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## Brazil Surf and Volunteer

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** Brazil Surf and Volunteer    **Trip Code:** BRSU    **Duration:** From 3 weeks

### Trip Highlights

- Get stuck in on a worthwhile community project in Rio
- Explore the city in the morning, volunteer in the afternoon
- Brush up your own surfing skills whilst learning from champion mini-surfers from the favela
- Experience life as a local in one of the most amazing cities in the world!



### Overview

Fancy riding the waves on the world renowned Sao Conardo beach (aka, a surfers paradise)? On our surfing project in Rio de Janeiro you'll be doing exactly that by volunteering on the beach in the heart of this incredible city.

You'll be spending your time helping the children of the favela, by either learning to surf from the fantastic young surfers from the favela, or whilst getting involved with extra curricular activities- like teaching the little ones English, getting stuck in with music lessons or by setting up games of other cool sports.

Your volunteering will be done in the afternoons, so you'll have plenty of time to see and explore Rio during your free time in the mornings and evenings too!

### Destination Info

Brazil is the 5th largest country in the world stretching across over 8.5 million sq km (3.2 million sq mi). It shares its borders with Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname and French

Guiana.

From the tropical forests of the Amazon basin to the plateaus in the Central Highlands, Brazil's topography is quite diverse. The coast is made up of tropical beaches, lagoons, mangroves, dunes and coral reefs. At 6 million sq km (2.3 million sq mi), the Amazon is the largest rainforest in the world and covers over half of Brazil's landmass. Originating in the Andes, the main channel of the Amazon River runs from west to east in the northern part of the country. There is little seismic or volcanic activity due to Brazil's position near the centre of the South American Plate.

## Itinerary



The project was founded by a Brazilian who was born in the favela. After learning to surf with the rich kids of Rio, he went on to become a surfing champion and thrived off of the surfing scene. To help the young children within his community he decided to set up the project, which gives these kids a new hobby as well as encouraging an education.

By encouraging the children to attend the project, he's been able to mentor them and by joining the project the children enter a social contract that, to continue surfing at the project, their grades must remain high at school and attend extra curricular activities at the surf school.



By helping out on the project, you are enabling more children to join in at San Conardo beach- (which can only be a good thing, right!). All of the children on the project have grown up on the favela, and live in pretty tough conditions. By giving them the chance to try out a new sport, you're giving them a chance to try out an awesome

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new sport!

Having volunteers around is also a great cultural exchange for the children from the favela; not only will they learn from you, from you'll be learning from them too! Once you've taught them a thing or two we're sure they'll be able to show you a few tricks on the water...



**Day 1:** Welcome to the stunning Rio, Real Gappers! If your flight is due to land on Day 1 of your time on the project, then we'll be able to pick you up from the airport and take you to your accommodation. You should arrange a flight to get you into Rio on your specified arrival date between the hours of 5am and 11pm. You'll then have plenty of time to settle in and get to know the other volunteers. The hostel is located within the heart of the favela in a friendly hostel, so you'll get a real cultural experience and the chance to see what life is like for the locals. Seeing as though the kids you're looking after are from the area, it's a great way to get to know them too!

**Day 2:** Today we'll leave you to your own devices so you can get over the jet lag and relax around Rio. You could hit the beach to check out where you'll be volunteering, you could go shopping, sightseeing, sunbathing- the possibilities are endless! Our in-country team all live in the city so can give you the lowdown of all the best places to see.

**Day 3 and the Orientation:** On the morning of Day 3 you'll have your orientation meeting where the team will go over all of the important info (such as what it's going to be like at your project, dos and don'ts, the best things to do in Rio and how to stay safe on your trip, etc). This is your time to ask any burning questions that you haven't yet had answered and to meet up with the other volunteers!

After your meeting you will be shown the way to your project and introduced to the staff who will be your day-to-day contacts; there will also be a member of the team with you who lives in the favela who will also help to show you around. The rest of the day will be your perfect chance to get stuck in and get to know the people at the project and how it all works.



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**Day 4** etc- You'll start surfing at 2pm each day (dependant on the weather and conditions!) and then surf to your heart's content all afternoon. The children will be very enthusiastic and are happy to show you a thing or two! The surfer who set up the project still runs the joint, so expect to learn some awesome moves from him as well.

The children return to the project around 5pm after a little break to attend their extra curricula activities, which you will help to run. This could be anything from an English class, a music program, beach clean up, football training, rock climbing in the local National Forest nearby... and so much more!

