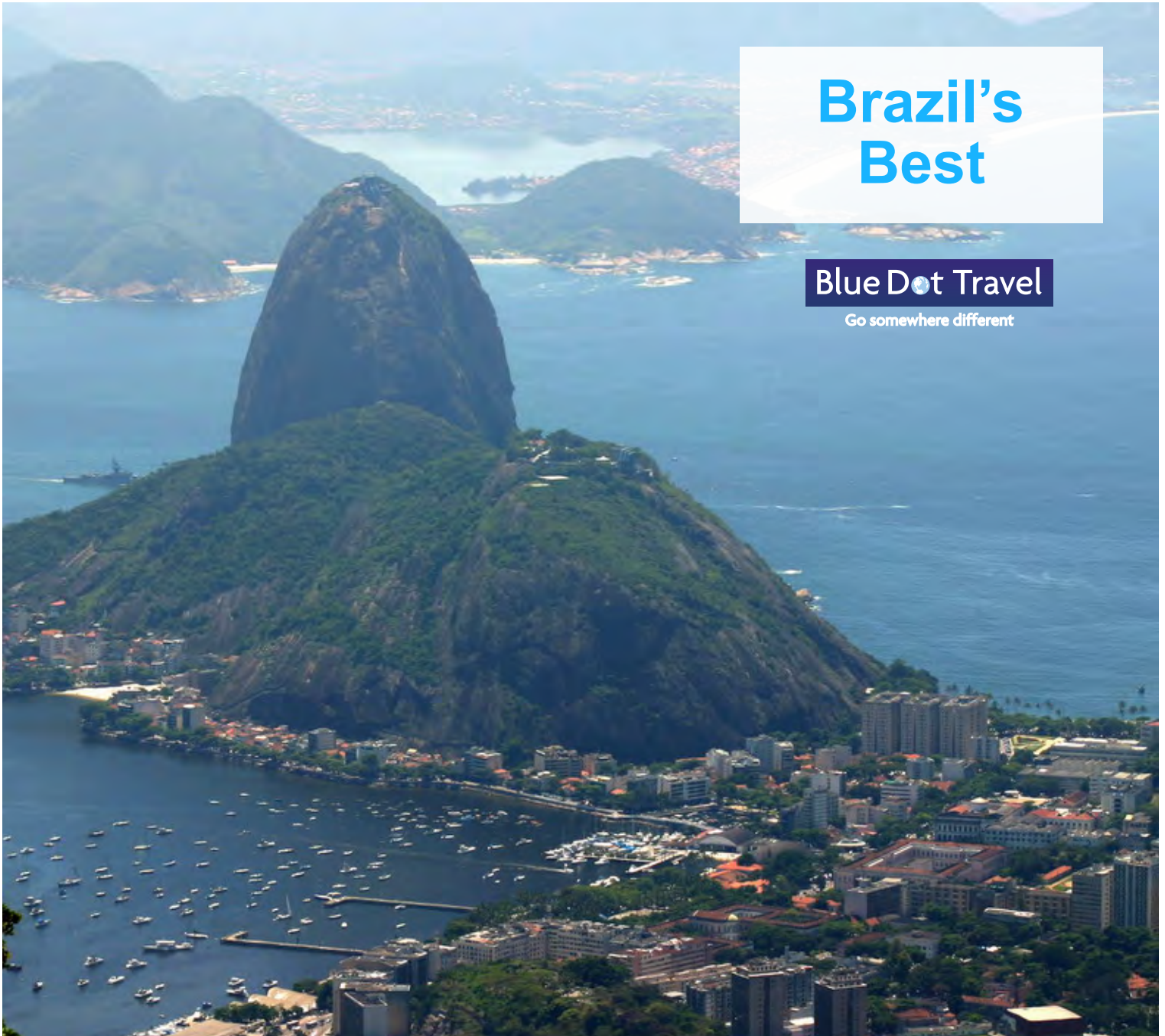


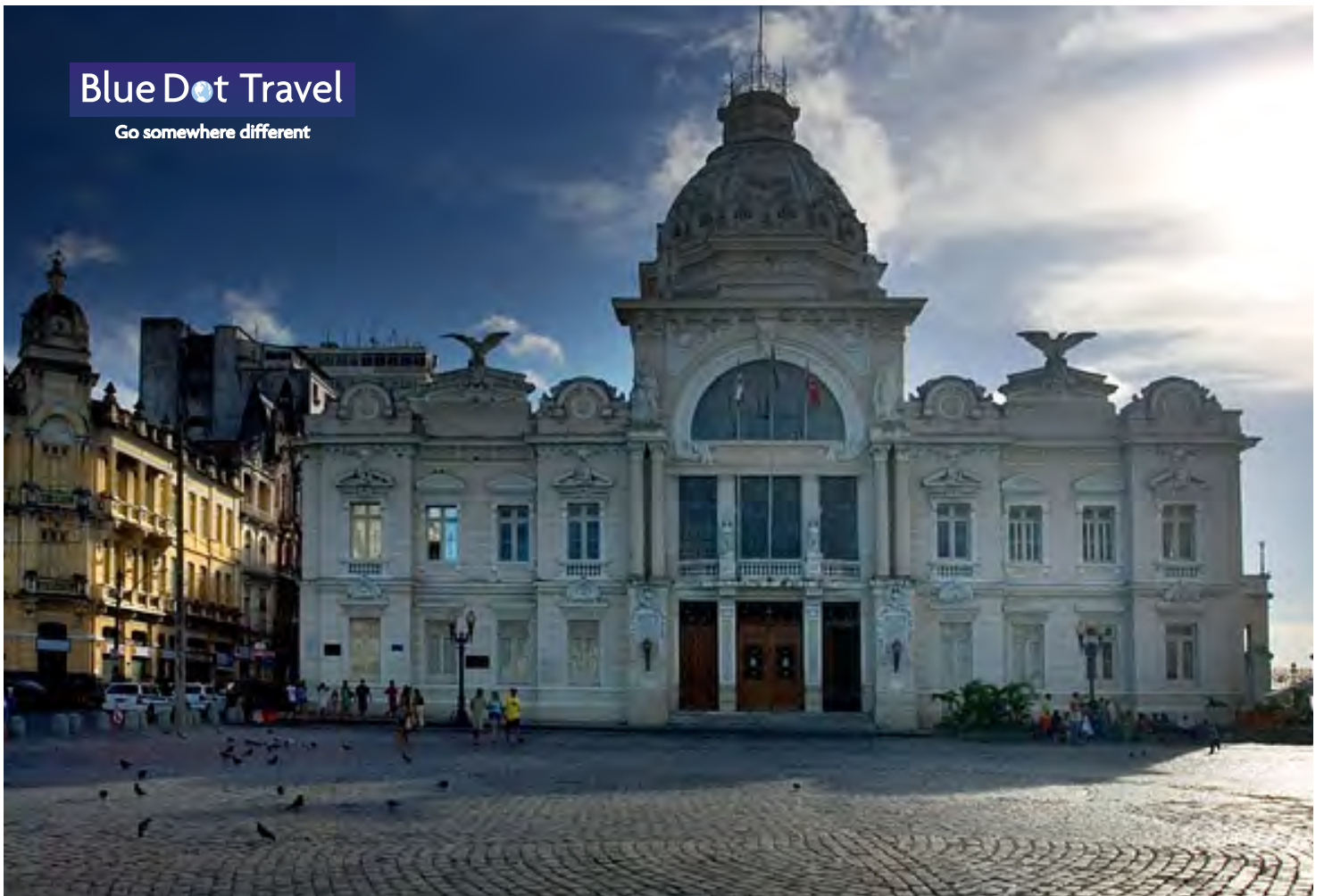
Brazil's Best

Blue Dot Travel

Go somewhere different



Itinerary correct as at Jan 10, 2018 but subject to change. ALL flights to be confirmed. www.bluedottravel.com.au



BRAZIL'S BEST

Three weeks of culture, history, amazing scenery, people and food, glorious food!

Covering almost half of the South American content, Brazil is the 5th largest country in the world by area and also by population. It covers approximately 8.5 million square kms (bigger than Australia) and is home to over 200 million people. Brazil has a diverse geography of natural environments, the most famous being the rainforests of the Amazon Basin with its plethora of endemic flora (over 3,500 species) and fauna covering the north and west. Other landscapes are influenced by the Atlantic Coast, The Andes mountain range, grassy plains and wetlands.

