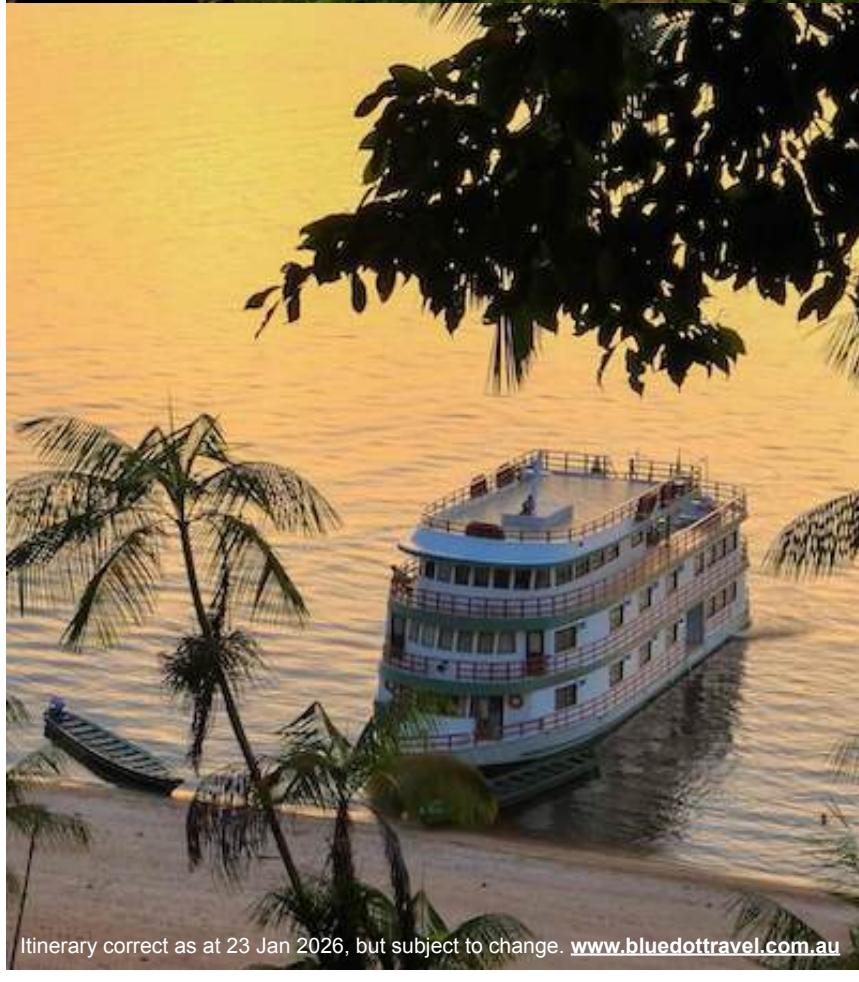


# Brazil's Best

## Rio, Salvador, Recife, and Manaus

Departs October 2027

Blue Dot Travel





## BRAZIL'S BEST RIO, SALVADOR, RECIFE, AND MANAUS

Situated in the east of South America, Brazil is the largest country on that continent, commanding a staggering half of its overall landmass.

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. The country hosts a plethora of endemic flora (over 3,500 species) and fauna covering the north and the west. Its landscapes are influenced by the Atlantic Coast, The Andes mountain range, wide grass plains and wetlands.

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 inhabitants 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.

Like Australians, many Brazilians are keen followers of sport. Football 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 became the first South American city to host an Olympic Games.

Join us for two weeks of culture, history, amazing scenery, people and fabulous food.



## Day 1 ARRIVE RIO DE JANEIRO

Depart Australia for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. We will provide a personalised flight schedule based on your needs. On the same calendar day, arrive in Rio de Janeiro, a world-renowned city famous for its breathtaking landscapes, located between lush green mountains and crystal-clear seas. The city is full of energy and rhythm, and the Rio locals, 'Cariocas', are known for their carefree spirit and charm. We'll be met at the airport before checking into our hotel, Windsor Leme, where we will stay for three nights. **D**

## Day 2 RIO DE JANEIRO

We start the day with a walking tour that gives you a sense of the legends and stories woven through downtown Rio's narrow streets and old historical buildings. 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 centre 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 the Metropolitan Cathedral. We'll have lunch at Belmonte Leme (or similar). In the afternoon, we'll take a fascinating "behind the scenes" tour of Carnival to learn about this famous worldwide party of all parties. Return to the hotel via Ave Niemeyer. Later, we'll 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. Tonight, experience the fabulous Ginga Tropical show that combines a variety of dances and rhythms developed from the African slave trade.. **B/L/D**

## Day 3 RIO DE JANEIRO

Depart from the hotel after breakfast to visit the city's most famous landmarks and see the natural beauty of Rio de Janeiro from above. After a scenic drive along Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon, passengers arrive at the bottom of 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 Rio de Janeiro. Rising from a small peninsula at the entrance of Guanabara Bay, its name refers to its resemblance to the traditional shape of a refined sugar loaf. The journey to the top is made in glass cable cars. Tonight is a fabulous dinner at Prado Emporium & Grill. The Grill is located in the historic mansion where the Jockey infirmary operated during the beginning of the twentieth century. This culinary centre combines an emporium and grill in a privileged area of the Jockey Club in Gávea. The space, of great proportions, has the architectural character of a colonial home and a balcony that is a feature in itself, facing the breathtaking view of the Jockey Club racecourse. The menu highlights are the delicious cuts of meat grilled on a four-metre-long barbecue. **B/D**



city in Brazil and its first capital, Salvador, was a significant 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 testament 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 Baroque architecture. Some of North Eastern Brazil's most pristine beaches, including the renowned Praia do Forte and Costa do Sauípe, lie outside the city. Considered Brazil's most artistic city, Salvador has a lively art scene, and its streets are filled with dance and music year-round. Afternoon flight to Salvador. Overnight at the Novotel Rio Vermeiro, where we will stay for three nights. **B/D**