**It's weekend time!** – It's free time, time! You could go out in the evenings, go shopping, do some sunbathing or swimming in the sea... it's completely up to you. We'd definitely recommend a visit up to the Christ the Redeemer- the view from up there is spectacular.

**Following weeks-** The following weeks will follow a similar pattern to the first- and you'll spend the 5 afternoons a week at the project.

## Accommodation

During your stay in Rio you will be accommodated in a hostel in the heart of the favelas and only 3km away from Ipanema Beach. You will be in a dorm room and will be sharing with up to 9 other people. The rooms are clean and comfortable and sheets and pillows are provided. Rooms also have air-conditioning. The hostel has a communal kitchen, recreation area, pool table, outside terrace library, free Wi-Fi, TV lounge, a bar and free breakfast. You are responsible for your own meals and for cleaning up after yourself. There is usually live music or entertainment in the recreation area during the evenings. The hostel is very sociable and a great place to meet people from all over the world!

## Programme Services and Facilities

### Internet

Internet access is cheap and readily available in Rio.

### Telephone

The international dialling code for Brazil is +55.

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To place an outgoing, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, +49 for Germany, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164 / +49 69 222226 475.

Mobile phone signal can be varied. If you are taking your phone with you, please ensure that it is set up for roaming. It is also a good idea to get your phone unlocked, so that you can purchase a local, Brazilian SIM card with either Vivo or TIM if you get the chance, which will allow you to call and text home cheaply.

## Laundry

There are laundry facilities available locally.

## Post

If you are expecting mail to be delivered while you're in Brazil please send to the postal address that we will give you once you have booked.

## Meals

You will receive breakfast each day.

## What's Included

- Arrival airport transfer
- Accommodation
- In-country orientation
- Local in-country team and 24 hour support
- Breakfast each day



## What's Not Included

- Flights, visas and travel insurance
- Local transport
- Lunch/Dinner are not included



## Is This Trip For You?

If you're sporty and revel in the prospect of volunteering on a project which is worthwhile to the community, then

this project is for you!

## What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore you may not need all of the listed items on your travels, nor it is exhaustive. In addition, it is worth noting that you can buy lots of the above in Rio.

Losing baggage is always a concern and as a result we recommend that you take all your essentials and most importantly valuables in your hand luggage, as well as some spare clothing for a couple of days, just in case your baggage does go missing, don't worry though, in this event you will most likely get your bags back in the next couple of days.

## Personal Admin

- Passport, insurance certificates and personal documentation
- Photocopies of all the above to be left at home with your next of kin
- Spending money
- Cash for your visa upon arrival (in hand luggage)
- Proof of inoculations (please speak to your GP about necessary immunisations)
- Secure, waterproof bag for documents and money: sealable plastic bags will do

## General

- Mosquito net and sleeping bag if you plan on travelling independently after the trip
- Small sewing kit
- Towel
- Plastic bags/Large Ziploc bags for storing things, or separating clean and dirty clothes in your back pack
- Personal hygiene kit, toiletries and towel
- Silk or Cotton Liner: Ideal for hot nights or as an extra layer to your sleeping bag
- Sunglasses (high UV protection)
- Sun cream (high factor needed)
- Small torch (head torch is preferable)
- Diary and writing pens
- Camera/batteries/film or memory card
- Water bottle – at least 75cl
- Day pack/rucksack for everyday use
- Mobile phone – set for roaming
- Personal stereo
- Plug adaptor
- Alarm clock/watch
- Pocket knife for general use
- Pegs, washing line and travel wash for clothes (biodegradable recommended)
- Travel Guide, such as Lonely Planet or Rough Guide

## Clothing

- Casual clothes for work (no strappy tops or short shorts)
- Trainers (especially for the soccer project)
- Sports kit for the soccer project
- Flip Flops

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- A hat to protect you from the sun
- Casual clothes for the weekends
- Pyjamas/nightwear
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm clothes for winter and early mornings.
- Waterproof Jacket

## Medical Kit

- Small medical kit containing plasters, medicine for diarrhoea, headache tablets, anti- histamine cream and any medication you will need.
- Mosquito repellent
- Contraception including condoms
- Antibacterial soap gel (does not need water to rinse off)
- Travel wash for clothes
- Painkillers
- Contact lenses and solution if necessary
- Tweezers (not in hand luggage!)
- Scissors (not in hand luggage!)

## Minimum Age

17 years old.

## Minimum Numbers

There are no minimum numbers on the trip.

