

Rio 24 Hours

Rio is known as '*Cidade Maravilhosa*' which means Wonderful City. People who are born in Rio are called **Carioca**.

The city lies between green hills covered in tropical forests and the Atlantic Ocean, with kilometers of beautiful white sandy beaches.

Tijuca Forest is the largest urban forest in the world. It contains the famous Corcovado hill, with the statue of Christ and the Tijuca peak.

Rio is not only blessed by its geographical location, but also by its topography. Plus, the relaxing atmosphere and the way of life of the Cariocas, make this city wonderful.

The trendiest neighborhoods are in the South part, where are located the famous Beaches of Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon.

In this post I'll guide you to get the best of Rio in only 24 hours.

How to get there:

Rio is served by most of the major airlines. Flights can be really full in summer time and during public holidays. In this case, your **plan B** is to reach **São Paulo** Guarulhos Int Airport and from there with a 50 minutes flight you are in Rio; or go to the domestic Congonhas airport (time between airports may vary from 50 to 90 minutes by car, depending on the traffic) where many airlines have shuttle flights to Rio downtown airport Santos Dumond.

When to go:

High season starts in December till March, which is summer time. The busiest times are during Carnival and New Year's Eve.

During summer the temperatures can reach 40C, with showers in the afternoon.

So if you are looking for some fun and party, this is the right time, the beaches are crowded by local and foreign tourists, parties are everywhere.

On the other hand, if you are looking for a more relaxing atmosphere, the best time is during winter, from June to August. Temperature varies between 28°/17°, it's the season with less humidity and rain.

Where to stay:

Ipanema and Leblon are the best neighborhoods to stay, located on the south area of Rio (Zona Sul). This area is fashionable and trendy, it's a place to see and to be seen, where the locals are. There are many hotels, restaurants and bars. These places are right next door to the iconic **Copacabana Beach**.

Moving around the city:

Rio is spread out and congested with traffic. There is a new subway line that connects Barra, in the west part, to the south area (Leblon, Ipanema and Copacabana) until downtown. With only 24 hours in the city, I'd take a cab to visit the attractions, **avoiding peak hours**.

Let's start

You can start your journey, early in the morning, getting into the **Carioca's** lifestyle: walk along the beach from **Leblon** till the end of **Ipanema**, called **Arpoador**.

The beach is a free outdoor gym for the locals, where you see people from all ages walking, jogging, doing exercises, surfing, playing beach volley, foot volley, etc.

It's roughly a 3 km walk and you can enjoy the beautiful view and a splash in the ocean.

Keep walking ahead in Arpoador towards **Copacabana**, stop at one of the many bars to try a fresh tropical juice or smoothie, like **açaí**, a fruit from the Amazon forest, known as the 'superfood'.

Once arrived in Copacabana Beach, you will see a military fortress on your right, which can be visited and inside there is a nice coffee shop, Confeitaria Colombo, with a wonderful view.

Keep walking on Copacabana Beach for another 3 km and you will see a beautiful construction from 1923, the Belmond Copacabana Palace Hotel.

From here on, it's better to take a taxi to *Pão de Açúcar* (**Sugar Loaf**), one of the landmarks of the city.

Buy your tickets to the cable car to admire the stunning view over the beaches and other pointy hills of Rio. The journey has two stops. The first stop is the *Morro da Urca*. The second stop is *Morro do Pão de Açúcar*.

When you go down you can take a walk on the **Urca Beach**, just beside the entrance of the cable car. On the left side of the beach you will find a paved path, the Claudio Coutinho trail, where locals go for jogging or for a walk.

Lunch time

I have two options for you:

The first one is a **churrascaria**, where you can try an 'all you can eat' of the best Brazilian meat, but you have also a vegetarian option of a huge buffet of salads, vegetables, Japanese food, cold cuts, fish and much more.

You can try **Churrascaria Assador Rio's** at Aterro do Flamengo or **Fogo de Chão** at Botafogo, both not far from the Sugar Loaf and with a breathtaking view.

The second option is near by your next attraction: the statue of Christ the Redeemer.

