



RECIFE BRAZIL

Take a look at a map of South America and go as far to the east as you possibly can. You have reached the Brazilian state of Pernambuco and the exciting northern coastal city of Recife (he-see-fee). Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean where the Capibaribe and Beberibe rivers flow out to the sea, Recife is actually closer to the west coast of Africa than it is to the farthest western border of Brazil itself. Just 8°3' south of the equator, it is understandable that the weather remains warm year round. However, considering the beaches in and around Recife are some of the most beautiful in all of Brazil, this works out nicely.

Recife is the Portuguese word for “reef”. One look at the city’s coastline and it quickly becomes clear the name is perfectly appropriate. Recife’s shore is paralleled by a long inside reef which not only creates a barrier against the ocean but also provides protected swimming areas for beach goers.

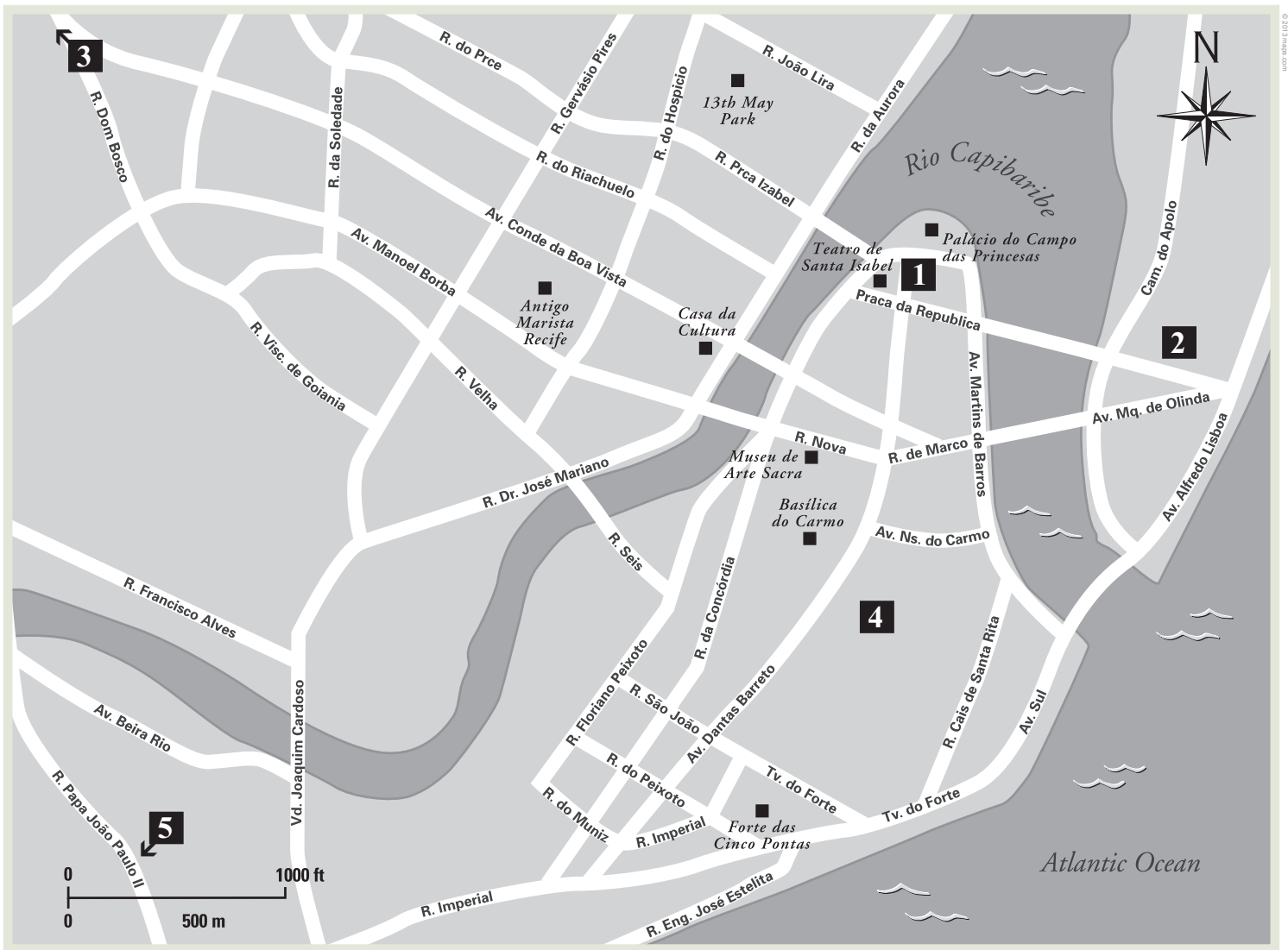
Due to the city’s many canals, islands and bridges, some references to the city call Recife the “Venice of Brazil”. This is not quite fair to Recife. The distinctive beauty of Recife can stand on its own merits but it would be fair to call the city the “Amsterdam of Brazil”. After all...it was the Dutch who, in the 1600s when Holland and Portugal were in global competition, laid out the design and built the foundation for this city, which would become a thriving port and exciting center of Brazilian commerce and culture.



