

2019 - IT'S ALL ABOUT CIDADE MARAVILHOSA! (16 DAYS)

GENERAL ITINERARY

9-Nov	Day 1	Saturday	overnight (1am-7am) flight JFK - Panama City, Panama; Day in Panama City; evening (9:20pm) flight to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
10-Nov	Day 2	Sunday	arrive to Rio de Janeiro; bus to Buzios; day in Buzios
11-Nov	Day 3	Monday	Day trip to Cabo Frio and Arrial do Cabo
12-Nov	Day 4	Tuesday	Day in Buzios
13-Nov	Day 5	Wednesday	morning bus to Rio De Janeiro; Day in Rio
14-Nov	Day 6	Thursday	Day in Rio (City Center with Old Rio, Lapa, Santa Teresa)
15-Nov	Day 7	Friday	Day in Rio (Copacabana, Ipanema, Leblon, Lagoa, Jardim Botânico)
16-Nov	Day 8	Saturday	Day in Rio (Cristo Redentor, hike to Pico de Tijuca)
17-Nov	Day 9	Sunday	Day in Rio (Pao de Acucar, Urca, Flamengo, Botafogo)
18-Nov	Day 10	Monday	Day in Rio (Bonde de Santa Teresa, Sambadromo, Maracana Stadium, Tijuca district); late evening flight to Foz de Iguacu
19-Nov	Day 11	Tuesday	night arrival to Foz do Iguacu; cross border to Argentina (Puerto Iguazu); Iguazu Falls (Argentina)
20-Nov	Day 12	Wednesday	day at Iguazu Falls (Argentina), Tres Fronteras (Argentina)
21-Nov	Day 13	Thursday	cross border to Foz do Iguacu; Iguacu Falls (Brazil); Park do Aves; Tres Fronteras (Brazil)
22-Nov	Day 14	Friday	morning flight to Rio; miradors near Dois Irmaos; sunset on Ipanema and Aproabar; Ginga Tropical show; Lapa nightlife
23-Nov	Day 15	Saturday	Day in Rio (ferry to Niteroi and 1/2 day in Niteroi); Mirante Dona Marta; Copacabana and Ipanema in the evening
24-Nov	Day 16	Sunday	Day in Rio (Rocina Favela Tour; Ecola de Artes at Parque Lage; Copacabana, Aproabar, Ipanema); 10pm go to airport
25-Nov	Day 17	Monday	1:30am flight home via Panama City (55min layover); arrive JFK at 1pm

* no major museums had been visited (inside) during this trip (for Ex: Museu do Amanha, Casa Franca-Brazil, Museo Historico Nacional, Museo Nacional de Belas Artes...)

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1	9-Nov	Saturday	JFK to Panama City flight (1am-7am) and Day in Panama City; evening flight (9:20pm) to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
		cloudy/	- Uber from Panama City Airport to Miraflores Locks at Panama Canal (pass via New Panama City - high-rises - Central American Miami)
		rainy day	- spend 2hrs at Panama Canal - see ships pass through locks(go top view for best views); visit museum; eat empanadas for breakfast
			- Uber to Panama Viejo (Old Panama City) - ruins (Old Panama City burned by Captain Morgan)
			- Uber to Mirador del Pacifico on Cinta Costera
			- walk to Mercado de Mariscos (eat Ceviche - camarones, pescado, langoustines)
			- walk to Casco Viejo (Old Town)
			- walk streets of Casco Viejo (eat excellent Artisanal ice-cream)
			a. Plaza de Francia
			b. Iglesia san Jose (with "golden altar")
			c. Arco Chato (ruins of old monastery)
			d. Plaza Simon Bolivar
			e. Metropolitan Cathedral
			f. Plaza de la Independencia
			- Uber to Flamenco Island via Amador Causeway (great New Panama City skyline views)
			- eat at one of restaurants while waiting for rain to stop

