



BRAZIL: TEACHING

Sun, Samba, Energy, Capoeira, Music, Laughter and the fabulous and lavish Carnaval ... Brazil has all of this and much more.

If you are looking for an injection of life to make you feel alive, Brazil is the place for you!

This tropical paradise is alive with mad passion in every walk of life. Axe (a-chay) means energy in Brazil and nowhere else is the heart-pounding, rhythmic energy more prevalent, be it an impromptu Capoeira roda on a street corner, bursting with music, excitement and physical perfection, or the sound of loud raucous laughter between two acquaintances over ice cold beer in local open sided bars.



WHAT DO YOU GET?

- New skills, more confidence, a greater understanding of a different culture, invaluable personal and professional development.
- An entry on your CV or résumé that will put you head and shoulders above most others in the job market.
- Experienced local staff with 24/7 back-up and support who'll meet you at the airport on your arrival - helps you **feel safe and never alone!**
- An in-depth Induction makes you **feel local straight away!**
- A unique insight into another culture – **see it from the inside** in a way you could never do as a tourist.
- An opportunity to **make lifelong friends from all over the world.**
- And best of all ... **an unforgettable experience!**



► SUMMARY FACTFILE

Start Dates	All year round - you choose your start and finish dates!
Duration	Minimum stay 2 weeks and up to 1 year, subject to visa requirements
Requirements	No qualifications needed, just a big dose of enthusiasm!
Price	From £775 / US\$1,165 for 2 weeks, ranging to £2,195 / US\$3,295 for 12 weeks. Full Price List and other Currencies
What's included	► Accommodation ► Breakfast (Rio only) ► Meeting you at the Airport ► Transfer to your accommodation ► Transport to and from your project ► Full pre-departure support ► Local in-country team support and backup ► 24-hr emergency support ► 2 free t-shirts.
What's not included	Flights, Insurance, Lunch and Dinner, Return transfer to airport.
Who can do this Project?	All our projects are open to all nationalities. Unless otherwise stated, you need to be aged between 17 and 70+

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW:

You can teach a huge variety of subjects in Brazil, in just about every type of institution, with children, teenagers and adults. Teaching here is exciting and rewarding. You will have students from a variety of backgrounds, and you are likely to learn about their culture as they will hopefully learn from you. Many of the children that you will teach, particularly in Rio, are from some of the poorest areas, but they are full of life and their cheeky manner is infectious and endearing!



We have a selection of institutions that you can teach at, each one individual with its own atmosphere and attraction. Some cater for children ranging in age, from the very young, where you will probably spend more time playing than teaching, to older children who will be excited to meet a foreigner like you and probably won't stop talking in a mixture of Portuguese and what little English they know!

This placement is an all-round experience of volunteering. However if you have any specifications (for example - you might only want to teach sport), just let us know and we can tailor-make the program you are looking for. Otherwise, you may wish to go with the flow and volunteer in a variety of worthwhile institutes for a diverse experience. You may also work with adults who want to improve their English so that they can improve their career prospects - here you'll be able to have more in depth conversations. As well as English, you can teach the following subjects in Brazil:

- Music
- Dance (modern, contemporary, ballet, etc.)
- Art
- Drama
- IT

Sports (Football, Basketball, Netball, Volleyball on the beach!) and various other sports - see also the coaching sports page.

The Teaching Programme

Rio de Janeiro or Florianópolis. Two different locations, each with their own special attractions. Teach Conversational English in this hot tropical paradise to deserving children and adults who need your help! A stimulating yet laid-back experience in one of the most beautiful and diverse countries in the world.

You may want to work at one institute or you may be keen to spread your help between a selection of institutes. Our projects are very well structured but, as with all things Brazilian, also pretty laid back! You don't need any qualifications to participate in a teaching placement in Brazil

Work Content.

