Brazil, the king's son Pedro stayed in Rio and was crowned emperor of Brazil, making him the only reigning monarch in the Americas. As an imperial capital, Rio had a population of more than 100,000 and was one of South America's busiest ports, shipping Brazil's rubber, coffee and sugar to the rest of the world.

Over the following decades, the government widened avenues, filled in swamps, eradicated yellow fever and even tore down bothersome hills to make space for construction. The formerly bucolic colonial capital of low, tile-roof buildings and dirt streets increasingly resembled a modern metropolis, and by 1920, its population had swollen to 1 million people.

After World War II, the city was further remodeled to make space for the automobile. A growing middle class began to abandon traditional Zona Norte enclaves for Zona Sul neighborhoods—Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon—that were rendered more accessible by buses, cable cars and automobiles. In 1960, Brazil finished the construction of the new inland national capital, Brasilia, and gradually moved

most government offices to the planned city. Though some say Rio has never recovered its lost prestige, it remains Brazil's main tourist destination and cultural center.

Port Information

Location

Ships dock at the Pier Maua astride the old downtown at Avenida Rodrigues Alves 10, which meets the beginning of Avenida Rio Branco (phone 21-3195-8000; <http://www.piermaua.com.br>). The whole area is undergoing a revitalization that includes the futuristic Museu do Amanha, the beautiful OrlaConde open-air galleria and the Museu de Arte do Rio. It's all part of Projeto Porto Maravilha (<http://portomaravilha.com.br>). Some of the 19th-century warehouses are used to host parties and exhibitions.

The passenger terminal offers public phones, an Internet cafe, taxi kiosk, newsstand, snack bar, souvenir shops, first-aid station and immigration desk.

Potpourri

Fed up with traditional candidates, voters once cast 400,000 votes for a write-in candidate who lived in RioZoo. A chimp named Tiao, which means "Big Uncle" in Portuguese, took third place in the 1988 balloting for mayor. Similarly, in 2010 a clown named Tiririca received more votes than any candidate in the congressional elections and was given a seat in congress.

Legend has it that Tom Jobim and Vinicius de Moraes composed "The Girl from Ipanema" on a bar napkin while sipping a couple of drinks just blocks from the beach at a spot called Bar Veloso, since renamed Garota de Ipanema.

A small lane in Copacabana, Beco das Garrafas, near the luxury hotel Copacabana Palace, is known as the birthplace of bossa nova and used to be frequented by the likes of Sergio Mendes in the 1960s. The name comes from the fact that disgruntled local residents used to throw *garrafas* (bottles) at the musicians to try to get them to keep the noise down.

During Rio's Carnival, besides the famous procession through the Sambadrome, there are hundreds of *bloco*s (street parties). The Carmelitas *bloco* in the Santa Teresa neighborhood is based on the order of nuns of the same name who lived in the area (and party attendees dress in appropriate attire).

Gavea Rock, the enormous outcropping in the Zona Sul, resembles a gigantic sculpture and allegedly sports ancient inscriptions on one of its sides (actually caused by erosion). Some believe Gavea Rock is the burial place of a Phoenician king, and others believe it to be one of the 12 vortices on Earth.

The section of the beach in Copacabana in front of the JW Marriott Hotel has long been known for its beach soccer. Nilton Santos, star of the Botafogo club and the national team, who retired in 1964, played regularly on this strip of sand.

Celebrity sightings are common on the beaches of the Zona Sul. Wait long enough and musician Chico Buarque or the hottest *telenovela* actress will stroll along. Rarely must they dodge autograph seekers or paparazzi; Cariocas tend to be nonchalant about such encounters.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Rio is a feast of natural and urban attractions that can be enjoyed as sweeping panoramic views or inspected up close. Most visitors opt for a panoramic view as an introduction to the city. The best spots are Pao de Acucar (Sugar Loaf) and Corcovado Mountain, though the more energetic might choose to hike up Gavea Rock. A gondola can take you up Sugar Loaf for a 360-degree view of Rio and Guanabara Bay.

The landmark statue of Christ with outstretched arms on Corcovado Mountain is reached via a funicular train. On a clear day, you'll be rewarded with wonderful views of the city, the bay and Tijuca Forest. For Gavea Rock, it is best to go with a local friend or a tour guide.

When you're ready to examine the city in more detail, head for the legendary beaches in the Zona Sul neighborhoods. The most famous beaches are Copacabana and Ipanema, though Leblon (next to Ipanema) and Leme (next to Copacabana) are worth experiencing also. Cariocas, as residents of Rio are called, are fun-loving and charming, and the cast of colorful characters you'll see strolling and lounging on the beach is just about the only thing that can compete with the city's spectacular natural setting. The beach is often known as the most democratic place in Rio.

You can combine people-watching and sightseeing by taking a walk through several neighborhoods. Rio's Centro is a great place to see a mix of old and new, colonial and modern. The Arcos da Lapa—arches that were part of an immense aqueduct built in the 1700s—are at the center of Lapa, a bohemian neighborhood in Centro that has made a full comeback after years of neglect and has a number of good antiques stores, bars, clubs and restaurants.

West of Lapa is the hilly Santa Teresa neighborhood, with its narrow, winding streets, stone stairs and late-19th-century houses—it has an artistic, counterculture feeling, and there are many interesting small galleries and museums to explore. You can take the scenic *bondinho* (streetcar) or a cab up to Santa Teresa.

If you choose to spend some time indoors, you'll find that Rio's museums run the gamut from the culture-oriented Edison Carneiro Folklore Museum to the campy Carmen Miranda Museum. The National History Museum and the National Fine Arts Museum are must-sees, as is the Contemporary Arts Museum in Niteroi.

For a look at Rio's religious heritage, visit the Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Gloria for its art and impressive architecture, as well as the Sao Bento Monastery.

Sooner or later, you'll be drawn back outdoors: Two good spots are the Jardim Botânico and the massive Tijuca Forest (keep an eye out for monkeys).

Historic Sites

Cristo Redentor

Rua Cosme Velho 513
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2558-1329

<http://www.corcovado.com.br>

The famous giant statue of Christ the Redeemer, with arms outstretched over the bay, is perched on Corcovado Mountain. As Rio's most instantly recognizable landmark, it's well worth a trip to see both the statue and the view, but be sure to choose a clear day. The statue itself is free to visit; the issue is how to get there. Many of the better hotels and travel agencies can help arrange a visit. You can go on your own by taking a taxi to the Corcovado train station.

Funicular trains depart every half-hour daily 8 am-8 pm, last ascent at 7 pm. (Elevators and escalators with panoramic views make the final ascent to the statue possible for everyone.) The train round-trip costs R\$74 adults.

Escadaria Selaron

Escadaria Selaron 24, Lapa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

In 1994 well-traveled Chilean painter Jorge Selaron started working on his iconic tile staircase, which has become one of the major attractions of Lapa. For many years, he added colorful tiles made by himself or donated to him from all over the world. In January 2013, Selaron was found murdered at the stairs, and many people fear that his unique creation may not be maintained forever. Most Rio visitors have their photo taken on the colorful stairs, but do go during the day because the area is unsafe at night.

Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Gloria do Outeiro

Praca Nossa Senhora da Gloria 135
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2557-4600

<http://www.outeirodagloria.org.br>

The Church of Our Lady of Glory on the Knoll, a unique octagonal church, was built in 1714. The main altar has carvings by renowned Brazilian artist Mestre Valentim. The church was designed so the cooling breeze of the sea could flow through it. There is also a museum of sacred art at the church.

The museum is open Tuesday-Friday 9 am-noon and 1-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 9 am-noon. The church can be visited Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm (closed for lunch noon-1 pm) and Saturday and Sunday 8 am-noon. Masses are held on Sunday at 9 and 11 am. Museum admission is R\$4.

Ilha Fiscal

Avenida Alfredo Agache (access is through the Centro Cultural da Marinha, at the end of Praca 15)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2104-5487

<http://www.mar.mil.br/dphdm>

This island, reached by a short boat ride, is home to the 1881 neo-Gothic palace where the last imperial ball was held. The palace's showpiece is a beautiful inlaid floor, made from several rare Brazilian woods, that covers an area of 10,800 sq ft/1,000 sq m.

Open to visitors Thursday-Sunday with guided tours starting at 12:30, 2 and 3:30 pm April-August and 1, 2:30 and 4 pm September-March. Closed the second weekend of the month. R\$25 adults.

Mosteiro de Sao Bento

Rua Dom Gerardo 68, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2206-8100

<http://www.osb.org.br>

One of Rio's better examples of baroque architecture. Masses are held Monday-Saturday at 7:30 am, Sunday at 10 am and 6 pm. Gregorian chant is sung at the 7:30 and 10 am Masses.

Daily 7 am-6 pm. Proper clothing is required.

Pao de Acucar

Ave. Pasteur 520, Urca
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2546-8400

<http://www.bondinho.com.br>

Sugar Loaf Mountain is not only an easily recognizable landmark, but it also offers a wonderful panoramic view of the city. All main tour companies run excursions, or ask your cab driver to leave you at the Sugar Loaf gondola station at Urca's Praia Vermelha. The cable car, which departs every half-hour, first takes you up the hill called Morro da Urca and then to the top of Sugar Loaf. To enjoy a truly spectacular view, arrive an hour before sunset and watch the sun go down and the city light up.

Daily 8 am-8 pm. Adults R\$76.

Museums

Biblioteca Nacional

Ave. Rio Branco 219, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3095-3879 or 21-2220-9484 to reserve an English-language tour

<https://www.bn.gov.br>

The National Library in Rio is the biggest library in South America and one of the largest in the world, housing approximately 9 million items. It includes books brought to Brazil by Portuguese King Dom Jose I. It's a fascinating neoclassical building that can be visited by guided tour only.

Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm.

Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil

Rua Premeiro de Marco 66, Centro (near Praca XV)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3808-2020

<http://culturabancodobrasil.com.br/portal/rio-de-janeiro>

Set in a beautiful neoclassical building dating from 1880, this is one of the most exciting cultural spaces in Rio de Janeiro. The building is complete with many original features such as the huge old "safe" doors. It often houses groundbreaking exhibitions such as modern works from young Brazilian artists and rare photos of Rio. It also has a brasserie, small cafe, theater, cinema and Wi-Fi. Casa Franca gallery next door is also worth a look.

Open daily except Monday 9 am-9 pm.

Instituto Moreira Salles

Rua Marques de Sao Vicente 476, Gavea
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3284-7400

<http://www.ims.com.br/ims>

This attractive cultural center, the former home of the wealthy Moreira Salles family, is a stunning example of Brazilian modernist architecture. Set in leafy Gavea, it hosts major exhibitions of modern painting and photography. There's also an elegant tearoom with an outside area beside a pool and a cinema.

Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-8 pm.

Museu Carmen Miranda

Aterro do Flamengo, Copacabana
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2334-4293

<http://www.cultura.rj.gov.br/espaco/museu-carmen-miranda>

Nicknamed the "Brazilian Bombshell" because of her exuberant performances in Technicolor musicals, Carmen Miranda was the first Brazilian singer to become internationally known. In the mid-1940s, she was one of Hollywood's best-paid stars. On view are her signature hats, dresses, shoes and other memorabilia, and there's a video library of her movies. Guided tours for groups are available by appointment.

Monday-Friday 11 am-5 pm. Free.

Museu Chacara do Ceu

Rua Murinho Nobre 93, Santa Teresa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3970-1126

<http://www.museuscastrmaya.com.br/chacara.htm>

This beautiful museum, housed in a modernist mansion and surrounded by lush gardens, has an eclectic collection of fine furnishings and Brazilian and international art. Works by Dali, Picasso, Monet and Matisse were lost to theft during Carnival 2006.

