

city by city city guide

Rio de Janeiro

Fiona Harkin, Becky Sunshine, Lindsey Dupler, WGSN 26.04.07

Beautiful yet often brutal, tropically lush yet starkly urban, sophisticated yet populist, Rio de Janeiro inspires fierce loyalty in its carioca inhabitants and seduces thousands of tourists every year.

We donned our Havaianas and feigned an air of nonchalant Brazilian cool to uncover the must-visit areas (beyond the beaches) in the City of God.



Santa Theresa dollmaker

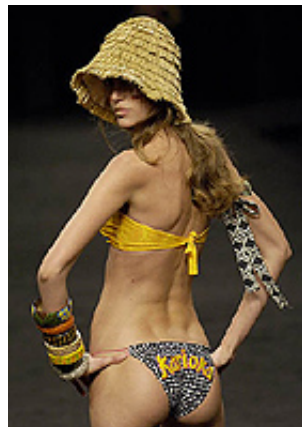


Graffiti

Until recently, this exuberant seaside city was viewed purely as a tourist destination, but Rio is actually also an important South American retail spot. You can find **hot beachwear** all year round, great accessories including **jewellery and footwear**, and easy-going **summer and trans-seasonal style**.

The city, coating the bays and clinging to the smooth rock mountains of the coastline, is also a living storyboard of **design inspiration**. Catch the surfers at Arpoador, sunbathe on Barra beach, explore the steep inclines of Santa Teresa and - for the adventurous - head to one of the well-known samba schools, such as **Mangueira**, to catch the hedonistic pre-carnival practices. Don't forget to soak up the haphazard favela aesthetic, which has inspired the likes of designers the Campana Brothers.

Did we forget to mention the great **interiors** on offer in the city? Check out WGSN's detailed guide to Rio's **top interiors destinations**, as well as our guide to **Buzios**, a favourite beachside resort just two hours from Rio.



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fact file

- The most famous costume party in the world, Rio's Carnival runs during February. For further information, visit www.brazil.org.uk
- US Citizens need a tourist visa before entering the country.

Apparel

adidas Originals

Garcia D'Avila
Ipanema

Alessa

Rua Nascimento Silva 399
Ipanema
www.alessa.com

Animale

São Conrado Fashion Mall

Antonio Bernado

Fórum Ipanema
Rua Visconde de Pirajá

Cavalera

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 313
Ipanema
www.cavalera.com

Cavendish

São Conrado Fashion Mall

Contemporâneo Moda & Design

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 437
Ipanema
www.contemporaneobrasil.com

Daqui

Av. Ataulfo de Paiva, 1174
Leblon

Espaço Fashion

Fórum Ipanema Mall

Coconut

Salinas beachwear at Ipanema
Forum

Gemstones at H. Stern

Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

Where to shop

The city's key areas are:

- **Ipanema**, for most of the city's best stores and malls, as well as the **Feira Hippie**. Head to the beach at Rua Garcia D'Avila.
- **Leblon**, Ipanema's upmarket sister. A residential area, it is home to an increasing number of stylish boutiques, good restaurants and new upscale malls.
- **Santa Teresa**, for a more traditional, bohemian side to Rio. Packed with beautiful buildings and a growing community of foreign-owned luxury B&Bs.
- **Copacabana** is touristy and, unfortunately, not what it once was. Stop here only for tourist essentials, like viewing the Copacabana Palace Hotel and the super-kitsch souvenir shops located one block behind.
- **Gávea and Lapa** are popular residential areas with flourishing independent scenes, while **Saara** is an ethnic market area, great for carnival accessories, well-priced semi-precious stones and fashion jewellery components. Prepare to bargain and take a Portuguese-speaking friend!
- **The beaches!** For authenticity, forget Copacabana and follow the cariocas to **Barra da Tijuca** for the best water and beach in Rio.

Ipanema

Ipanema is the main shopping area to head to. Start on **Rua Visconde de Pirajá**, which runs parallel to the beach.



Ipanema beach



Gilson Martins

On the crossing with **Rua Maria Quitéria**, overlooking a square, you'll find stores for leading Brazilian label **Forum** (near to Rua Barrão Torre), casual beachwear at **Redley** and popular upmarket label **Osklen**, with its well-merchandised stores.