			- walk all length of Amador Causeway (connects 3 small islands)
			- pass by Biodiversity museum
			- Uber to airport; flight (9:20pm) to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Day 2	10-Nov	Sunday	Arrive to Rio de Janeiro; bus from airport to Buzios; day in Buzios
		cloudy day	- arrive Rio de Janeiro (6:30am)
			- 1001 bus (booked via BusBud.com) from GIG Airport to Buzios (Rio de Janeiro region)
			- check into Buzios' hotel Pousada Bucaneiro
			- Buzios Center (Rua das Pedras, Orla Bardot, Manoel Turibio de Farias and other streets)
			- eat dinner at local restaurant (fish, rice, fries, farofa, caipirinhas...)
			- Bronze statues of 3 Fishermen, Brigitte Bardot, J. Kubitschek) on Orla Bardot
			- hike to Buzios' Beaches: Canto, Armacao, Ossos, Azeda, Azedinha, Joao Fernandes, Joao Fernandinho
			- evening and dinner in Buzios City Center
Day 3	11-Nov	Monday	Cabo Frio and Arrial do Cabo
		cloudy/ rainy day	- local bus to Cabo Frio
			- walk streets of Cabo Frio
			- Rocket Beach and Forte beach (Praia do Forte) (did not go to Ilha do Japones due to weather)
			- Saint Matthew Fort
			- Uber to Arrial do Cabo
			- Boat Trip from Arrial do Cabo from the Praia dos Anjos Marina:
			a. Pratal do Pontal do Atalaia, famous for the staircase; swim in very cold water
			b. Crevice of Our Lady
			c. Did NOT visit Gruta Azul (Blue Grotto) due to heavy rain and stormy waters
			d. Stone Profile of the Gorilla
			e. Did NOT go to Ilha do Farol (Amazing Beach - Praia do Farol; has ancient tree mentioned in Amerigo Vespucci's writings) due to heavy rain and cold wind
			f. Did NOT go to Praia do Forno due to heavy rain and cold wind
			- Uber to Cabo Frio Center
			- dinner at Tia Maluca Restaurant (Shrimp Moceca, Cachasa Shots, Beer)
			- local bus back to Buzios
			- evening in Buzios City Center
Day 4	12-Nov	Tuesday	Buzios Beaches and hiking
		cloudy day	- local bus to Geriba Beach
			- hike to Beaches and Mirantes: Ferradurinha, Ferradura, Foca, Forno
			- lunch at Buzios restaurant "Buzin" (por kilo) on Rua das Pedras
			- walk to Manguinhos and Tartaruga Beach
			- evening in Buzios City Center
Day 5	13-Nov	Wednesday	Bus from Buzios to Rio, Copacabana walk, Flamengo tailgate and game at Maracana Stadium
			- morning 1001 bus from Buzios bus station to Rio's Bus Station (Rodoviario Central)
			- ride over "Rio de Janeiro - Niteroi" bridge (13.3km in length)
			- Uber to Copacabana - check into Astoria Palace Hotel
			- walk on Avenida Atlantica on Copacabana
			- lunch at Carretao Churrascaria

			- meet up with Sergio and make metro to Maracana Stadium for Flamengo-Vasco Football game (local Derby)
			- pre-game tailgate
			- Football game at Maracana
			- metro back to Copacabana
Day 6	14-Nov	Thursday	Day in Rio (Centro - City Center, Gamboa, Saude, Lapa, Santa Teresa)
		rainy day/ heavy rain	- metro (from Cardeal Arcoverde station) to City Center (Carioca metro station)
			- Palacio Tiradentes
			- Paco Imperial (Brazil's Independence declared from the balcony; now houses galleries)
			- Praca XV
			- Estacao das Barcas (boat station - Boat Ferry to Niteroi)
			- Ilha Fiscal (from distance)
			- Arco de Teles (was part of viaduct)
			- Travesa do Comercio Botecos (street with cafes; Carmen Miranda lived in one of the houses)
			- Centro Cultural Banco do Brazil
			- Casa Franca-Brazil (Stock Exchange of Rio)
			- Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Candelaria
			- walk along waterfront
			- Sao Bento Monastery
			- Museu do Amanha (Museum of the Future)
			- walk along Porto Maravilha Docks
			- Etnias Mural (Eduardo Kobra) - was largest mural in the world when created in 2016 to celebrate Rio Olympics
			- Associacao do Comite Rio da Acao da Cidadania (500000 slaves were brought to this building during colonization period)
			- Praca Manuel Antonio with Estatua de Mercedes Baptista (Brazilian Ballet dancer and choreographer)
			- Pedra do Sal (historic and religious site in Saude; originally quilombo village (Little Africa)) - outdoor party area in the evenings
			- walk streets of Centro
			- Real Gabinete Portugues de Leitura (Royal Portugese Reading Room built in late 1800's; has books from 1500s) - go inside
			- Praca Tiradentes
			- Confeitaria Colombo (eat Pastel and Brigadero) - café is hard to find
			- Theatro Municipal (beautiful building)
			- Museo Historico Nacional
			- Biblioteca Nacional (took break from rain)
			- Museo Nacional de Belas Artes
			- Cinelandia with Odeon Theatre
			- snack on Jabuticaba berries
			- Praca Mahatma Gandhi
			- Cathedral Presbyteriano
			- EDISE - Edificio Sede da Petrobras (like Rubic's Cube building)
			- Cathedral Metropolitana de Sao Sebastiao (superb !!)
			- walk to Carioca Aqueduct (built 1724)
			- walk to Escadaria Selaron
			- go up the stairs and walk to Parque das Ruinas (excellent city views)
			- dinner at Espirito Santa in Santa Teresa (tried various plates of Pirarucu Fish (Arapaima))
			- walk down cobblestone Santa Teresa streets
			- metro back to hotel from metro station Gloria