Open daily except Tuesday noon-5 pm. R\$2; free on Wednesday.

Museu da Imagem e do Som

Ave. Atlantica 3432, Copacabana
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2146-1579

<http://www.mis.rj.gov.br>

Brazil's entire movie and musical history, from bossa nova to samba, can be seen and heard at the MIS through an array of state-of-the-art interactive sight and sound immersion experiences. The building's design, by New York architectural firm Diller Scofidio and Renfro, breaks from the traditional Copacabana apartment block routine and is as much an attraction as the sights and sounds within.

Wednesday-Sunday noon-9 pm. R\$10.

Museu da Republica

Rua do Catete 153, Catete
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2127-0324

<http://museudarepublica.museus.gov.br>

This impressive house, Catete Palace, was built between 1858 and 1867 by a coffee plantation owner and it housed some of the most important political debates in Brazilian history when various presidents called it home. It now houses the Museum of the Republic. It has several eclectically and elaborately designed rooms, although the most famous is that where former Brazilian President Getulio Vargas famously committed suicide. His pajamas, with the deadly bullet hole, are on display.

Tuesday-Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am-6 pm. R\$6 adults.

Museu de Arte Contemporanea-Niteroi

Endereco, Mirante da Boa Viagem s/n
Niteroi, Brazil

Phone: 21-2620-2400

<http://culturaniteroi.com.br/macniteroi>

Designed by renowned Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, this striking art museum houses a permanent collection of more than 1,000 works by contemporary Brazilian artists. It also has a great panoramic view of Guanabara Bay. You can take a taxi across the long bridge to Niteroi, but, particularly on clear days, we recommend the ferry from Praca 15—it's a less expensive (and often faster) way to get there, and you can admire the view of Rio along the way. From the ferry docks in Niteroi, take a taxi or Bus 47-B to the museum.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm. R\$10 adults.

Museu de Arte do Rio

Praca Maua 5, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3037-2741

<http://www.museudeartedorio.org.br>

Spread over four floors, this museum showcases a growing selection of international paintings, including excellent works of abstract art. More endearing to the locals are old landscape paintings of the city. The roof terrace on the sixth floor offers visitors a magnificent view of Rio.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-5 pm. R\$20 adults.

Museu de Arte Moderna

Ave. Infante Dom Henrique 85 (in the Aterro do Flamengo, near Santos Dumont Airport)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3883-5600

<http://www.mamrio.com.br>

This spacious museum with a stunning view of Guanabara Bay houses the most important individual collection of Brazilian modern art, that of Gilberto Chateaubriand, which is displayed in temporary exhibitions. There is also a small cinema and a shop selling Brazilian design pieces.

Tuesday-Friday noon-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am-6 pm. R\$14 adults.

Museu do Folclore Edison Carneiro

Rua do Catete 181, Catete
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2285-0441

http://www.cnfcp.gov.br/interna.php?ID_Secao=2

A great place to learn about Brazil's roots. The items on display represent the entire country: Afro-Brazilian objects, ceramics, toys, ritual vestments and popular art. It is organized around the themes of life, religion, festivals and art. The museum is located in the shaded gardens of Parque do Catete, which is also the site of the former presidential palace, now the Museu da Republica. English-language audioguides are available.

Tuesday-Friday 11 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 3-6 pm. Free.

Museu do Indio

Rua das Palmeiras 55, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3214-8700

<http://www.museudoindio.gov.br>

Established as the scientific and cultural arm of the National Indian Foundation, this museum has one of the most important collections of artifacts from the indigenous people of Brazil in some creative audio and visual displays. There's also a shop where you can buy native crafts, as well as a cafe and a research center.

Tuesday-Friday 9 am-5:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 1-5 pm. Free admission.

Museu Historico Nacional

Praca Marechal Ancora s/n (next to Praca 15), Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3299-0324

<http://www.museuhistoriconacional.com.br>

This site has two beautifully restored 18th-century structures that form the National History Museum: the House of Armaments (1764) and the House of Trains (1762). Together they illuminate Brazilian history with more than 257,000 objects: weapons, carriages, paintings and sculptures.

Open Tuesday-Friday 10 am-5:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 2-6 pm. R\$8. Free on Sunday.

Museu Nacional de Belas Artes

Ave. Rio Branco 199 (near Cinelandia metro station), Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3299-0600

<http://www.mnba.gov.br>

The National Museum of Fine Arts has some 200 works by Brazilian artists from the 17th-19th centuries, housed in an exquisitely ornate 1908 French Renaissance building. It houses the largest easel painting in Brazilian art history, an impressive war scene from the battle of Arai. There's also a gallery with paintings by non-Brazilians such as Picasso, Matisse and Nicolas-Antoine Taunay.

Tuesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 1-6 pm. R\$8 regular admission; free on Sunday.

Museu Villa-Lobos

Rua Sorocaba 200, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2226-9818

<http://museuvillalobos.org.br/museuvil/index.htm>

If you are a fan of Brazilian music, the Villa-Lobos museum is dedicated to Heitor Villa-Lobos, who is considered the greatest classical composer in the Americas. He even conducted the New York Philharmonic orchestra in Carnegie Hall. The museum contains instruments and other artifacts from his musical career.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm. Entrance free.

Oi Futuro Flamengo

Rua Dois de Dezembro 63, Flamengo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3131-3060

<http://www.oifuturo.org.br>

An important and innovative cultural space in Rio, Oi Futuro Flamengo houses various exhibitions, often pretty fresh and cutting edge, as well as the permanent interactive museum of telecommunications. It also has a huge library of art books.

Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-8 pm. Free.

Parks & Gardens

Claudio Coutinho Trail

Praca General Tiburcio (Vermelha Beach), Urca
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This trail, named after a famous former Brazilian football (soccer) coach, starts at the base of the hill called Morro da Urca and offers wonderful views of nearby Sugar Loaf and the surf crashing below it.

Daily 6 am-6 pm. Free.

Ilha de Paqueta

Piazza San Roque 31, Island Paqueta
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2544-6667 (ferry)

<http://www.ilhadepaqueta.com.br/paqueta.htm>

This small, picturesque island in Guanabara Bay is a popular spot for a walk or a picnic: No cars are allowed on the island. In addition to the sandy (but heavily polluted) beaches, there are a few interesting colonial buildings to explore. Cycling is popular, and you can rent a bike near the quay for around R\$5 an hour.

There is a small tourist kiosk just as you leave the terminal on the main street where you can pick up a map of the island (closed for lunch noon-1 pm). You can also hire a horse-drawn cart for about R\$15.

Ferries depart from Praca 15 daily (nine crossings, the first leaves for the island at 5:15 am, the last ferry leaves the island at 10:15 pm). The ferry takes about 70 minutes and costs R\$5 (R\$10 return).

Jardim Botânico

Rua Jardim Botânico 1008
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3874-1808

<http://www.jbrj.gov.br>

Created by Dom Joao VI as a royal garden to display plants from other regions, the Botanical Garden is now a lovely place for walking or bird- and monkey-watching. The gardens are so insulated from urban noises that you may think you're in the countryside, and temperatures are blissfully cool on hot days. Highlights include the orchid house and the majestic rows of imperial palms. There is also a museum, an outdoor cafe, a gift shop and a sensory garden for the visually impaired.

Monday noon-5 pm, Tuesday-Sunday 8 am-5 pm. R\$9 entry.

Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas

Zona Sul (between avenidas Epitacio Pessoa and Borges de Medeiros)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.lagoarodrigodefretas.com.br>

The shore of this polluted but pretty lagoon in Zona Sul is a good place for a walk—have some ice cream as you stroll. There's a great cycling and jogging track, too, where chic Cariocas work out or walk their fancily clad dogs. Kiosks serve everything from Italian to Japanese food. You can hear Brazilian music and jazz played in the evening after 9 pm at stands around the lagoon. It is popular on weekends and during the summer. Bikes can also be hired, as well as pedalos.

Parque Brigadeiro Eduardo Gomes

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.parquedoflamengo.com.br>

More commonly known as the Aterro do Flamengo, this is one of the world's largest parklands along the sea and the largest of its kind in the country. It faces Flamengo Beach, stretching from the Modern Art Museum near Centro to the Botafogo neighborhood. It has a public harbor, jogging trails, bike lanes, soccer fields (where you will often see people playing into the early hours), a skate park and restaurants. It's a popular hangout on weekends, when top-notch free concerts are held there. We recommend that you visit only during daylight hours. You can enter the park from any point along Avenida Praia do Flamengo.

Parque do Catete

Rua da Catete 153, Catete
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3235-3693

<http://museudarepublica.museus.gov.br/o-museu/#jardim>

This attractive park is behind the Palacio do Catete, which now houses the Museu da Republica. The 19th-century gardens with a water feature running throughout provide a peaceful respite to busy Catete. There is also a small museum for children and often exhibitions or concerts in the park, as well as access to a small arts cinema. The gardens can be accessed via the Museu da Republica or Rua da Catete or from Flamengo beach side.

Parque Lage

Rua Jardim Botânico 414, Jardim Botânico
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2491-1700

<http://www.parquedatijuca.com.br>

Parque Lage is actually inside Tijuca Forest, and one of the trails begins there. You can get a great brunch in the attractive mansion house, which now houses the Visual Arts school of Parque Lage. It has been used as a location for several international music videos and often has some great music and arts events.

Open daily 8 am-5 pm. Free.

Tijuca Forest

Estrada da Cascatinha 850, Alto da Boa Vista (the main entrance is at Praça Alfonso Vizeu)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2492-2253

<http://www.parquedatijuca.com.br/amigosdoparque.php>

Part of the Tijuca National Park, this is one of the world's largest urban forests. By the mid-19th century, Tijuca Forest was practically deforested, first for lumber, then for coffee plantations. In 1861, the government recognized that deforestation was hurting local rainfall, leading to a shortage of potable water. The forest is now one of the city's most important protected areas. If you're lucky, you'll see monkeys and a variety of butterflies. Beautiful spots include the Cascatinha (a lovely waterfall), the Mayrink Chapel, the Lago da Fada (Fairy Lake), the Acude da Solidao (Solitude Dam) and several caves. We recommend you take a Jeep tour, which can be arranged through most hotels. If you're determined to go on foot without a guide, the best place to start is Cascatinha, which is close to the main park entrance. Just remember that many people get lost in the forest, so stay on the marked trails at all times.

Daily 8 am-7 pm. Admission is free.

Recreation

No wonder Cariocas are known for toned, tanned bodies: With good weather year-round, Rio is a sports enthusiast's dream.

The beaches are the most popular choice for outdoor activities. The picturesque settings offer a backdrop not only for swimming, surfing, diving and boating, but also for Frisbee games, volleyball (including foot volley), paddle tennis or "frescoball," soccer and biking.

Rio is also a jogger's paradise: All the main beaches have paths that run along the shore, and on Sunday, major seaside avenues are closed to automobile traffic.

For adventurous types, hang gliding is an absolute must. When conditions are right, hang gliders fly from Pedra Bonita, one of the peaks in Tijuca National Forest. Depending on the thermal currents, they circle above the forest for 10-30 minutes before landing gently on the sands of Sao Conrado beach.

If you'd rather remain on the ground, there's also good hiking (with waterfalls that offer the prospect of a refreshing dip) on the many trails that wind through Tijuca National Forest.