Stop by **Contemporâneo Moda & Design** on Rua Visconde de Pirajá (heading towards Leblon and away from Arpoador), a second-storey store offering a good mix of top Brazilian labels, from Alexandre Herchcovitch to Neon.

The **Fórum Ipanema** shopping mall is more like an arcade, but it houses several boutiques by Brazil's top swimwear designers including **Lenny**,

Espaço Lundgren
Av. Vieira Souto, 234
Ipanema

Farm
Shopping da Gávea

Forum
R. Barao da Torre 422
Ipanema
www.forum.com

Forum de Ipanema
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

Gang
Ipanema 2000 mall
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

Kitanga
Rua Visconde de Pirajá 305
Ipanema
www.kitanga.com

Isabela Capeto
Rua Dias Ferreira 45
Leblon
www.isabelacapeto.com

Le Lis
São Conrado Fashion Mall

Louis Vuitton
Garcia D'Avila
Ipanema

Mara Mac
Galeria Fianna mall.
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema
São Conrado Fashion Mall
www.maramac.com

Maria Bonita Extra
Fórum Ipanema Mall
and
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema
www.mariabonitaextra.com

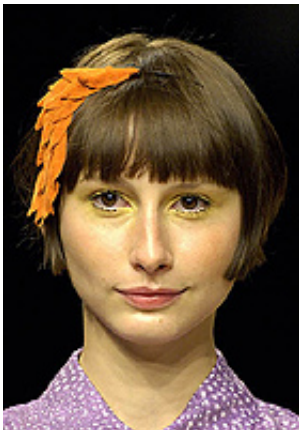
Osklen
Rua Maria Quitéria, 85 (Ipanema)

Salinas, Rygy and **Bum Bum**. There are also good accessories stores here, from the happy coloured resin specialist **R. Sobral** and glitzy **Gueirreiro** to the sophisticated **Antonio Bernardo** and upmarket **Andreas Badofszky**. There's a small branch of the chic girl's fashion favourite **Maria Bonita Extra**, as well as fast fashion store **Espaço Fashion**. **Mara Mac** is another leading Brazilian designer and the Rio store is located in the nearby Galeria Fianna mall.

Nearby, see **Cavalera** for good denim styles, **Kitanga** for that carioca wardrobe staple - activewear - and a small branch of **Arezzo** for on-trend, mid-market shoes and handbags. Mid-market beachwear shops worth a look include **Armadillo** and **Jamf**.

Beloved Brazilian accessories designer **Gilson Martins'** store offers kitsch and colourful accessories, from leather holders moulded to fit champagne bottles to tongue-in-cheek wallet pouches in the shape of fried eggs.

Kidswear stores are well represented in the area, mostly along Rua Visconde de Pirajá. Of note, there's the **Ipanema 2000** shopping arcade, in which you'll find **Pingo de Pé**, **Mimi e a Sardinha** and **Bonita**.



Maria Bonita Extra

Branching off, head down **Rua Garcia D'Avila**. The street is anchored by a large **H.Stern Home** store, **Louis Vuitton** and **Amsterdam Sauer** jewellers. There's also a flagship store for Brazilian jeweller **Antonio Bernardo**, home store **Elle et Lui** **Maison**, **adidas Originals**, fashion label **Tessuti** and **Mont Blanc**. (Stop for a bite to eat here at **Viasete Grill**.)

At the eastern end of Garcia d'Ávila stands one of six Rio-based boutiques for sophisticated designer swim and beachwear brand **Lenny**. On **Rua Nascimento Silva**, there's a handful of upscale designer shops - but for funky, kitsch style and cool art installations, carioca label **Alessa's** shop is

unmissable.

For Rio essentials, see the bum-lifting jeans store **Gang**, located in the mid-market Top Center mall back on Rua Visconde de Pirajá, near Rua Anibal Mendonça. On Anibal Mendonça itself, you'll find the Rio flagship for **Maria Bonita Extra** - known and loved for its fun prints and chic, feminine styles. (More dining options in this area include salad specialist **Gula Gula** and meat restaurant **Fornieria**).

Ipanema's Feira Hippie

Outdoor street markets - known as feiras - are a key feature in the city. Aside from the regular tourist offerings, you can find interesting local work such as good quality leather bags, embroidery from Bahia, and jewellery made from Brazilian stones and seeds.