HISTORY

Today it seems difficult to comprehend the tremendous challenges, and dangers faced by earlier generations who sailed from Europe to the “New World” and struggled to carve out a new existence in a rugged and untamed land. The Portuguese, in their colonization of Brazil were no exception. Most attempts failed but one area (referred to as a “Hereditary Captaincy”) which succeeded was the region of Pernambuco. The initial colony was founded in 1534. It survived and grew due to the leadership of a well respected Portuguese officer and diplomat by the name of Duarte Coelho Pereira. It was Coelho who established the town of Olinda in 1535, Recife’s beautifully preserved neighboring town.

Other Portuguese attempts at colonization in Brazil did not succeed due to Portugal’s overextension of available resources, poor management, scarce food and supplies, and especially bloody relations with the Indians which led to continual attacks. However Duarte Coelho and his colony slowly flourished. Pereira was determined to diversify the economic base of the colony. The only industry was the export of brazilwood to Europe. This had been taking place for many years prior to the settlement. With the help of European investors Coelho brought sugar cane to the colony and expanded the plantations. But rather than indenturing or enslaving the local Indians he requested of the Portuguese Crown permission to bring in African slaves. The Portuguese monarchy, having profited greatly from the slave trade looked with anticipation upon the prospect of continued fortune and quickly granted Coelho permission for the importation of slaves. Growing cane and the production of sugar for European export took off. Investors, the Portuguese Crown, Coelho, his colony and the town of Olinda all prospered.



A century later, in the 1600s, the Dutch sought to wrest from the Portuguese their colonial holdings in Brazil and elsewhere. The prosperous town of Olinda and the village of Recife fell to the Dutch in 1631 and they held the region for nearly a quarter century. It was during the Dutch administration of Recife that civil engineers, surveyors, architects and tradesmen, men experienced in draining swamps, building canals and bridges, docks and harbors, were brought to the village and laid the foundation for what would become a major city and vital port. Another important factor established by the Protestant Dutch was religious freedom. With that decree came many Jewish merchants who had fled the wrath of the Roman Catholic's Portuguese Inquisition.

Dutch control declined in the 1650s when support for the garrison was not forthcoming from Holland. The Dutch surrendered Recife to the Portuguese in 1654 and left the region. The prosperous Jewish business community, legitimately fearing the re-establishment in Brazil of the dreaded Holy Office of Portuguese Inquisition, left Recife with the Dutch and dispersed throughout the Caribbean, Holland and New Holland in North America. The Portuguese proceeded to build the great city of Recife upon the foundation laid by the Dutch.

RECIFE PLACES OF INTEREST

1 **Praça da República** is the site of a number of beautiful and historic buildings in Recife. Among those which grace this beautiful plaza are the Governor's Palace, the Hall of Justice, and St. Isabel Theater.

2 The **Kahal Zur Israel Synagogue** ("The Rock of Israel") is believed to be one of, if not the first, synagogues in the New World. The synagogue was founded in 1630 by Sephardic Jews (those from the Iberian Peninsula) who had fled the brutality and oppression of the Portuguese and Spanish Inquisition and came to Dutch controlled Recife by way of Amsterdam, Holland. Understandably, when the Portuguese drove out the Dutch in the mid 1650s most of the Jewish community left with them. The Holy Office of the Portuguese Inquisition proceeded to destroy any vestige of the Jewish community in Recife. In 2000 archeological and archival research, directed by Marcos Albuquerque of Pernambuco's Federal University, and supported by the government of Brazil with the Jewish Federation of Pernambuco (among others), led to the discovery of the synagogue. Today the synagogue is a museum of Recife's Jewish culture and history.

