

# Beautiful Brazil



## Highlights

- Rio City Tour
- Corcovado
- Mountain Tour
- Christ the Redeemer Statue
- Tijuca Forest
- BBQ Lunch
- Sugar Loaf Tour
- Ipanema Beach Dinner
- Petrópolis Imperial City Tour
- Full Day Ouro Preto and Mariana Tour
- Mineira Lunch
- Two-Day Colonial Cities Tour

## Optional

- Tropical Islands Cruise
- Three Days, Two Nights to Iguazú (Iguassu) Falls

## Itinerary

### Rio de Janeiro (5), Belo Horizonte (3)

**DAY 1** Board your jet to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil!

**DAY 2 RIO DE JANEIRO** Flying into Rio is a wonderful sight. Standing 120 feet tall, the famous statute of Christ serenely presides over 75 miles of spectacular coastline. Soon you will know why the locals call this "Cidade Maravilhosa" or the Marvelous City; a name that reflects the city's stunning natural setting between the mountains and the sea. Your courier will meet you at the airport and accompany you on a guided Rio City Tour. Start at Flamengo Park and see all the highlights of the historical downtown including a visit to the world-renowned Church of Glória da Outeiro.

**DAY 3 RIO DE JANEIRO** Travel by cogwheel train to the top of Corcovado Mountain where the gigantic statue of Cristo Redentor, the landmark of Rio, stands. The panoramic view of the city from here is breathtaking. On the way down from the mountain, visit the enormous Tijuca Forest, a reforestation project originally used for coffee plantations. Descend into Barra da Tijuca for a BBQ Lunch in a genuine "Carioca" restaurant.

**DAY 4 RIO DE JANEIRO** Today is free for exploration. *Option:* Take a full day cruise and tour to the Tropical Islands. Travel via the scenic Costa Verde, or "Green Coast," to the fishing village of Itacuruçá for a schooner cruise along the emerald waters.

**DAY 5 RIO DE JANEIRO** The morning is free for discovery and exploration. This afternoon a two-stage cable car will bring you to the top of Sugar Loaf Mountain, where you will have an astonishing view of Guanabara Bay, Copacabana Beach, and the city. Dine in style tonight at a beachfront restaurant on Rio's trendy Ipanema Beach.

**DAY 6 RIO DE JANEIRO** Take a full day tour to Petrópolis, once the summer residence of Brazil's Emperor Dom Pedro. The area includes historically important architecture including a museum that houses the great treasures of the Brazilian Crown, the oldest religious temple in the city dating back to 1862, and an

arboretum. Visit the Imperial Museum, the Crystal Palace and the Sao Pedro Neolithic Cathedral.

**DAY 7 BELO HORIZONTE** Fly to Belo Horizonte, located 2,625 feet above sea level and blessed with a pleasant climate year-round. The area functions as an important mining area, as well as the gateway to many of the historical cities of Minas Gerais.

**DAY 8 BELO HORIZONTE** Travel back to the early 18th century and Brazil's "Golden Age." This area's hills and mountains contain the richest mineral deposits in Brazil, and led to the area being christened "General Mines" when gold and diamonds were found at the end of the seventeenth century. Built with the wealth from the gold rush, Ouro Preto is an historical monument. Miles of cobblestone streets and blocks of row houses dip down hills and meander around churches. Visit the churches of St. Francis of Assisi and Pilar, both of which marked the climax of the gold cycle with carved works painted entirely in gold, and the Mineralogy Museum, which gives a complete mineralogical view of Brazil. Also tour Mariana, one of the major colonial towns. Visit the cathedral with its famous German organ, the old prison (*gadeia*), and the Sacred Art Museum. Enjoy a typical Mineira Lunch, featuring dishes of the region.

**DAY 9 BELO HORIZONTE** Continue your Golden Age colonial adventures with a tour of Congonhas do Campo to see Aleijadinho's life-size soapstone sculptures of the twelve Apostles and his Via Crucis, Brazil's greatest artistic treasure. Journey on to São Joao del Rei, founded in 1703, when gold was discovered in the area. On to Tiradentes to visit St. Antonio Church and the Casa do Padre Toledo or "House of Father Toledo." Handicrafts are a good buy in Tiradentes. Lunch is included in today's tour.

**DAY 10 DEPART** Return home with fantastic memories of Beautiful Brazil or fly to magnificent Iguazú Falls and the surrounding natural park of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay for an *optional* three days and two nights.

