

Christ The Redeemer

The statue of Christ the Redeemer is located at the top of Corcovado Mountain. The entire monument of statue of Christ the Redeemer is 38m high with the statue accounting for 30m and overlooking the city of Rio de Janeiro is one of the tallest statues in the world; the span from finger tip to fingertip is 28m and there is a small chapel housed in the base.

The reason why it was built was to show that Christ loves all. In Portuguese, this iconic monument is known as Cristo Redentor. Christ the Redeemer was designed by a French sculptor by the name of Paul Landowski and a local engineer named Heitor da Silva Costa was chosen to supervise the entire construction. The statue was built not out of steel but from reinforced concrete as that was considered a more suitable material for the cross shaped statue. The external caps of the idol were constructed in soapstone due to the resistance of this material to the extreme time and also due to its malleability.

The statue of Christ the Redeemer can be accessed by the 2.4 meter Corcovado Railway that has the capacity to hold 360 passengers every hour. The trip by rail is approximately 20 minutes and leaves the base each half hour. From the road or the train terminal Christ the Redeemer statue is reached by 222 steps. For those not wishing to make the arduous trek up the mountain, reaching the statue is possible by escalators and elevators.

Christ the Redeemer is one of the tourist attractions that every year attracts to more and more visitors. The best time to visit the Christ the Redeemer statue is late afternoon or evening when you can enjoy the splendour of the setting sun while taking in one of the most important landmarks in the world.

History of Christ the Redeemer

Christ the Redeemer (Cristo Redentor) is a 30 metre high statue, mounted upon an 8 metre pedestal, and of course the 700 metre high mountain of Corcovado. It was constructed between 1922 and 1931 from soapstone and reinforced concrete. Today it is a Brazilian cultural icon and global symbol of Christianity.

An earlier proposal for a Christian monument on Mount Corcovada was dismissed after the country became a republic in 1889, when the roles of church and state were separated. However a second proposal came in 1920 from Catholics motivated by the perceived atheism of contemporary Rio de Janeiro.

The proposal attracted donations to support the construction, which came largely from Brazilian Catholics. Designs included a representation of the Christian cross, a statue of Jesus holding a globe in his hands and a pedestal that symbolised the world. The resultant Christ the Redeemer statue symbolises peace.

Christ the Redeemer was created by French sculptor Paul Landowski and Brazilian engineer Heitor da Silva Costa, working with French engineer Albert Caquot. It weighs 635 metric tons.

The face of the Christ the Redeemer statue was created by Gheorghe Leonida, a Romanian sculptor living in Paris hired by Landowski. On the 75th anniversary of the statue's construction, in October 2006, the Archbishop of Rio consecrated a chapel beneath the statue. The statue was hit by lightning in 2008 and in 2014, causing damage, while it has also been the focus of recent renovation efforts.

Christ the Redeemer today

The monument is a cultural icon in Brazil and around the world. It's a popular tourist destination so crowds are often large. On a clear day, the viewpoint atop Corcovado provides an excellent view of Rio.

Getting to Christ the Redeemer

The statue is open most of the day. A choice of train and tour buses make the journey to and from Christ the Redeemer simple, while the entrance ticket is inexpensive.