As well as providing much needed assistance to children within schools, Travellers have also developed a number of partnerships with social projects aimed at providing English lessons and recreational activities to street children or those from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Our projects provide educational assistance and also encourage children to see the 'good side' of the world by taking them away from the violence and poverty that they live in and encouraging them to see things in a different way. Such children have the opportunity to develop social skills and life skills. Along with the co-ordinators of such projects you'll be acting as a positive role model to children, keeping them away from the dangers of the streets. It is not uncommon for children, particularly in Rio's poorer areas to never have left their village. Many will be amazed and confused that you speak an entirely different language - and they'll want to learn it too!

We have a huge variety of placements dotted in and around the city of Rio de Janeiro, some right next to the beach and some a little further inland. You'll no doubt work with several different institutions, depending on what age groups you'd like to work with. All projects are within 45 minutes of your hotel accommodation and you will live and play with all of our other Travellers Rio-volunteers!

Below are brief descriptions of some of the projects that we are currently working with – if you would like any more information please don't hesitate to contact us.



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CIEP (Rio): CIEP first appears much the same as any other public school in Brazil with its curricular based around that of the national educational system. The centre teaches all the usual curricular subjects found in any other school in Brazil. However, it is unlike most schools, which only set out to teach children for approximately 4 to 5 hours each day. CIEP Rubens Paiva has gone much further than this basic requirement by organizing other additional activities, groups and clubs for the students to get involved with – all in the hope of supplementing their education and taking them off the streets. This means that the school actually works the exhausting time table from 7 am until 11 pm every single day, Monday to Friday.

One of the schools first objectives is to keep the children in off the streets – so to do this it provides additional activities in the hope that the children will want to stay all day, every day! And it really does work with many of the students attending and taking part in sports clubs, language courses, and cultural projects.

On top of this the children not only have the needs of their minds satisfied, they also have the needs of their body's taken care of as well – all the children are cared for and provided with all three of daily meals at the centre each and everyday. If the centre didn't provide the children with their daily meals the children may find that they would often have to go without as many of the families simply can't afford to feed their children 3 meals-a-day everyday.

Most students attending the school arrive from families suffering from various difficulties; whether they are single-parent families struggling to get by, or one of the parents has an addiction to alcohol or drugs etc.

The schools aim is simple - to help wherever it can; whether it's through providing an education to the children, or it's by providing day-to-day basic sustenance. The centre also works hard to try and reduce the continuing psychological trauma that all of these children suffer. A major goal is also to involve the parent in their child's education – many parents simply don't pay any attention or even care whether their child attends school or not. This makes the job of the centre that much harder as there is no one to re-enforce the work that the centre does. CIEP is home to just over 500 students which are split down into more manageable groups of around 35 students. It plays host to students of all ages and extends its care to include children suffering from mental disabilities. Centres caring for children with disabilities are sadly a rarity – making this centre very important.

As with many of the centres we work with, CIEP provides a wide range of activities and lessons to children of a wide range of ages. The centre accommodates children as young as three years of age all the way up to school leavers.

As such a typical day may include activities and lessons that may sometimes require you to use your initiative and creativity. There is a host of activities and projects running at CIEP with which you can get involved with. In addition there are also possibilities for several other new activities which could be implemented and run by you. Some activities for you to think about would be: English teaching (to 5 & 6 year-olds, teenagers & young adults, and perhaps even to adults from the community), teaching/assisting in lessons such as arts & crafts, dance lessons, sports lessons, drama lessons (which can be given in English, for those students learning English), music (guitar, keyboard, etc.) – to name just a few.

Apart from these there are the extra activities organized for the students and family members, such as cultural events (presentations, shows, parties, and meals), social events, study groups, tours, and fundraising activities such as street parties. The range of activities that can be developed there is endless.

Ballet De Santa Tereza (Rio): As the name suggests the Ballet de Santa Tereza involves Ballet! But guys don't worry we won't get you in a leotard just yet! The centre isn't just about ballet there are other dances taught as well – no truly the centre is involved with a host of activities. And whether you are a dancer or not we are sure you will agree once you have visited the project and spent a day working with the children that it is more than worthy of being included in on the list.

