

SOUTH AMERICA · BEACHES · WILDLIFE · CULTURE · NIGHTLIFE · CITY BREAKS · FOOD



Brazil

Brazil works on a continental scale: Amazon rainforest, the Pantanal wetland and more than 7,000 km of Atlantic coast. Rio's granite peaks and beaches, the 275 cascades of Iguaçu and the Pantanal's jaguars headline, while Salvador and the north-east add Afro-Brazilian music, food and a Carnival tradition found nowhere else.

**The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all but essential travel to parts of Brazil.**

Read the latest FCDO travel advice before planning a trip. Your travel insurance may be invalid if you travel against FCDO advice. FCDO advice last updated 29 September 2026.

 CAPITAL Brasília	 CURRENCY Brazilian real (BRL) £1 ≈ R\$6.72	 LANGUAGE Portuguese	 BEST TIME Apr–Jun, Sep–Nov
 DAILY BUDGET £40–£210 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, N 127V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 11h 50m direct ~£600–£1,150 return	 TIME ZONE UTC-3, UTC-4... standard time

Brazil covers nearly half of South America, so a first trip of two or three weeks means choosing. The classic loop starts in Rio de Janeiro, with a few days between Copacabana, Santa Teresa and Corcovado, then flies south-west to Foz do Iguaçu for the falls. Wildlife lovers add the Pantanal via Cuiabá or Campo Grande, or an Amazon lodge from Manaus; beach and culture seekers head north-east to Salvador, the dunes and lagoons of Lençóis Maranhenses or the protected island of Fernando de Noronha. The coast road from Rio to Paraty and Ilha Grande suits overland travel.

Brazil feels big, sociable and loud, with music spilling out of bars and beach kiosks late into the night. Day-to-day costs are moderate — a cold beer and petiscos at a botequim is cheap — but Amazon lodges, Noronha and Rio hotels over New Year and Carnival are not. English is less widely spoken than many visitors expect, even in tourist areas, so a few phrases of Portuguese go far. It suits travellers who want cities, beaches and wildlife in one trip and are comfortable keeping valuables discreet. Many are surprised by how much of daily life, from booking tables to tours, runs on WhatsApp.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

NATURE

Iguaçu Falls

Around 275 cascades thunder along a 2.7 km horseshoe on the Argentine border. The Brazilian side gives the grand panorama and a walkway into the spray below the Devil's Throat; most visitors cross to Argentina for a second, closer day.
- 2

CULTURE

Christ the Redeemer

The 30-metre Art Deco statue, completed in 1931, stands on the 700-metre Corcovado above Tijuca Forest. Take the cog train up early, before tour groups arrive, for views across Guanabara Bay to Sugarloaf.

3

WILDLIFE

The Pantanal

The world's largest tropical wetland is South America's best place to see wildlife in the open: capybaras, caimans, hyacinth macaws and, from July to October, jaguars hunting along the rivers near Porto Jofre at the end of the Transpantaneira.

4

NATURE

Amazon lodges and the Meeting of the Waters

Manaus is the gateway to jungle lodges on the Rio Negro and Amazon. Just downstream, the dark Negro and sandy Solimões flow side by side without mixing for several kilometres at the Meeting of the Waters.

5

HISTORY

Pelourinho, Salvador

Salvador's hilltop old town is a UNESCO-listed tangle of pastel colonial houses and gilded Baroque churches, notably São Francisco, and the heart of Afro-Brazilian culture, from capoeira schools to Olodum's drum rehearsals.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

São Paulo

≈ 21 million people

South America's largest city is a food and art capital rather than a beauty: eat at the Mercado Municipal, see MASP and the Pinacoteca, and spend an evening in Vila Madalena's bars.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Rio de Janeiro

≈ 12.5 million people

Granite peaks, rainforest and beaches crammed into one city: Sugarloaf, Corcovado, sunset at Ipanema and samba in Lapa make three or four days feel short.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Belo Horizonte

≈ 5.8 million people

Minas Gerais's capital is known for its botecos and comida mineira; most visitors use it as a springboard to Inhotim's vast art park and the Baroque gold town of Ouro Preto.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Brazil

Best time: **Apr–Jun, Sep–Nov.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

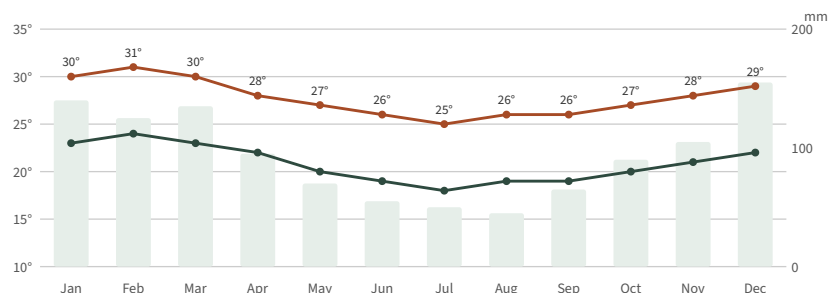
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Rio de Janeiro