Aprazivel restaurant is situated on the top of Santa Teresa neighborhood in a bucolic area, just below the statue of Christ, it's a beautiful location, excellent food and an amazing view.

After lunch It's time to head to another famous place in Rio: **The Statue of Christ the Redeemer**.

This is one of the most iconic places to visit in Rio de Janeiro.

The statue is located on the top of *Morro do Corcovado*, part of the Tijuca Forest Park.

The most popular way to get there is to take the tram near Rua Cosme Velho. The journey to the statue takes around 25 minutes. The fastest way to reach the peak is by taxi.

Time to get back to your hotel and relax a bit to get ready for the night.

For **dinner** you can choose one of the many restaurants I listed below, which are in Zona Sul (south area).

My suggestion is to try a good **caipirinha**, **feijoada** (black beans) and some other local food.

Restaurants and bars

-Academia da Cachaça in Leblon, to feast on Brazilian feijoada (a tasty sort of bean stew with different kinds of beef and pork, sautéed kale and farofa) accompanied by a caipirinha to get into the rhythm of the city.

-Empório Jardim which has two locations, the most photogenic is in Gávea, where Instituto Moreira Salles is. In a serene place, you will be able to have a good meal and take great photos.

-Casa Graviola in Leblon, for healthy dishes focusing on organic products from local producers.

-Braseiro da Gávea in the neighborhood of Gávea, to eat picanha (a famous Brazilian cut of beef) with black beans (almost omnipresent in Brazilian cuisine) and farofa (the cassava flour mix that can have bacon, eggs or banana) and a cold *chopp* (draft beer)

-Casa Camolese is in front of the botanic garden. It's a stunning and trendy location with the view of the Jockey Club. It's a bar, restaurant and they also have live shows.

-Jack Daniel's Rock Bar is inside the Jockey Club. It's one of the trendiest club in the city, with rock and electronic music.

-**Blue Note** at Lagoa neighborhood is a bar where you can listen to jazz, bossa nova and much more.

-**Zaza Bistro** at Ipanema is a nice place with delicious food and drinks.

-Bars with sandwiches, natural juices and smoothies: Bibi Sucos, Balada Mix and Poli Sucos.

Nightlife and Samba

If you still have some energy left, you can go to **Lapa**, in downtown. This is the place where is located the beautiful Escadaria Selaron Steps, with the iconic mosaic steps of Rio.

Lapa is a very picturesque neighbourhood and one of the busiest areas for the nightlife in the city, with bars, clubs, live music, samba, rock, etc. Here are some places with live samba that you can try:

-Clubs dos Democráticos

-Botequim Vaca Atolada

-Rio Scenarium

-Carioca da Gema

Departing Day

Since you don't have much time before your departure, I give you here some options to spend your last hours as you better prefer:

-You can go to **Lagoa** and rent a bike to ride around the lagoon, stopping once in a while to soak the view of the city and watch the locals enjoying their backyard.

-You can go for a walk to the **Parque Lage**, with a bucolic atmosphere and a very strong cultural sense, due to the School of Visual Arts that works there. Situated below the Corcovado hill and next door to the Botanical Garden.

-Go to **Barra**, located in the west part of Rio, it's well worth a drive along the panoramic coast until **Prainha and Grumari beach**, famous for the waves.

-The **Museum of Tomorrow** is one of the most recent projects inaugurated in the city, which revitalized the Pier Maua, an area that until recently was forgotten.

-take some surf/Stand Up lessons or just relax sun bathing.

5 Safety tips while in Rio

Rio is famous for petty crime, so be aware!

1- Keep your phone and wallet hidden, do not use jewelry, watches and anything valuable.

Do your best not to walk around like a tourist with a massive camera around your neck.

2- If you don't know the city well, it's better to take a taxi or Uber instead of renting a car.

You can get lost in an area that could be dangerous.

3- Never enter in a *favela* (slum) without a local person who has the 'permission' to get in.

4- Avoid walking around in the city at night, especially when there is nobody around.

5- Don't leave your belongings unattended, especially on the beach.

Instagram

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