Beaches

Going to the beach (*praia*) is practically a year-round event and, for the visitor to Rio, an essential people-watching experience. All beaches in Rio are free, and local papers report daily on water quality. Public toilets and showers are available inside lifeguard posts (called *postos*). *Postos* are located every kilometer along the city beaches from Posto 1 at Leme to Posto 13 at Sao Conrado. Posto 6 in Copacabana is actually absent, although the area that marks the junction between Copacabana and Arpoador is still referred to as a *posto*. There are also *postos* every kilometer along the wonderful and seemingly endless beach stretching from Barra to Recreio. It costs R\$1 to use the facilities in the *postos*.

The beaches in Rio come to life at dawn, with thousands of Cariocas and tourists alike enjoying various forms of exercise. At night, the city beaches are all brightly floodlit, which means they remain busy well into the morning hours. Many of the kiosk-bars stay open all night, too—or at least until there are no more customers. However, for security reasons it's not a good idea to venture onto the sand at night, unless it's very busy.

Barra da Tijuca and Recreio dos Bandeirantes

The long, clean stretch of beach east of Sao Conrado is Barra da Tijuca (or simply Barra). The locals there are a bit showy, and the district in general attracts a certain amount of disdain, supposedly for being a vulgar imitation of Miami. But the beach is superb and large enough that it's hardly ever crowded.

Copacabana, Leme and Arpoador

Copacabana, with its wide, crescent-shaped sweep of dazzling white sand, is widely considered the most beautiful beach. It is extremely popular, but large crowds equal lots of trash, making it at times a very dirty beach. Stretches of beach are identified by the names of nearby landmarks, *postos* or streets that bisect Avenida Atlantica. You'll probably see fitness fanatics toning their muscles at the various exercise stations. The surf at Copacabana can be rough, and although there are lifeguards on duty, swimmers should not venture out into deep water.

Leme is a western extension of Copacabana Beach. It's family-oriented and less crowded, but the water quality is seldom good. At the opposite end, between Copacabana and Ipanema, Arpoador Beach and

Diabo (Devil) Beach are favorites with surfers and body-boarders, and are recommended only for strong swimmers, because of powerful and tricky currents.

On Sunday and holidays, Copacabana's Avenida Atlantica is closed to vehicular traffic until 6 pm.

Flamengo and Botafogo

The first beach to the south and then west of Centro is Flamengo. It's very popular and nicely offset by Aterro Park. The emphasis is on beach sports (particularly soccer) rather than swimming, because the water is not very clean. Nearby Botafogo Beach is not recommended for swimming at any time because of pollution. Shower and toilet facilities are limited on both beaches.

Ipanema and Leblon

Ipanema is the fanciest and trendiest beach in town. Expect tiny bikinis and many perfect bodies. If you're a surfing or body-boarding enthusiast, Arpoador, the headland that separates Ipanema from Copacabana, usually has the best waves in the Zona Sul. On a clear day, the Arpoador end of Ipanema is also regarded as the best place from which to admire Rio's beautiful sunsets.

At the far end of Ipanema is Leblon, a quieter beach frequented by the residents of this affluent neighborhood. Because of a nearby canal, the water quality at Leblon is generally poor. On Sunday and holidays, both Avenida Vieira Souto in Ipanema and Avenida Delfim Moreira in Leblon are closed to traffic until 6 pm.

Urca and Vermelha

Across Botafago Bay from Flamengo Beach is Urca, a secluded beach and neighborhood of charming houses and sidewalks over the bay; it's a great place to stroll and watch fisherfolk cast their lines. South of Urca, at the base of Pao de Acucar, is Praia Vermelha, a narrow strip of sand. It's a beautiful setting, but the strong current is challenging for swimmers.

Vidigal, Sao Conrado and Joatinga

On Avenida Niemeyer, just in front of the InterContinental Hotel, is the small beach of Vidigal. Check to see if security guards are there before deciding to stay—one of Rio's most infamous favelas looms just behind. Sao Conrado is the next beach. It's elegant and attracts a more reserved crowd. Part of this beach is also named Pepino, and that's where you're likely to find hang gliders. Joatinga, between Pepino and Barra da Tijuca, is a cozy inlet hidden from the rest of the city.

Bicycling

A 10-mi/16-km bike path skirts the Rio de Janeiro coastline from Leblon all the way to Gloria, offering a safe option for both exercise and sightseeing. You can also bike around Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas. Note that, for nicer bicycles, many rental shops require a security deposit.

Bike & Lazer

Rua da Laranjeiras 58
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2285-7941

<http://www.bikeelazer.com.br>

This specialty bike store also rents all sorts of bikes for R\$20 an hour or R\$80 for an entire day (until 8 pm). Second location in Ipanema (phone 21-2267-7778).

Special Bike

Rua Sao Joao Batista 28-A
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2539-3980

<http://www.specialbikebotafogo.com.br>

Rio's largest bike store, also with branches in Ipanema, Leblon and Botafogo, rents bikes for R\$20 an hour and R\$50 for an entire day.

Golf

Gavea Golf Club

Estrada da Gavea 800, Sao Conrado
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3323-6050

<http://www.gaveagolf.com.br>

On this short par-68 course, players can expect to use their irons more than their drivers. Founded in 1921 and designed by Arthur Morgan Davidson, it runs between a seaside peak called Pedra da Gavea and the Tijuca National Forest. The front nine are played at the foot of the mountains, holes 10-14 at seaside and 15-18 back astride the hills. The clubhouse is a colonial farmhouse. It's a private club, but guests at selected hotels are allowed to play. Guests are welcome at the club Monday-Friday. Reservations are necessary.

Itanhanga Golf Club

Estrada da Barra da Tijuca 2005
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 219-8498-1220

<http://www.itanhanga.com.br>

This par-72 course hosted a stage of the European PGA tour. Founded in 1933, the course was frequented by President Getulio Vargas, a populist strongman who committed suicide in 1954. Small greens force target-golf play. It is open to guests. Equipment can be rented on-site. Dress code enforced.

Scuba & Snorkeling

Dive Point

Ave. Ataulfo de Paiva 1174, Loja 4, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 219-6429-0895

<http://www.divepoint.com.br>

Diving lessons and excursions to Angra dos Reis, Arraial do Cabo and Buzios.

Dive trips cost around R\$200.

Projeto Mergulhar/New Dive

Rua Antunes Maciel 112, Sao Cristovao
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Diving courses and excursions around Rio, especially to Cabo Frio, Arraial do Cabo and Angra dos Reis.

A diving course with four outings costs about R\$1,150.

Surfing

Escola de Surf Rico de Souza

Ave. das Americas 19019, Recreio dos Bandeirantes
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2438-1821

<http://www.ricosurf.globo.com>

Daily lessons in front of Posto 4 at Barra or at Macumba beach a little farther west. Private lessons (including equipment) cost R\$70 per person for one hour or a course of eight lessons for R\$460.

Escolinha da Surf Arpoador

Praia de Arpoador
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-9814-9702

<http://www.escolinhadesurfipanema.com>

Jean Carlos, the professor of Arpoador surf school, is a regular figure on Arpoador beach. He also runs the legendary Favela Surf Club, a great institution that brings young people from the favela community behind Ipanema together with those from the expensive houses below. His lessons begin at R\$70 per person and are usually on Arpoador.

Escolinha de Surf Paulinho Dolabella

Rua Maria Quitéria, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-9814-9702

<http://www.escolinhadesurfipanema.com>

Surfing lessons in front of the Caesar Palace and on Arpoador Beach. Private lessons for R\$100 an hour. Also rents long boards, short boards, fun boards and rubber suits. Group lessons available; call ahead.

Other Options

With natural wonders such as the Pao de Acucar, Corcovado and Pedra Bonita, climbing is a popular activity in Rio and the options for climbers are nearly endless. About 1,000 routes have been marked, and the scenery is usually breathtaking.

And if you've never tried hang gliding before, you can fly *voo duplo*, where you're strapped into a hang glider alongside an experienced, qualified pilot. The *Rio Guide*, available at Riotur and many hotels, has the phone numbers of various pilots. Pilots are also registered with the Rio de Janeiro Hang Gliding Association.

Nightlife

If you want to taste Rio's nightlife, check out live music of all genres in small clubs or the avant-garde dance clubs that showcase the latest in modern rhythms. The city's nighttime offerings reflect the free-spirited and easygoing nature of Cariocas and cater to all tastes and budgets. Be sure to try a caipirinha, Brazil's national cocktail that is made with *cachaca* (a rum made from sugarcane), sugar and lime.

Nightclubs and many bars are open until at least 3 am, even during the week. Some clubs have a cover charge, and others have a *consumacao minima* system in which you have to spend a certain amount on drinks. The most expensive places have both. Take cash; few places accept credit cards, so call ahead to check.

Bars, Taverns & Pubs

Academia da Cachaca

Rua Conde de Bernadotte 26, Loja G, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2239-1542

<http://www.academiadacachaca.com.br>

The name says it all: *Cachaca* receives five-star treatment in this relaxed locale. Students of alcoholic beverages can sample more than 500 regional varieties (all for sale, of course), either straight (the finer varieties can match the quality of a good whiskey) or mixed with an endless number of tropical fruits and crushed ice. If you're feeling hungry, try the delicious *escondidinho*, a mix of sun-dried beef hidden under a puree of mashed cassava. There is a second location in Barra at Ave. Armando Lombardi 800, Loja 65 L (phone 21-2492-1159 or 21-2493-7956).

Daily from noon.

Bar Astor

Ave. Vieira Souto 110
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2523-0085

<http://www.barastor.com.br/o-astor/rio-de-janeiro>

One of the only few beachfront bars in Ipanema, chic Bar Astor has a decent drinks menu (including a great caipirinha) and an eclectic food selection (basic bar food with a French slant).

Monday-Wednesday 6 pm-1 am, Thursday 6 pm-2 am, Friday 1 pm-3 am, Saturday midnight-3 pm, Sunday midnight-10 pm.

Bar D'Hotel

Hotel Marina All Suites, Ave. Delfim Moreira 696, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2172-1112

<http://www.allsuites.hoteismarina.com.br/gastronomia/bar-d-h-a-tel.htm>

This plush, classy, air-conditioned bar has a great view of the beach and is a meeting place for romantics of any persuasion. Settle down on one of the velvet sofas and enjoy the sunset. Good for drinks or late-night food, it also offers brunch until 3 pm. The *caipirubys* (a vodka caipirinha with red berries) and the

Royal (a cocktail made with vodka, Cointreau, grenadine, lime, ginger and ice) are favorite drinks there. A fun and hip place, but it can be a bit pricey.

Daily 7 am-2 am.

Bar do Mineiro

Rua Paschoal Carlos Magno 99, Santa Teresa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2221-9227

<http://www.bardomineiro.net>

This traditional watering hole, with its tiled walls and delicious bar menu, is one of the most charming and authentic bars in the bohemian Santa Teresa neighborhood. There you get an idea about what the bars in the small towns of the Minas Gerais region are like. It's quieter during the week but still has a great atmosphere and gets very busy during weekends. Try the *pasteis* (deep-fried pastries with a variety of fillings), *feijoada* (on Saturday) or shredded sun-dried beef served with pumpkin and kale. For drinks, icy Bohemia and Original beers are popular, but the ginger *batidas* are good, too. Of course, you can always sample shots of excellent Mineiro *cachacas*.

Open Tuesday-Friday 11 am-2 am, Saturday until 3 am, Sunday until midnight.

Bar e Restaurante Urca

Rua Candido Gaffree 205, Urca
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2295-8744

<http://www.barurca.com.br>

This little hidden gem of a bar is a lovely place to enjoy the sunset, a cold beer and the chat of Rio locals. It has great *pasteis* made of shrimp.