The long-running Feira Hippie takes place **every Sunday** (mornings only) at the **General Osório Square** in Ipanema (closer to the Arpoador end)

and
São Conrado Fashion Mall
www.osklen.com

PL Bis
Rua Garcia d'Avila 147-8
and São Conrado Fashion Mall

Redley
Rio Sul Shopping Mall
www.redley.com

Richards
São Conrado Fashion Mall
Gávea Shopping Mall

PL Bis
Rua Garcia d'Avila 147-8
and São Conrado Fashion Mall

Taturanas
Rua José Roberto Macedo
Soares,
Loja 5B
Gávea

Tessuti
São Conrado Fashion Mall

Tidsy
São Conrado Fashion Mall

Via Flores
Rua General Venando Flores 305
Leblon

Kidswear

Mimi e a Sardinha
Ipanema 2000

Bonita
Ipanema 2000

Petit Lippe
Rua Dias Ferreira
Leblon

Pingo de Pé
Ipanema 2000

Sugar shoes
Gávea Shopping Mall

Totem kids

and is unmissable for fashion research. Look further and you'll find most areas have their own markets throughout the week.

Leblon

Leblon is arguably the most upmarket part of the city and, as well as a handful of small local boutiques, it is one of the best areas for restaurants and bars.

Make a beeline for the discreet and very cute **Isabela Capeto** store on Rua Dias Ferreira. One of Brazil's secret success stories, Capeto sells her brand of crafted chic to the likes of Browns in London and Le Bon Marché in Paris. Snap up her dresses and accessories here at lower prices, while checking out the tiny store's girlish yet Brazilian aesthetic.

Dias Ferriera 113 offers chichi interiors, while sophisticated childrenswear store **Petit Lippe** dresses some of Leblon's luckiest children and babies.



Feira Hippie



Isabela Capeto



Alexandre Herchcovitch



Koni Express

Make your way to Avenida Ataulfo de Paiva via Rua Aristides Espínola and stop for cakes at the very traditional parlour at number 101.

There are some good cafes and restaurants near the stores on Dias Ferreira and, just over the road from the Isabela Capeto boutique (accessible also on Avenida Ataulfo de Paiva) is the book store/cafe **Letras Expressões**, where you can pick up good Brazilian interior design, jewellery and travel magazines.

Daqui on Av. Ataulfo de Paiva is a great interiors store selling original pieces by local designers. We like the crochet- and lace-imprinted ceramics by Caroline Harari. Its sister store a few doors down sells a cutting-edge selection of Brazilian men's and women's apparel from the likes of Wilson Ranieri, Ronaldo Fraga, Oestudio and Alexandre Herchcovitch. Don't miss cute sushi restaurant **Koni Express**, just next to Daqui interiors.

Flirty and feminine fashion is the order of the day at designer boutique **Via Flores**, on **Rua General Venando Flores**, just off Av. Ataulfo de Paiva as you walk towards Ipanema. Its stock of Brazilian fashion by Graça Ottoni, Coven and Santa Ephigênia is complemented with pieces by Laundry by

Gávea Shopping Mall

Malls

Fórum Ipanema Mall

Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

www.forumipanema.com

Ipanema 2000 mall

Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

Rio Design Leblon

Av Ataulfo de Paiva 270

www.riodesignleblon.com

Shopping Leblon

Avenida Afrânio de Melo Franco
290

www.shoppingleblon.com

Swimwear

Armadillo

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 468

Blue Man

Fórum Ipanema
São Conrado Fashion Mall

www.blueaman.com

Bum Bum

Fórum Ipanema
Barra Shopping Mall
Rio Sul

www.bumbum.com

Jamf

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 423

Lenny

Fórum Ipanema.

www.lenny.com

Rosa Cha

São Conrado Fashion Mall

www.rosacha.com

Rygy

Fórum Ipanema

Salinas

Fórum Ipanema

Shelli Segal and Diane von Furstenberg. **PL Bis** is great for shoes and accessories designed by owner/designer Sandra Arraes.

If you're walking in this area, don't miss some of the fabric and paper shops. We liked **Caçula de Leblon** for it's good stock of vibrant and traditional chita fabric.