Day 7	15-Nov	Friday	Avenida Atlantica, Arpoador, Avenida Vieira Souto, Avenida Niemeyer, Leblon, Lagoa, Jardim Botânico
		cloudy/ rainy day	- walk to Fort Copacabana via Avenida Atlantica
			- cross via Rua Francisco Otaviano to Arpoador
			- Arpoador
			- walk Avenida Vieira Souto in Ipanema and Leblon
			- walk to Mirante do Leblon and then to Praia do Vidigal via Avenida Niemeyer
			- walk via Leblon neighborhood to Lagoa with Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas
			- walk full circle around Lagoa Lake (7.8km) via Avenida Epitacio Pessoa and Av Borges de Medeiros - great views of Cristo Redentor
			- eat Acai and Globo tapioca snack
			- pass by Flamengo Football Club and Hipodromo da Gavea on a way to Jardim Botânico
			- Jardim Botânico
			- walk along Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas and Ipanema neighborhood to Casa de Feijoadá (very fulfilling meal) - pass by canal separating Leblon and Ipanema
			- go to Garota de Ipanema bar
			- walk back to Hotel via Ipanema & Copacabana neighborhood
Day 8	16-Nov	Saturday	Cristo Redentor, hike to Pedra da Gavea peak in Tijuca forest
		sunny day	- metro and then Uber to Cristo Redentor Trem do Corcovado (lower tram station/entrance)
			- arrived to tram station at 8:30am, bought tickets for 11:30am available tram
			- Uber to Bilheteria Corcovado - second (higher) tram/bus stop to Cristo Redentor (not to waste 3 hrs)
			- find a forest trail that leads to Cristo Redentor site entrance (through the forest), not to wait for train time slot or get another ticket and wait in lines for shuttle bus
			- excellent experience walking the trail (30min) - adventure hike !! (very few people take or know about the trail)
			- enter through rear gates of the Cristo Redentor site entrance
			- Cristo Redentor !!! - spectacular
			- amazing views of Rio
			- take tram all the way down to tram station entrance
			- Largo do Boticario
			- Uber to Tijuca National Park Visitor Center
			- short hike to Cachoeira das Almas (waterfall of Souls)
			- walk to Base da trilha do Pico da Tijuca (checkpoint before entering the trail; checkpoint closes at 3pm, we entered through the forest at 3:25pm)
			- long hike to Pico da Tijuca (fast pace due to time constraint) - 1021m over sea level - last part of trail is steep rock stairs with metal chains for railing
			- awesome views of Rio from top
			- hike down to Park's exit (Portaria PNT) - pass by Capela Mayrink and Cascatinha Taunay waterfall
			- Uber to Churrascaria Palace (more touristy)
Day 9	17-Nov	Sunday	Pao de Acucar, Urca, Botafogo, Flamengo, Sambadromo, Maracana, Lapa
		sunny day	- walk Copacabana's Avenida Atlantica to Leme Rock
			- walk around Leme Rock via Av Princess Isabel, Av Pasteur to lower funicular Bondinho Pao de Acucar
			- take funicular to top of Morro Da Urca
			- walk around, check out Bondinho cars, city views, closer view of Pao de Acucar
			- take second funicular to top of Pao Acucar (Sugar Loaf Mountain)
			- walk around (amazing city views)
			- take funiculars down

