

# Getting here and advice about your stay

## Entry requirements

### **Passports and visas**

British nationals do not normally need a visa when travelling to Brazil on a British passport. Without a visa you will be classed as a tourist and will therefore not be able to work whilst in the country. Your passport should be valid for a minimum of 6 months from the date you enter Brazil.

Visit the British Consulate in London website for more information about visas at: <http://cglondres.itamaraty.gov.br/en-us/>.

On arrival in Brazil, be sure to comply with immigration laws. You may be asked by the Federal Police (the Brazilian immigration authority) to explain the purpose of your visit, produce evidence of your return or onward travel, or even provide proof that you are financially-able to support yourself for the duration of your stay within the country. Ensure that your passport is stamped to avoid any fines on departure. You should also receive an immigration landing card which you will need when you depart, do not lose this or you may be fined.

You may apply to the Federal Police for an extension on your visa, should you wish to extend your stay. However, you should not overstay your visa, which may result in you being served notice to leave the country. You may be additionally fined and/or deported.

*[Source – DIT: Doing business in Brazil: Brazil trade and export guide, FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

### **Dual nationality**

If you are of British/Brazilian dual nationality, Brazilian immigration authorities may require that you travel using a Brazilian passport, rather than a British passport.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

### **Travelling with children**

For children (aged under 18) of dual British/Brazilian nationality, who are travelling alone, without their parents/legal guardians, or travelling with a single parent, there are additional requirements. Although the same requirements do not apply to foreign nationals, it is advisable for any British travellers under the age of 18 who are travelling to Brazil in the same manner, to carry a letter of authorisation from either the absent

parent(s) or guardians, to avoid any unnecessary delays. If you require further information, contact the Brazilian Consulate in London.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

### **Yellow fever certificate requirements**

You may be required to be vaccinated and carry a yellow fever certificate to enter Brazil. Check if this is required by visiting the National Travel Health Network and Centre's [TravelHealthPro](https://travelhealthpro.org.uk) website: [https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/34/brazil#Vaccine\\_recommendations](https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/34/brazil#Vaccine_recommendations).

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

### **UK Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs)**

UK Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) are accepted for entry, airside transit and exit from Brazil. Your ETD must be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Brazil.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

### **Local laws and customs**

There is an epidemic of drug trafficking in Brazil. Those caught committing trafficking offenses face severe punishments, including long prison sentences. Penalties such as educational reform classes and community service can be given for the possession of drugs for personal use.

Email scams targeting British nationals, and involving illegal drugs, have been reported. The scammers offer financial rewards for individuals to travel to Brazil and take items out of the country on their behalf. The items often contain drugs and despite individual circumstances, those caught will be detained and charged with drug trafficking offenses.

Brazil has no laws against homosexuality. LGBT couples lawfully have equal rights, and same-sex marriage became legal in 2013. The Brazilian Constitution protects human rights in addition to Brazil being a signatory of both regional and international agreements which protect LGBT rights.

The world's largest Pride celebration takes place annually in São Paulo. The event is usually peaceful and acts of violence are rare. Pride events also take place across other Brazilian cities, including Rio de Janeiro, which attracts a large number of people. Traditionally, Brazil is a tolerant country; however parts of Brazilian society are reserved and somewhat conservative, in particular in small towns and villages outside the main

cities. For LGBT community advice and guidance visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-foreign-travel-advice> prior to travel.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Safety and security

### **Favelas**

Favela is the Portuguese word for slum. Favelas are shanty towns constructed of improvised, unplanned houses occupying areas of urban neighbourhoods in all major Brazilian cities. In some parts they cover a vast space, bordering areas visited by tourists.

The favelas can be dangerous and unpredictable with a lack of security. There have been instances of violence and armed conflict between gangs and police forces in the Rio de Janeiro favelas. It is therefore advisable to avoid these areas, and not to visit the favelas even on an advertised tour.

Ensure that when travelling using a GPS navigation system that your chosen route does not pass through a favela. It is recommended that you avoid entering unpaved or narrow streets which may lead into a favela. You should seek advice from your hotel or the local authorities if you are unsure about a route or location.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil, Encyclopaedia Britannica]*

### **Crime**

The cities of Brazil experience high levels of crime. However, as in all major cities, crime levels vary throughout the different areas of each city. It is worth familiarising yourself with the city and seeking advice and/or reliable local knowledge to identify any high risk areas, , and when and where it is safe to travel. You should remain vigilant particularly around the carnival season. You should not visit city beaches at night or in the dark.

