

Salvador Da Bahia, & Rio de Janeiro

BRAZIL

DAY 01: NORTH AMERICA/SALVADOR Depart New York JFK International Airport via jet service to Salvador Da Bahia via Sao Paulo.

DAY 02: SALVADOR DA BAHIA Upon your arrival in Salvador in the afternoon, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. The balance of the day is at leisure for your rest and relaxation. This evening, around 6:00pm, enjoy a welcome to Bahia Tropical Drink before transferring for evening festivities including a CULTURAL SHOW and typical Bahian Dinner.

Bahian folklore is very rich, the main legacy is samba de roda, capoeira, reisados (epiphany), and bumba-meu-boi. Capoeira is a distinctive dance style which features bodily self defense techniques which are performed to the accompanying music of the berimbau and African type drums. The folklore shows include Candomble, which while taking on a folkloric form, Candomble is a religion brought over by African Slaves. It is believed that a supreme God, Olorum, reated Obatala (the Sky) and Odudua (the Earth) who were united to give birth to Iemanja (the waters) and Aganju (the firm ground). Iemanja and Aganju had a son, Orunga (the air) - beginning of life in the universe. Orixas (saints) usually associated with catholic saints, govern natural phenomena and things on Earth. Thus, Iansa is the goddess of storms and is identified with St. Barbara. Xango, god of thunder, is St. Jerome. Oxossi, god of hunting is St. George. Oxum, goddess of fountains and beauty, is Our Lady of Candeias. Ogun, god of iron, is St. Anthony. Each god or goddess is associated also with a color and a day of the week. Thus, Iansa's color is red and her day is Wednesday, Xango dresses in red and white and his day is also Wednesday. Ogun dresses in blue on his day, Tuesday, Oxossi dresses in green or blue on Thursday. Iemanha dresses in transparent clothes on Saturday and Oxala to whom the people show the greatest devotion due to his identification to Senhor do Bonfim, dresses in white on Friday. After the dinner and show, return to your hotel.

DAY 03: UPPER AND LOWER CITIES Morning embark on your tour of the Upper and Lower Cities. The city of Salvador is divided into two parts; The "Lower City" is at sea level and contains the old port and commercial district where visitors will find the most complete and astounding assemblage of Brazilian arts and crafts at Mercado Modelo. The "Upper City" is reached by stone steps, alleyways or more efficiently, by the Lacerda Elevator. In this part of the city will be found the old government buildings, residential districts, visit the most important Baroque Churches, the Old Town, Afro-Brazilian Museum, Museum of the Sacred Art and the Market Place. Continue to visit a Candomble "Terreiro", a public place where people pay homage to the Orixas (African Sacred Entities). Visit Casa Branca, the oldest terreiro in Brazil where you will hear a lecture on the rites and festivals. Visit sacred places like trees, fountains and stones, explaining the meaning for the African religion. Inside Casa Branca, see the sacred rooms and the kitchen of the Orixas, and the part of the house where the community lives - as they do in Africa. Continue to Rio Vermelho Beach for a visit to the house dedicated to Yemanja (Queen of the Sea), where festivities take place on January 01 and February 02. Proceed to Post Office Square, the only square in Brazil where there are sculptures of the Orixas. Return to your hotel.

DAY 04: BAY CRUISE Today take a cruise on All Saints Bay or Baia de Todos os Santos which bounds Salvador on the south. The great Bay covers 1100 square kilometers and has 55 islands, many in their original natural state, rich with tropical vegetation. Visit Frades Island and Itaparica Island. Return to your hotel for overnight.

DAY 05: SALVADOR Full day at leisure for personal exploration or shopping.

DAY 06: CACHOEIRA Morning departure from Salvador enroute to Cachoeira, 66 miles away by paved roads. Because of its great cultural and architectural value, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, Cachoeira has been designated as a national monument. Upon your arrival in Cachoeira, special arrangements have been made for you to meet the Boa Morte, a sorority of Black women, all descendants of African slaves. A special presentation and lecture will be made which will be interpreted from the native Portuguese to English detailing the history of the Sorority. Following the lecture, an opportunity will be given for group members to personally interact and socialize with some of the sisters. In the afternoon, the distinctive samba-de-roda dance will be performed especially for the group. This form of samba is, unlike others, a group dance with soloists. At the center of the circle, the soloist moves gracefully to the insinuating rhythm of the percussion ensemble.

DAY 07: SALVADOR/RIO DE JANEIRO Morning at leisure. Transfer to the airport for your flight to Rio de Janeiro. Upon your arrival in Rio, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for overnight.

RIO DE JANEIRO The sky is always blue; summer all year around. Sun, beach, sea, mountains and lush tropical forest. There is the statue of Christ the Redeemer, always with arms wide open. This exciting city is the soul and symbol of Brazil and may well be the capital of the pleasure-seeking world. Rio covers a narrow strip of coast with 15 miles of legendary beaches. Rio is famous for Carnival and its' Samba Schools that rehearse all year round.

DAY 08: SUGARLOAF/CORCOVADO A solid rock mountain 1,229 feet high at the entrance to Guanabara Bay is one of the landmarks most readily identified with Rio. Take the cable car at Praia Vermelha to its first stop - Morro da Urca, at a height of 215m. The name Urca, a nautical term like many of the city's place-names, refers to a two-mast vessel. There is a second hill at the foot of Sugar Loaf - Morro Cara de Cao, Dogface Cliff. It was between these two hills that the founding of Rio de Janeiro took place in 1565. Later the fortress of Sao Joao was constructed here to defend the city from foreign invaders. The final stop of the cable car is at the summit of Sugar Loaf, 394m. On top is a restaurant, souvenir shop, open air theater and a lookout with telescopes. The splendid view of the city is framed by the mountains, the tallest peak being Corcovado. One has a dazzling view of the beaches, nearby islands and sea. Continue to Corcovado Mountain, crowned by the gigantic statue of Christ the Redeemer. The name Corcovado means hunchback for the shape of the peak. Travel through Tijuca National Park via railway, through the dense forest of trees as tall as cliffs and hung with creepers. The trip is extraordinary, deep forest shade every now and then opening to changing views of the city. Then the final walk up to the peak and its huge panoramic views - the figure of Christ the Redeemer was designed by Heitor da Silva Costa and sculpted by the French artist Paul Landiwsky, was raised in its magnificent position in 1931. The figure stands thirty meters high and weighs 1145 tons. The spectacular panorama spread at your feet is breathtaking, encompassing the city of Rio, Guanabara Bay, the mountain skyline, SugarLoaf, the 8-mile Rio-Niteroi Bridge, the Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon and the shimmering Atlantic. Return to the hotel.

DAY 09: RIO DE JANEIRO Full day at leisure for personal relaxation or last minute shopping.

DAY 10: RIO DE JANEIRO/NORTH AMERICA Full day at leisure. Evening transfer to the airport in time to board your return flight to North America.

DAY 11: NORTH AMERICA Arrival in the morning local time.