			- Praia Vermelha (Red Beach)
			- walk to Urca neighborhood and go to Mureta da Urca with Bar e Restaurante Urca via Av Portugal and Av Joao Luiz Alves promenade
			- walk back to Av Pasteur and go to Praia de Botafogo
			- Parque do Flamengo & Praia de Flamengo - superb views of Morro da Urca and Pao de Acucar
			- watch Capoeira training near beach
			- Uber to Sambadromo
			- Uber to Maracana Stadium
			- Uber to Escadaria Selaron
			- walk around Lapa and Cinelandia
			- Uber to Ipanema
			- drinks at Garota da Ipanema
			- burger and beer at TT Burger
			- walk back to Hotel
Day 10	18-Nov	Monday	walk on Copacabana and Ipanema beaches, Bondinho tram to Santa Teresa, Tijuca district, fly to Foz do Iguacu
		cloudy/ rainy day	- morning walk on Copacabana and Ipanema beaches; cold water
			- check out from Hotel at noon (store luggage at the Hotel)
			- take metro to Carioca metro station
			- ride Bondinho tram over Lapa Viaduct to Santa Teresa and back
			- metro to Jardim Oceanico in Barra da Tijuca
			- walk to Praia da Tijuca (rain started)
			- walk around Barra Tijuca and Praia da Tijuca (rain starts)
			- metro back to Copacabana
			- walk to Morro de Leme via Avenida Atlantica
			- dinner at Portugese restaurant "O Peixe Vivo"
			- pick up luggage at hotel and Uber to Airport
			- 11:30pm flight to Foz do Iguacu
Day 11	19-Nov	Tuesday	flight to Foz do Iguacu, border crossing to Puerto Iguazu, Tres Fronteras, Cataratas del Iguazu (Argentina)
		sunny/hot & humid day	- arrive Foz do Iguacu airport at 2am; taxi to cross Brazil-Arg Border and check into Grand Cruzero Hotel (in Puerto Iguazu, Argentina)
		102-105F	- walk to Puerto Iguazu town
			- walk to Tres Fronteras (Argentina)
			- taxi to Cataratas del Iguazu (Iguassu Falls, Argentina) - no Uber in Puerto Iguazu
			- Cataratas del Iguazu Park
			a. shuttle train to Devil's Throat (Garganta del Diablo)
			b. walk Upper Circuit
			c. walk Lower Circuit
			- taxi to hotel
			- dinner at La Vaca Enamorada in Puerto Iguazu town center
Day 12	20-Nov	Wednesday	Cataratas del Iguazu (day 2), Tres Fronteras
		sunny/hot & humid day	- taxi to Cataratas del Iguazu
		102-105F	- jungle trip and boat ride to the base of the Falls
			- walk Lower Circuit (at slow pace)
			- walk Upper Circuit (at slow pace)
			- shuttle train to Devil's Throat

			- taxi back to hotel
			- taxi to Tres Fronteras (for a sunset)
			- walk back to Puerto Iguazu center
			- dinner at Tatu Carreta - best dinner of the trip
Day 13	21-Nov	Thursday	border crossing to Brazilian side of Falls, Cataratas Iguacu (Brazil), Parque das Aves
		sunny/hot &	- check out from hotel
		humid day	- taxi to Foz do Iguacu, cross Argentina-Brazil border
		102-105F	- check into Hotel Bogari in Foz do Iguacu
			- Uber to Cataratas do Iguacu Visitor's Entrance
			a. shuttle bus to Iguacu Vista View start point (Caminho das Cataratas Brazil)
			b. follow Path of the Falls Trail (amazing panoramic views of the Falls)
			c. walk to lowest point - closest to the Falls - Mirante da Garganta do Diabolo
			d. shuttle bus via Macuco Safari Road back to Visitor's Entrance
			- walk to Parque das Aves (Bird's Park)
			- Uber to Foz do Iguacu Zoo (depressing zoo)
			- Uber to Tres Fronteras (Brazil) (for a sunset) - paid entrance; but lots of entertainment
			- Uber back to Foz do Iguacu center
			- dinner at Park Foz Steakhouse (more Arapaima Fish and other dishes)
			- walk back to hotel
Day 14	22-Nov	Friday	fly back to Rio de Janeiro, vista views of Ipanema and Lagoa, sunset over Dois Irmaos, Ginga Tropical show, nightlife in Lapa
		sunny day	- Uber to Foz do Iguacu Airport
			- fly back to Rio de Janeiro
			- Uber to Everest Rio Hotel in Ipanema
			- walk on Ipanema's & Leblon's Avenida Vieira Souto
			- walk to Mirante do Leblon
			- taxi and short walk to Mirante viewpoints in Parque Natural Municipal Penhasco Dois Irmaos
			- walk back, walk along the Leblon and Ipanema beaches for sunset views over Dois Irmaos
			- walk to Pedra do Arpoador - amazing views of Dois Irmaos especially at sunset
			- walk back to Hotel
			- Uber to show "Ginga Tropical" - touristy show in Leblon
			- burger and beer at TT Burger
			- walk back to hotel
			- Uber to Pedra do Sal for nightlife
			- Uber to Lapa for nightlife
			- walk around Lapa neighborhood
			- Uber back to hotel
Day 15	23-Nov	Saturday	ferry to Niteroi, Dona Marta Mirador, Copacabana and Ipanema neighborhoods
		sunny day/	- metro to Carioca metro station
		evening rain	- ferry boat from Praca XV CCR Barcas to Niteroi (20min)
			- walk to Fish Market
			- walk to Niteroi Art Museum (MAC Niteroi)
			- walk to Praia do Icarai
			- Uber to Parque do Cidade do Niteroi (all the way to the top) - Mirador point has fantastic views of Rio de Janeiro