Monday-Friday 6:30 am-11 pm, Saturday 8 am-11 pm, Sunday 8 am-8 pm.

Baretto-Londra

Ave. Vieira Souto 80, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3202-4000

<http://www.fasano.com.br/gastronomia/baretto-londra>

This stylish bar inside the Fasano Hotel is a testament to the hotel owner's obsession with London. Its heavy leather sofas and Union Jack decor coupled with record covers on the walls give it a little bit of Britrock flavor. The drinks are a bit on the pricey side, but the caipirinhas are fabulous. It's worth trying the mixed berry flavor or lychee. There is usually a DJ or live music Wednesday-Saturday, but the music comes with a cover charge. Dress is smart; leave the flip-flops at home.

Monday-Saturday from 8 pm.

Bar Luiz

Rua da Carioca 39, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2262-6900

<http://www.barluiz.com.br>

This traditional bar dates back to 1887 and has a beautiful art deco interior unchanged since 1927. Old photographs of Rio adorn the walls. It is reputed to have the best *chopp* (draft beer) in town. The bar is said to have been frequented by lots of Carioca characters—everyone from diplomats to writers such as Machado de Assis. Also serves great, but not cheap, German food.

Monday 11 am-8 pm, Tuesday-Friday 11 am-10 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm.

Bracarense

Rua Jose Linhares 85, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2294-3549

<http://bracarense.com.br>

This simple little bar is about as unpretentious as you can possibly get—locals go there to sit at sidewalk tables and drink beer, often after visiting the beach, and it's routinely voted the best of its kind by local journalists. Great snacks: Try the *carne seca*, a northeastern specialty of salted beef with garlic and onions, or the *caldo de feijao*, a black-bean soup served with pork rinds, lime and cilantro. Another house specialty is *bolinho de aipim com camarao*, a crisp ball of deep-fried manioc puree filled with shrimp and Catupiry cheese.

Open Monday-Saturday 8 am-midnight, Sunday 10 am-10 pm.

Braseiro da Gavea

Praca Santos Dumont 116, Gavea
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2239-7494

<http://www.brasedodagavea.com.br>

In an area known as Baixo Gavea, this popular bar across from Rio's Jockey Club is the hot spot in this upscale neighborhood. Happy hour is crowded and lively, and it's a great place for igniting amorous encounters. The bar food is simple and hearty—try the *galeto* (roast chicken).

Daily from 11 am.

Champanharia Ovelha Negra

Rua Bambina 120, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2226-1064

<http://www.champanhariaovelhanegra.com.br>

The Rio branch of the popular champagne bar of the southern city of Porto Alegre quickly attracted a legion of loyal customers. Inspired by Barcelona's popular wine bars, the Champanharia offers about 40 different domestic and imported brands. Good sandwiches and antipasti platters to accompany your favorite bubbly. Happy hours are packed. The best day to visit is Friday.

Monday-Friday 5:30-11:30 pm. Bottles begin at R\$30 and can run up to R\$825.

Devassa

Rua San Verguero 2
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2556-0538

<http://www.cervejariadevassa.com.br/unidades/rio-de-janeiro/flamengo>

The specialty there is draft beer from its own microbrewery. The dark brews are worth trying. The Monday night all-you-can-drink special for R\$30 attracts a big crowd, but the place is also a popular hangout on weekends. There are branches in several other neighborhoods around town.

Daily from noon.

Jobi

Ave. Ataulfo de Paiva 1166, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

You can't talk about bars in Rio without talking about Jobi. It's an institution and one of the only late-night bars in the beach area of the city. People crowd outside this small bar in Leblon well into the early hours. It also serves tasty traditional Brazilian food, all topped with a constant flow of cold beer.

Open daily 11 am-4 am.

Meza Bar

Rua Capitaio Salamao 69, Humaita
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3239-1951

<http://www.mezabar.com.br>

Meza Bar breaks the mold in this street full of *botecos* in Botafogo. It has one of the most sophisticated and extensive drink menus in Rio. You can also get light meals to nibble on, served tapas-style. It's a cool place to hang if you fancy a change of pace. There is often a DJ on the weekends.

Open nightly from 6 pm.

Palaphita Kitsch

Avenida Epitacio Pessa s/n, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2227-0837

<http://www.palaphitakitch.com.br>

One of the most pleasant bars in which to sip a drink by the lake seated on its chunky wooden chairs. As well as a good range of drinks, the restaurant specializes in Amazonian dishes. It's worth trying the *tambaqui*, a fish typical of the region. The bar prides itself on using predominantly organic ingredients.

Daily 6 pm-midnight.

Dance & Nightclubs

The cover charge to enter most clubs is less expensive if you take a flyer with you or send your name to the *lista amiga* first. All require ID to enter, so make sure you have a copy of your passport with you.

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Ave. Padre Leonel Franca 240, Gavea (beside the Planetarium)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2540-8041

<http://00riodejaneiro.com.br/riodejaneiro.html>

Zero Zero (as it is pronounced) is one of the most sophisticated-yet-friendly nightclubs in Rio, with a high density of aspiring models and local celebrities. All week long, DJs spin a mixture of soul, funk, R&B and electronica. When your legs give out, you can relax and nibble on sushi in an outdoor bar under leafy palms. Friday is normally hip-hop night, though it's best to check the website for the music schedule.

Monday from 5 pm, Tuesday-Sunday from 9 pm. Cover R\$20-\$50.

Armazem 161

Rua do Lavradio 161, Lapa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

An antiques store along Lapa's antiques strip was transformed into a nightclub with a bar, dance floor and room for live samba shows. Atmospheric lighting, thanks to some 200 antique lamps and chandeliers.

Open Wednesday from 6:30 pm, Thursday-Saturday from 10 pm. Cover R\$20-\$30.

Casa da Matriz

Rua Henrique de Novaes 107, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2226-9691

<http://www.casadamatriz.com.br>

Casa da Matriz is part of a group that includes several other clubs. It is popular with the student-age crowds and often feels like a European club. They may play electronic or 1980s vibe, or drum 'n' bass.

Cover R\$20-\$45.

Fosfofox

Rua Siqueira Campos 143, Copacabana
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2548-7498

<http://www.fosfofox.com.br>

Located in the heart of Copacabana, this club caters to Rio's underground scene. It offers a variety of themed nights, featuring rock, glam rock, hip-hop, funk and all kinds of electronic music. It also presents performance art. It hosts gay nights, too, so check the schedule. Try the special (and quite lethal) cocktail called *fada azul* (blue fairy), a concoction made of blue curacao, absinthe and lime juice.

Open Wednesday-Saturday from 11 pm, Sunday from 9 pm. Cover varies, usually R\$25-\$40 depending on the night (cheaper with flyer or name on *lista amiga*).

Severyna

Rua Ipiranga 54, Laranjeiras
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2556-9398

<http://www.severyna.com.br>

This is the hip place for *forro*, the fast, accordion-driven music from northeastern Brazil, which you dance to with a partner. Once considered *declassé*, *forro* clubs have become popular with young middle-class Brazilians. Severyna features *forro*, MPB and samba nightly—except on Saturday, when Beatles covers reign. Also serves northeastern regional food such as *carne de sol* (sun-dried beef).

Shows start at 8:30 pm. Cover R\$15.

The Week

Rua Sacadura Cabral 135
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2253-1020

<http://www.theweek.com.br>

The Week was one of the first clubs to be situated near the port-side area. It follows the success of the club in Sao Paulo and in Florianopolis. It's one of Rio's only real "superclubs" with two dance floors and a pleasant open decked area outside. Although it has a huge gay following, it also draws an increasingly mixed crowd. Check the website for themed nights.

Open nightly from 11 pm.

Live Music

Cafe Cultural Sacrilegio

Ave. Mem de Sa 81
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3970-1461

<http://www.sacrilegio.com.br>

Housed in one of the many renovated heritage buildings of Lapa, this is a hip and affordable place to experience the nontouristy party scene of Rio. Cafe Cultural Sacrilegio is located just next to the more famous Carioca de Gema, but its bands are just as good, if not better. Enjoy fantastic samba, *choro* and *maxixe* (the Brazilian version of tango).

Tuesday-Friday from 7 pm, Saturday from 8 pm. Cover R\$25 Tuesday-Thursday, R\$35 Friday and Saturday.

Carioca da Gema

Ave. Mem de Sa 79, Lapa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2221-0043

<http://www.barcariocadagema.com.br>

One of Lapa's favorite bohemian addresses features live samba and Brazilian pop music, along with delicious snacks such as sun-dried beef with onions and bacon. There are only a few tables, and it gets full on Friday and Saturday.

Monday-Friday from 6 pm, Saturday from 9 pm, Sunday from 8 pm. Cover is R\$22-\$35.

Circo Voador

Rua dos Arcos s/n, Lapa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2533-0354

<http://www.circovoador.com.br>

If you're a bit samba-ed out but still want to hear some live music, Circo Voador is the place to go. Some of the best contemporary young Brazilian bands play there as well as international artists. It's a great venue with a huge outside area where you can sip a beer under palm trees while listening to a band play under a huge covered marquee.

Cover R\$15-\$50 depending on band.

Clube dos Democraticos

Rua da Riachuelo 91, Lapa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2252-1324

<http://www.clubedosedemocraticos.com.br>

This is the oldest samba dance hall in Rio, and it still retains a unique atmosphere compared to, say, the glitz of Rio Scenarium. It's a great place to listen to samba or *forro*, while also having enough space to dance. If you don't feel like dancing yourself, you can watch young couples dance *samba de gafiera*. Wednesday is good for *forro*, Thursday and Saturday for samba.

Cover R\$15-\$30.

Rio Scenarium

Rua do Lavradio 20, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3147-9000

<http://www.rioscenarium.art.br>

This late-19th-century mansion is furnished with antiques that are often rented out for TV and film productions. It makes it an interesting place for a night out. The relaxed bar draws a colorful crowd with live performances of Brazilian samba, *choro* and *forro* music. Expect long lines Friday and Saturday from 10 pm since the main band performs at 10:30 pm. You can also reserve tables.

Open Tuesday-Thursday from 6:30 pm, Friday and Saturday from 9 pm. Cover R\$30-\$45.

Trapiche Gamboa

Rua Sacadura Cabral 155, Praca Maua
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2516-0868

<http://www.trapichegamboa.com>

If you feel like checking out some different neighborhoods, Trapiche Gamboa is a fantastic old building situated near the old port area in Praça Maua. It generally plays samba and attracts an older, thirty- to fiftysomething crowd. It also has a good selection of Brazilian *petiscos*, or finger foods.

Open Tuesday-Friday 6:30 pm-1 am, Saturday 8:30 pm-2 am. Cover R\$15-\$20.

Vinicius

Rua Vinicius de Moraes 39 (across the road from Garota da Ipanema restaurant), Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2287-1497

<http://www.viniciusbar.com.br>

This pleasant spot offers live bossa nova a block from the beach. Excellent food, too. Maria Creuza, who often sang with bossa nova poet Vinicius de Moraes, makes frequent appearances there.

Bossa nova shows daily, with warm-up acts starting around 9:30 pm. Headlining artists at 11 pm. Cover R\$30-\$45 depending on night and artist.

Other Options

Cidade do Samba

Rua Rivadavia 60, Gamboa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2213-2503

<http://cidadedosambarj.globo.com>

Samba school music and performances happen year-round at the massive Cidade da Samba building next to the city's docklands. Thirteen of Rio's major samba schools create and store their floats in this huge complex.

Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm. Entrance R\$5. Every other Thursday there is a samba spectacle and dinner beginning at 8 pm for R\$190.

Lapa

Arcos de Lapa (Located in the area around the arches of the old aqueduct)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Most Friday and Saturday nights, the streets of this small neighborhood—Rio's version of Paris' Montmartre—are full of people. If you're lucky, you may catch a drumming circle or a *capoeira* display, a stunning mixture of dance and martial arts. Nearby, there are small clubs and live-music venues where you can dance to samba and Brazilian hip-hop. Dress down if you don't want to feel conspicuous.

Performing Arts

Rio has a lively performing-arts scene. In addition to theaters and concert halls, many groups offer free weekend concerts of popular and classical Brazilian music (many in some of the city's baroque churches). Parks in Ipanema, Leme and Lagoa, as well as the Aterro de Flamengo, also attract crowds with their outdoor shows.

Music

Brazilian Symphony Orchestra

Ave. Rio Branco 135, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2142-5800

<http://www.osb.com.br>

The group performs at various locations throughout the year. Check the website for schedule and location.

Na Roda

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://narodario.wordpress.com>

Offers music lessons with top Brazilian musicians and teachers, such as percussionist Marco Lobo, who has worked with Milton Nascimento, Maria Betania, Lenine, Ana Carolina, Joao Bosco, Titas, Gilberto Gil and others. Lessons are given in the musicians' studios, usually in Zona Sul around the Catete and Laranjeiras neighborhoods.

Venues

Large international concerts are usually held at the football (soccer) stadiums, though it is worth checking the local paper, particularly the Rio Show section of Friday's *O Globo* newspaper, which lists all the gigs happening in bigger venues.

For more information about events, check Fundicao, based in Lapa (<http://www.fundicaoprogresso.com.br>) and Vivo Rio near Cinelandia (<http://www.vivorio.com.br>).

Centro Cultural do Banco do Brasil

Rua Primeiro de Marco 66, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3808-2020

<http://culturabancodobrasil.com.br/portal/rio-de-janeiro>

Located in a restored bank building, this venue usually has a full slate of classical-music concerts, plays, art exhibits and films.

Wednesday-Monday 9 am-9 pm.

Cidade das Artes

Avenida das Americas, Barra da Tijuca
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3328-5300 (box office)

<http://cidadedasartes.rio.rj.gov.br>

This truly stunning cultural center opened its doors in 2013. The building contains the *Grande Sala*, which is the main 1,250-seat concert hall, as well as theaters, a chamber music hall, cinema and restaurant. The location is the home for the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra.

Metropolitan

Ave. Ayrton Senna 3000, Barra da Tijuca
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-4003-6464. Toll-free 21-4003-5588 (box office)

<http://www.t4f.com.br>

The large Metropolitan, which seats 8,450, hosts concerts by international and Brazilian artists. Tickets can be purchased online or by calling or visiting the box office (open daily noon-8 pm).

Teatro Joao Caetano

Praca Tiradentes, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2332-9257

<http://www.cultura.rj.gov.br/espaco/teatro-joao-caetano>

This venue has high-caliber dance, theater, musical and opera performances.

Teatro Rival Petrobras

Rua Alvaro Alvim 33-37, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2240-4469

<http://www.rivalpetrobras.com.br>

This swanky club has been around since the 1930s. A legendary institution, it continues to host some of the top names in MPB (Brazilian pop music). It's a great location in a back street in Cinelandia.

Monday-Friday 3-9 pm, Saturday 4-9 pm.

Theatro Municipal

Praca Marechal Floriano, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2332-9191

<http://www.theatromunicipal.rj.gov.br>

The beautifully restored Theatro Municipal is Rio's main performance venue. Its orchestra presents concerts year-round. It also hosts four operas a year, soloists and vocalists perform there, and its dance troupe stages performances based on Brazilian literature and folklore as well as a standard classical repertoire.

Tuesday-Friday 11 am-4 pm, Saturday 11 am-1 pm.

Spectator Sports

Brazil has won more World Cup tournaments than any other country, so it should come as no surprise that soccer is the national passion. Brazilian soccer teams play year-round in different tournaments: The Rio de Janeiro state tournament takes place January-March, and the national tournament kicks off in April and finishes in December.

There are four main soccer teams in Rio: Flamengo, Botafogo, Vasco and Fluminense. These teams normally play at the legendary Maracana stadium. Home games are also played in other local grounds, such as Engenhao for Flamengo, the city's most popular team.

The only other regular sporting event in Rio is horse racing.

Soccer

Engenhao

The best place to see a game is generally Engenhao stadium, although it's a bit trickier to get to than the Maracana. The quickest way is to go to the train station, Central, by metro or taxi and catch a train from there. The trains will go in the direction of Bangu or Campo Grande, and you need to disembark in station Olimpica de Engenhao de Dentro. Otherwise a taxi will cost around R\$40 from Zona Sul. You can take a bus from Zona Sul 457 or 485L, but you could be in for a long ride. You can access the club from Rua Arquias Cordeiro close to the station.

If you want to avoid the hassles of public transport to get to a game, the best way is to take an organized tour. The company Brazil Expedition runs great regular football trips to games. It will organize tickets and transport, as well as escort you into the stadium. Cost R\$120-\$150 (phone 21-9998-2907; <http://www.brazilexpedition.com>).

Tickets for the game should cost you R\$20-\$40 and can be bought in the Flamengo's headquarters, conveniently located in Gavea at the Western side of the Lake area.

Laranjeiras

Rua Alvaro Chaves 41
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3179-7416

<http://www.fluminense.com.br>

Home to Fluminense Football Club and modeled after an English cricket pavilion, this is the oldest stadium in Brazil and the only club stadium in Rio worthy of a visit just to see the facility. During the state championship, you may even see the team play in this antiquated setting, but only against smaller teams who attract few fans, because the capacity is about 8,000. It's unlikely you'll ever sit in a more beautiful location to watch a professional soccer match—Laranjeiras affords a far more pleasant experience than the mammoth Maracana stadium (even though a majority of games are played there).

Maracana

Rua Professor Eurico Rabelo s/n (at the corner of Avenida Macarana)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-8871-3950

<http://www.suderj.rj.gov.br/maracana.asp>

The Maracana stadium is actually not called the Maracana; its real name is Stadium Mario Filho, named for a Brazilian journalist. The Maracana name comes from the neighborhood where it is located. The stadium, with seating capacity of 73,531, was used for the 2014 World Cup and hosted the opening ceremonies of the 2016 Olympics. The stadium also houses a museum.

Daily 9 am-5 pm. R\$10.

Shopping

Ipanema and several shopping malls are Rio's prime shopping spots. Because Brazil has some of the largest gem mines in the world, gems and jewelry are an excellent value. Both H. Stern and Amsterdam Sauer have headquarters in Rio. Look for them on Ipanema's Avenida Visconde de Pirajá, which is also filled with specialty boutiques. (Avoid designer-name products sold by street vendors: They're fake.)

When buying antique religious icons, be sure to ask for proof of origin: An organized crime ring pilfers objects from colonial churches and sells them through antiques dealers in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and other major cities.

In a country with such a rich musical heritage and so many contemporary singers and bands, it would be a shame not to buy a few CDs or traditional instruments.

Shopping Hours: Generally Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm. During the summer (December-March), many stores stay open on Saturday until 7 pm, especially in Ipanema and Copacabana. Shopping malls are often open Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm. There is an increasing number of 24-hour grocery and convenience stores. Most open-air markets operate 7 am-3 pm. The larger shopping malls usually open after 3 pm on Sunday.

Antique Stores

Cassino Antique Fair

Ave. Atlantica 4240, Copacabana
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2523-8709

<http://www.shoppingcassinoatlantico.com.br>

This fair has more than 60 booths in the halls of the Cassino Atlantico shopping mall.

Saturday 11 am-7 pm.

Downtown Antique Fair

Praca Marechal Ancora, Centro (next to the old market tower and Praca 15)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

At this outdoor antiques fair you'll find china and silver, old watches, Oriental rugs, rare books, all types of paintings and art objects.

Open Saturday 8 am-5 pm.

Praca Santos Dumont Antiques Fair

Jardim Botânico (in front of Hipodromo do Jockey Club Brasileiro)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The traditional fair of Praca Quinze is re-created at Praca Santos Dumont, with more than 50 stalls selling art-nouveau and art-deco pieces, furniture, porcelain, ivory, crystal, silverware and rugs. Open 9 am-5 pm.

Rua do Lavradio

Rua Lavradio 28, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2224-6693

<http://www.polonovorioantigo.com.br>

This long street in the bohemian quarter of Lapa is filled with old mansions that have been converted into antiques stores. Increasingly, many of the stores have added cafes, bars and even nightclubs to the premises. Check out the Mercado Moderno, a great 20th-century furniture store. Great for both buying and browsing. An open-air antiques fair is held on the first Saturday of every month.

Shopping dos Antiquarios

Rua Siqueira Campos 143, Copacabana
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.shoppingdosantiquarios.com>

From the outside, this imposing concrete megamall resembles a massive parking deck. However, inside are two floors full of more than 250 antiques stores specializing in every type of object—jewelry, clothing, toys, books and furniture—from many time periods. There are some truly wonderful finds available.

Open Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm.

Galleries

If you'd like to buy some Brazilian art, the Cassino Atlantico shopping arcade has two or three galleries selling art at reasonable prices. You'll also find some artwork in the Santa Teresa neighborhood, where many Carioca artists live—try the area around Largo dos Guimaraes, on the *bondinho* route up from Centro. Twice a year (May and November), Santa Teresa artists hold a collective open house in their ateliers. There's also the slightly touristy "hippie fair" on Sunday in Ipanema, where you're sure to find many different kinds of paintings—together with a fair amount of junk.

There is an increasing number of smaller galleries exhibiting street art in Rio. They are often inside shops.

Galeria Jean Boghici

Rua Joana Angelica 180, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Owner Jean Boghici was among the pioneers in dealing Brazilian modernists. The gallery still specializes in work from the mid-20th century.

Open Monday-Saturday 2:30-7:30 pm.

Homegrown

Rua Maria Quitéria 68, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2513-2160

<http://www.homegrown.com.br>

This shop, located above a bar, displays street art.

Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm.

Markets

Rio has several excellent open-air markets where you'll find fresh-cut flowers, fruits, vegetables, meats and cheeses. Try Praca General Osorio in Ipanema on Tuesday, Rua Domingos Ferreira in Copacabana on Wednesday, and Praca Santos Dumont in Gavea or Praca Nossa Senhora de Paz in Ipanema on Friday.

Babilonia Feira Hype

Jockey Club, Rua Jardim Botânico, Tribuna C, Gavea
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.babiloniafeirahype.com.br>

Every few weeks, part of the swanky Jockey Club is taken over by this fashionable arts-and-crafts market. It's a great place to buy clothes and jewelry from Rio's up-and-coming designers, as well as crafts. It also has designer brands for lower prices. The outdoor food court has lots to choose from, and you can sit and watch the horse races in the shade of Corcovado. It's best to check the newspaper for details.

Saturday and Sunday noon-10 pm.

Cobal do Humaita

Rua Voluntarios da Patria 448, Humaita
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This permanent produce market is also a popular spot for lunch and dinner.

Open Tuesday-Saturday 8 am-6 pm, Sunday 8 am-noon.

Feira de Sao Cristovao

Campo de Sao Cristovao
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2580-5335

<http://www.feiradesaocristovao.org.br>

Started more than 50 years ago by migrant workers, this market is now an explosion of music, dancing, food, art and produce from northeastern Brazil that attracts 60,000 people each weekend. On Saturday the carnival atmosphere really gets going after midnight, with music and dancing (mostly the traditional *forro*) that can continue until daylight. The market winds down Sunday afternoon, usually finishing at about 6 pm.

