

Useful tips for your travel

Beach

Brazilians only carry a towel, sun tan oil or sun block and a small amount of money to the beach. We suggest you to do the same. Avoid swimming far from the shore and be careful with overexposure to the sun, if your skin is sensitive, you should avoid the beach from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Remember, you are in a tropical country.

Banks

Banks are open weekdays from 10 am to 4 pm; they are closed on weekends and public holidays. Before departure from home, visitors are encouraged to check the acceptability of their credit and/or cash cards with their local bank. Automated teller machines (ATMs) can be found almost everywhere; some machines provide 24-hour cash withdrawal (R\$) facilities for major credit cards

Business Hours

Most offices and stores are open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Stores are also open on Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm while most of the large shopping centers open Monday to Saturday from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm and Sunday from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Banks are open from Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Car Rentals

The main car rental companies have branches in Rio de Janeiro. Reservations should be made at the point of origin. Should the visitor require a rented car for a day or two during his stay, the Concierge of the hotel will be able to make the necessary arrangements.

Cashing money with Credit or Bank Card

Visa card holders may withdraw cash from the Banco do Brasil and Banco Itaú. Card holders with a PIN number may obtain cash from the 24-hour machines; those without will have to await verification, available from 10 am to 4 pm. Rio de Janeiro International Airport Exchange Department ("Seção de Câmbio") 3rd floor. Tel.: (55-21) 3398-3652 Hours for exchange: For US\$ and Euros from 8 am to 10 pm, daily; for another money exchange: Mondays to Fridays, from 10 am to 6 pm. 24-hour machines also available.

Climate

Most of Brazil lies one the South of the Equator. As a result there is very little seasonal variation. The climate is comfortably temperate in most of the country, and refreshing sea breezes often blow along the coast almost all year round. With the temperatures usually ranging from 65 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit (18 to 30 degrees Centigrade), casual spring and summer clothes are appropriate for almost every region and occasion. In Rio , Summer runs from December though March with temperatures ranging from 25° C (77° F) to 42° C while winter runs from June though to August when temperatures can drop to around 20° C (68°F) in the day and cool 16° C (60°F) at night.

Clothing

Dress Casually. For men slacks and a sports shirts are sufficient; for women, casual attire is fine. Women may appreciate having a shawl or cardigan to hand in the more heavily air conditioned buildings while a light sweater is all the necessary for winter nights . Informality is the keynote in Rio de Janeiro in terms of dress. The use of jackets and ties for men is restricted almost exclusively to offices. A lightweight wrap or jacket is often needed as the major hotels, restaurants and bars, as well as the subway and most taxis, are air-conditioned.

Entry Requirement

A visa is required for U.S. citizens who wish to visit Brazil. Tourist or transit visas are often processed within two-week days and are obtained through the nearest Brazilian Consulate. One passport-size photograph, along with the round-trip ticket and a duly completed and signed application form are required to apply for your visa, valid for 90 days (for tourists) or 10 days (transit).. Nations who do not need a visa to enter Brazil on tourism include those from: Andorra, Argentina; Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, San Marino, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, UK, Vatican and Venezuela.
<http://www.consulatebrazil.org/visas.htm>

Please note that these rules are subject to change without previous information. We advise to check the up dated information with your local tour agency or with the Air Company.

Geographic Location

Brazil covers almost half of South America and the coastline runs along the Atlantic Ocean for over 7.408 kilometers (11.919 miles) of white sandy beaches.

Government

Brazil is a democratic Federal Republic where the President is elected for a 4 years term with the right to reelection.

Hotel Safes

Hotels offer safety deposit boxes in their rooms. It is recommended that jewelry, air tickets, documents and money are kept in them. Keep only what is necessary for your daily use with you.

Land Área

8.511.865 square kilometers (3.319.666 square miles).

Language and Religion

Portuguese is the national language, although the Brazilian people give different accents and semantics to the Portuguese language spoken in Portugal. English and Spanish are the foreign languages spoken in most areas, especially in hotels, shops, restaurants and other tourist places. English and Spanish are part of the school curriculum.

Roman Catholic is the predominant religion all over Brazil. The rituals of Protestant church are also followed. Rituals and ceremonies brought from Africa by slaves in previous centuries are also found regularly in the "terreiros" of Candomblé, Macumba and Umbanda.

Medical Services

Most hotels have immediate access to on-call 24-hour medical assistance. There are also many government and private hospitals with 24-hour emergency and out-patient departments. Many of Rio de Janeiro's doctors and dentists were trained or have undergone postgraduate training overseas. All hotels have lists of recommended medical services.

Money

The Brazilian currency is the Real (R\$); there are 100 centavos in one Real. Coins issued by the government are either bronze-coloured for 1 centavo, silver for 5, 10, 25 and 50 centavos and a nickel and bronze coin for R\$1.

R\$1, R\$2, R\$5, R\$10, R\$20 R\$50 and R\$100 are the denominations of the notes. The value of the real against the US dollar varies according to the daily rate. Banks and exchange bureaux charge a commission on exchange transactions, which the visitor should check beforehand.

As elsewhere, the rates of exchange for cash and travellers' cheques are marginally different, and coins are not exchangeable. Money changers are obliged by law to display net rates of exchange. Receipt notes must be issued by law; it is advisable to keep these until after departure.