			- Uber to Niteroi's Estacao Arariboia ferry back to Rio's Praca XV
			- Uber to Mirante Dona Marta - superb views of Rio
			- Uber to Café Lamas in Flamengo (also watched Flamengo Football team win Copa Libertadores Final played in Lima)
			- metro from Catete metro station back to Ipanema
			- evening snack: tapioca crepe & guarana juice
			- walk to Copacabana
			- metro back to hotel in Ipanema
Day 16	24-Nov	Sunday	favela tour, Escola de Artes, Hippie Market, walk along Avenida Atlantica, Avenida Viera Souto, Arpoador
		cloudy/ drizzle	- morning tour of Rocina Favela (booked with hotel) - next time get a longer private tour
			- visit Hippie Market to buy souvenirs home (weekends also have numerous souvenir spots along Copacabana's Av Atlantica)
			- Uber to Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage (in Lagoa) - great views of Cristo Redentor
			- Uber to Morro Leme
			- walk back to hotel via Copacabana's Avenida Atlantica and Ipanema's Avenida Viera Souto with stop at Arpoador
			- dinner at Carretao Ipanema Churrascaria (so-so)
			- last walk on Ipanema's Avenida Vieira Souto
			- 10pm Uber to airport for flight back home via Panama City
			- arrive JFK at 1pm 11/25/2019
IDEAS AND TIPS FOR FUTURE TRIP(S) TO RIO:			
			Season - March-April for sun and beach; June-August for clearer sky and cooler weather
Day 1			Hike Morro Leme to Forte do Vigia
			Praia Vermelha
			walk around Urca Neighborhood with snack at Bar e Urca;
			Urca behind Pao Acucar: Praia de Fora; Reduto Sao Martinho Fortress; Praca da Fundacao do Rio de Janeiro !!; Fortaleza de Sao Joao; Reduto de Sao Teodosio (fortress)
			Hike to top of Morro Urca, then take cable car to top of Pao Acucar for a sunset
Day 2			Dois Irmaos hike to Mirante Dois Irmaos via Pedra Bonita Trilha Vidigal (pass through Favela Vidigal) - go with group/tour
			Lagoa: Parque Lage (walk around) and Escola de Artes Visuais (have lunch or breakfast); walk around Lagoa
			walk around Humaita neighborhood (to Botafogo/Guanabara Bay & Boat Marina) or spend evening in Leblon/Ipanema
Day 3			Hike to Mirante de Pedra da Gavea (spectacular views of the mountains, beaches, Rio; but hard and dangerous hike/climb) - go with group - some stretches of hike similar to Pico da Tijuca
			also, nearby Pedra do Raio (similar to Telegraph Rock)
			or Hike to Pedra Bonita via Trilha da Pedra Bonita' go to Secreto da Pedra Bonita; and Voo Livre da Pedra Bonita
			Handgliding from Pedra Bonita
			Barra Tijuca and Tijuca neighborhood

Giant Water Lilies (Victoria Amazonica) - check season			
most museums and sites are closed on Mondays			
go to other beaches			Praia da Gavea, Barra de Tijuca