

9 

Rio de Janeiro

With its glorious coastline, dramatic mountains and urban rainforest, Rio de Janeiro is a city that hits you between the eyes with its natural beauty. But there's plenty to discover here that isn't instantly self-evident. From lively neighbourhood bars and an intricate beach culture to sculptural gardens and concrete modernist buildings, there is a lot more to Rio than bronzed bodies on Ipanema Beach.

Need to know

Get to grips with the basics

- 01 **When in Rio:** When asked about safety in the city, any local will be quick to say that you should be fine – as long as you are *esperto* ("street-smart").
- 02 **First past the post:** The city's beaches are broken down into sections according to numbered *postos* ("posts"), each of which offers a different atmosphere.
- 03 **Make a day of it:** The most important meal is lunch and it does not necessarily end with the arrival of the bill. Put aside at least two hours on weekdays and be prepared on weekends: it can be a day-long event.
- 04 **Meet and greet:** Brazilians are known to be quite touchy-feely. Just extending your hand with no extra touching comes across as a little *frio* ("cold") to most Cariocas.
- 05 **Dress to impress:** Rio is extremely informal but don't mistake casualness for lack of style. The majority of venues will have no problem if you turn up in T-shirt, shorts and Havaianas. Rio gets very hot and humid so always opt for lighter fabrics.

Hotels

At home in the Marvellous City

- ① Fasano, Ipanema
Design-centric digs

The Fasano's location is second to none but only about half of the rooms have a sea view, so be sure to ask. There are three Deluxe Ocean-Front Suites and these are easily the best. The Fasano's other assets include a rooftop infinity pool.

Avenida Vieira Souto, 80
+55 (21) 3202 4000
fasano.com.br

②

- Belmond Copacabana Palace, Copacabana**
Old-school glamour

The most sophisticated address in Rio has ushered the rich and famous across its marble threshold since it opened in 1923. The Palace's rooms are a masterclass in simple grandeur.

Avenida Atlântica, 1702
+55 (21) 2548 7070
belmond.com/copacabana-palace-rio-de-janeiro

③

- Mama Ruisa, Santa Teresa**
Personalised service

Owner Jean Michel Ruis prides himself on giving each guest a unique experience; he can recommend a personalised itinerary for your visit.

Rua Santa Cristina, 132
+55 (21) 2508 8142
mamaruisa.com

Food and drink

Dining Carioca-style

①

- Gero, Ipanema**
Old-school Italian

When hotelier Rogério Fasano opened Gero in 2002 he raised the gastronomic bar for the whole city. The menu is heavy on classic Italian staples such as lamb shanks and veal ravioli; our top pick is the saffron risotto with ossobuco.

Rua Aníbal de Mendonça, 157
+55 (21) 2239 8158
fasano.com.br

②

- Aconchego Carioca, Praça da Bandeira**
Comforting Brazilian food

This relaxed pub-style restaurant serves food that is typical of Brazil's northeast. If you need a break from Rio's carnivorous leanings this is a good option.

Barão de Iguatemi, 379
+55 (21) 2273 9035

③

- Sushi Leblon, Leblon**
Japanese with a twist

The sleek dining room has specialties such as *sushi de agulhão branco* (butterfish and fried quail egg nigiri with truffle oil) and tuna tartare, all served on crockery by São Paulo-based Japanese potters Hideko Honma and Kimi Nii.

Rua Dias Ferreira, 256
+55 (21) 2512 7830
sushileblon.com

④

- BB Lanches, Leblon**
Juicy secret

Sample some lesser-known Amazonian fruits such as the lychee-like graviola, the bitter orange acerola fruit or the purple açaí, which some say tastes like a mix of berries and chocolate.

Rua Aristides Espinola, 64
+55 (21) 2294 1397

⑤

- Bar dos Descasados, Santa Teresa**
Sunset romance

Tucked beneath the stunning Santa Teresa Hotel, this bar is a wonderful spot for a sundowner or two. The large arches open out onto one of the best views in Rio, over the rooftops of Santa Teresa to Guanabara Bay.

Rua Almirante Alexandrino, 660
+55 (21) 2222 2755
santa-teresa-hotel.com

Retail

Laidback design with flair

①

- Osklen, Ipanema**
Beach plus

Global sportswear brand Osklen was founded in 1989 and the first Rio shop opened two years later. The flagship store offers high-end casualwear while Osklen Praia, a short walk away, hosts a range of T-shirts and shorts.

Rua Maria Quitéria, 85
+55 (21) 2227 2911
osklen.com

②

- Blue Man, Ipanema**
In-demand swimwear

Brothers David and Simão Azulay made Blue Man into a success story during the 1970s by adding their vibrant prints to pieces such as a tie-side bikini and *sungas*: the swimming shorts favoured by fashionable men throughout Brazil.

Rua Visconde de Pirajá, 351
+55 (21) 2247 4905
bluemman.com.br

③

- Poeira, Leblon**
Modern Portuguese

Poeira ("dust") is the creation of Portuguese entrepreneur Mónica Penaguião; these homeware shops hold a mix of international designs as well as its own-brand furniture, rugs and cushions.

Rua Dias Ferreira, 480
+55 (21) 2580 0513
poeiraonline.com

④

- Toca do Vinícius, Ipanema**
Bossa nova central

Carlos Alberto Afonso, now in his sixties, set up this record shop dedicated to bossa nova in 1993 and originally named it *Toca da Bossa Nova* (Den of Bossa Nova).

Rua Vinícius de Moraes, 129
+55 (21) 2247 5227
tocadovinicio.com.br

Vocabulary

Local lingo

- 01 **Bom dia:** Good morning
- 02 **Boa tarde:** Good afternoon
- 03 **Boa noite:** Good night
- 04 **Carioca:** Local resident of Rio
- 05 **De nada:** You're welcome
- 06 **Lindo(a):** Beautiful
- 07 **Obrigada:** Thank you (for women)
- 08 **Obrigado:** Thank you (for men)
- 09 **Oi:** Hi
- 10 **Tchau:** Good bye
- 11 **Tudo bem?:** How are you?



Buy now at all good bookshops or visit the online stores at monocle.com and shop.gestalten.com