It is recommended that you leave your passport and valuables in a safe place, but you should keep a photocopy of your passport and an additional form of photo ID on your person at all times. You should keep a watchful eye over your possessions whilst on the beach, as thefts are commonplace on public beaches. You should also be aware that groups of thieves have been known to run across beach areas snatching possessions. The areas of Rio de Janeiro with the highest number of incidents reported by British nationals are Lapa, Santa Theresa and the Copacabana and Ipanema beaches. In São Paulo, incidents have been reported in the downtown historical area, Avenida Paulista, and the various red light districts which can be particularly dangerous. The central bus

station and the Federal District area have the highest number of incidents reported in Brasilia.

In order to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of robbery or crime you should avoid walking down quiet streets or isolated areas, and it is advisable to take a taxi after dark. Keep any valuables kept in vehicles out of sight.

Carjacking has been known to take place on major access routes and in tunnels. You should lock your doors and keep windows sealed whilst driving. Be particularly vigilant when stationary at traffic lights, and avoid stopping at the side of the road when driving at night.

Cloning your card from ATMs, and bank and credit card fraud happens frequently in Brazil. If you intend to visit Brazil you should notify your bank in order to prevent your card from being blocked. Do not lose sight of your card during transactions and refrain from using an ATM if you notice anything unusual. Any cash notes withdrawn from an ATM containing pink marks should be taken to the bank to be swapped immediately as they may be damaged or fraudulent.

Should you become a victim of crime whilst in Brazil, you should contact the local police and the nearest British Embassy or Consulate.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

### **Demonstrations and civil unrest**

Public demonstrations and occasional strikes take place across Brazil in various cities. During some events there have been reports of conflict between police and protesters leading to arrests, as well as disruption to transport in more urban areas. Even the most peaceful of protests can escalate into violence. It has not been unknown for the police to utilise rubber bullets and tear gas in order to disband protesters.

Protests take place regularly and often without warning in São Paulo, often resulting in disruption to public transport and roads, include the main road to Guarulhos International Airport. Other areas in São Paulo that are popular destinations for protests and demonstrations are Largo da Batata, and the historic downtown area of Avenida Paulista. It is also worth noting Esplanada dos Ministerios in Brasilia and Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro.

It would be advisable not to take part in demonstrations and to avoid demonstration areas if you are travelling or living in Brazil. You should follow local news reports, use your common sense and importantly follow instructions of local authorities. If you come across a demonstration, you should leave the area immediately.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Organised crime

There is a serious problem with organised crime in many areas, namely in the main cities, around the international sea ports and along Brazil's uncontrolled land borders.

Brazil is home to the world's largest domestic crack cocaine market and the second largest domestic cocaine market (after the United States). Gangs and organised crime units are primarily associated with drug trafficking, ultimately controlling the flow of Andean cocaine into and out of the country. Rivalries with other organised crime groups can lead to violence, with gangs often heavily armed. Other illegal groups associated with drug trafficking, can also be connected to counterfeit and fraudulent goods, as well as piracy.

In the past, organised crime has also had a presence within wealthier circles, including various illegal activities such as the theft of cargo, and manipulation of government procurement.

The Brazilian Government is committed to fighting organised crime. Recently inaugurated President Jair Bolsonaro made a promise in his presidential campaign to tackle Brazil's raging crime and corruption. In the Rio de Janeiro favelas there is also a Police Pacification Unit (UPP) in place in an attempt to combat organised crime and violence.

*[Source – DIT: Overseas Business Risk – Brazil, BBC News]*

## Terrorism

There is no apparent threat of terrorism in Brazil, and the threat against any foreign interests in Brazil is low risk. However, terrorist attacks cannot be ruled out completely, and although they are unlikely, attacks could be random or imperceptible.

There remains a global threat of terrorist attacks against UK nationals and interests from individuals or groups provoked by the ongoing conflict in Syria and Iraq. Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reduce-your-risk-from-terrorism-while-abroad> regarding the global threat from terrorism.

*[Source – DIT: Overseas Business Risk – Brazil, FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Natural disasters

Disruption can be caused by heavy rains during the rainy season in Brazil, which can cause landslides and flash floods, especially in rural areas or in the poor urban areas. In the south and southeast, the rainy season begins in November and ends in March, and runs from April to July in the northeast. You should follow local media and news channels to monitor the weather and pay attention to any information provided by local authorities.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Travel

Please see the links below to some useful websites about travelling to Brazil, which are maintained by the Brazilian authorities:

- <http://www.visitbrasil.com/en/>
- <http://visit.rio/en/welcome/>
- <http://www.spturis.com/v7/index.php>

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Public transport

There may be disruption to some public transport services during public demonstrations or at times of civil unrest. Be aware of petty criminals, sometimes working in a gang, stealing belongings on public transport, in particular during rush hour when it is very busy. In general, the Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo metro links are perceived to be a safer method of transport than buses.

Be aware that traffic in the main cities can be heavy, in particular during rush hour.