Ballet de Santa Tereza is a non-profit institution providing a range of extra-curricular programs to children, teenagers and families that live in surrounding areas. Many of the areas are considered of being at risk/vulnerable to the less desirable aspects/sub-cultures of modern day city life.

The institutes mission and focus revolves around providing social stability through engaging and encouraging the participation of the local community in activities which stimulate social and cultural awareness and thereby encouraging stronger integration among community members. The aim is to achieve such goals through the medium of artistic expression and social education.



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Most of the team working at the centre is formed of volunteers who are generally taken from the local community. All of the volunteers are very willing, and provide help where ever it maybe required. According to the volunteers attending the centre the level of satisfaction drawn from seeing the smiling faces of the children is worth more than any amount of money in the world.

As we mentioned earlier – Ballet Santa de Tereza isn't just a centre for dance, but (!), it is fab and you will want to get stuck-in and help out! Especially as unfortunately sometimes lessons have had to be called off because of the lack of teachers available – so you will certainly be helping to make a difference and help to keep the centre going through taking part during your placement.

Your involvement at the centre may change with the activity that you are undertaking; classes may be organised by age or they may be organised on ability – sometimes as with the ballet classes you may simply be inundated and find that you have a group offering you a real mixture of ages and abilities – its an all-inclusive motto that the centre tries to put forward wherever suitable.

As mentioned the centre is more than worthy of its inclusion simply because the breadth of the activities and the level of involvement – all of which go to make volunteering at the centre a simply fabulous experience – and one that you will certainly remember. You will be able to get involved in and perhaps help to develop lessons in drama, English, art (usually painting), assisting with dance classes such as ballet, along with more traditional dances. There are also music lessons where you can “jam” and “get-down” with the children. The institution is desperate to receive volunteers whether it is to teach English or take ballet classes (one of their more popular programs)

Solar Menios De Luz (Rio): This is a truly wonderful centre and one which extends its care to children of all ages; the centre takes in children starting from as young as 3 months – who then go on all the way up to the late teens. The centre accommodates almost four hundred children, many arriving from very poor families from communities in the surrounding area. The children attending are then split into groups of around 25 students.

The centre has an abundance of activities it provides to the children; giving courses in languages, IT, as well as giving lessons in sports (including among others basketball, football, rugby etc), dance; including capoeira, drama (it even boasts its own amphitheatre), arts and music. They also work hard to provide additional schooling to the children to help them achieve their goals. Solar have also built up and impressive library. Of course final but not least there is also the crèche.

This centre truly performs a wonderful service to the children and local community that it serves.

ADE-Agencia de Administracao Estadual (Rio): ADE's work focuses on providing a brighter future for the children attending. The majority of the people working with the ADE are volunteers, with only a small proportion of members receiving any payment for the work they undertake.

Although the building is quite small comparatively, the infrastructure is well organised and manages to utilise every available resource, such as the sports complex of a nearby school, and of course not forgetting the nearby beach! You will also have access to a computer lab, a classroom (dedicated to classes teaching languages among other subjects), a room dedicated to dance. There's also some space out in the open-air just outside which is utilised.

Traditionally the English lessons have always been taught by Brazilian volunteers, but not now! Everyone at the centre is very excited about having native English speakers teaching the kids. It helps to add a new flavour to the lessons and brings so much more to the children aside from just the obvious.

There is also some scope for organising extra activities which can be taken outside of the institution. Possible activities could include arranging a practical conversation lesson such as an active participation class teaching English in a setting such as at the shops. The beach is just 3 blocks away from the centre (10 minutes walk) – so you may also have the opportunity of working right on Flamengo beach. You could find yourself coaching sports such as volleyball, football and perhaps even an adaptation of rugby (into games like “tag” - it can be great fun). You'll spend time building confidence, moral, and improving team bonding. You'll be doing all this whilst looking to teach technique, skills and strategy – save this one till last



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as it can take a little bit of time, energy and patience – well after all the kids are just the same as the kids back home - they are simply overflowing in enthusiasm.

Educandario Santa Catarina (Florianopolis): This one is what we call “Crèche”. The crèche receive young children aged between 2 – 6 years-old. These kids come to the crèche in the morning and stay until the evening. During this period, they study, play, sleep, they have their meals, a shower, etc.