Please note: you may be the only volunteer at your chosen project at any one time. However, each of our Brazil volunteer projects share the same accommodation. Therefore, if there are volunteers on our other programmes you will be able to spend your spare time and evenings with them. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact us

## Flights

Your flight to Brazil should arrive into Rio de Janeiro International Airport on your programme start date between the hours of 5am and 11pm. If you arrive outside these times you will need to make your own way to the accommodation or pay an additional fee for an out-of-hours transfer. Your return flight or onward travel should be arranged on your programme end date.

To book your flights, contact our flight specialist on 01273 647219 who will help you find a great deal. Please provide your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your online account or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

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## FAQs

1. **Do I need to speak Portuguese?**

Be prepared that very few people speak English in Rio. You don't have to be able to speak Portuguese to take part in the project, but if you can speak the language you will get more out of your time in Brazil. We would suggest adding some Portuguese lessons to your plans. We offer a 10-hour course over 5 days that you can take part in during your time at the project. For more details please ask one of our Travel Advisors.

2. **Do I need to take a sleeping bag?**

No. All locations have a basic pillow, pillow case and sheet.

3. **Is there a safety deposit box/safe?**

In all locations there are places to keep your valuables. Please make sure that you take a lock with you.

## Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.



## Money Matters

Brazil's currency is the 'real' (R\$). One real is made up of 100 centavos.

ATMs are the easiest way of getting cash in big cities and are common. In many smaller towns, ATMs exist but rarely work for non-Brazilian cards. So make sure you bring some cash or traveller's cheques. Both cash and traveller's checks should be either in US dollars or Euros, with Amex being the most recognized traveller's check. Thomas Cook and Barclays traveller's checks are less widely accepted, but you should be able to cash them in large cities.

Brazil is one of the most expensive countries in South America – especially in the cities – so come prepared!

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant \$6.53  
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) \$1.79  
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) \$1.22  
Water (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.84

(Prices quoted in US Dollars)

## Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

British nationals and nationals of most European countries, and New Zealand do not require visas for visits of up to 90 days. Americans, Canadians and Australians do require a visa. All other nationalities should consult their nearest Brazil Embassy or High Commission.

### Visa courier service

If you prefer to use a specialist visa courier service to apply for your visa on your behalf, we recommend Visa Central who can offer you assistance and advice, making your visa application straight forward.

To investigate costs for this service [click here](#) to select the country or countries that you wish to travel to.

## Cultural Considerations

### Etiquette

In Brazil, personal space is not such an issue and therefore people may stand a bit closer when speaking to you than they would at home, please do not be put off by this as it is just a different cultural practice.

Greeting and parting is usually marked with handshakes  
If entertained in a Brazilian home, it is appropriate to send a thank you note and maybe some flowers the next day. Do not send purple flowers, as this signifies mourning.

## Religion

Brazil is around 74% Roman Catholic, though there is no official state religion. Religion is an important part of life in Brazil, and we would urge that you be respectful at all times in and around places of worship. Do not be surprised to see individuals crossing themselves when passing any object of religious significance or reciting religious adages at appropriate times.

## Clothing

There is no specific code of dress in Brazil, but remember the seasons are opposite to ours and dress for the climate. Casual dress is appropriate, though conservatism is advised away from the beach. It may be necessary for men to wear a tie and jacket for more exclusive restaurants.

## Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in Brazil and readily available. However, please respect other people. Smoking is not permissible in apartments or the host families' homes. Many regions in Brazil have banned or limited smoking in public places and many restaurants will have a separate seating area for those wishing to smoke.

You should drink in moderation and it should not impact on programme. While we want you to have fun in your free time, anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into Brazil. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries Brazil has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including "soft" drugs like marijuana, are ILLEGAL. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

## Tipping

Most bars or restaurants will generally add a 10% service charge at the end of your bill.

In bars, it is usual practise to build up a tab rather than pay cash for each individual drink. Typically you should ask the bartender for your bill and he will bring the total to you. Sometimes in crowded bars and nightclubs you have your individual control number and go to the register to pay at the end.

With taxis, you should round the taxi fare to the nearest whole number. Tips are not generally given beyond this. For most hotels, a small tip is usually given if a porter transfers all luggage to or from the room.

If on an organised tour, a hat is usually passed around for a tip to be given. It is entirely up to you how much you wish to give them.