Towards the borders with Ipanema, you'll find the **Rio Design Leblon** mall, which used to be dedicated to interiors but now many of its large stores are being used as flagships for fashion brands. Just over the road on **Avenida Afrânio de Melo Franco** is the new, upmarket **Shopping Leblon** mall, housing both leading Brazilian and international designers, from Ermenegildo Zegna to Tommy Hilfiger.



Via Flores



PL Bis

Santa Teresa

Perched high on the hill, not far from the Marina del Gloria is the quaint, artisanal area of **Santa Teresa**. Its winding cobbled streets are relatively quiet during the day, but spring to life at night as residents and visitors in the know fill the local bars and restaurants.

But best of all are the out-of-sight gems: the local artists who work from their studios, the architectural practices and the local pavement dollmaker, as well as low-key but very stylish B&Bs.



www.salinaswimwear.com

Totem Praia

São Conrado Fashion Mall
Gávea Shopping Mall
www.totempriaia.com

Track and Field

São Conrado Fashion Mall

Shoes/accessories

Amsterdam Sauer

Garcia D'Avila 484
Ipanema
www.amsterdamsauer.com

Andreas Badofszky

Fórum Ipanema Mall
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

Antonio Bernardo

Fórum Ipanema Mall
and
Garcia D'Avila 121
Ipanema
www.antoniobernardo.com

Arezzo

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 295B
Ipanema

Bianca Silveira

Rua Marquês de São Vicente, 188

Gilson Martins

Rua Visconde de Pirajá, 462
Ipanema
www.gilsonmartins.com

Gueirero

Fórum Ipanema Mall
and Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema

H. Stern

Rua Visconde de Pirajá, 490
Ipanema

Júnia Machado

Rua Jardim Botânico, 674
sala 401

Mont Blanc



Mama Ruisa

Cama e Café (www.camaecafe.com) of Santa Teresa is a bed and breakfast network created by João Vergara and Leonardo Rangel. The aim was to connect locals with the more discerning tourists on a budget to experience local life. There are more than 50 participants, including Wanderley Figueiredo, the owner of an apartment with amazing views next to Largo das Neves. For something a touch more upscale with a European sensibility, try the beautifully designed **Mama Ruisa on Rua Santa Cristina**, owned and run by chic Parisian hotelier **Jean Michel Ruis**.

Late, great architect **Ricardo Fasanello's** studio is nearby on Rua Do Paraíso, run by his widow Olivia. While it's not open to the public, appointments to view the untouched modernist space can be made with a bit of persuasion. And just five minutes away, Fasanello's daughter Andrea is running **Moda Fusion** (www.modafusion.org) from her stylish private house. Moda fusion is an NGO which supports girls from the favelas, promotes local fashion designers and has collaborated with a local modelling agency.



Garcia D'Avila 145
Ipanema

Nativa
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Shopping da Gávea

R. Sobral
Fórum Ipanema Mall
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
Ipanema
www.rsobral.com

Parceria Carioca.
Fórum Ipanema.
Rua Visconde de Pirajá
(also at Shopping da Gávea
and Rua Jardim Botânico 728)

Sapateria
Shopping da Gávea

Interiors

Cavalera
Rio Sul
Rua Lauro Muller, 116
Botafoga

Daqui Interiors
Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 1174
Leblon

Dias Ferriera 113
Rua Dias Ferreira
Leblon

Elle et Lui Maison
Garcia D'Avila
Ipanema
www.elleetlui.com

H.Stern Home
Garcia D'Avila 102
Ipanema
www.hsternhome.com

Inspiration

Bibliotheca Nacional
Avenue Rio Branco 219
Centro
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2262 8255
Open: Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm



Ricardo Fasanello

The artist **Ze Mog and his wife Rita**, a jewellery designer, live and work from their incredible home on Rua Felício dos Santos. A visual feast of found objects and vivid, kitsch pieces fill every corner. This place is inspiring and definitely worth making an appointment to see. And a WGSN favourite was the local dollmaker perched on the street corner making dolls from recycled junk and selling for practically nothing.

We suggest taking a taxi through the area - which has a few rough spots - but if you're feeling brave, the world's oldest operating tram runs every 30 minutes from the downtown station opposite the Cathedral Metropolitan.