The centre is open Monday to Friday with the children arriving early at around at 7:30 am. This gives the children time to receive their morning breakfast which is served daily at 8:00 am. Classes begin by 9:00 am, before stopping for an hour off for lunch, which is taken at midday. Again the children are able to enjoy food prepared by the centre. Then the children enjoy an hour off for a siesta mid-afternoon - one of the benefits of being of such a young age. There’s a few more activities before the children are then picked up from the centre; leaving at around 5.30 pm.



Classes are supervised by staff members who are affectionately referred to as ‘tias’ or aunties. Your role will be primarily to assist the ‘tias’ with the class. As your placement develops, so will your role in the classroom. The crèche has a playground, a video recorder and a cassette player which you can utilize. They do not have access to anything more sophisticated, such as internet or a library etc. Football and games of any sorts are appreciated within the lessons and will make you even more popular amongst the kids!

But this centre doesn’t receive only young children. It hosts more than 500 pupils from young children to young teenagers with classes of about 20. You will teach 3 to 4 hours a day during the working week. Again the children here are poor with no knowledge of English currently. This means the lessons will be very basic, especially with the young kids from the crèche who cannot read or write. You will use lots of different activities here such as games, songs and anything that catches the kids’ attention. It’s not only about the teaching but also important to provide a good time for the kids. Sometimes, playing “hangman” with the kids can really make a successful lesson!

Casa Lar (Florianopolis): These are small, but wonderfully warm and inviting centres! Everyone here works extremely hard to create an environment that nurtures an overwhelming feeling of wellbeing; allowing the children to feel free to join in and express themselves.

These centers “host” children who are orphans or who have been taken away from their family because their parents were considered unable to raise them. This could be due to many different reasons; the kids were being forced to beg instead of going to school, or were being spanked for example..

The main goal is always to reinstate the child’s ties to their family in the hope of seeing them return home. Where this isn’t immediately possible, the children go on to Casa Lar.

When this happens the children are taken to this “Judicial Home” and the parents are sued. While the process is being decided, the children live in the centre and should the judge find the parents incapable of raising their children suitably, or in the case of parents who have died, the children will then go to the list for adoption. While they wait for adoption, they live in this centres.

The children have a very limited knowledge of English if any at all so you will be helping to lay the very first building blocks – a crucial stage in developing not only their comprehension but perhaps more importantly their enthusiasm. This really is a wonderful centre to become involved with.

You will have groups of children and teenagers (aged between 7 and 16) all divided by age. The lesson is one - one and a half hours for each group.

LOCATION:

Rio de Janeiro, was discovered on January (Janeiro) 1, 1502 by Portuguese navigators who mistook the entrance of Guanabara Bay for the mouth of a river (Rio). Brazil’s second largest city gave up the title of capital city with the creation of Brasilia – the newly engineered capital of Brazil. If Brasilia is the capital city and Sao Paulo the engine of Brazil, Rio is still regarded as the heart of the country. Known to Brazilians as “Cidade Maravilhosa” (The Wonderful City), Rio de Janeiro is always brimming with colours, sounds, rhythms, and joy, all helping to make it synonymous with Carnival! Very few places in the world match the hospitality and



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natural charm in which Rio is perpetually swathed.

Squeezed into a narrow, astonishingly lovely zone between rainforest-clad cliffs and the sea, in what many have called the world's most beautiful city setting, Rio de Janeiro pulses like an artery. The famed emeralds, amethysts, and rubies of Rio shops are just the beginning; all the colours of the world are here. The thousand shades of Amazon green, the deep black of a businessman's London made suit, the lucid gold of afternoon sunlight, the grey of granite monoliths, the blue of a tropical sea, the hundred shades of tanned flesh. The primeval splendour of Rio's environs lends the city an eternal youth - the arrogant flamboyance that lets one dance too late and too seductively, talk to a stranger when you don't really speak the language, and wander the streets knowing you will end up somewhere exciting.

