

RIO NEW YEARS TOUR & BRAZIL GOLD ROUTE



Brazil's Gold Route Cities & the Rio New Year's Celebration

9 DAYS / 8 NIGHTS

Discover where the gold originated to build Europe's great palaces and churches. And discover a few treasures along the way.

The Route of Gold rambles along rugged mountains from the beautifully preserved colonial gold mining towns of Ouro Preto and Sao Joao del Rei to the ancient seaport of Paraty. This bounty of gold provided the wealth to build the royal colonial seat of Rio de Janeiro as well as the Old World capital, Lisbon. The richest deposits of gold ever found in the Americas even financed England's Industrial Revolution!

FROM
**GET CUSTOM
PRICING**

per person

THIS TOUR INCLUDES:

- 8 nights in 4-star hotels
- 4 Dinners, 1 Lunch
- 8 Brazilian Buffet Breakfasts
- All Transfers
- English speaking Tour Director

HIGHLIGHTS

- Rio de Janeiro with Sugar Loaf Mountain & Corcovado (Christ the Redeemer Statue)
- New Year's Brazilian BBQ and New Year's Celebration at Copacabana beach
- Ancient Seaport of Paraty
- Gold Mining Town of Ouro Preto
- Visit to a Gold Mine
- Schooner Excursion

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31st Dec RIO DE JANEIRO

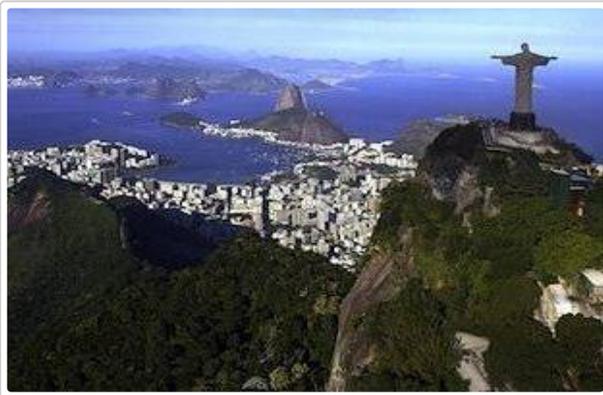
Arrive in Rio de Janeiro, the marvellous city and check-in in your hotel. Prepare for the worlds biggest New Year's Celebration. Bring some white clothes. This is the color of choice for tonight. An African tradition to celebrate the day of Yemanja, the African goddess of the seas. The Afro-Brazilian roots become more evident later when you have the chance to join and to dance with the locals in the streets and along the beach of Copacabana.

Meet your fellow travelers for a complementary caipirinha or other tropical drink before attending a Rodizio, an All-You-Can-Eat Brazilian Barbecue (included, might be served as lunch or dinner, on the 31st of Dec or 1st of Jan, according to availability).



1st of Jan **RIO DE JANEIRO**

The panoramic view from the top of the Sugar Loaf Mountain is the highlight of today's afternoon sightseeing tour. Board a funicular to reach the summit with its 360° spectrum of golden beaches, green forests and a thriving metropolis that has earned Rio de Janeiro the title of the "world's most beautiful city". Sightseeing continues with a tour of Rio's historical past. Learn how Portugal's prince scandalously broke all family ties and declared himself Emperor of Brazil.



2nd of Jan **RIO DE JANEIRO**

Christ the Redeemer keeps an eye on Rio from an elevation of 710m (2340ft). This afternoon board the trenzinho (cogwheel railway) up to the top of Corcovado Mountain for a bird's eye view of the center of the city from the center of the city! This evening, depart for home or your onward journey.



3rd of Jan **RIO DE JANEIRO TO PARATY**

Join us along the "Green Coast" to Paraty. Arrived there check in to your selected hotel.



4th of Jan **PARATY SCHOONER CRUISE**

Stroll through the streets twice daily covered by water brought in by the tides, past houses in elegant decay before boarding a schooner for a half-day cruise of the islands including a lunch prepared by the crew!



5th of Jan **SÃO JOÃO DEL REI**

This morning, board your coach for a climb up to the Serra da Bocaina National Park, amongst the world's oldest rock formations. Retrace the route of Rio State's gold rush, up to the Minas Gerais, Brazil's historical mining area.

Take a sip of Caxambu's world-renowned mineral water in this well-preserved spa town, getaway of Brazil's health-conscious, before continuing on to the historical mining town of São João del Rei. Check into your selected hotel, before taking a stroll through the city and enjoying a hearty local dinner (included).



6th of Jan **TIRADENTES AND OURO PRETO**

A few minutes' drive brings us to the hilltop town of Tiradentes (lit. Tooth-puller), the most charming of colonial cities. Named after the martyr of the Inconfidência who was known for his dental skills, Tiradentes exudes a sense of another age.

The masterwork "The Prophets" by Aleijadinho (Brazil's Michelangelo) is the highlight of our stop in Congonhas. Chiseled out of soapstone by the artist without the use of his arms or legs, the sculptures bring the Old Testament figures to stirring life.

The 'Black Gold' of Ouro Preto (the largest deposits in the Western Hemisphere) financed Lisbon's glory as well as the English Industrial Revolution. At its peak, this town's population was twice New York's and five times Rio de Janeiro's! Dinner is included tonight in what was once 'the world's richest city'.



7th of Jan **OURO PRETO AND MARIANA**

This morning's walking tour covers the best of the former state capital, declared a World Cultural Heritage Site by the UNESCO. Ouro Preto's churches and plazas have been witness to incredible wealth and bloody rebellion. Formerly known as "Vila Rica" - the name was changed by decree of Emperor Dom Pedro I, and Ouro Preto was declared an Imperial City.

The town of Mariana, Ouro Preto's quieter cousin just 12km away, offers a unique contrast. Take an adventurous visit into a former gold mine and shop for local arts and crafts.



8th of Jan

PETROPOLIS AND THE SERRA DO MAR

Return to Rio de Janeiro through the spectacular Serra do Mar, stopping in the Imperial city of Petropolis, the former Summer residence of the Emperor. Arrive in the *cidade maravilhosa* again, just in time to board your flight home tonight.