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb–Mar	Carnival Rio's samba-school parades in the Sambódromo headline, but street blocos in Rio, Salvador's trio elétrico trucks and Olinda's giant puppets make Carnival nationwide; book accommodation months ahead.
Jun	Festa Junina (São João) North-eastern towns, especially Caruaru and Campina Grande, celebrate St John through June with forró music, bonfires, square dancing and maize-based food.
Dec	Réveillon in Copacabana New Year's Eve on Copacabana beach draws around two million people dressed in white for fireworks over the sea, with flowers thrown to the sea goddess Iemanjá.

How much does Brazil cost?

SHOESTRING £40 per person / day ≈ R\$269 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £95 per person / day ≈ R\$638 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £210 per person / day ≈ R\$1,410 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Feijoada Black beans stewed with salted and smoked pork cuts, served with rice, farofa, sautéed couve greens and orange slices — traditionally a long Saturday lunch.	Moqueca baiana Bahia's fish or prawn stew simmered in coconut milk, dendê palm oil, peppers and coriander, brought bubbling to the table in a clay pot.	Churrasco At a churrascaria rodízio, waiters circulate with skewers of picanha and other cuts, carving at your table until you flip your card to red.
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Getting around

Distances are vast, so most visitors fly: LATAM, Gol and Azul link every state capital, and fares drop when booked early. Long-distance buses are comfortable and frequent — Rio to São Paulo takes about six hours — with reclining leito seats on overnight routes. Passenger trains are almost non-existent. Rio and São Paulo have cheap, efficient metros; elsewhere, Uber and the local 99 app are widely used and usually cheaper than street taxis.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  C N 127V — bring a UK-to-C/N adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Ambulance: 192 Fire: 193 Police: 190 or 911 Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +55	TIME ZONES UTC-3, UTC-4, UTC-5 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Varies — bottled or filtered is safer

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Restaurants add a 10% service charge (serviço) to the bill, which is optional but normally paid; elsewhere, round up taxi fares and tip guides modestly.

ETIQUETTE

Brazilians greet warmly with a handshake or cheek kisses, depending on the region. Avoid the 'OK' hand sign, which is rude here — use a thumbs up instead — and keep beachwear for the beach.

MAIN AIRPORTS

São Paulo/Guarulhos International Airport (GRU), São Paulo; Rio de Janeiro/Galeão International Airport (GIG), Rio de Janeiro

Visas & entry for Brazil

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can visit Brazil without a visa for up to 90 days for tourism.

If you want to extend your tourist visa, contact the Federal Police (in Portuguese) before your visa expires.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A

Tetanus

Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya

Dengue

Hepatitis B

Rabies

Tuberculosis

Yellow fever

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter. There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

Low risk of malaria

- There is a low risk of malaria in the Amazon basin of Brazil, including in the city of Manaus: awareness of risk and bite avoidance recommended.
- There is a very low risk of malaria in the rest of Brazil: awareness of risk and bite avoidance recommended.
- There is no risk of malaria in Iguaçu Falls: bite avoidance recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Brazil

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Mon 2 Nov 2026	All Souls' Day
Sun 15 Nov 2026	Republic Proclamation Day
Fri 20 Nov 2026	National Day of Zumbi and Black Awareness
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	Universal Fraternization Day
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Wed 21 Apr 2027	Tiradentes' Day
Sat 1 May 2027	Worker's Day
Tue 7 Sep 2027	Independence Day
Tue 12 Oct 2027	Our Lady of Aparecida

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Portuguese

ENGLISH	PORTUGUESE	SAY IT
Hello	Oi	oy
Thank you	Obrigado / Obrigada	oh-bree-GAH-doo / oh-bree-GAH-dah
Please	Por favor	poor fah-VOR
Excuse me	Com licença	kohn lee-SEN-sah
How much is this?	Quanto custa isso?	KWAN-too KOOS-tah EE-soo

Know before you go

Keep phones and cameras out of sight on busy streets and beaches, carry only the cash you need, and use ATMs inside banks or shopping centres during the day.

Book early for Christmas, New Year, Carnival and the July school holidays, when Brazilians travel en masse and domestic fares and beach hotel prices climb steeply.

Yellow fever vaccination is recommended for much of Brazil, including Iguaçu and the Amazon; check TravelHealthPro and get the jab at least ten days before travel.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.