## Day 5, Tuesday SALVADOR

After breakfast, we start with the essential sights of Salvador, tracing the city's development from its humble 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-listed World 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. Lunch at a local restaurant. Dinner at your leisure tonight. **B/L**

## Day 6 SALVADOR & SURROUNDS

The scenic Coconut Highway leads to Praia do Forte, a fishing village 80 km north of Salvador, home to some of the best beaches in Bahia. On arrival at Praia do Forte, we stroll through the village. We'll 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 visitor centre provides a unique up-close view of these majestic animals. We will 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 (at your own expense), we head back to Salvador. Tonight, discover the world of Bahia, a mindboggling 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 their exuberant national dance. **B/D**



## Day 7 SALVADOR – RECIFE

After breakfast, there should be a little time for strolling, shopping or rest, before transferring from the hotel to Salvador airport. Afternoon flight to Recife. The capital of Pernambuco in the Northeast, Recife, is known as the "Brazilian Venice" for its many channels, waterways, and bridges that resemble those of Italy's famous city. Recife has an excellent culinary scene serving delicious international cuisine and succulent fish dishes typical of the region. Fresh coconut water is found on almost every corner. Close to the capital is Piedade Beach, whilst further away lie the untouched beaches of Tamandare, São José da Coroa Grande, Maria Farinha and Porto de Galinhas. The sun shines brighter in Recife than anywhere else in Brazil! Overnight in Recife at the Novotel Marina, where we'll stay three nights. **B/D**





## Day 8 RECIFE AND OLINDA

Recife is a wonderful, friendly town. Old Recife has beautiful colonial buildings dating back to the 1800s. On our 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. It's a short drive from the port to the 16th-century colonial town of Olinda, famous for its historical past and Portuguese Colonial Architecture. A very well-preserved colonial town founded in 1534, Olinda is UNESCO-listed. Here, we will leave the bus and board a minivan to make our way 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. Our walking tour will include Kahal Zur Israel, the first Synagogue on the continent. Dinner will be at a local restaurant. **B/D**

## Day 9 RECIFE

After breakfast, we'll learn about the famous artist Francisco Brennand. He worked across many formats but is best known for his sculptures. We will also visit the Palace of Frevo to learn about the wonderful culture of Brazilian dance and music. Then, we'll return to Recife and drive downtown to see its graceful bridges and Golden Chapel, part of the Convent and Church of St. Anthony. Its intricate baroque design, covered in gold leaf, makes it one of Brazil's most beautiful and historic examples of religious art. A lovely lunch is included at Castellus Restaurant today. Dinner tonight at your leisure. **B/L**

## Day 10 RECIFE – MANAUS

Transfer to the airport for our 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 for visiting the rest of the Amazon region. Transfer to the Amazon Eco-park. 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 dinner, we will take a night canoe tour to try to spot small alligators and other creatures. Overnight in Manaus at The Amazon Eco Lodge, where we stay three nights. **B/D**

## Day 11 MANAUS – AMAZON JUNGLE ECO LODGE

After breakfast, we'll enjoy a nature hike. Biodiversity is the main characteristic of the eco-park. It includes

uncatalogued species in virgin rainforests, natural savannahs and creeks, and streams of crystal-clear warm water run through the rainforest. During the tour, the guide will lead clients through the forest and educate us on the local flora and fauna, how to source edible fruits, drinkable water, first aid, and much more. This hike will last one to three hours, depending on the participants. Then we'll have lunch at the lodge before going on a fishing tour on motorised canoes, accompanied by a Bilingual guide. (This is an amateur fishing activity. You are not obliged to join if fishing is not your thing). Upon returning to the lodge, guests will be served dinner. **B/L/D**

## Day 12 AMAZON RIVER

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, and the interesting aspects of local life, such as the stilt houses. Arrival at The Meeting of the Waters by 11.30, the spectacular merging of the Negro and Solimões Rivers. From then on, the famous Amazon River runs to the Atlantic Ocean. The waters of the two rivers run together for about 12 km, side by side, without mixing. The phenomenon occurs due to differences in the rivers' temperatures, densities, and speeds. Depending on the level of the water, we'll visit a typical "caboclo" villa on Terra Nova Island. Note. The order of the day is subject to change, depending on conditions. Overnight in Manaus. **B/L/D**



## Day 13 MANAUS

Today, after breakfast, we will check out of the lodge and drive to the city for a walking tour, taking in all of the core sights, including the famous opera house. Then, at around 2.00 pm, we will check into the Quality Hotel. Your afternoon and evening are free. (Lunch and dinner are at your leisure and own cost). **B**



## Day 14 DEPARTURE

After breakfast, we'll be transferred to Manaus airport to begin our journey home or to your next destination.