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RIO'S CARNIVAL & COLONIAL TREASURES OF BRAZIL

Combine Carnival's Champions' Parade in Rio & the Colonial Brazil Gold Route

10 DAYS / 9 NIGHTS

Where the excitement of carnival, the history of all of South America and the colonial arts meet

Arrive in Rio for Carnival's Champions' Parade and combine it with the gems of the colonial hinterland of Rio: The Rio de Janeiro "Gold Route". It traces the route from Brazil's gold mines to the important towns and ports where the gold was shipped to the Old World. Visit Ouro Preto, a city in the Atlantic Rainforest that was a hub for gold miners. Also see the port of Paraty, whose cobblestone streets encircle many a colonial mansion. Also see São João del Rei, Tiradentes, and other gold mining towns with unique architecture and beautiful rainforest scenery. The Champions' Parade, which is included in this tour package is when all the champion samba schools from the previous days of the Carnival festival show off their costumes, music and dancing for one grand finale performance. It's a must-see show!

FROM
**CONTACT
US!**
per person

THIS TOUR INCLUDES:

- 10 days/ 9 nights in Brazil
- All Breakfasts
- All Transfers
- English speaking Tour Guides

HIGHLIGHTS

- Rio Carnival Winner's Parade
- Sugar Loaf Mountain
- Corcovado Mountain and the Christ the Redeemer Statue
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Paraty & Ouro Preto
- Train ride to Tiradentes
- Visit to a Gold Mine in Mariana
- Schooner Excursion through the bays of Paraty

ITINERARY



Day 1

ARRIVE IN RIO DE JANEIRO

Friday March 3rd, 2017

Arrive today in Rio de Janeiro, a city of stunning natural beauty, nestled between the Atlantic Rainforest-covered hills and the dazzling waters of Guanabara Bay. Rio de Janeiro has been nicknamed the "Marvelous City," and on this Rio Carnival & Gold Route tour, you'll have the opportunity to find out why.

Your tour guide will greet you at the airport or port, and take you to your hotel, located on Copacabana Beach. Copacabana is famous for its wide sidewalks, tall beachfront hotels, warm waters, and white sandy beaches. It's right next to Ipanema Beach, and these two beaches are considered some of the most famous in the world. Go for a stroll along the boardwalk, or take a dip in the rooftop swimming pool of your hotel.

In the evening, enjoy a complimentary caipirinha, the definitive Brazilian cocktail, along with a rodizio all-you-can-eat buffet dinner. The rodizio includes barbecue meats, veggies, fruits, cheeses, and more.



Day 2

SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN, RIO CITY TOUR, & RIO CARNIVAL PARADE

Saturday March 4th, 2017

After breakfast in the hotel, your guide will take you to Sugarloaf Mountain, a granite peak that juts up over Guanabara Bay and offers spectacular panoramic views of the city. Ride up to the top of Sugarloaf by way of a cable car, known to be the safest cable car system in the world. The gondolas feature wide windows so that you can soak in the views of the city, forests, and bay from all angles.

Afterwards, your guide will show you some of the historic sites and beaches on this Rio de Janeiro tour. Learn about how the prince of Portugal broke away from the royal family, naming himself Emperor of Brazil and declaring independence from Portugal.

In the evening, your guide will transfer you to the Sambodromo Stadium, where you can watch the Rio Carnival Champion's Parade. The 6 best samba schools will perform in a "grand finale" parade, with over 3000 dancers and musicians dressed in colorful, vibrant costumes. The unforgettable show begins at 9:00 pm and lasts for several hours.



Day 3

CHRIST THE REDEEMER STATUE & CORCOVADO MOUNTAIN TOUR

Sunday March 5th, 2017

Another important peak rising above Rio de Janeiro is Corcovado, where the Christ the Redeemer statue stands and welcomes newcomers into the city with outstretched arms. The Christ statue is a world-renowned icon, and is indicative of the openness and kindness of cariocas, the residents of Rio de Janeiro. Take a tour to the top of Corcovado, via the trenzinho cogwheel railway.

The rest of the day you have at leisure in Rio de Janeiro. You may want to go shopping, explore the beaches, or opt for an additional tour, such as a Schooner Cruise around Guanabara Bay, a 4x4 off-roading tour of the Tijuca Forest, a visit to the Botanical Gardens, a dinner and samba dance show at the Plataforma Samba Restaurant, or dinner at the pirate-themed Marius Restaurant. The options are endless!