That somewhere is usually near the beach: Rio's 45 miles of white sand beach encompass neighbourhoods' familiar the world over. Copacabana, Ipanema, and Leblon cuddle together like a clique of celebrities, each brilliantly different. Rio de Janeiro's diverse personalities often delight and astound, and never fail to fascinate, from the impeccable, beach-scarved Avenida Atlantica to the favelas which blanket the hillsides, to the cobblestone streets and artist-inhabited Victorian mansions of Santa Theresa. During the day, the beach-and-cafe cultures nonchalantly transform the shoreline into the center of the city. At night, the clubs, restaurants, and dance halls, called forros, dominate. Part of the nightlife's charm is its spontaneity.

Rio is indisputably a majestic city to rival any – and comes complete with all the attendant traffic and bustle to follow. But the life that inspires the Rio driver to make three lanes where there were only meant to be two also coaxes an impromptu samba from tired legs and drives that most renowned of all Rio events, Carnival. What colour Mother-Nature hasn't already supplied, the local Cariocas will invent. Nothing is spared for this festival of senses.

Florianópolis, or Floripa as it is more commonly known, is the capital city of Santa Catarina in southern Brazil. It is composed of one main island, Ilha de Santa Catarina, and a number of surrounding small islands. It has a modern, cosmopolitan feel, but its location nestled amongst sand dunes, rain forest, beach and mountains make it the perfect place to sample the best of both worlds...

In Florianópolis the natural treasures are truly exceptional and include beautiful lagoons, stunning beaches, rolling mountains lush with Atlantic rainforest, soft white dunes, and an array of small offshore islands, as well as a wealth of landscapes, aromas and colors.

The island offers opportunities for many types of tourism, from traditional summer relaxation holidays to surfing, windsurfing, paragliding, snorkeling, diving, boat tours, jiu jitsu, hiking, whale-watching and many other ecotourism options.

The island truly has a bit of something for everyone, from authentic and rustic fishing villages, to surfer's paradises surrounded by charming small towns (which remind many people of parts of San Diego or Santa Barbara in California), to high-end Brazilian summer getaways (reminiscent of South Beach in Miami or San Tropei in France), as well as pristine and untouched nature preserves, just minutes from modern shopping malls and cinema complexes. Its numerous white and clean sand bottom beaches continue to draw visitors from around the world in addition to the sun-worshipping local population.

Brazil is widely known for its unbelievable parties, beautiful people, and unrelenting passion for enjoying life, and Florianópolis is quickly becoming known as the epicenter of this lifestyle. There are a wide variety of nightlife options on the island from the strip of bars playing live music in the Lagoa da Conceição to the ultra-hip and ultra-exclusive parties in Jurerê Internacional. Whatever your poison, make sure you save your energy because you won't want to miss a second!!!

The climate in Florianópolis is very favorable, sub-tropical and temperate most of the year, with average temperature between 70°F and 90°F. The population of the island today is estimated at approximately 400,000 inhabitants.

ACCOMMODATION & FOOD:

RIO - Accommodation is situated in the Flamengo region of Rio - just a hop, skip and a jump away from famous Copacabana beach! This is a great place to be as you will be only 3 minutes away from the metro station, opposite the Catete Palace and you will be able to visit Sugar Loaf Mountain and the Christ the Redeemer statue with great ease.



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You will be staying in a dorm room in a brand new hostel which has been set up by an artist with a wish to create a hostel that is different to anything else in Rio. Set in a beautiful redeveloped building from the end of the 19th century, you will be surrounded by wonderful Brazilian art, dipping you straight into the culture from the first minute you arrive! With over 110 beds, some decorated with an “art” theme you will be sure to meet like-minded travellers, other volunteers and artists from all over the world! The hostel currently has internet and WiFi, a common area, TV room, library, book exchange, safes, a terrace area for socializing, and a housekeeping service. It also has a bike rental service. They often have popular music from Brazil with live music on occasion and a fantastically vibrant, friendly atmosphere.