Tuesday-Thursday 10 am-6 pm, Friday-Sunday 10 am-9 pm.

Hippie Fair

Praca General Osorio (an easy walk from Ipanema hotels and about 10 minutes by taxi from Copacabana), Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.feirahippieipanema.risoleil.com>

This fair has it all: contemporary Brazilian art, leather goods, knickknacks, jewelry, Bahian snacks, handmade instruments and live music. As is the case at all of Rio's outdoor markets, you can try to bargain (you are more likely to haggle successfully at the end of the day). It's worth a trip even if you decide not to buy anything.

Sunday 7 am-7 pm.

Shopping Areas

Avenida Visconde de Piraja

This Ipanema avenue is one of the chic places to shop in Rio. You'll find the city's major jewelers, H. Stern and Amsterdam Sauer, and an abundance of boutiques and bikini shops. Be sure to explore the many small shopping arcades, where some of the best shops are tucked away.

Barra Shopping

Ave. das Americas 4666, Barra de Tijuca
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-4003-4131

<http://www.barrashopping.com.br>

The biggest and arguably the best shopping mall in the city—the only problem is that it's far away. The taxi fare from Copacabana or Ipanema is around R\$40, but there are also numerous buses from the Zona Sul.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 3-9 pm.

Cassino Atlantico

Ave. Atlantica 4240, Copacabana (next to the Sofitel Rio de Janeiro Copacabana)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This shopping arcade houses the Cassino Antique Fair, several art galleries and a variety of other shops.

Forum de Ipanema

Ave. Visconde de Piraja 134, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

<http://www.forumdeipanema.com.br>

One of this famous neighborhood's most interesting arcades brings together many of Rio's top designers under one glitzy roof.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 3-9 pm.

Rio Sul

Rua Lauro Muller 116, Botafogo (just minutes from Copacabana)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-3527-7257

<http://www.riosul.com.br>

Zona Sul's largest shopping mall, Rio Sul is full of department stores and lots of clothing shops, plus a food court and movie theater.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday noon-9 pm.

Sao Conrado Fashion Mall

Estrada de Gavea 899, Sao Conrado
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2111-4444

<http://www.fashionmall.com.br>

This glitzy mall is a shopping paradise for affluent Cariocas in search of the latest domestic and foreign designer labels. The impressive food court is one of the best in town.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday noon-9 pm.

Shopping Leblon

Ave. Afranio de Melo Franco 290, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2430-5122

<http://www.shoppingleblon.com.br>

A suitably Leblon experience with designer shops in a pleasant environment. There is even a Starbucks with a resident pianist. There is also a food court upstairs, plus cinemas.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm, Sunday 1-9 pm.

Specialty Stores

Amsterdam Sauer

Ave. Rio Branco 156, Loja C, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2283-5962

<http://www.amsterdamsauer.com.br>

This world-famous jewelry store offers precious stones from Brazil. Tours of its workshop are offered. Museum and international showroom on Rua Garcia D'Avila in Ipanema (phone 21-2512-1132).

Monday-Friday 9 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-4 pm.

Bumbum

Estrada Do Portela 395, Apt 201
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2268-7507

<http://www.bumbum.com.br>

Bumbum, one of the famous Carioca bikini brands, churns out sexy beachwear, and the beaches of the Zona Sul all serve as open-air runways of the latest trends. Quality is high, the material high-tech, durable and stretchable, and prices don't have to be high unless you want your bikini hand-embroidered, sequined or embellished with diamonds. It stocks larger sizes, too, as well as *sungas* (men's bathing suits), beach dresses, beach bags, hats, sarongs, chunky jewelry and belts. Bumbum has shops in all major Rio shopping malls.

Casa Oliveira

Rua da Carioca 70, Centro
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2508-8539

<http://www.casaoliveirademusica.com.br>

One of several good music shops selling instruments on this specialist street. The famous *berimbau*, from Bahia, is this store's specialty.

Monday-Friday 9 am-7 pm, Saturday 9 am-1 pm.

Daqui do Brasil

Ave. Ataulfo de Paiva 1174, Loja A, Leblon
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2529-8576

<http://www.daquidobrasil.com>

This charming little store features articles of contemporary Brazilian design such as household items, jewelry, toys and clothing accessories.

Monday-Friday 10 am-9 pm, Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.

Galeria River

Rua Francisco Otaviano 67, Copacabana
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2267-5899

<http://galeriariver.com.br>

This shopping gallery has been around since the swinging 1960s. Conveniently located behind the surfers' beach at Arpoador (between Copacabana and Ipanema), its boutiques are devoted to Cariocas' favorite beach activities: surfing, swimming, tanning and skating. Tanned shoppers walk dripping and barefoot through the main corridors in search of gear. It's a great place to pick up cool shades, bikinis, surfboards or skateboards.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm.

Glorinha Paranagua

Rua Visconde de Piraja 365, Loja 2, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Tropical stylish handbags made of bamboo, linen, soft leather, gold cork and striped straw.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-3 pm.

H. Stern

Rua Visconde de Piraja 490, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2274-3447

<http://www.hstern.com.br>

This world-famous jewelry store features precious stones and excellent designs. At its main store in Ipanema, you can also tour the workshop and visit a small museum. It has other stores in Centro (at Ave. Rio Branco 128-A), at the airports and other locations around the city.

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturday 8:30 am-12:30 pm.

Maria Bonita

Rua Vinicius de Moraes 149, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2523-4093

<http://www.mariabonita.com.br>

Established by the late Maria Candida Sarmento in 1975, "Pretty Mary" is probably the most established Carioca fashion brand, and its timeless, elegant collection by Danielle Jensen ranks among the best—but certainly not cheapest—buys in Rio.

Monday-Friday 9 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-4 pm.

Maria Oitica

Rua Elvira Machado 18, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2275-4197

<http://www.mariaoitica.com.br>

Why make jewelry of expensive gold, silver and diamonds when you have Amazonian seeds, fish scales and bark from exotic trees such as *tucuma*, *morototo*, *buriti* and *babacu*? The only thing these jewels and accessories don't like is water. They do look beautiful, though, and purchases support rainforest preservation and help Amazonian communities survive on the production of arts and crafts. There are also branches in Leblon, Ipanema and Gavea.

Monday-Friday 10 am-8 pm, Saturday 10 am-3 pm.

Novo Designo

Museu de Arte Moderna, Ave. Infante Dom Henrique 85 (in the Aterro do Flamengo, near Santos Dumont Airport)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2524-2291

<http://www.novodesenho.com.br>

Small but great showroom for contemporary Brazilian design: lamps, clocks, housewares, office accessories and creative toys. It also sells a fabulous collection of arts and crafts made in small communities from all over Brazil.

Tuesday-Friday noon-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday noon-7 pm.

Osklen

Rua Maria Quitéria 85, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2227-2911

<http://osklen.com>

An ethical-minded, ecofriendly Brazilian label, blending urban chic with a casual but exuberant touch of Brazilian nature. Carioca fashion at its best, and affordable, too. This is where the cool locals shop. There are locations all over Rio; the flagship store is in Ipanema

Parceria Carioca

Rua Jardim Botânico 728, Loja 108
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2259-1437

<https://www.facebook.com/parceria.carioca>

Designer Flavia Torres creates beautiful and funky costume jewelry, as well as colorful bags and sandals. There is a second location in Ipanema.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm.

Pe de Boi Artesanato Brasileiro

Rua Ipiranga 55, Laranjeiras
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2285-4395

<http://www.pedeboi.com.br>

Beautiful Brazilian arts and crafts: decorated pots, basketware, folkloric and religious objects, finely woven textiles and hammocks.

Monday-Friday 9 am-7 pm, Saturday 9 am-1 pm.

Quiosques Biscoito Fino

Rua Lauro Muller 116, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2266-9300

<http://www.biscoitofino.com>

This Brazilian music label has stands or kiosks in two shopping malls, Rio Sul, Fashion Mall and Shopping Gavea.

Salinas

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2227-0523

<http://www.salinas-rio.com.br>

Bikinis are probably the most important item of clothing in a Carioca woman's wardrobe, and no one does them better than Salinas. There is something so effortlessly cool and Brazilian about these bikinis. There are nine shops throughout Rio; the largest one in Ipanema is in the Forum gallery.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm.

Toca do Vinicius

Rua Vinicius de Moraes 129-C, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2247-5227

<http://www.tocadovinicium.com.br>

Fans of bossa nova and such Brazilian singers and composers as Tom Jobim, Vinicius de Moraes, Chico Buarque and Caetano Veloso will love this friendly little place.

Open daily 9 am-10 pm.

Verve

Rua Garica D'Avila 149, Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Phone: 21-2247-0352

<http://vervelingerie.wordpress.com>

Often called "lingerie with bossa," this great Carioca label swings for sure. Its nightgowns, bras and panties are sexy, playful, comfortable and—most importantly—come in sizes that follow international standards. There are also shops in Gavea, Barra and Sao Conrado.

Monday-Friday 10 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-3 pm.

Security

Etiquette

Remember one fact above all others: The heritage of Brazil is Portuguese, not Spanish. Statements and actions that tend to lump the country's culture in with that of the Spanish-speaking nations of South America will not be well-received.

Appointments—Appointments should be made well in advance, but spontaneity is very common, particularly when socializing. Punctuality is rare: As a visitor, you should be on time, but expect to wait for your Brazilian counterpart. If you need to deal with any government bureaucracy, your chances of business success will increase if you employ a Brazilian agent (a *despachante*). They are often invaluable for cutting through red tape.

Personal Introductions—Shake hands with everyone, and maintain steady eye contact. In Brazil, women often greet both men and women with a kiss on each cheek. If your acquaintance has a professional title, you will learn it when introduced. Until directed otherwise, use the professional title or the more standard titles (Senhor, Senhora). Brazilians will often use such titles with first names. Note that it is typical for a person to have two surnames, one from the mother, followed by one from the father. Unlike Spanish America, the father's surname usually comes last. For example, Senhor Joao Gaspar Figueiredo would be called "Senhor Figueiredo."

Negotiating—Small talk nearly always precedes discussions of business. A solid personal foundation is used to build a rapport, and that takes time. Do not become impatient if negotiations fail to be direct and to the point. Relations tend to become relaxed and informal rather quickly, but allow your host to set the pace.

Business Entertaining—Business should take a backseat to socializing during meals. Dinner usually takes place between 7 and 10 pm, but formal dinner parties can last into the wee hours.

Body Language—Body space tends to be close, with polite gesturing and touching common. Know that the "OK" sign (thumb and forefinger touching in a circle) is a vulgar gesture in Brazil. To signal "OK," give the thumbs-up sign.

Gift Giving—Gifts are not a major part of doing business in Brazil. Take along a small gift such as flowers, candy or wine if you're invited to someone's home.

Conversation—Standard cautions apply. Early on, avoid politics and religion. Ask questions about Brazilian culture rather than offering opinions about it. Brazilians are generally interested in what foreigners think of their country and may ask your opinion. You may want to prepare a diplomatic answer. You will probably be asked if you know the names of a couple of Brazilian musicians and the fact that Brazil is a five-time champion of the World Cup soccer competition. Soccer (*futebol*) is a good icebreaker, and soap operas (*telenovelas*) are attentively followed by many women.

