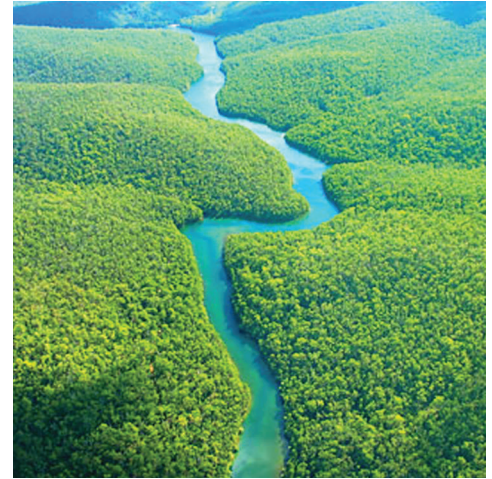


BRAZIL AT A GLANCE



Country : Brazil is the largest country in Latin America. It spreads across almost half (47.3%) of South America, and occupies a total area of 8,547,403.5 km². It is the fifth largest country in the world after Canada, Russia, China and the United States. The mixture of races has made Brazil a culturally rich and at the same time unique country. The result is a happy people, open to everything new, a people one can only find in Brazil.

The country is rich with dazzling beaches, tropical islands and picturesque colonial towns. Its verdant rainforests boast an astounding array of wildlife, while its wildly energetic cities are home to a multitude of ethnic groups.

Being the world's fifth-largest country in both size and population, Brazil's thriving economy has made it Latin America's powerhouse, enjoying record growth in the last five years (Brazil currently ranks among the ten largest economies in the world). This is a country revered for its football prowess.

Organisation of the State: Federative Republic integrated by 26 States and the Federal District; free and direct elections for the three levels of Government (Union, State and Local)

Capital City: Brasilia

Other Major Cities: Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Salvador, Fortaleza.

Geographical Location : The equator passes through the north of the country near Macapá; the Tropic of Capricorn passes through the south near São Paulo. Brazil's maximum width, 2,684 miles (4,319 km), is almost the same as its maximum distance from north to south, 2,731 miles (4,394 km). Brazil's landscape is as diverse as the people who inhabit it. Few tourists venture far from Brazil's spectacular coastline (which spans 7400km/4598 miles), but a trip into the interior reveals a different but equally captivating Brazil. As well as the world's biggest rainforest in the Amazon, Brazil boasts many wilderness areas including the wildlife-rich wetlands of the Pantanal, the canyons and caves of the Chapada Diamantina and the colourful old gold-mining towns in the mountains of Minas Gerais. Area : 8,547,403.50 sq km (about 2.6 times that of India)

Coastal line: 7,400 km

Border line: 16,000 km

Bordering Countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia French Guyana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Population : 194.227.984 (2008) Brazil is the sixth most populous country in the world after China, India, the United States, Indonesia and the Russian Federation.

Language : Portuguese is the official language of Brazil.

Except for the languages spoken by Indian tribes living in remote reservations, Portuguese is the only language of daily life. Brazil is the only Portuguese-speaking country in South America.

Religion: Christianity is the major religion with approximately 74% population being Roman Catholics.

Government: Brazil is a Federation comprising 26 States and the Federal District of Brasilia. Each state has its own Head of State: President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva since 2002.

Climate: Although most of Brazil lies in the tropics, more than 60 percent of the population live in areas which are cooled either by altitude, sea winds or polar fronts. While the coastal cities of Rio de Janeiro, Recife and Salvador can get extremely hot, plateau cities such as São Paulo, Brasília and Belo Horizonte have mild climates, and the southern cities of Porto Alegre and Curitiba have a climate similar to that of southern Europe. Despite the popular image of the Amazon as a region of blistering heat, temperatures of more than 32°C (90°F) are in fact rare. The annual average temperature in the region is 22-26°C (72-79°F), with not much variation between the warmest and the coldest months. The hottest part of Brazil is the northeast, where temperatures of more than 38°C (100°F) are frequently recorded during the dry season between May and November. Brazil's most intense rain falls around the mouth of the Amazon near the city of Belém, and also in the upper regions of Amazonia where more than 2,000 millimetres (78 inches) of rain fall every year. Most of Brazil has moderate rainfall of between 1,000 and 1,500 millimetres (39 to 59 inches) a year, most of it coming between December and April. The driest part of the country is the northeast, where rainfall is irregular and the evaporation rate very high, making it difficult to grow crops.

Economic Profile:

- 1 Overall GDP - 2007 -US\$ 1.314.199 million
- 1 GDP per capita - 2007 - US\$ 6.852
- 1 Economically-active population 15 years of age or over - 2007 - 67.8%
- 1 Economically-active women 15 years of age or over - 2007- 57.3%

Major Natural Resources: Iron Ore, Gold, Bauxite,

Aluminium, Silver, Oil, Precious and Semi-precious Stones. Principal Crops : Coffee, Cocoa, Corn, Cotton, Oranges, Soyabean, Sugar, Tobacco and Wheat.