If you'd like to upgrade to a double or single room, just let us know at time of booking and we can arrange it for you. There will be a small supplement for the upgrade. All rooms have their own bathroom and individual cupboard with a key for security.

Area: The hostel is located only a 15 minute-walking distance away from the Arches of ‘Lapa’, ‘Cinelandia’ and ‘Flamengo’, from where you can visit Sugar Loaf Mountains (Pao de Acucar) and the Statue of Christ, the Redeemer; only 3 minutes away from ‘Catete’ Underground station, where you can catch the train and get to ‘Copacabana’ or ‘Ipanema’ beach in less than 15 minutes. There are several banks, ATMs, supermarkets, drugstores, cinema, hotels, shops, etc., all within a couple of minutes away, which makes the area interesting and busy even in the night time! The options for entertainment are endless too; one night you can choose to watch a film at the cinema; the other you can just chill out with friends in a local bar or pub.

Past volunteers have regarded eating out as one of the highlights of living in South America, and an essential part of Brazilian culture! Because of this, the price of your placement includes your breakfast but for dinner, you'll get the chance to venture out and sample some of the fabulous food which Rio is famous for.



For breakfast in the hostel you can expect a feast of natural fruits and juices (try the *acai* – a delicious berry to sprinkle on your granola cereal), coffee, milk, bread, cheese, ham, butter, jams and sweet cakes (popular in Brazil for breakfast) amongst other things – so you certainly won't be leaving on an empty stomach! You will be allowed to use the kitchen facilities whenever it is not being used by the hotel staff.

FLORIANOPOLIS - For a complete cultural experience in Florianopolis you will live with one of our selected host families that help Travellers to make your placement as much enjoyable as possible. All of our host families are welcoming and will provide you a very familiar environment. We believe that this is the best way to become integrated into the local culture - you'll be much more than just a “tourist” and the added benefits are that often our host families introduce you to their families and friends and they often invite our volunteers to many local events, such as football matches, cinema, a drink in a local pub in the evening after a day of work, birthday parties, family Sunday's meals, a ride to the beach, etc.

It's also a great opportunity to learn Portuguese in an easy and natural way.

The family you'll live with will be allocated according to the location of your project, the number of volunteers at the same time as you, any personal issues (such as if you're allergic to pets, for example), but all our host families are near to launderettes, supermarkets, shops, banks, pharmacies, internet cafes, etc., and located in safe areas. The centre of the city is usually a 20-minute bus ride away.

You may share a room with another Travellers' volunteer and you will get contact details of all the other volunteers who are in Florianopolis at the same time as you so you can be in touch with them.

The bathrooms are Western style and have hot water.

VISAS:

In countries where visas or immigration documents are required, we'll send you all the necessary forms and information and make the process very easy for you.

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FLIGHTS:

You have the option to arrange your own flights or we can assist you with your flight arrangements. If you would like us to do this for you, we will liaise with you regarding available flights and dates to suit you. All arrangements for your flight bookings/payments will be fulfilled by [Murray Rogers Travel Limited](#), ATOL No. 6856.

INDUCTION ON ARRIVAL:

When you arrive, you will be welcomed at the airport by our Brazilian Organiser, who will take you to your accommodation. During your first few days you will be given an induction so that you can learn about Brazil and its culture, as well as useful information like how to use the transport system etc.

COSTS:

Please see the prices pages of our website [Full Price List](#). The price of this project is a reflection of the following costs:

- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Breakfast (Rio only)
- ✓ Meeting you at the airport
- ✓ Transport to and from your project
- ✓ Local in-country team support and backup
- ✓ 24hr emergency helpline
- ✓ Full pre-departure support
- ✓ UK administration
- ✓ Marketing (brochures, website design and maintenance, attending careers fairs, advertising, website listings and presentations)
- ✓ Project Research/Site Inspection
- ✓ Staff Training/Equipment
- ✓ Donations to worthwhile projects

HOW YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

By joining a Travellers Program you enable us to keep donating money to worthwhile projects around the world; from clothing and feeding school children, building playgrounds or funding vital conservation research - your participation makes these donations possible.