There are many acknowledged taxi ranks across Brazil. When taking a taxi, ensure that you only use licensed taxis and you should check that the taxi company details are displayed on the outside of the vehicle. There are also licensed taxi desks in the baggage reclaim areas of most airports which you can book and pay for in advance inside the airport as opposed to on the street.

There are various taxi apps available for your phone which can be a useful way of making sure that you are using a registered taxi, and they may have the facility to track and share your journey with friends and/or family. Be selective when choosing a taxi app, some rely on GPS and may try to divert through a favela or dangerous area.

There are facilities and adaptations for travellers with disabilities, including lifts to stations and platforms and easy-access buses, throughout the major cities in Brazil.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Road travel

Although it is possible to drive in Brazil on your UK driving licence, it is recommended that you obtain an international driving permit. See: <https://www.gov.uk/driving-abroad> for more details.

It is worth noting that you must turn your headlights on when driving on federal motorways or you will face a penalty. You should always check the speed limit.

There is a strict no tolerance policy on drink driving in Brazil. You will be prosecuted if you are caught driving under the influence of alcohol. Punishments for drink driving include fines, a 12 month driving suspension, or even imprisonment of up to 3 years.

There is a high rate of accidents on Brazil's roads, and standards of driving are generally poor. Away from the cities, roads can be inadequate and poorly-surfaced in rural areas. It can be dangerous to ride a bicycle on the road and would be best avoided. Bus crashes are not uncommon.

If a personal injury is sustained during an accident, this should be immediately reported to the police. You can file a police report in person at a police station or call the police on 190. If you are in Rio de Janeiro you should go directly to the nearest police station to register an accident (DEAT – Tourist Police station call 2332-2924 or 3399-7170 or 2334-6804). For medical assistance, the local emergency services (SAMU) can be contacted on 192, or on 193 to reach the fire and rescue service.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## **Air travel**

You should only fly with nationally recognised airlines, as there have been incidents and accidents involving poorly maintained or substandard light aircraft.

Although not exhaustive, a selection of registered and audited airlines, which meet certain standards of operational safety and recommended practices, have been published by the International Air Transport Association. See: <https://www.iata.org/whatwedo/safety/audit/Pages/index.aspx>.

Be sure to allocate ample time to reach the airport for your flight as traffic in the main cities can be very busy, especially in rush hour.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## **Sea and river travel**

When travelling on the sea or by river, you should familiarise yourself with safety procedures and where to locate a life jacket in the event of any emergency. There have been a number of boating accidents on the Amazon River.

Some routes in the Amazon and Solimões river basin are frequented by pirates and those who are drug trafficking, both of which are likely to be armed. You should speak to local authorities and seek reliable local advice to check your route is safe if you intend to travel by river. It may be worth considering accompaniment by an escort.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*

## Health

You should visit your GP or health provider a minimum of 4-6 weeks prior to travelling to Brazil. This is an opportunity to assess any health risks specific to you or the country itself and will allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Visit the Brazil-specific pages of the TravelHealthPro website at: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/34/brazil>, for more information.

You can also receive useful information, advice and guidance from the NHS via the FitForTravel website at: <https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations.aspx>, or the NHS Choices website at: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/>.

Some medicines prescribed or purchased in the UK can be of an alternative legal status and regulations surrounding their usage may vary in other countries. If it is necessary for you to travel with either prescription or over-the-counter medication you should consult the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) or TravelHealthPro at: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad>. Rules and regulations are subject to change therefore it would be advisable to seek advice or check with the Brazilian Consulate before travelling. You should take a copy of your prescription or a letter from your doctor to confirm that you are required to take the medication you are carrying. It is worthwhile to take surplus medication with you, as some medicines are not readily available in other countries, or may be counterfeit if they are.

UK nationals are entitled to receive emergency medical treatment in the public hospitals in Brazil, although they can be very crowded. You will not be seen or accepted into a private hospital or facility unless you are able to provide evidence of adequate insurance or satisfactory financial funds. Your travel insurance should cover the cost of any required medical treatment including repatriation. You should call 192 and ask for an ambulance if you require emergency medical assistance. Contact your insurance company immediately if you are referred to a medical facility or hospital for treatment.

You should take extra care to protect your skin from the sun. The sun can be very hot and levels of UV are much higher than in the UK.

*[Source – FCO: Foreign travel advice Brazil]*



## FCO travel advice

If you are travelling to Brazil for business, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) website has travel advice to help you prepare for your visits overseas and to stay safe and secure while you are there.

For advice please visit the FCO travel section pages on the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/brazil/travel-advice-help-and-support>.

## Travel insurance

You should take out comprehensive travel insurance before you travel. See the FCO foreign travel insurance guidance at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance>.

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