Day 4

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RIO WALKING TOUR

Monday March 6th, 2017

Your guide will meet you at the hotel to take you on a walking tour through the historical and cultural areas of Rio. Take the subway to Teatro Municipal in Cinelândia, the center of downtown Rio, built in the 20th century, considered one of the most beautiful theaters in Brazil. Admire the architecture as you continue to Museu Nacional de Belas Artes from the 19th century. This museum has over 20,000 pieces in its collection, many of which are particularly rich in Brazilian culture.

Next, walk by Biblioteca Nacional, one of the largest libraries in Latin America and the 7th largest in the world, towards Largo de Carioca. This plaza is considered the heart of Rio's Center Town and both locals and tourists alike enjoy this square. Continue your walking tour to the Paço Imperial, an important historical building with beautiful architecture. Walk along Boulevard Olímpico, where locals and tourists gathered to watch the live feed during the Summer 2016 Olympic Games.

Finish your historical walking tour at the Museum of Tomorrow, a science museum built along the waterfront. This museum represents forward thinking in a sustainable world; the futuristic building itself is a sight to see. Finish your walking tour with a stop along the Mosteiro de São Bento, Monastery of St. Benedict, a mannerist style church that is a primary example of Brazilian colonial architecture in Rio and the country.



Day 5

FREE MORNING IN RIO DE JANEIRO & TRANSFER TO PARATY

Tuesday March 7th, 2017

After breakfast in the hotel, you may want to spend your free day exploring the beaches, or opting for another Rio de Janeiro city tour. We offer several options: a 4x4 off-roading tour of the Tijuca Forest, a visit to the Botanical Gardens, a shopping tour at the Hippie Market, and more.

In the afternoon, transfer to the port city of Paraty. The ride follows the scenic cliffs and coastline of Brazil's Atlantic Rainforest region. Paraty features cobblestone streets, a protected port with calm waters, colonial-era mansions and churches. The port was the endpoint where gold was loaded and shipped to Portugal. Have dinner in one of the local restaurants, included in your tour.



Day 6

PARATY SCHOONER CRUISE & LUNCH

Wednesday March 8th, 2017

This morning, have breakfast at the hotel, and then go for a stroll along the streets and the waterfront. At the port, you'll board a schooner for a half-day cruise around the bay. Enjoy a Brazilian buffet lunch on the ship.

The rest of the day is free to explore Parati on your own, or choose an additional excursion.



Day 7

SERRA DA BOCAINA PARK & MINAS GERAIS TOUR

Thursday March 9th, 2017

The morning begins with a ride through Serra da Bocaina National Park, which has interesting, prehistoric rock formations. Continue to Minas Gerais, the region where Brazil's gold rush began.

Stop along the way in Caxambu, a resort town that is a relic of Brazil's imperial past. Continue on to São João del Rei, a town that was an important gold mining town. Check in to your hotel and then stroll through the streets and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant, included in your tour.



Day 8

TRAIN TO TIRADENTES & OURO PRETO TOUR

Friday March 10th, 2017

After breakfast this morning, take a train ride to the town of Tiradentes, a colonial town with important colonial-era sculptures and architecture. Aleijadinho, the "Michelangelo" of Brazil, sculpted the Prophets and other remarkable statues here. Visit the Congonhas to see these masterful works of art.

Continue your tour of Brazil's Route of Gold by heading to Ouro Preto, which means "Black Gold." Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ouro Preto was a bustling hub during the gold mining boom days. Check into your hotel, and relax. Tonight's dinner is included.



Day 9

OURO PRETO WALKING TOUR & MARIANA GOLD MINE

Saturday March 11th, 2017

Today, the journey begins with a delightful walking tour through Ouro Preto. Learn about the history of Ouro Preto - both its incredible wealth during the gold rush, and the bloody rebellions that have occurred here.

The tour continues to Mariana, a quiet town 12km from Ouro Preto. Venture into a former gold mine, to get a glimpse of what life was like for miners. There's also the opportunity to shop for locally-made handicrafts in Mariana.



Day 10

PETROPOLIS TOUR & RETURN TO RIO DE JANEIRO

Sunday March 12th, 2017

The final day of the Rio Carnival and Brazil Route of Gold tour includes a stop in Petrópolis, which was the summer palace of the emperor of Brazil. Petrópolis is located several miles inland from Rio de Janeiro, where the imperial capital was located. Once you've seen the palace and grounds, continue on to Rio de Janeiro. Your driver will drop you off at the airport for your flight home, or to your next Brazil destination.