For every volunteer, a donation is made by Travellers on your behalf into the [Bridge The Gap Foundation](#). This Foundation was set up by us to donate directly to particularly worthwhile and necessary projects for children and animals around the world, and partners with other NGO's to raise match-funding for worthy projects.

COUNTRY PROFILE:

Brazil's colourful diversity and geographical abundance seem to embody everything that is best in South America. The Amazon flows through its heart! There is a dazzling string of great cities along its coast - the pulse-pounding resort of **Rio de Janeiro**; sprawling, metropolitan **Sao Paulo**; and, further north, the entrancing canals and bustling piers of **Recife**.

We have programmes in two very different locations. You can choose between the **dazzling city** of [Rio de Janeiro](#) and the **beach paradise** [Florianópolis](#). A world of contrasts! Alternatively, why not combine your placement and visit them both....?

Brazil has an incredible amount of diversity in vegetation and climate and a fascinating cultural mix of immigrants who have brought with them their customs and cuisines. **A vibrant, pulsating country!**

This tropical paradise is alive with mad passion in every walk of life. Axe (a-chay) means energy in Brazil and nowhere else is the heart-pounding, rhythmic energy more prevalent, be it an impromptu capoeira roda on a street corner, bursting with music, excitement and physical perfection, or the sound of loud raucous laughter between two acquaintances over ice cold beer in local open sided bars.

Brazil has the **sixth largest population in the world** (about 169 million people) which has doubled in the past 30 years. Because of its size, there are only 15 people per sq. km, concentrated mainly along the coast and in the major cities, where two-thirds of the people now live: over 19 million in greater Sao Paulo and 11 million in greater Rio.

In Brazil work is secondary to leisure and **Brazilians know how to enjoy life**. It is impossible not to absorb this infectious passion for life, enthusiasm for fun and appreciation of the little things in each day. Of course, a consistently

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hot summer and beaches such as the Copacabana and the infamous local tittle of Caipirinha all help secure that lively, happy vibe!

Caipirinha is the traditional Brazilian cocktail and is fittingly delicious. Refreshing and powerfully alcoholic, a Caipirinha is prepared with a Brazilian sugarcane liquor, Cachaça, lime juice (fresh from the fruit), sugar and lots of ice. This is an appetiser to be enjoyed before eating when socialising with friends – something you will do much of in Brazil.



Brazilians know how to party, in the cities, in the country, on the beaches and, in fact, wherever they go, and the biggest party of all time occurs each year throughout the country. **Carnaval is spectacular!!** It takes place in February all across Brazil but particularly in Rio. The streets are packed and pumping with incessant samba beats and pure hedonism for 5 days with a period of building excitement for some time before. Any excuse for a party! The year begins after Carnaval and, as with all things Brazilian, somewhat later than planned. Well, after all... what's the rush....?

Around the same size as the USA, Brazil is by far the largest South American country. It borders every country in South America but Ecuador and Chile. Brazil's population is clustered along the East coast of the Atlantic whilst much of the rest of this tropical land remains **scarcely populated** and difficult to access. Brazilians are most commonly of African, European or Indian descent and of Roman Catholic faith. The official language, unlike anywhere else in South America, is **Portuguese**. This diverse ethnic background is often cited as the explanation for the welcoming nature of the average Brazilian, who, as some say, *'have a little of the entire world in their blood'*.

Carnival, which takes place throughout Brazil, is a moveable feast that is tied to the religious calendar. Traditionally a pre-Lent celebration, ending on Ash Wednesday. Carnival activities around Brazil normally take place from the Friday prior to Ash Wednesday and continue up to and including Ash Wednesday itself. In some cities, the celebrations will spill over through the entire week and include the following weekend. Many Brazilian offices and business will close for the week of Carnival in much the same way UK firms close between Christmas and New Year.