However it is Brazil's people and varied cultures that primarily make this country a must-visit destination. Cave paintings found in the protected Serra da Capivara National Park date in- habitants back 25,000 years! Fast forward to around 1500 AD and the Portuguese explorer Pedro Alvares claimed the region for his country. Over many years, the Portuguese, Dutch and Spanish all fought over the country and it was not until 1822 that Brazil was declared a republic. In the late 19th century, immigrants from all over the world settled in various regions around the country and today there is a wonderful mix of intermingled nationalities hard to find anywhere else in the world! Today, Brazilians speak Portuguese but it is greatly influenced by indigenous peoples and the slaves from Africa who worked the early sugar plantations.

Much like Australians, many Brazilians are "mad keen" on sport. Football (or soccer as we call it) is their national game and they have been World Cup champions a record 5 times. Volleyball & beach volleyball, martial arts, Basketball and Formula 1 racing are also highly popular. Ayrton Senna who tragically died in an F1 race in 1994, is regarded by many as their greatest sporting legend. In 2016, Rio will become the first South American city to host an Olympic games.



**Day 1
IN TRANSIT**

Meals in flight.

**Day 2
SALVADOR**

The oldest city in Brazil and its first capital, Salvador was a major post for the slave trade and is now a thriving centre of Afro-Brazilian life. Salvador is considered the country's soul and the birthplace of Brazilian culture. The local cuisine, music, dance and vibrant visual arts are all testaments to the pervasive African influence. As one of Brazil's great historical destinations, the city is filled with churches, homes and forts that reflect stunning Portuguese architecture from the Baroque period. Outside the city lie some of North Eastern Brazil's most pristine beaches, including the renowned Praia do Forte and Costa do Sauípe. Considered Brazil's most artistic city, Salvador has a lively art scene and its streets are filled with dance and music all year round. On arrival, the group will be met by the guide and transferred to the hotel for rest after your long flight. Welcome dinner at the hotel's restaurant. Overnight in Salvador. *D*

**Day 3
SALVADOR**

We start with the essential sights of Salvador tracing the development of the city from its simple beginnings to what is now the third largest city in Brazil. The group will visit the mouth of the immense bay and then via elegant tree-lined

avenues and bustling city streets to the Pelourinho, a Unesco Heritage site and the largest complex of colonial architecture in South America. Stroll through the narrow, bustling streets lined with buildings in pastel shades of an age gone by. We visit the church of São Francisco with its exuberant gold-leafed Baroque interior and the Pelourinho square, the heart of the old town. After lunch, discover the world of Bahia, a mind boggling myriad of rhythms that has attracted many international musicians to these shores. We will see the sacred dances of the Candomblé; puxada de rede, a song by fishermen in honour of Yemanjá the goddess of the sea; maculelê, an acrobatic stick and sword dance with its origins in the cane fields; capoeira, a martial art/dance of Angolan origin and the samba de roda, a spinning, swirling version of this exuberant national dance. Overnight in Salvador. *B/D*



Day 4 SALVADOR

The scenic Coconut Highway leads to Praia do Forte, a fishing village 80 km's north of Salvador, home to some of the best beaches in Bahia. On arrival at Praia do Forte we stroll through the village and will have the opportunity to visit the headquarters of the TAMAR Project - the national sea turtle preservation project and one of Brazil's most



successful ecological programs. The visitors' centre provides a unique up-close view of these majestic animals. We then drive south to Guarajuba Beach where we have time to swim in the calm warm waters of the

South Atlantic ocean, or have lunch in one of the local restaurants. After lunch, we head back to Salvador to overnight. *B/L*

Day 5 SALVADOR – RECIFE

After breakfast, transfer from the hotel to Salvador airport. Capital of the state of Pernambuco in the North-east, Recife is known as the "Brazilian Venice" due to its many channels, waterways and innumerable bridges that resemble the famous Venice of Italy. The city has an excellent culinary scene serving delicious international cuisine as well as succulent fish dishes typical of the region. Fresh coconut water is found on almost every corner. Close to the capital is Piedade Beach and traveling further away lie the untouched beaches of Tamandare, Sao Jose da Coroa Grande, Maria Farinha and Porto de Galinhas. The sun shines brighter in Recife than anywhere else in Brazil! Overnight in Recife. *B/D*