Postal Services

The Brazilian postal services meet all international standards, and there are many post offices around the city. They are closed on Sundays and public holidays. Most hotels offer postal facilities for guests' letters and packages and a packing service.

Shopping

Credit Cards and Cheques American Express, VISA, Diner's Club and MasterCard are accepted at the majority of shops, although it is always a good idea to confirm this before buying. Occasionally a small discount is offered on cash sales. Personal cheques drawn on overseas banks are not accepted. Generally speaking, travellers' cheques are welcome. Visitors are encouraged to check the daily dollar rate at their hotels before going on a spree.

Subway System

Rio de Janeiro's subway is safe, efficient and easy to use. Tickets are for one, two or ten rides. Tickets are bought at the counter, as there are no ticketissuing machines. The Copacabana Metro station is located in Praça Cardeal Arcoverde or Siquiera Campos, four blocks from the beach. The Metro is a great boon to adventurous visitors; Catete, Glória, Cinelândia, Carioca and Uruguaiana stations are those closest to the city's principal historical and cultural attractions.

Time Zone

Country and in the main cities, the time is three hours earlier than Greenwich (London) Meridian Time.

Transportation service Airport transfers

	Copacabana	Ipanema	São Conrado	Barra da Tijuca
1 - Yellow Cab	U\$ 25	U\$ 25	U\$ 28	U\$ 30
2 - Radio Taxis	U\$ 52	U\$ 52	U\$ 62	U\$ 68
3- Shuttle Bus	U\$ 6	U\$ 6	U\$ 6	U\$ 6
4 - Private Tranfers	U\$ 85	U\$ 85	U\$ 85	U\$ 85

Approximated Amounts, considering hotels in Copacabana and Ipanema: Privet Transfer provided by **crEAct.eve** (Approximated U\$ 40). In this case **crEAct.eve** will send a bilingual driver guide to pick up passenger at the airport. Maximum of 2 passengers. Pre payment with credit card is requested. The advantage of this service is that they will receive a personalized service and primary information about the city, useful tips, etc.

1 - **Yellow Cab** : Amount is charged according to the taximeter. **crEAct.eve** does not recommend this service for foreigners arriving at airport who are not able to speak Portuguese (taxi driver will probably not be able to speak English). In case of using this service, we recommend to use the official Yellow Cab company of the airport.

2 - **Radio Taxis** : Radio Taxi vouchers can be purchased at the arriving hall outside customs. Payment with credit card is accepted and hostesses are bilingual. In some Radio Táxis companies the driver can also charge directly to passenger. **crEAct.eve** advises "Cootramo Radio Taxi" (2560.5442) and "Transcoopass Radio Táxi" (2560.4888) services, which are registered with the tourist board

3 - **Regular Shuttle Bus** : Bus itinerary goes from the airport, passing downtown, Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon beaches along the coast and ends at the Intercontinental Hotel. Ask for assistance according to your hotel address. This bus company offer a VIP lounge in one of the airport terminal.

4 – **Private Tranfers** In this case we will send a bilingual driver guide to pick up passenger at the airport. Maximum of 2 passengers. Pre payment with credit card is requested. The advantage of this service is that they will receive a personalized service and primary information about the city, useful tips, etc.

Táxis

Avoid tours or excursions from taxi drivers. You may be disappointed. If you can, avoid yellow cabs. Use the Cootramo and Transcoopass services , which are registered with the tourist board or ask for help at hotel concierge. In general, we suggest you contact your guide or our office for tours and transfers.

Telecommunications

Brazil is connected to all appropriate international telephone and satellite communications systems, providing trouble-free connections to virtually anywhere in the world. Most hotels provide guest room International Direct Dial (IDD) services; some hotels have in-room Internet hook-up and fax machines. Others offer this service through their Concierge or Business Center. Outside hotels, long-distance calls can be made from IDD payphones or card phones in various locations. Telemar also provides service at certain hours of the day at their Copacabana and Ipanema offices. The push-button call-home system, providing immediate connection to the operator of the country required is also available. For information about dial access and IDD phone locations, contact the hotel operator. Not all local calls from private phones are free. However, shops, restaurants and bars without payphones will usually permit free use of their phones. The International Direct Dial (IDD) code for Brazil is 55 and the city code for Rio de Janeiro 21.

Tipping

Restaurants, taxis and hotel tips are 10% - 15% over your bill. Most restaurants include 10% on their bill s it is up to you to leave an extra tip.

Voltage

Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo have 110 or 120 Volt 60 cycles alternate current (AC). Salvador and Manaus have 127 Volts. Recife, Brasilia and a number of other cities have 220-Volt Service. Most Hotels, however, provide both services and/or adapters for guests.

Water

Rio de Janeiro's water supply conforms to international standards; due to the pronounced taste of chlorine in the water it is advisable to drink bottled mineral water.

Safety and Security

As in any city in the world of the size of Rio de Janeiro, the key to an uneventful stay is to protect yourself from pickpockets and carry as little cash and as few valuables as possible. The Rio de Janeiro military police and the municipal guard corps have stations and reporting centres. In case of need, do contact the hotel Front Desk for guidance and assistance.