

## BRAZIL AT A GLANCE

**POPULATION:** 207,353,391 (July 2017 est.)

**LANGUAGE:** Portuguese

**PREDOMINANT RELIGIONS:** Christian (Roman Catholic, Protestant)

**TIME ZONE:** Six to nine hours behind Eastern Daylight Time (New York City). Daylight Saving Time is observed in eastern Brazil.

**TELEPHONE CODES:** 55, country code; 85, Fortaleza city code; 83, João Pessoa city code; 92, Manaus city code; 41, Paranagua city code

Everything in Brazil seems larger than life. It has the world's most extensive wetlands, mightiest river and largest rainforest, as well as one of the most unique and diverse cultures on the planet, including the world's wildest party — *Carnival* — an extravaganza that occurs before Ash Wednesday.

On the other hand, Brazil's problems, including poverty, crime and environmental recklessness, can also seem larger than life. Although it is one of the industrial powerhouses of South America, Brazil has trouble feeding all of its people. Also, deforestation of the Amazon basin proceeds at an ominous rate.

### COMPASSION IN BRAZIL

Compassion's ministry in Brazil began in 1975. Today, more than 40,000 children are registered in more than 185 child development centers throughout the country. Compassion's church-based child development centers are places of hope for impoverished children in Brazil. Under the guidance of caring Christian adults, children's pressing needs for nutrition and medical attention are met. Children also receive tutoring to



help with their academics. Health and hygiene lessons teach them to care for their own physical well-being, and positive social skills are modeled and encouraged.

### WEATHER

March through November is the driest time to visit Brazil's south and southeastern regions, including Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. December through February can be rainy and humid. The evenings and winter days in the south (June through September) can be fairly cool (40 degrees F / 5 degrees C), and sweaters and even light winter coats are needed. The Amazon region is always hot and humid, but the best time to see it is July through August. The northeast is quite warm throughout the year, though the coastal regions see frequent rainfall April through June.

### CURRENCY

Brazil's currency is the *real* (BRL). Visa is the most commonly accepted credit card. Few ATMs provide cash from American Express. For safety reasons, use ATMs located inside banks or convenience stores.

## FOOD

Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating, choose meat that is cooked thoroughly, avoid local dairy products, and assume the water is unsafe (stick with prepackaged or boiled drinks).

## SHOPPING

Brazil is known for busy markets and pedestrian malls. Although famous for leather goods, other unique items are coffee, gems, traditional handicrafts, lace and embroidery. Counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available, though they are illegal in the United States.

## ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Voltage used in Brazil is 110V and 220V. Outlets accept plug types A, B, C, I or N. (For up-to-date plug and outlet information, check [whatplug.info](#) and click on your destination country.) You may wish to take a universal plug adaptor, available in the luggage/travel sections of most big-box stores.

## DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** remember that the cultural heritage of Brazil is Portuguese, not Spanish. Statements and actions that tend to lump their culture in with that of the Spanish-speaking nations of South America will not be well received.



- **Do** learn at least a few words of Portuguese. Your efforts will be appreciated — many Brazilians will go far out of their way to help you. For greetings and farewells say *bom dia* (BOM JI-ah) for “good morning,” *boa tarde* (BO-ah TAR-dji) for “good afternoon” and *boa noite* (BO-a NOY-tchi) for “good evening/night.” For “goodbye,” *tchau* (chow) is popular and casual. *Atay logo* is “till next time.” *Por favor* is “please” and *onde ee* (ON-jee eh) is “where is.” Men and women say “thank you” differently: He says *obrigado* (oh-bree-GAH-doh), and she says *obrigada* (oh-bree-GAH-dah).
- **Do** carry a photocopy of your passport when you leave the hotel as proof of citizenship and identification.
- **Don't** use the “OK” sign (thumb and forefinger touching in a circle) as it is a vulgar gesture in Brazil. Instead, use the thumbs-up sign.

## DRESS

In general, lightweight clothes made from natural fibers work best. Except in summer, it is always a good idea to pack a light sweater or jacket. During winter or in the mountains, a jacket or even a light overcoat might be necessary.

**Women:** Modest, loose-fitting tops (nothing form-fitting) are recommended; sleeveless tops are acceptable, but please cover your shoulders in places of worship; pants, capris, longer skirts and loose-fitting, casual dresses are recommended for women.

**Men:** Button shirts and polo shirts are recommended. T-shirts are allowed in casual settings. Long, non-denim pants are recommended for center visits and church services.

**Both:** Shorts are highly discouraged outside of beachside locations. A light jacket is recommended for cool evenings or rainy days.

**Shoes:** Closed-toe shoes are recommended during the day due to potential unsanitary or uneven terrain.

## GENERAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

Leave at home all unnecessary credit cards, Social Security card, library cards and similar items you may routinely carry in your wallet. Carry items in front pockets, not back pockets. Do not display large sums of money in public; make visible only the amount of money that approximates your purchase. Never leave items with cash in them (purse, wallet, backpack, etc.) on a bus, car or any other location. Stay alert and be cautious at all times. Don't take safety and security for granted.

## U.S. EMBASSY INFORMATION

**Website:** [br.usembassy.gov](http://br.usembassy.gov)

**Phone:** 55-61-3312-7000

**Address:** SES – Av. das Nacoes, Quadra 801, Lote 3, 70403-900-Brasilia, DF

**Recife Consulate Phone:** (81) 9916-9470 or (81) 3416-3060

**We strongly advise you to contact the CDC ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) or check with your personal physician for more information about your specific health needs while traveling, including any recommendations for immunizations.**

*All information taken from the World Factbook and  
Compassion International.*

## USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

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The official language of Brazil is Portuguese. The country's secondary language is English. Some common Brazilian greetings include:

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Hi                       | <b>Oi</b>                     |
| Good morning             | <b>Bom dia</b>                |
| Good afternoon           | <b>Boa tarde</b>              |
| Good evening             | <b>Boa noite</b>              |
| Goodbye                  | <b>Tchau</b>                  |
| What is your name?       | <b>Qual é o seu nome?</b>     |
| My name is ...           | <b>Me chamo (name)</b>        |
| A pleasure (meeting you) | <b>Pazer em conhecêlo</b>     |
| How old are you?         | <b>Quantos anos você tem?</b> |
| How are you?             | <b>Como vai?</b>              |
| Thank you                | <b>Obrigado</b>               |
| Please                   | <b>Por favor</b>              |
| You're welcome           | <b>Não há de quê</b>          |
| Yes                      | <b>Sim</b>                    |
| No                       | <b>Não</b>                    |
| Good                     | <b>Bem</b>                    |
| I don't speak Portuguese | <b>Não falo português</b>     |
| Do you speak English?    | <b>Você fala inglês?</b>      |
| Can you help me?         | <b>Pode me ajudar?</b>        |

How much?

**Quanto?**

Where is ... Where are ...?

**Onde está / Onde estão?**

I want to buy....

**Eu quero comprar ...**

What time is it?

**Que horas são?**

### PORTUGUESE TIPS

Brazilian Portuguese has a different pronunciation and vocabulary from the classical language spoken in Portugal. Brazilian Portuguese is softer and more lyrical. Many words and names are adopted from Indian dialects and other languages. Within Brazil, accents, dialects and slang vary regionally.

Brazilians accompany their oral communication with a rich body language, a sort of parallel dialogue. The thumbs-up of *tudo bem* is used as a greeting, OK and thank you.