Day 6 RECIFE & OLINDA

Recife is a wonderful, friendly town. Old Recife has beautiful colonial buildings that date back to the 1800's. On our panoramic tour we will visit the white sands of Boa Viagem, the city's squares and Casa da Cultura (the Culture House) which has been transformed from a detention centre to a wonderful craft centre. You'll also have time to wander and explore on your own. A short drive from the port will take you to the 16th century colonial town of Olinda famous for its historical past and its Portuguese Colonial Architecture. A very well preserved colonial town founded in 1534, Olinda is UNESCO listed. Here you leave the bus and board a minivan to go through the narrow winding streets of the historic centre. Sights will include the Main Square and the Alto da Sé – the crest of the highest hill in the city. Take a moment to admire the colourful Portuguese tiles and wood carvings decorated with gold leaf that punctuate the architecture. Your walking tour will include the Kahal Zur Israel, the first Synagogue on the American Continent. Overnight in Recife. *B/D*

Day 7 RECIFE

Today we'll tour Francisco Brennand's work and local dance music. We will then return to Recife and drive through the downtown area with its graceful bridges and then visit the Golden Chapel - part of the Convent and Church of St. Anthony. Its intricate baroque design, covered in gold leaf, makes it one of the most beautiful and historical examples of religious art in Brazil. Overnight in Recife. *B/D*

Day 8 ITAMARACA & ECOPARK

History, culture and nature are the principal attractions - the beautiful Itamaraca Island. We will visit Igarassu, one of the oldest villages of colonial Brazil that boasts the first church constructed in the country. Crossing through immense palm trees, we'll arrive in Itamaraca, where the boat which will take us on our journey through the waters of the Santa Cruz canal will be waiting for us. At our stop on the Coroa do Aviao Island we can take a dip before visiting the Ecopark. The Itamaraca Peixe Boi Marine mammals institute is dedicated to the recovery and rehabilitation of manatees, a docile marine mammal native to most of the Americas. The popular name 'Peixe Boi' literally means 'Bull fish', due to their size of up to half a tonne. They are totally vegetarian and a highly endangered species, with as few as 400 surviving along the tropical coastline of South and North-eastern Brazil up to the Amazon basin. Overnight in Recife. *B/D*

Day 9 RECIFE - SAO LUIS

Today we transfer to São Luís. State capital of Maranhão, São Luís is a city full of traditions and culture. Founded in 1612, it is home to beautiful mansions and townhouses as well as historical town squares. Listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, much of the colonial architecture dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has been restored. The city now houses cultural centres, museums, shops and restaurants. Besides history, the city preserves its traditions. The folkloric events and the architecture of the churches built in the days of slavery are evidence of the vitality and strength of the cultural traditions still alive today. São Luís is also a modern city, with a newer area full of buildings, shopping centres and sophisticated restaurants. Overnight in Sao Luis. *B/D*

Day 10 SÃO LUÍS - BARREIRINHAS

Today we start with a City Tour in São Luís to see the French flavour of the city with its local cuisine and French architecture. Around 3.00pm, we'll departure to Barreirinhas, a 4 hour trip on good road. You'll see plantations of Babaçu and Buriti. Barreirinhas is located on the waterfront of Preguiças River and is a very peaceful and hospitable town. The Lençóis Maranhenses National Park, located close to town is a rare gem with magnificent dunes sculpted by nature. Check in to your Hotel in Barreirinhas. *B/D*

Day 11 PREGUICA RIVER BY BOAT

Around 8.30 am we'll take a ride on a speedboat on the majestic Preguiças River with its mangroves, Juçara Palm trees and herons and kingfishers. We will make stops on

communities of Vassouras, also known as small "Lençóis" where we can interact with monkeys plus Mandacaru, a small fishing village. Those who are up to it can ascend 160 steps up the Mandacaru's lighthouse for the scenic view of the dunes, river, estuary and ocean. Next stop: Caburé, this being an arm of dunes located between the river and the Sea. We'll return to Barreirinhas around at 3.00 pm. *B/L*