Personal Safety

There have been many moves by the government in Rio in the past few years to tighten up security in the city with the introduction of measures such as 24-hour policing in the favelas. In the beach areas, simple steps such as brighter street lighting have been taken. However, although the crime rate is not as high as it was in the 1990s, it is still a problem. Theft in the street is common and it may involve a weapon, such as a knife or gun. The key to staying safe is to be aware and keep your wits about you: Avoid poorly lit and deserted areas; don't wear expensive (or expensive-looking) jewelry, clothing, shoes or watches; keep your wallet in a front pocket or, better yet, in a concealed money belt; and don't carry large amounts of cash. Avoid renting a vehicle if at all possible.

If you wear a backpack, be especially vigilant, since hands can easily slip inside it behind your back. Never take valuables to the beach, including expensive footwear—just a towel and some money for a cold drink. Be alert on city buses—they've been known to attract thieves. Speaking English loudly in public places may also attract unwanted attention. If you are approached and threatened, the best thing is to keep calm and give it up. Don't resist; it's not worth it.

When using ATMs, make sure no one is hovering around you. Use a machine located inside a bank building or shopping mall and preferably during the day. Only keep a small amount of cash in your pocket, concealing more in a money belt. Don't flash or count money in public. With important documents such as passports or plane tickets, carry a photocopy with you and leave the original in a secure place such as the hotel safe.

It's generally safe to walk in the Zona Sul tourist areas during the day or evening (after dark, make sure to stay on busy, well-lit main thoroughfares), but be careful in the Centro (downtown) after office hours and on weekends. The city's Zona Norte is made up largely of industrial areas, poorer residential areas and favelas, and you're probably not likely to be walking there.

Also be careful in the sex-club area around Rua Prado Junior in Copacabana. Prostitution is legal in Brazil, and areas with a large number of working girls and brothels attract a higher rate of crime. Brazil is cracking down on brothels in the wake of the country's increasing international stature and high-profile events. An early-evening stroll along the well-lighted and restaurant-packed Avenida Atlantica is a better alternative if you want to experience the colorful Copacabana nightlife, although it can become more dangerous late at night. Always stay on the hotel side; never walk on the beach side after dark. Be aware if you are walking along the beach sidewalks at night. It's not a good idea to walk down the beach side of Ipanema or Copacabana after a certain time. If no one else is doing it, you probably shouldn't, either.

At night, no matter where you are, it is always safer to take a taxi, particularly if you are unfamiliar with the neighborhood. Robberies do occur in broad daylight, too.

An increasing amount of police patrol the beach areas of Barra, Leblon, Ipanema, Copacabana and Leme. A special branch of the civil police, DEAT, is trained to deal with all crime related to tourists and foreigners. Its offices are located in Leblon in front of the Casa Grande and Scala theaters on Avenida Afranio de Mello Franco. Phone 21-3399-7170.

For more information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

Some locals drink filtered tap water, and it is safe to do so. However, many Cariocas prefer bottled water. Bottled water (*agua mineral*) is readily available in hotels, restaurants, supermarkets and drugstores. Food sold by street vendors is generally safe to eat, but make sure it has been freshly cooked and take note of the appearance of the vending stand: Sanitation standards are not always up to par. Watch out for inexpensive lunch counters, which also vary greatly in cleanliness. Food served in higher- and moderately priced restaurants is generally safe, although a recent crackdown revealed that some elite restaurants had serious hygiene issues.

The mosquito-borne zika virus is present in Brazil. Although many people infected with zika never show symptoms, if you experience fever, rash, joint pain and red eyes during or after your visit to Rio, consult a doctor. More concerning is the virus's correlation with severe birth defects: Women who are pregnant or may become pregnant should consult a doctor before visiting the region. For more information about zika, contact the CDC. <http://www.cdc.gov/zika>.

Private hospitals and clinics are clean and well-equipped and provide the same level of service you would expect in North America. The best hospital in Rio is Copa D'or, Rua Figueiredo de Magalhaes 875, Copacabana (phone 21-2545-3600; <http://www.copador.com.br>). Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment before treatment is given, so it is imperative you check your insurance coverage before your trip.

We do not recommend that you seek treatment in the free public hospitals; standards are not always as high as those in private hospitals, and you may be regarded as a burden on an already overstretched public health service. Your hotel should be able to recommend a competent doctor and arrange an appointment.

For a medical emergency, call 193 (Portuguese only). The excellent Ambulance Service (controlled by the fire department) does not respond to residence calls, including hotels.

Many pharmacies (*farmacias*) are open around the clock, including City Farma Flamengo (Rua Marques de Abrantes 37, Flamengo), City Farma do Leme (Ave. Prado Junior 237, Copacabana) and City Farma Leblon (Rua Dias Ferreira 618, Leblon).

For more information about localized outbreaks of dengue or yellow fever (almost always confined to rural areas) or other concerns, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

There is no official government agency that provides accessibility information. However, Centro de Vida Independente, a nongovernmental agency, can offer advice on traveling in Brazil with a disability. Rua Marques de Sao Vicente 225, Gavea. Phone 21-2512-1088. <http://www.cvi-rio.org.br/cvi.asp>.

People with reduced mobility who need a taxi should call Coopertramo (phone 21-2209-9292 or 21-8243-2958) or Transcoopass (phone 21-2209-1555).

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do try to dress like the locals. You may be on vacation, but the thieves are not. The more you blend in, the better. For instance, don't wear that new Brazilian national soccer shirt you just bought. Save it for the post-trip homecoming party.

Don't take your camera, wallet or purse to the beach. Take a little spending money, a towel and a bottle of sunscreen. Leave the rest behind.

Do buy a bikini when you are in Rio. Anything you take from home will be horribly outdated from a Brazilian point of view. Fortunately, string *tangas* are no longer as fashionable as they once were.

Don't wear a Speedo-style bathing suit if you are male. Buy a stylish Brazilian *sunga*, which are modeled on men's full briefs. Surfing shorts should never be worn for swimming, only for walking to the beach.

Do try the local food and beverages. Brazil is a great place to eat and drink. But if you want local ambience, don't go to dinner too early. Brazilians don't eat dinner until around 9 pm.

Do arrive on time for business appointments, but don't arrive on time for dates or informal social gatherings. If you arrive at a house party at the appointed hour, the hosts will still be getting ready. Cariocas are also famous for inviting people to their homes when they first meet them, but don't take the invitation literally.

Don't try to drive in the city and do be careful when crossing the street—even if the signal is in your favor.

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Passport, visa and proof of onward passage and/or sufficient funds are required of Canadian and U.S. citizens. There is a departure tax of about R\$140 that is normally included in your air ticket. If not, you pay the departure tax (in U.S. dollars or reals) when you check in at the airport. The Brazilian government usually awards a three-month tourist visa. It is renewable for another three months at the Policia Federal office located on the third floor of Terminal 1 at the Antonio Jobim International Airport.

All U.S. citizens must have a passport when traveling by air to or from Bermuda, Canada, the Caribbean, Central and South America and Mexico. Reconfirm travel-document requirements with your carrier prior to departure.

Population: 11,616,000.

Languages: Portuguese. Most major tourist hotels and upscale restaurants have staff members who speak English. Spanish is also widely understood (if not spoken), and a surprising number of establishments have staff who speak Japanese.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Roman Catholic, Protestant), traditional Afro-Brazilian religions.

Time Zone: 3 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (-3 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the first Sunday in October until the last Sunday in February.

Voltage Requirements: 110 volts. Most outlets are adaptable for two kinds of plugs: plugs with two flat prongs and plugs with two round prongs.

Telephone Codes: 55, country code; 21, city code for Rio de Janeiro;

Money

Taxes

A 19% sales tax is included in the price of most products and services. However, there are many exceptions, and some taxes range as high as 53%, so ask first if you have any doubt. By law, merchants cannot display the tax separately on your receipt. A 10% hotel occupancy tax and a 5% service tax are included in hotel prices. It's a good idea to confirm that taxes are included in any price you are quoted.

Tipping

In restaurants, a 10% service charge is included in the bill. In better restaurants, an "optional" 10% is calculated at the end of the bill, to be paid according to your discretion (pay it unless service was problematic). Tip a cabdriver no more than 10%—most Brazilians don't tip cabbies at all. In a hotel, tip the bellhop about R\$1 per luggage item.

Weather

Rio de Janeiro is warm and humid year-round. The heaviest rainfall is November-April. The best time to visit is May-August, when temperatures are mild, ranging 63-77 F/17-25 C. January and February generally have the hottest weather, with temperatures topping out at around 95 F/35 C.

What to Wear

Rio is the land of almost perennial tropical dress. Its beach weather lasts a good six months of the year and seems to affect the entire city's dress code. In the seaside neighborhoods of Ipanema, Copacabana, Leblon and Barra da Tijuca, swimsuit-and-sandal-clad beachgoers mix freely with casually dressed shop clerks. A suit is the norm only for Rio's downtown business district. Casual dress is acceptable in most restaurants—even bathing suits are acceptable in the outdoor cafes along the beach. At night, most locals change into trousers, dresses or skirts. A sweater or jacket is probably necessary at night during the winter.

Communication

Telephone

Rio's city code is 21, but it's not used when making calls within the city. Local phone numbers have eight digits. To call other cities in Brazil, dial 0, followed by a phone company code (21 for Telemar, 41 for

Embratel), then the city code, followed by the local number. The easiest way to call internationally from Rio is to call an operator at 000-111. For directory assistance, dial 102.

All cell phone numbers begin with 9, making cell numbers nine digits long.

The blue payphones in the streets (*orelhoes*) are used with phone cards (*cartao telefonico*) you can buy at any newspaper stall. They usually come in 40 or 60 units (*unidades*). A quick local call will set you back one or two units, but an international call will deplete the card in several minutes. For international calls, try Central Fone (phone 21-2522-6444; <http://www.centralfone.com.br>), which also offers cheap Internet access. However, the cheapest option, if you have Internet access, is to use Skype for phone calls.

Cell phone use in Rio is extremely popular, and coverage is excellent in town. International roaming is possible with GSM phones, but it's expensive. It is recommended that you buy a local SIM card from TIM (<http://www.tim.com.br>), the only Brazilian provider that offers nationwide service, and use it in an unlocked phone. You can also rent a mobile phone at the airports from a company such as PressCell (phone 21-2422-9300; <http://www.presscell.com.br>).

Internet Access

Internet cafes are common across town, with many bookstores also offering Internet services. You're most likely to stumble across an Internet cafe in Copacabana or Ipanema, where they're popular with visitors. The average cost is about R\$4-\$6 per hour.

At Info Centro (Avenida Rio Branco, right outside the Carioca metro stop) you'll find Internet services, along with a host of other technical services, in a four-story shopping center dedicated to computer and communications technology.

Wi-Fi is increasingly available but still not up to speed with Europe and the U.S. It is available at the airport, some hotels and at some coffee shops. (Wi-Fi-enabled coffee shops will have signs outside.)

Transportation

Taxis are the best and safest option for getting around Rio. Depending on where your hotel is, the metro (subway) is the second-best option. Driving a car or riding a bus can be a nerve-wracking experience for tourists—many Cariocas, especially city bus drivers, maneuver like race-car drivers, and traffic laws are inconsistently enforced. Rent a car only for out-of-town trips. In the summer, if you do ride a bus, be sure to take an air-conditioned one (called an *executivo*).

Bus

Rodoviaria Novo Rio

Rio's bus station is a constant beehive of activity, because buses are the principal mode of transportation into and out of the city. There are many bus lines, with service to and from all major cities in Brazil. An express "executive" bus service links Rio and Sao Paulo (a five-hour ride). Buses leave every 15 minutes and offer sleeper seats, air-conditioning and a small snack. Ave. Francisco Bicalho 1, Sao Cristovao. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Phone 21-3213-1800. <http://www.transportal.com.br/rodoviaria-novorrio>.