3 Oficina Cerâmica Francisco Brennand (The Francisco Brennand Ceramic Museum) is one of the most interesting art museums in a city which is filled with wonderful museums. Francisco de Paula de Almeida Brennand is perhaps Brazil's preeminent ceramic artist. Over 2,000 pieces of the master's works are on display throughout the museum's workshops, exhibit halls and gardens. This is one of Recife's most popular sites, enjoyed by visitors and locals alike.

4 Pátio de São Pedro is a beautiful and historic cobblestone plaza. The most prominent feature in the plaza is the Igreja São Pedro (The Church of St. Peter), together with three museums; Popular Art, Luiz Gonzaga and Carnival. There are numerous cafés around the plaza where visitors may join the locals for a cold drink or coffee.

5 Boa Viagem is the most popular and certainly most famous beach in Recife. Boa Vagem Avenue runs the length of the beach and is packed with great cafés, restaurants and shops. The beach is protected by an inside reef, from which Recife gets its name.

Beyond Recife

Olinda is a small historic town, immediately north of Recife, along the coast. Founded in 1535 Olinda is reputed to be the best preserved colonial era town in Brazil. Set on hills overlooking the Atlantic the town is filled with beautiful churches, monasteries and colonial buildings, all attesting to Olinda's former status as one of the wealthiest cities in Brazil.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Recife and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Brochure or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, please be advised to take only necessary items and to secure any valuables onboard.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: Prices are generally fixed however some small shops may bargain.

Tipping: A 10% tip is customary at restaurants.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

Brazil is a large country but most of the population is found along the Atlantic coast. Brazil's cuisine has been primarily influenced by European immigrants and the descendents of former African slaves. Many of Brazil's traditional dishes are regional. Some of the favorites in the area of Recife include: Vatapá, a stew made by boiling shrimp in coconut milk, separately combining water, sautéed onions and garlic, chili peppers, peanuts, a bay leaf, cornmeal and cubed fresh fish fillets. This is stirred into the shrimp and simmered. Moqueca combines chopped chilies, onions, tomatoes, cilantro, garlic and parsley in a hot clay pot coated with olive oil. Fish and coconut milk are added and it is usually served with white rice. Lula Frita is crunchy batter-fried squid rings. Feijoada is a stew made with meat and black beans, often served with white rice. Farofa is a side dish of onions sautéed in butter combined with eggs and scrambled... manioc is added and cooked until toasty brown.

Cachaça is very strong liquor made from sugarcane. It is often mixed with lime, sugar and crushed ice to make a cocktail known as Caipirinha. We are not sure where the name came from but there is a cocktail made with triple sec, lime juice, cachaça and batida de côco...mixed and shaken with ice and offered in an Old-Fashioned glass. It is called Nightboat to Recife.

SHOPPING FACILITIES

One of the most popular souvenirs in Recife is carved pieces of brazilwood, *Caesalpinia echinata*. It was the valuable red dye which came from this hard and beautifully grained wood that helped to attract many of the first Europeans to the region, and from whence Brazil derives its name. Leather goods and ceramics are also much sought after in Recife. Some of the more popular shopping areas include:

Shopping Center Recife - Rua Pe. Carapuceiro, 777

Shopping Paço Alfandega - Rua Alfandega, 35

Shopping Tacaruna - Av. Gov. Agamenon Magalhães, 153

Casa da Cultura - Rua Floriano Peixoto

In the near by town of Olinda, near Sé Church.

LOCAL CURRENCY

Brazil's currency is the "real" (BRL). Some shops and vendors may accept U.S. dollars in small denominations. Major credit cards are widely accepted however some shops offer discounts if the item is paid for in cash.

POST OFFICE & TELEPHONE FACILITIES

A Post Office is located at Rua Marques de Olinda, 261

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 0.800.890.0288
MCI: 0.800.890.0012

TRANSPORTATION

Recife's bus service and metro are user-friendly and reliable.
Taxis and car rentals are available.

TOURIST INFORMATION

There is a Tourist Office inside the port area, where the ship
will be docked.

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

The official language of Brazil is Portuguese.

Hello - Alô

How are you? - Tudo bom?

Thank you - Obrigado

You are welcome - De nada

Yes - Sim

No - Não

Good bye - Tchau (like the Italian "ciao")