Day 12 BLUE LAGOON AND BONITA LAGOON

An early departure in 4x4's to the Blue Lagoon circuit, where – for those up to it - we'll trek into the Park over the dunes (about 2h) to reach the Bonita Lagoon. Lunch stop along the way. In the afternoon we'll witness the beautiful sunset in the dunes and then return to Barreirinhas in 4x4 vehicle. *B/L*

Day 13 SÃO LUÍS - BELEM

Transfer from Barreirinhas to São Luís Airport and then fly to Belem. Belem is the capital of the State of Pará and is located on the southern side of the Amazon River. It serves as the main entrance to the Amazon region as well as an important commercial and economic centre. During the 19th century rubber boom, the city served as the main port of the region. The famous "Ver-o-Peso" market, designed and built in England, as well the Catholic Churches and the "Peace Theatre" are reminders of that era. Nowadays the modern airport regularly receives flights from the United States, Latin America and most Brazilian cities. Overnight in Belem. *B/D*

Day 14 BELEM

Today we start with a sightseeing tour of Belém where you will visit all of the main attractions that the city has to offer. We will start by visiting the "Ver-o-Peso" Market in the morning, then the Emilio Gold Museum, Republic Square, the Peace Theatre and the Old City of Belém. Overnight in Belem. *B/D*

Day 15 BELEM - MANAUS - LODGES / BOAT

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Manaus the capital of Brazil's largest state - Amazonas. Manaus is located in the Northwest of the country. It is an ideal starting point when visiting the rest of the Amazon region. Tour boats leave Manaus to see the Meeting of the Waters, where the



black waters of the Negro River meet the white waters of the Solimões River, flowing side by side without mixing for several miles.

Transfer to Amazon Ecopark with our English speaking guide. After check-in at the lodge, we'll depart from the lodge

on a boat or motorised canoe to explore the local area. Return to the lodge for dinner and after we will have a night tour in a canoe to try and spot small alligators and other creatures. *B/D*

Day 16 MANAUS - LODGES / BOAT - MANAUS

After breakfast guests will go on a nature hike. Biodiversity is the main characteristic of Ecopark. It includes uncatalogued species in virgin rainforest natural savannahs and creeks. Several streams of crystal clear warm water run through the rainforest. During the tour, the guide will lead clients and educate them about the local flora/fauna, how and where to find edible fruits and potable water, first aid, how to find their way in the forest and much more. The duration of this hike will be one to three hours, depending on health conditions of the participants. Then guests will have lunch, before going on a fishing tour. Depart lodge in paddle or motorised canoes, accompanied by a bilingual guide. (Fishing of piranhas and other species, depending on season). It is a non-professional fishing. Upon returning to the lodge, guests will be served dinner. Meals and activities at the lodge. Overnight in the Amazon (Manaus) with full board. *B/L/D*

Day 17 MANAUS - LODGES / BOAT - MANAUS

After breakfast we will depart for a tour of Meeting of the Waters. The boat goes down the Negro River navigating along the shore of the City of Manaus, allowing passengers to view the Amazonas Theatre, the Port of Manaus, the Customs and the interesting aspects of the local life - the stilt houses for instance. Arrival at The Meeting of the Waters by 11.30am. It's a spectacular merge of Negro and Solimões Rivers. From this point on both rivers form the famous Amazon River that runs all the way to the Atlantic Ocean. The waters of the two rivers run together for about 12kms, side by side, without mixing. The phenomenon happens due to differences in temperature, density and speed of the waters of the rivers. Depending on the level of the waters, we'll visit a typical "caboclo" (local inhabitants) villa at Terra Nova Island. Overnight in the Amazon. *B/L/D*

Day 18 MANAUS - LODGES / BOAT - RIO DE JANEIRO

After breakfast you will have a morning of leisure to relax and explore the area then transfer back to Manaus and then to Rio Airport. Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil until 1960. Often called "Cidade Maravilhosa" (The Marvellous City) Rio de Janeiro is world renowned for its breathtaking landscapes and location, nestled between lush, green mountains and crystal clear seas. Rio is one of the most culturally and economically prominent cities in Brazil and features some of the country's most famous tourist attractions such as Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf Mountain), Corcovado (Christ the Redeemer statue), and the iconic beaches of Copacabana and Ipanema. The city is full of energy and rhythm, and the locals of Rio, 'Cariocas', are known for their carefree spirit and charm. Whether you are looking to experience Carnival, relax in a naturally stunning environment, or enjoy all the luxuries of a cosmopolitan city, Rio de Janeiro has it all! Rio by night - After dinner we head to the most famous samba theatre in Rio de Janeiro to enjoy an unforgettable performance of Brazilian Samba and folklore. A look into the magical world of Brazilian Carnival wrapped in the colours and the sounds of exotic percussion instruments. Available from Monday to Saturday. Menu dinner at Prado Emporium & Grill. Barbecue Prado Emporium & Grill is located in the historic

