

# Quest Program **BRAZIL**



To many people **Brazil** means football, magnificent nature, hospitable people, Samba and Carnival, but Brazil is much more than this. With one of the world's most important economies and a high standard of education, it has always been called a country of the future.

Portuguese is spoken in Brazil and our program does not require any previous knowledge of the language.

From geographic size to resources, everything about Brazil is big. Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world, larger than the continental United States. Forests cover more than 65 % of Brazil's territory, and it is home to the world's largest tropical rain forest, the Amazon, which possesses rare plants used for modern medicine.

Brazil also has one of the most diverse animal populations in the world. The differences among Brazil's regions are also big. In the Southern region you will see beautiful beaches and mountains similar to places in Europe. In the Northeast you will find beautiful palm trees and beaches with white sand and warm temperature and warm sea water all year around. In the Mid-West region you will find savannas similar to the ones in Africa.

The most famous of Brazilian cities is, of course, Rio de Janeiro. The soft blue sea waters and the huge statue of Christ with his arms open wide inspire tourists from all over the world. Brazilians are considered friendly and warm people, open to other nationalities. Brazil is made up of a mixture of cultures, especially Native Indians, Africans and Europeans, the latter coming mostly from Portugal, Spain, Italy and Germany. In Brazil, you may find that traditional family values and family roles are changing as this country grapples with old versus new ways of thinking. Amidst these contradictions, it is in the free spirited and nationalistic Brazilian people that you are likely to discover Brazil's magic — an affinity for romance and beauty known the world over.

## **School Life**

The Brazilian educational system includes both public and private institutions, ranging from pre-school to university and postgraduate levels. Education

Statística  
do Brasil

Area: 8,514,877 square kilometers

Population: 192,272,890

Capital: Brasilia

Language: Portuguese

Government: Presidential Federal republic

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A nonprofit corporation committed to advancing intercultural educational student exchange.



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is compulsory for ages seven through 14. Public education is free at all levels. Schools in Brazil begin in mid-February after summer vacation (the seasons in Brazil are the opposite of those in the Northern Hemisphere) and finish by the end of November. Our Brazil program is adapted so that students may participate in an academic year program from July to June, or from January to December; a fall semester program from July to January, or a spring semester program from January to July. The school year is divided into four quarters with one vacation break for four weeks in July. Summer vacation is from December to February.

In general, classes in Brazil begin at 7:00 am and end at noon. Students and parents often have lunch at home, as it is the most important meal of the day. There is no school on Sunday, but some schools do have classes or tests on Saturday mornings. Brazilian students are expected to spend the afternoon studying independently at home. Depending on the year in which the exchange students are placed, they will be required to take a standard set of courses with their Brazilian classmates.

These courses include: Portuguese language, biology, Brazilian literature, chemistry, geography, physics, mathematics, history, geometry, civics, physical education, and English. Some schools require the students to wear uniforms, which is usually a T-shirt with the school badge. Also, exchange students may have to buy books as Brazilian students do. Efforts are made to find them second-hand books or some that they can borrow or purchase at a lower cost. Transportation to and from school will depend on how far the school is from the student's house. Sometimes they can walk, some families take the students by car, and some students take public transportation.

While no previous language study is required, we strongly suggest that students prepare by learning some basic phrases in Portuguese, as all classes will be taught in Portuguese for the Academic Year, Fall Semester and Spring Semester programs. Students will participate in an intensive 10-hour Portuguese course spread out over the first month of the program. For an additional fee, a language teacher can be hired to help students learn or improve Portuguese language skills while on the program. Why study Portuguese? Portuguese is the first language of over 190 million people, and considered one of the 10 most influential languages in the world!

## **Host Family Life**

Students will stay with carefully selected host families throughout Brazil. Common placement areas include Goiania, Curitiba, and Santa Maria. Students are not placed in large metropolitan areas, such as Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo, nor are they placed in extremely rural locations. Families in Brazil are typically very close, and activities that gather the entire family, including extended family, are common. Brazilian people are very warm and chances are that the student will be greeted by their host family with hugs and kisses. In Brazil, people usually kiss each other two to three times on the cheek to greet one another. Most Brazilian families require their children to provide information concerning their activities, so if the student plans to go out, they will want to know where he/she is going, with whom, and when he/she is coming back. Adjustment to host family life and Brazilian culture will be assisted by a program representative.

Brazilians generally eat two large meals a day: lunch and dinner. Breakfast is quick and light, sometimes just black coffee. Others also enjoy milk, coffee,

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bread, cheese, fruit and juice as breakfast options. Some families are also have a snack together in the afternoon. Most dinners will include rice and beans, and the types of meats, vegetables, fruits, and desserts vary, as each Brazilian region has developed its own very diverse dishes. Brazilian cuisine is rich and results from a blend of many cultures, especially Native Indian, African and European.

## **Program Extras**

Students will be given the opportunity to join various group trips and excursions. Prices vary depending on length of trip and numbers of cities visited. More detailed information about the optional excursions and pricing will be provided once students are on the program.

## **Northeast Tour**

It is a region known for its incredible culture, beaches full of coconut trees and dunes from which the students can slide into the warm, clear water. The people here are famously hospitable and eager to show the students the beauty of their region.

We will visit historical cities, “fishing villages,” museums and buildings full of Brazilian history. The students will also have the opportunity to visit Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and one of the most exotic natural sanctuaries in Brazil, the Chapada Diamantina. It is located in the interior of the state of Bahia and contains canyons, hills, water falls and the historic town of Lençóis, which was once the capital of Brazilian diamond exploration.

## **Buenos Aires / Argentina**

Less than a three hour’s flight from São Paulo, the Argentinean capital of Buenos Aires pleases

every tourist with its beauty and elegant people strolling along the flowered streets. Buenos Aires is a charming city; perfect for those who are looking to have a great time appreciating impressive architecture, food, music, and dance.

## **South Tour**

This program shows the students some of the most amazing cities and sights in South America! The tour starts with Iguacu Falls, a natural wonder of 275 water falls all in one national park. Then we drive to the nice views of the south of Brasil, visiting Gramado and Canela with its European style, the beautiful island of Florianópolis, the green city of Curitiba, and the huge city of São Paulo.

## **Amazon Expedition**

This trip is organized for exchange students who dream about adventures in the Amazon rainforest! We will go deep into the jungle, go on a five-day boat expedition on Amazon and Negro Rivers, sleep in hammocks in the rainforest, swim with the Amazon pink dolphins, visit an Indian community, swim in waterfalls after amazing treks, and also get to know everything about the region from outstanding ecology guides!

## **About Quest**

Quest International was founded in 1999. We are a nonprofit organization committed to international, educational student exchange. Our goal is to promote cultural awareness and international understanding by offering quality, educational and cultural programs for students, host families and schools. Our staff is dedicated to creating a positive exchange experience for all program participants.