Ze & Rita Mog's home

Copacabana

www.bn.br

Corcovado

Rua Cosme Velho 512
Cosme Velho
Trains depart daily every 30 mins,
9am-6pm
Cost: R\$25
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2558 1329

Instituto Moreira Salles

Rua Marquês de São Vicente, 476
Gávea
Tel: +55 (0) 25 12 6448
Open: Tuesday to Sunday, 1pm-8pm
www.ims.com

Jardim Botânico

Rua Jardim Botânico 1008
Lagoa
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2294 9348
Open: Daily 8am-5pm
Entry: R\$4

Jeep Tours

Tel: +55 (0) 21 2589 0883
www.jeep-tour.com

Museu Internacional de Arte Naïf

Rua Cosme Velho 561
Cosme Velho
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2205 8612
Open: Tuesday to Friday, 10am-6pm, Saturday and Sunday 12noon-6pm.
Entry: R\$5
www.museunaif.com

Museum of Contemporary Art, Niterói .

Mirante de Boa Viagem
Niterói
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2620 2481
Open: Tuesday to Saturday, 11am-7pm, Sunday 11am-6pm
Entry: R\$5

Museum of Modern Art

Avenida Infante Dom Henrique 85
Parque do Flamengo, Centro
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2240 4944
Open: Tuesday to Friday, 12noon-6pm, Saturday and Sunday 12noon-7pm.
Entry: R\$8

It might have the most famous beach in the world, but **the three-mile-long Copacabana stretch is not much of a retail destination**. The Avenida Nossa Senhora and nearby streets have the best on offer, but that's mostly touristy souvenirs.

On the Rua Francisco Otaviano, however, there is a row of surf shops selling US and Australian surf and skate brands, as well as performance equipment. Antique hunters might want to head to the **Shopping dos Antiquários**, a market full of antiques dealers.



Copacabana beach

Not far from Copacabana in Botafoga is the **Rio-Sul** shopping centre. After a recent refurbishment, the mall is much improved, offering mostly lower- and mid-market shopping, as well as food courts, cinemas and even a nightclub. Don't miss Redley for beachwear and Cavaleira for fashion and popular music including Brazilian funk and samba.

Malls

São Conrado Fashion Mall, just beyond Leblon, is widely thought to be the most sophisticated in the city. Well-to-do cariocas flock there to shop for Brazil's upmarket brands in air-conditioned comfort.

The first floor is a mix of lifestyle, kidswear and mid-market fashion, with a few interiors stores in the mix. The second floor houses boutiques by some of Rio's top fashion designers, including Cavendish, Animale, Tessuti and Mara Mac. Tidsy is a mixed-label boutique stocking Paper Denim Cloth and Habitual jeans, alongside bikinis and Brazilian labels such as Andre Lima and Juliana Gevaero.



Salinas



Clube Chocolate

Browse through super-skimpy, technicolor swimwear in Salinas and Rosa Cha. Osklen's beachwear is both classic and stylish, while Track and Field is good for activewear - check out the huge range of fashionable swimwear by Cia Maritima. For a top selection of international labels, as well as own-brand

www.mamrio.com

Teatro Municipal

Praça Floriano 210

Tel: +55 (0) 21 2299 1717

www.theatromunicipal.rj.gov.br

Where to eat and drink

Carioca de Gema

Rua Mem de Sá, 79

Lapa

Tel: +55 (0) 21 2221 0043

Carlota

Rua Dias Ferreira 64

Leblon

Tel: +55 (0) 21 2540 6821

Cervantes

335B Avenue Prado Junior

Cipriani

Copacabana Palace

Avenida Atlântica 1702

Tel: +55 (0) 21 2548 7070

Fellini

Rua General Urquiza, 104

Leblon

Fornieria

Rua Maria Quitéria 136

Leblon

Tel: +55 (0) 21 2287 0335

Gula Gula

Rua Henrique Dumont 57

Ipanema

(branches throughout Rio)

www.gulagula.com

Koni Express

Avenida Ataulfo de Paiva 1174E

Leblon

Jobi

Ave Ataulfo de Paiva 1166

Leblon

Nova Ca Pela

Ave Mem de Sá, Lapa

Olympe

Rua Custódio Serrão, 62

clothing designed by **Adriana Barra**, leading store **Clube Chocolate** shouldn't be missed. We love its merchandising aesthetic - which changes every season - and it's also a great spot for lunch and people-watching.