Major Industries: Automobiles, iron & steel, paper and pulp, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, petro-chemicals, metallurgy, textiles, sugar, food and beverages, cement & information technology and aircraft. Its mineral resources include iron, gold, bauxite, silver, oil, precious and semi-precious stones.

Major Exports: Aeroplanes and other aircraft (of an unladen weight exceeding 2,000 Kg but not exceeding 15,000 Kg.), Soya seeds in split or cracked form, Rests and other solid waste from the extraction of soy oil, non-agglomerated iron ore and its derivatives, sugar cane, vehicles of cylinder (capacity exceeding 1500 cm³, but not exceeding 3000 cm³, up to 6 passengers), coffee in grains, chemical paste of wood, other shoes of natural leather, agglomerated iron ore and derivatives.

Major Imports: Petrol, diesel oil, wheat, vehicles (of cylinder capacity exceeding 1500 cm³, but not exceeding 3000 cm³, up to 6 passengers), other naphtas, spare parts for jets and helicopters, turbo-reactors greater than 25 KN, electromagnetic spare parts, spare parts for vehicles and tractors, naphtas for petrochemicals.

Entry Requirements: Passports valid for at least six months from date of entry required by all nationals. Yellow fever vaccinations are compulsory for visits to some areas and recommended for others. All travellers must be in possession of onward or return tickets and sufficient funds to cover their stay.

Currency: Real (1 real = 100 centavos)

Currency Exchange

All banks, cambios, travel agencies and authorised hotels exchange recognised traveller's cheques and foreign currency. The US Dollar is the most widely accepted foreign currency.

Credit/Debit Cards and ATMs

Most major international credit cards are accepted (Visa more so than other cards), though not universally. There is an extensive network of ATMs around the country.

Banking Hours: Mon - Fri 1000 - 1600.

Office hours: Mon - Fri 0900 - 1800.

Time: Brazil spans several time zones:

- Eastern Standard Time : GMT - 3 (GMT - 2 from third Sunday in October to third Saturday in March).
- Western Standard Time : GMT - 4 (GMT - 3 from third Sunday in October to third Saturday in March).
- North East States and East Pará : GMT - 3
- Amapa and West Pará : GMT - 4
- Acre State : GMT - 5
- Fernando de Noronha Archipelago : GMT - 2

International dialling code : +55

Electricity : Brasília and Recife, 220 volts AC; Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, 127 volts AC or 220 volts in larger hotels. Plugs are of the two-pin type. Most hotels provide 110-volt and 220-volt outlets, transformers and adaptors.

Measurement System: Getting in to Brazil: The main national airlines are TAM (JJ) (website:www.tam.com.br) and Gol (G3) (website:www.voegol.com.br).

Main Airports: Brasilia International (BSB) is 12km (7 miles) south of the city. To/from the airport: Buses run regularly to the city centre (journey time - 30 minutes). Taxis are also available (journey time - 15 minutes).

Rio de Janeiro (GIG) (Galeão) is 20 km (13 miles) north of the city. To/from the airport: Public buses operate 0530-2330 to the city (journey time - 40 minutes). There is an airport shuttle bus which stops at all major resorts and hotels, running every hour. Taxis are also available. São Paulo (GRU) (Guarulhos) is 25 km (16 miles) northeast of the city. To/from the airport: An airport bus runs every 30 minutes (journey time - 30 minutes). Taxis are also available.

Further information on Brazilian airports can be found on the following website: www.infraero.gov.br

Mobile Telephone: Mobile coverage is generally very good. Roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies, but travellers should check with their service providers. An unlocked GSM tri- or quad-band cell phone works in Brazil, with SIM cards widely available. Minutes can be added via cartões pre-pago (prepaid cards), available at newspaper kiosks.

Internet: Many hotels provide Internet access to guests. Internet cafes can be found in main towns and cities, and there are often Internet booths at airports. In smaller towns, public access is sometimes available at post offices.

Post: Services are generally reliable. Airmail service to Europe takes about one week. Surface mail takes at least four weeks. Post office hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1800, Sat 0800-1200.

Culture: Brazil's rich musical traditions include samba, bossa nova, tropicalismo, forró and numerous other distinctive styles. Although Brazilians are a diverse bunch, joie de vivre is a characteristic shared by most of the country's 192 million citizens. Carnival is the best-known manifestation of this celebratory spirit and is feted throughout Brazil. Rio de Janeiro and Salvador are the best places to join the mayhem, when samba-filled parties erupt through the streets, and revellers dance and celebrate for days on end.

(Source: www.indianembassy.org.br/www.brazilembassy.in, http://www.worldtravelguide.net/country/39/create_miniguide/South-America/Brazil.html)

