

What to do in Rio

Do what we do. Rio is at its best when mountains, beach, and food all blur together. Book ahead for restaurants and outdoor experiences, and check the forecast before you go.

What to know

Pay with your phone

Apple Pay works almost everywhere cards are accepted. Always choose Brazilian reais (BRL), the local currency, on the card machine, not US dollars. Businesses do not take dollars, so carry reais if you want cash. US\$1 is about R\$5. A 10% service charge is usually included; no extra tip is expected.

Use Uber door to door

Wait inside until your Uber arrives and check the plate. The Metrô is useful during the day. Skip buses and rental cars.

Set up your phone before landing

Set up roaming or an Airalo eSIM before you land. Install WhatsApp, Google Maps, and Google Translate. Keep your phone out of sight on the street.

Carry lightly

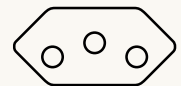
Leave necklaces, other jewelry, and luxury watches at home. Keep your passport at the hotel. Never walk on the beach after dark. During the day, keep someone with your bags. Avoid map shortcuts through hillside communities (favelas).

Let the weather choose the day

Save Christ and Sugarloaf for a clear day. Bring sunscreen, repellent, and a light rain layer. Swim between the lifeguard flags.

Bring a plug adapter

Brazilian outlets fit a slim two-prong European plug, not the larger round European plug. Rio has both 127V and 220V outlets, so check before using anything that is not dual-voltage.



If you need help

Police: 190 · Ambulance: 192 · Fire: 193

Arts & culture

Niterói

MAC Niterói

Contemporary art, Oscar Niemeyer's architecture, and an incredible view of Rio.

Cosme Velho

Casa Roberto Marinho

Brazilian art displayed in an elegant house surrounded by tropical gardens.

Restaurants

Ipanema

Satyricon

A Rio classic for excellent seafood and Mediterranean cuisine.

Barra da Tijuca

Mocellin

A traditional Brazilian steakhouse experience.

Ipanema

Gajos d'Ouro

Traditional Portuguese cuisine in Ipanema.

Leblon

Belmonte

A classic Brazilian boteco for caipirinhas, cold beer, and bar snacks.

Google Maps

Matt's full Rio list

More places to eat, drink, and explore across Rio, all saved in one Google Maps list.

Flamengo Park

MAM Rio

Modern and contemporary art in a beautiful setting by Flamengo Park.

Leblon

Malta Beef Club

Great steaks and premium cuts of meat.

Botafogo

Oteque

A sophisticated tasting-menu experience. Book well in advance.

Gávea

Braseiro da Gávea

No reservations. Go before noon or mid-afternoon; expect a line at peak hours. Order the picanha to share.

Ipanema

Koral

Modern cuisine in a stylish but relaxed atmosphere in Ipanema.

Beaches

Ipanema / Leblon

Beach and bike route

Ipanema and Leblon are the classic Rio beaches. Bike Itaú or Whoosh works well for the orla and Lagoa.

Day trip

Saquarema

Brazil's surf capital, where the WSL Championship Tour comes to Praia de Itaúna. A beautiful day trip from Rio.

Experiences

Team Bispo

Surf lesson at Arpoador

A fun way to experience Rio's beach culture in one of the city's most iconic surf spots.

WhatsApp: +55 21 99780-1316

Nobre

Helicopter flight

Message Nobre directly on WhatsApp to book spectacular aerial views of Rio.

WhatsApp: +55 21 99158-9340

Lagoa

Waterski with Marquinhos

Waterski on the Lagoa below Christ with Marquinhos.

WhatsApp: +55 21 99976-7147

São Conrado

São Conrado

Beautiful scenery and a more relaxed atmosphere.

São Conrado

Hang gliding or paragliding

See Rio from above with Mahmoud Azim. Message him directly on WhatsApp to book; he speaks English.

WhatsApp: +55 21 98181-0333

Velas do Rio

Sailing catamaran

A relaxing trip around Guanabara Bay with Velas do Rio.

Hikes

São Conrado

Pedra Bonita

A relatively easy hike with one of the best views in Rio.

Urca

Sugarloaf

Hike the light-to-moderate trail from Pista Cláudio Coutinho to Morro da Urca, then continue by cable car to Sugarloaf. You can also take the cable car the whole way.

Tijuca Forest

Corcovado from Parque Lage

A longer and more challenging trail through the Tijuca Forest, ending near Christ the Redeemer.

September 4-7 and 11-13

In Barra. Buy through the official site and allow extra time for traffic.

Rock in Rio

Want more options?

Our full Google Maps list has more.



Live guide and updates

Scan with your phone



Full Rio map

Scan with your phone

Made for our wedding guests in Rio · September 2026