mansion where the Jockey infirmary operated during the beginning of the twentieth century. This Culinary centre combines emporium and grill in a privileged area on the Jockey Club in Gávea. The space, of great proportions, has the architectural characteristics of a colonial home and a balcony that is an attraction in itself, facing the breathtaking view of the Jockey Club runway for watching the horse races. The menu highlights are the Argentine meat cuts grilled in a 4-metre long barbecue, fully loaded with coal, with hints of pine smoking from where the most delicious cuts come out. Overnight in Rio at selected hotel with breakfast. *B/D*

Day 19 RIO DE JANEIRO

Depart from the hotel after breakfast to visit the most famous landmarks of the city and see the natural beauty of Rio de Janeiro from up above. After a scenic drive along Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon passengers arrive at the bottom of the Corcovado Hill. Embark on a comfortable train that ascends the mountain, where the statue of Christ the Redeemer is located 2,300 ft above sea level. The Christ statue, known as the "wonder of Rio", was recently elected one of the 7 "New Wonders of the World". Over a million tourists each year visit the world famous 'Pão de Açúcar', (Sugar Loaf Mountain), which has become an iconic symbol of the city of Rio de Janeiro. Rising up from a small peninsula at the entrance of Guanabara Bay, its name is said to refer to its resemblance to the traditional shape of a concentrated, refined sugar loaf. The journey to the top is made in glass cable-cars. Rio by night - After dinner we head to the most famous samba theatre in Rio de Janeiro to enjoy an unforgettable performance of Brazilian Samba and folklore. A look into the magical world of Brazilian Carnival wrapped in the colours and the sounds of exotic percussion instruments. Available from Monday to Saturday. Menu dinner at Prado Emporium & Grill. Barbecue Prado Emporium & Grill is located in the historic mansion where the jockey infirmary operated during the beginning of the twentieth century. This Culinary centre

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Day 20 RIO DE JANEIRO

We start the day with a walking tour which will give you a feeling for the legends and stories woven around the narrow streets and old historical buildings of downtown Rio. The walk includes a visit to many interesting points such as

the São Bento Monastery, Candelária Church, Praça XV, the "Travessa do Mercado", Imperial Palace ('Paço Imperial'), the cultural center located in the beautifully-restored Banco do Brasil, the Casa França-Brasil, Ouvidor Street and Gonçalves Dias Street with the traditional Colombo Coffee Shop. Continue down to Uruguaiana Street, Carioca Square, and up to the Metropolitan Cathedral. Rocinha favela is the biggest favela in Latin America with about a 150 thousand inhabitants. It is located near the neighbourhoods of Gávea and São Conrado. On this jeep tour it will be possible to observe the routine of the community with visits to homes of residents day-care centres, schools and to the headquarter of Rocinha's own samba school – Escola de Samba Acadêmicos da Rocinha – and with walks through the many narrow streets and the commercial centre of the neighborhood. The commercial centre, located at Largo do Boiadeiro, is an open air fair with food, beverages and handicrafts typical of the North and North-eastern regions of Brazil, the regions where most of the residents originally come from. From the hotel we will reach the favela by open air jeep through Estrada da Gávea we will visit the administration then proceed to Carlinhos rooftop, from there we will walk the streets of the neighbourhood; following we will visit Largo do Boiadeiro, the headquarters of the Rocinha Samba School, then return to the hotel via Ave Niemeyer. Overnight in Rio. *B/L*

Day 21 RIO DE JANEIRO

Today is free time. A private transfer to Rio airport will be provided for your flight home or next destination. *B*

Day 22 IN TRANSIT

Day 23

Arrive back in Australia.