Further up the coast is Barra de Tijuca, a developing area with many nouveau-riche inhabitants and a growing number of gated communities along the beach. This is where the largest of the malls, **Barra Shopping**, is located, housing around 500 shops and restaurants.

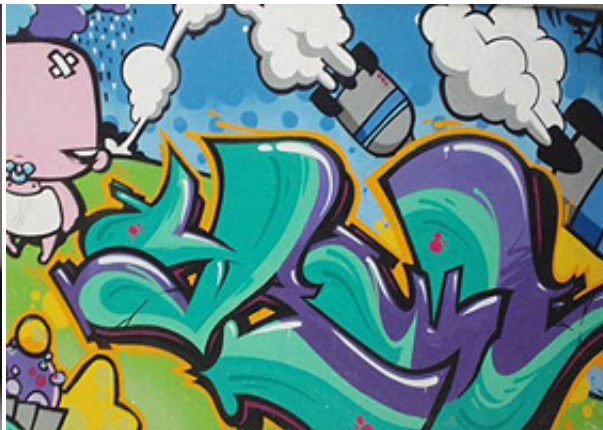
Gávea and Lapa

WGSN highly recommends walking around the bohemian residential areas of **Lapa** and **Gávea** to get a taste of local life. Also, with 200,000 residents, Rio's largest and most notorious favela, **Rocinha**, teems with life. Unless you know a local who can show you around, it is still recommended to join a tour (Jeep Tour offers one for \$30).

The **indoor shopping centre in Gávea** gives a good taste of Brazil's mid-market brands; standouts include Nativa and Sapateria for footwear, Maria Bonita Extra (the designer's diffusion line), Barra (lingerie), Farm (casual clothing), Sugar Shoes (for kids), Carpe Diem, Totem Praia (retro-style beachwear) and also Totem Praia Kids. The Richard store has three floors of casual and beach apparel, while Area Objectos has upmarket interior accessories.



Totem Praia



Graffiti

Outside, take time to wander up **Rua Marquês de São Vicente** to take in the neighbourhood. Built in the 1950s, the grand **Instituto Moreira Salles** and gardens now play host to exhibitions and films. Beautiful satin clutches and high heels at designer **Bianca Silveira's** shop make it worth stepping into.

In the opposite direction, **Tracks** is the place for music aficionados looking for vintage samba. For gorgeous one-of-a-kind ethnic fashion and handmade jewellery, take a look at **Taturanas**. If you're here in the evening, make sure to stick around: every night of the week, **Baixa Gávea** is packed with a hip, young crowd.

Further down on **Rua Jardim Botânico**, **Júnia Machado** sells jewellery made from natural materials such as Brazilian seeds and semi-precious stones.

The **Babilônia Feira Hype** (check for dates) is held in the paddock of the

Jardim Botânico
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2537 8582

Rio Scenarium
Rua do Lavradio, 20
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2233 3239
www.rioscenarium.com

Viasete Grill
Garcia D'Avila 125
Ipanema
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2512 8100
www.viasete.com

Where to stay

Cama e Café
network of 50 private
B&Bs in Santa Theresa
www.camaecafe.com

Copacabana Palace
Avenida Atlântica 1702
Tel: +55 (0) 21 2548 707
www.copacabanapalace.com



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Jockey club and provides a platform for emerging Brazilian designers. Across the road, the lush, landscaped **Jardim Botânico** contains over 7,200 species of plants and an orchid greenhouse. Inside, the **Olympe** restaurant offers French *nouvelle cuisine* and stunning views.

Downtown is also worth a visit for an authentic taste of local life. Lapa buzzes with street markets and tiny local art galleries and comes alive at night when the samba clubs open.

WGSN favourite **Nova Ca Pela** is a fantastic place to enjoy a cold beer. Retro wallpaper sets off pretty pictures and paintings, waiters wear traditional white jackets and the *bolinhas de bacalhau* (deep-fried cod balls) are said to be the tastiest in Rio.

In the same vicinity are important buildings such as the Teatro Municipal opera house, the neoclassical Biblioteca Nacional library and the Ministerio Educação, which was designed by Rio's beloved modernist architect Oscar Niemeyer.



Muggia

Brazil may be a country known for its precious gems - smoky quartzes, emeralds and amethysts - but twin sisters Ana Beatriz and Juliana Suassuna use only fabrics, metals and plastics in their inventive accessories range at their shop **Muggia** on Rua Real Grandeza in Botafogo.