Car

Cars are driven on the right side of the road. The speed limit on the highway and on the Linha Vermelha is an often-exceeded 50 mph/80 kph (watch out for automatic radar controls on this road and the BR 101 between Rio and Paraty). On city streets, it's 30 mph/50 kph. Road signs are in kilometers. Exits off main highways such as the Linha Vermelha are called *saidas*.

Carioca drivers are notoriously fast and reckless, so be cautious on the road. Be particularly careful around buses, whose drivers tend to act as if they were driving roller coasters. When you are parking the car, it is typical that local children or men will guide you to an empty space and "stand guard" (whether they actually do so or not is another matter). When you drive away, you will be expected to tip them R\$1-\$2 for their services. Many people throughout Brazil eke out a living from this activity.

The minimum age required to drive a rental car in Brazil is 21. Some agencies also will demand driving experience of at least two years. The rental must be paid for using a major credit card; it will be charged in advance, sometimes as much as twice the rental amount, to prove you have sufficient funds. Both regular and international licenses are required to drive a rental car. The international license is different than those of other South American countries, so be sure you have the right one before you travel.

Rental-car companies have booths at both airports. Most of them also have locations on Avenida Princesa Isabel, near the Hotel Meridien in Copacabana. Expect to pay R\$180-\$225 per day for a small car.

Public Transportation

Buses

Riding a regular city bus in Rio is an adventure: There are no schedules or maps, space is tight, there are no storage compartments, and drivers don't speak English. On the positive side, bus service between the Centro and Zona Sul runs 24 hours a day, and you rarely need to wait long.

The front of the bus indicates the final destination, and the major stops and avenues traveled are written on the side of the bus. Safe alternatives are the green and blue minibuses (some of them air-conditioned) that circulate along the beaches from Copacabana to Leblon, stopping at hotels and restaurants. Large buses with TVs and air-conditioning (*ar condicionado* printed on the side) travel to more distant areas of the city.

Board large buses at the back, pay the fare collector (*trocador*) and then pass through the turnstile. Board minibuses at the front. The standard fare is around R\$4 per journey, although certain routes and air-conditioned buses may cost slightly more.

There are also many smaller white vans that run along the beach areas during the daylight hours. These are usually quite safe, although unlicensed and sometimes crowded. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Metro

Rio's subway system is inexpensive, efficient and air-conditioned. The only problem is that many parts of the city are not served, although three more lines are in the planning stages.

Line 1 runs from Tijuca in the Zona Norte to Ipanema in the Zona Sul, passing near the Sambodromo and tourist locations downtown. Flamengo Park and the beaches of Flamengo and Copacabana are also accessible from this line.

Line 2 runs to Zona Norte and ends in Botafogo, where you'll need to change lines if you want to go to the beach areas as far as Ipanema or General Osorio. A connecting bus can be taken to Leblon, Gavea and Barra da Tijuca from outside the station. Line 2 runs between the Botafogo station to stops in Humaita, Lagoa, Jardim Botânica and Gavea for no additional cost.

Line 4, which opened in late 2016, runs from Ipanema to Barra da Tijuca.

Tickets can be purchased only at subway stations. Easy-to-read route maps are posted in subway cars and stations. The standard fare is R\$3.20 per journey and R\$4.15 for Barra bus extension.

If you want to use the bus, make sure you ask for *superfície* (surface). Hours of operation are Monday-Saturday 5 am-midnight, Sunday and holidays 7 am-11 pm. . Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Toll-free 800-595-1111 (Portuguese only). <http://www.metrorio.com.br>.

Ship

Cruise ships and ferry boats dock downtown in the oldest part of the city. The beaches and hotel districts are a 20- to 30-minute taxi ride away, and cabs are readily available at the dock.

Taxi

There are two kinds of taxis in Rio: yellow cabs and radio taxis. Yellow cabs are more plentiful and economical (20% cheaper, on average), but it's rare to find a driver of a yellow cab who speaks English. They are most commonly hailed in the street. (The drivers of yellow cabs tend to exaggerate fares, so make sure the meter is at R\$2 when you get in—and that the meter works.) Expect to pay R\$22-\$28 for a ride between Centro and Ipanema.

Many of the radio taxi drivers have some knowledge of English. To request a bilingual driver, you'll have to order the cab by phone, and you should expect around a 30-minute wait. Radio taxis have stands at many major hotels and at both airports. "Special" radio taxis are better cars, but their drivers sometimes don't work the meter, so ask in advance how much the fare will be. Your safest bet is to have a hotel desk clerk or doorman hail a cab for you.

People with reduced mobility should call Coopertramo (phone 21-2560-2022) or Transcoopass (phone 21-2590-2300).

Train

Rail service in Rio is limited to suburban lines and a commuter train. We don't recommend it: The system is chaotic, run-down and poorly policed.

For More Information

Tourist Offices

BrazilMax

This website provides useful travel information about Brazil in English. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. <http://www.brazilmax.com>.

Riotur

The municipal tourism agency runs the helpful Centro Integrado de Atendimento ao Turista (Tourist Services Center), which has an English-speaking staff as well as maps and information printed in English. It also provides the *Rio Guide*, an excellent bimonthly publication with the latest information and services for tourists. Several additional locations are found in the airport (daily 6 am-midnight), as well as one in the Novo Rio bus terminal (daily 8 am-8 pm). Open Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm. Ave. Princesa Isabel 183, Copacabana. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Phone 21-2541-7522. <http://www.visit.rio>.

Punta del Este, Uruguay

Overview

Introduction

During high season, glamorous Punta del Este, Uruguay (or Punta, as most call it after a couple of days), is filled with rich South Americans, mainly Argentines, looking for sun and fun.

Located 70 mi/110 km east of Montevideo, Punta del Este proper is a narrow spit of land jutting into the Atlantic, surrounded by beaches and a yacht harbor, but informally it encompasses a much larger area. Around its edge is the oceanfront promenade, the Rambla General Artigas, which is lined with cafes, bars and seafood restaurants. You can spend the day at the beach enjoying one of many watersports (yachting, swimming, surfing, deep-sea fishing and waterskiing). Then relax in the afternoon with a traditional British high tea (tea and scones) at one of the tearooms in town.



West of town, the wonderfully surreal Casa Pueblo is a good place for a break from the sun: The Moorish-style fortress, once the home of painter Carlos Paez Vilaro, is now an art gallery and hotel. Punta also has great golf courses, tennis courts and a vibrant nightlife (restaurants, discos and casinos).

Because of its unique geography, the peninsula at Punta lets you watch the sun both rise and set over water. The beaches are good, with each having a certain ambience of its own—one stretch of sand may be for families, another for sporty types, one for teenagers and another, apparently, for supermodels (many of whom spend their summers there instead of Buenos Aires).

The scene changes from season to season, so you'll just have to find where you're comfortable. Playa Mansa, protected by the peninsula, is calmer than the Playa Brava beaches that face the Atlantic. The Mansa beaches are favored by families and watersports enthusiasts. Playa Brava's waves draw surfers, and the activity carries on into the night, with numerous pubs and nightlife options.

Day trips can be taken to Isla Gorriti, a beautiful island just off the coast, which has uncrowded white beaches and the ruins of an 18th-century fort. Another boat trip will take you around Isla de Lobos, an island jammed with sea lions.

If you would rather travel by car, drive a short way to the resort town of Piriapolis, anchored by the grande dame of Uruguayan resorts, the Argentino Hotel. Or drive east from the peninsula past the spectacular mansions to Jose Ignacio, an increasingly popular small resort 19 mi/30 km west of town with perhaps the prettiest beaches, best waves and finest restaurants in Uruguay.

The season runs December-March (summertime in the Southern Hemisphere). During January and February, the beaches can be crowded, the traffic horrendous and the prices steep. The best time to visit is early December and from early March.

Port Information

Location

Cruise ships anchor in the bay and tender passengers to a central marina. From there, getting to street level requires a series of steps that may be difficult for some visitors. The town center is about a 15-minute walk from the pier. A limited number of taxis are available.

Montevideo, Uruguay

Overview

Introduction

Uruguay's capital, Montevideo, is one of South America's more attractive capitals, even if its once-grand colonial architecture could use a little sprucing up. Home to nearly half the country's 3.3 million people, it's a city of beaches, plazas, restaurants, cafes, nightclubs and casinos. The Ciudad Vieja (Old Town) and the newer downtown area hold the most interest for visitors. Improved security has made the Ciudad Vieja the heart of the city's nightlife, though its accommodations are only so-so. We suggest two nights to visit both the old and new parts of town.



If time is available, drive around the suburbs and the harbor to see ships coming in (sunset from the pier is beautiful).

Festivals include South America's longest celebration, the 45-day-long Carnival de Montevideo, and a rodeo during Easter.

Port Information

Location

Cruise ships dock at the Port of Montevideo, which is only a five-minute walk from the heart of the old town. Most cruise lines offer shuttles to transport visitors into modern downtown Montevideo, which is about 2.5 mi/4 km away.

Taxis are abundant and wait outside the port entrance for those who want independent transportation

See & Do

Sightseeing

A pleasant way to start your tour is to see the entire city from the 11th-story terrace of the Palacio Municipal, located on the main street, Avenida 18 de Julio. Or you can take in the view from the old Spanish fort. Afterward, go to Ordonez Park to see the rose garden (more than 850 varieties) and La Carreta (a covered-wagon monument—there's a similar one for stagecoaches in El Prado Park). Other

sights include the Palacio Taranco (an 18th-century European-style mansion), the Casa Garibaldi (once the home of Italian freedom fighter Giuseppe Garibaldi) and the renovated Solis Theater, South America's best in terms of beautiful architecture, acoustics and broad cultural offerings). If you need to take a break for a coffee or beer, both Plaza Entrevero and Plaza Constitucion have pleasant outdoor cafes.

Also worth seeing are the Plaza Independencia, Museo Torres Garcia (works by Uruguayan artist Joaquin Torres Garcia), National Museum of Fine Arts (Parque Rodo), Museum of Natural History, the Legislative Palace (mosaic floors and stained-glass windows) and the beaches (Ramirez, Malvin or Pocitos).

There's an exceptional gaucho museum upstairs from the Banco de la Republica, which also has a small money museum on Avenida 18 de Julio. Make a point of stopping in, if only to see the building itself—the interior is marvelous. The Rambla, the avenue running along the beach, is good for walking.

Shopping

Montevideo has several interesting outdoor markets, including the Feria de Villa Biarritz (open Saturday as a flea market and Tuesday as a farmers market) and Feria de Tristan Narvaja (a sprawling flea market open Sunday morning). The artisans market, located on San Jose Street, is open Monday-Saturday.

Dining

Dining Overview

If it's lunchtime, head for the Ciudad Vieja's Mercado del Puerto. Inside this ornate building (it was once a train station), market stalls have been converted into *parrillas* (grills) and seafood restaurants (try El Palenque), with exterior sidewalk seating as well. Many of the establishments have proper tables, but many visitors prefer sitting on a stool facing the grill for an up-close view of the action.

For lunch and dinner, the Bacacay pedestrian mall and Mitre Street, near the Solis Theater, are the heart of the Ciudad Vieja's nightlife. Restaurants worth trying include El Abasto (Bacacay 1309) for beef, Don Peperone (Sarandi and Bartolome Mitre) for pastas and La Corte (Sarandi 586) for a more diverse international menu.