Like Mardi Gras, Carnival has its roots in ancient pagan ritual. The wild parties began in the Middle Ages but were tamed in Europe by Christianity. The Portuguese were irrepressible, however. Carnival flourished and incorporated extravagant costumes from India and primitive carnal beats from African rhythm. Carnival takes place before lent where Catholic Brazilians officially gave up luxuries such as meat, alcohol and pastries. The word Carnival seems to have derived from the Latin 'goodbye meat'. The reasoning, and a grand one, behind Carnival therefore was to accumulate and rack up all sins in a blow out of extreme proportions, in advance of the deprivation ahead!

The excitement of Carnival builds practically all year round. Rehearsals at samba schools begin in August and marching percussion bands practise for their performances of music throughout the year.

Carnival Balls are extreme, surreal and erotic events. There is various stages of undress, extravagant body painting, stickered tattoos, fishnets and spandex involved! Hypnotic music, grinding movements and beautiful ladies of the night vying for the camera's attention are included in the price of the ticket. Some of these beautiful ladies are less 'lady' than they may appear...

Street Carnival is all about the dancing in the streets, marching bands pump out their theme tune and other rhythms as the drag queens and party crazed people bob along behind.

The **samba parades** are perhaps a highlight of carnival. As the Lonely Planet so nicely puts it, the Brazilians harness sweat, noise and confusion and turn it into art. The best Samba schools in the country prepare all year for their moment of glory. This procession is a competition of the art. There are many aspects to samba including percussion, song, dance, choreography, costumes, story line, floats and decorations. The winner of the samba parades earns admiration and the pride of Rio and all of Brazil.

THINGS TO DO IN: BRAZIL

Brazil offers so many different things to do that it's impossible to narrow it down to a few 'favourites'. One of the greatest things about this vibrant country is the atmosphere.... wherever you are and whatever you're doing, take time to absorb it - as you learn about the country around you and interact with local people you'll soon appreciate the energetic yet laid back Brazilian way of life!

- **Amazonia National Park:** The Amazon covers an impressive 7 of Brazil's 27 states and almost 40% of the total land mass. If you have the time, its a must see for the wildlife, climbing, trekking or lazy days spent traveling by boat along the river.

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- **Iguaçu Falls:** Sometimes described as being one of the 7 natural Wonders of the World! The falls have 275 separate cascading waterfalls, above which you'll see a glistening rainbow coloured mist. Simply spectacular!
- **Rio de Janeiro:** Rio is infamous, for its sun, sea and surf. As a city, it's friendly, chaotic, laid back and exciting! On top of the beach scene, Rio's the cultural and educational heart of Brazil, with many art galleries, museums, theatres, and dance halls where you can learn to Samba like the locals!
- **Recife:** Located on the north eastern coast of Brazil, Recife is well known for the canals and connecting bridges that criss-cross the city - a picturesque city and a famous tourist destination. There are many great beaches in this region and the cuisine is entirely different from that of the south of Brazil, making it well worth a visit.
- **Florianópolis:** With 42 beaches and a thriving surf, sun and water sport culture it's no surprise that *Veja* magazine, a Brazilian publication, named Florianopolis "the best place to live in Brazil."
- **The Pantanal:** Considered one of the world's great wildlife reserves with the best fishing in South America. Visitors come to these wetlands for the bird watching - this region is teeming with birds and other wildlife.
- **Salvador:** Formerly Brazil's colonial capital city and once the slave centre of Brazil. Salvador's enchanting cobblestone streets give it the charm of a Roman city, yet with an African soul. A must see for the ornate churches and lively, vibrant atmosphere.
- **Sao Paulo:** Sao Paulo is HUGE!! Not only is this the most populous city in Brazil, but it is also the commercial centre, home to many big businesses and skyscrapers. Italian and Japanese immigrants have settled in the city, leaving a cosmopolitan atmosphere with some of the trendiest nightlife in the whole of Brazil.



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VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK:

"On my last day the kids made me a poster and I was presented with a watermelon with a candle on top (this was not some weird Brazilian tradition they merely had no time to bake a cake!). I was also delighted and a little speechless when they took me on a surprise trip to a nearby Samba school and I was treated to seeing the kids samba moves!"

Lizzie Faithfull

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