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

Unfortunately, tourists are often targets for pickpockets and thieves. Please educate yourself about South America and Brazil in particular, before you leave, so that you can be alert to all types of situations. Safety guidelines will be covered in detail at your orientation session upon arrival but please familiarise yourself with the following general travel safety rules.

- Avoid travelling alone, especially at night
- Find out where the unsafe areas are and avoid them
- When travelling keep all-important documents and valuables in a safe place, like an inner hidden pocket or money belt
- Carry only as much cash as you think you will need for the day
- Don't wear expensive jewellery or watches
- Be wary of people who seem too friendly too fast
- Keep cameras out of sight. Always keep bags and purses in your sight, especially on public transport.
- Before swimming, ask how safe the area is
- Levels of violence and street crime are relatively high in Brazil, particularly in major cities, so please be vigilant after dark.
- Please make sure that you always use a legitimate taxi, especially in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, because some thieves have been known to disguise themselves as taxi drivers and prey upon tourists. Only use taxis that are lined up at a taxi stand or call a radio taxi service. Legitimate taxis also have red or maroon license plates, while those on private cars are grey. The red or maroon coloured commercial license plate should include the name of the city you are in.
- Please take into account that it is a legal requirement in Brazil to carry proof of identity at all times.

## ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

## Language Guide

The official language is Portuguese. Here are some useful phrases that should help you get by in Brazil. We also suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

Hello - *Ola*

Goodbye - *Adeus*

Yes - *Sim*

No - *Não*

Thank you - *Obrigado*

I do not understand - *Eu não entendo*

Where is...? - *Onde e...?*

The Police station - *Delegacia de policia*

The Train station - *Estação Ferroviária*

The hospital - *Hospital*

## Food & Drink

Brazilian food tends to revolve around three key things:

- Arroz (white rice)
- Feijao (black beans)
- Farinha (flour)
- These are usually eaten with red meat, chicken or fish.
- The food tends to vary from region to region, depending on the influences present in a region, so for example in the North there is an Indian influence. Within the Amazon, the staple tends to be fish, whereas in the South it is meat.
- Below are some of Brazil's traditional dishes to keep your eyes and stomachs peeled for whilst you're out there:
  - Barreado - meats and spices cooked in a clay pot for 24 hours and served with banana and farofa
  - Carangueijada - cooked crab, whole
  - Caruru - food brought from Africa to Brazil, made with ladies fingers (okra), onions, shrimp, peppers and oil
  - Cozido - stew with potatoes, carrots and vegetables
  - Doorado - freshwater fish
  - Feijoada - national dish of meat stew with rice and a bowl of beans
  - Xinxim de Galinha - chicken flavoured with garlic, salt and lemon

Breakfast tends to be light and usually consists of breads and jam with coffee. Lunch is usually the main meal of the day, with most shops and offices closing for a couple of hours whilst everyone sits down to a large meal. Dinner is late as a consequence and it is common to see people eating in restaurants until midnight.

## Drinks

Brazil is renowned for its strong coffee such as cafezinho, which is a small cup of sweetened coffee, often complimentary after meals in restaurants.

The most popular alcoholic beverage is cachaca, which is an extremely potent sugar-cane liquor. In Leblon you can find the Academia de Cachaca, there are tours of distillers in Minas Gerais and a Cachaca Museum.

Capeta is another common alcoholic beverage consisting of Cachaca, condensed milk, cinnamon and guarana powder.

## Public Holidays

To view a list of the public holidays for Vietnam, please see the link below:

[www.timeanddate.com/holidays/brazil/](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/brazil/)

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. Many schools, government offices, stores and banks are closed on National Holidays.

## Weather

Brazil's weather is pretty temperate all year round so deciding on what time you want to go will really depend on what sort of activities you want to do.

The summer runs from December to February and it's also the time that Brazilians are on holiday so everywhere tends to be a little crowded – but if you want to coincide with Carnival you'll be expecting crowds! If you're likely to spend time in the Amazon and the Pantanal you'll find June to August are normally the driest months.

## Time

Brazil has four time zones. Standard time is three hours behind GMT; Amazon time is four hours behind GMT; Acre, a state in Brazil, is five hours behind GMT; and finally the Fernando de Noronha archipelago is two hours behind GMT. With the exception of Acre, the country observes Daylight Saving Time between October and February-March, and clocks move forward one hour.

## Electricity

There is no standard voltage in Brazil. Most states use 110V, but some states in the north and some hotels use 220-240V.



Plugs are two pin – either flat blade or round pins

## Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.





# Brazil Surf and Volunteer

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