Where to eat and drink

Rio is a gourmet paradise. Restaurants run the gamut from the popular all-you-can-eat churrascaria rodízios (barbecue buffets traditionally eaten on Saturdays) to some of the best sushi outside Japan. On the weekend, many restaurants cook **feijoada**, a traditional Brazilian stew made with rice, black beans, meat and orange.

Many beat the heat by buying **coconuts** from a street vendor (make sure to ask for a cold one). **Fresh fruit juice** bars seem to be at nearly every corner and do thriving trade. Be sure to sample some of the indigenous rainforest fruits. **Açaí** comes in a thick, gloopy purple paste, but is so nutritious and filling it can take the place of a meal. Locals love to spoon it down after surfing.



Mangueira carnival rehearsal



Copacabana at night

During the day, "kilo" (pay by weight) restaurants are often a fast, cheap and delicious way to eat. In Leblon, **Fellini** on Rua General Urquiza feeds more than 800 people a day. But for top quality churrascaria, head to WGSN favourite **Porcão Ipanema** on rua Barão da Torre - you will not be disappointed. Remember to eat with strategy here and skip the bread and sides, leaving room for the meat that comes round the table later on.

For friendly ambience and the best black bean soup in Rio, go to **Jobi** on Av Ataúlfo de Paiva in Leblon. The tastiest sandwiches in Rio can be devoured at **Cervantes** in Copacabana - try the rosbife, queijo e abacaxi (beef, cheese and pineapple) combination. If the restaurant is too busy, go to the takeaway cafe around the corner and eat on the beach.

For fashionable dining, book a table at **Zazá** on Prudente de Moraes. The swanky **Sushi Leblon** on rua Dias Ferreira serves the freshest fish.



Mangueira carnival rehearsal

Come dusk, there is no shortage of happening nightlife and cosmopolitan bars. Most of the action centres around Ipanema and Leblon, while downtown, laid-back Santa Theresa and jumping Lapa provide hip alternatives.

For sophisticated **caipirinha cocktails**, stylish lounge bars such as **Devassa** and **Melt** do the trick.

Downtown in Lapa you'll find a handful of jumping live Samba bars along the Rua Mem de Sá, including WGSN favourite **carioca de Gema**. Nearby, ex-antique and bric-a-brac shop **Rio Scenarium** is a touristy Samba club worth checking out - if only to see the crazy furniture hanging from the ceiling.

Inspiration

Art aficionados should head to the **Museum of Modern Art** (don't miss the Novo Desenho shop championing interiors accessories by new designers) or the nearby **Museu Internacional de Arte Naïf**, a converted colonial mansion housing one of the world's largest collections of works by self-taught artists.

Visitors fortunate enough to be in Rio a month or so before the Carnival can participate in one of many rehearsals held around the city. These are a great way to experience the local culture.



Museum of Contemporary Art in Niterói



Museu Internacional de Arte Naïf

If there's time, a trip out of the city to the Niterói bridge is breathtaking and is also en route to the **Museum of Contemporary Art**. Designed by Niemeyer, the museum's shape - as with much of his architecture - is inspired by the curves of women and the Brazilian landscape. But make sure you call beforehand to check its open.

A 20-minute train journey up the **Corcovado** mountaintop goes through the Tijuca Forest to the toes of Rio's landmark, the open-armed Christ the Redeemer statue. From here, vertigo-inducing 360-degree views provide a stunning vista of the mountains, coastline and city below.

Where to stay

Opt for one of the unique guesthouses recommended in our [best bijou guesthouses feature](#).

Design hotels are still a new thing in Rio and the city is slowly catching up with São Paulo. Slated to open in Ipanema in 2007 is a Rio outpost of São Paulo's leading hotel, the **Fasano**. Designed by Philippe Starck, it will undoubtedly be the most stylish destination in town, thanks to the Fasano's quiet but very well-regarded hospitality.

The **Copacabana Palace** is one of the city's landmark hotels. Modelled on The Carlton in Cannes, the beachside frontage is grand and imposing, while the decor and service is pretty grand and traditional. It offers a charming, old world experience.

For more recommendations, see WGSN's [Rio Room Service](#) guide.



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