

Bwana Dik's Rio Guide 2004:
A Consumer's Guide to the Good Life in Rio de Janeiro
Revised edition, February 2004



**Prepared as a service to the gentleman traveler (and the rest of you
perverts, sodomists, and degenerates as well).**

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free to copy and distribute, but if you meet me in Rio and liked this
guide, buy me a beer (or better yet, a piece of ass).**

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Bwana Dik's Rio Guide/Introduction

Rio de Janeiro...Cidade Maravilhosa! I've received lots of "can you tell me" email about how and where to have fun in Rio over the past few years, so I thought I'd just condense all the info I have into one guide. I just returned from another wonderful week in Rio, so will try to update the info that is generally available on the web. I will try to update this guide annually. Hopefully this information will be as useful. There are a few new sections (budget terms, for example), and other sections are expanded and/or updated.

One caveat...this is my own take on Rio. Not everyone shares the same tastes and interests, so—as the saying goes—YMMV. I hope you find this useful. If there are topics not addressed here that you'd like to see more on, let me know and I'll do what I can next time. This is a work in progress.

Here it goes:



Preparing for the Trip:

Passport and Visa: Yes, you need a passport (someone actually asked that question on one of the boards); and you also need a visa to enter Brazil from the US. If you're not a US citizen, you may or may not need a visa...check with the Brazilian embassy in your country. The visa must be acquired before coming to Brazil. After acquiring the visa you must enter Brazil within 90 days for the visa to be validated, and the visa, typically, is good for multiple entries for five years. Make sure you request a 5-year tourist visa, as some guys have ended up with shorter ones (90 days) and paid the same fee. Since mid-

2002 the fee increased from \$45 to \$65 and then to \$100 (in 2003) if getting it in person at one of the consulates (Why the increases, and why is it so high in the first place? The fee is set to mirror what the US charges Brazilians for a visa. When we jack up our fees, they jack up theirs). The fees are somewhat higher if you do the transaction by mail, and each consulate seems to have slightly different rules regarding how long it takes, whether they will accept mail applications, and so forth. Check with the Brazilian Embassy website (<http://www.brasilemb.org/>) and look under “consular services” for more information. Generally, you’ll need a passport that won’t expire in the near future, a round-trip plane ticket, a completed application form, and the \$\$ (usually cash—be sure and check first). Don’t do as a friend of mine did and show up at the airport without the visa. He was stranded in Chicago for two days trying to get the visa and straighten out his flight and hotel reservations.

Language: No, they don’t speak Spanish in Brazil. Brazil was settled by Portugal, and Portuguese is the “lingua franca.” If you speak Spanish you’ll find that many Brazilians will understand it reasonably well, but you may have problems understanding Portuguese. There are many sounds in Portuguese that do not occur in Spanish, but not vice versa. Take some time to learn the basics of Portuguese and you will have a much better time. I prefer the Pimsleur Brazilian Portuguese tape or CD sets (three sets, I, II & III); they are not cheap, but they are effective. If you want a quicker introduction to the basic conversational necessities, try Pimsleur’s Instant Conversation Course (cassette or CD). Discount dealers can be found (try <http://bigredgarage.com>). You can also occasionally find used sets through places like Ebay, and you may be able to download mp3 files of these materials from the usual sources.

There is a wonderful little volume titled “*Hot! International: Love and Sex in Seven Languages*” by David Appell that includes Portuguese and covers anything you might want to ask of your special friends in Rio. I know of no other dictionary or guidebook that offers translations for “sit on my cock” or “I want to fuck your ass.” Unfortunately, it appears to be out of print, and the publisher is no longer in business. Every so often a copy will appear on Ebay. Keep an eye out for it. The girls love it.

I’ve listed some additional language learning resources under “Further Readings” at the end of this guide for those who want to delve a bit deeper into the language.

Time: The time difference between Rio and where you’re coming from will vary across the year. Technically, it’s –3 GMT, but changes to –2GMT during daylight savings time (NB: DST in Brasil doesn’t coincide with DST in the US). Here’s a web site that will give you the current time in Rio and many other major cities: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock>. You can also construct your own “Personal World Clock” using this site, featuring the time in the cities you frequent.

Weather: When is the best time to come to Rio? Today! Failing that, tomorrow. That old saying about the beach—“the worst day at the beach beats the best day at work”—is true of Rio. Rio’s summer runs from late November through early March, and this is both the hottest and wettest (rainfall) time of year. Winter runs from June through

August and is the driest period. Temperatures can get quite warm in summer, but rarely terribly cool in winter. There are often very nice beach days in winter, but you can hit a cold spell as well. July, despite being in the middle of winter, can be nice because the universities are out of session for most of the month, so many college girls come to Rio to play. Weatherbase (<http://www.weatherbase.com/>) provides good historical data on monthly average temperatures, rainfall, and such.

Electricity: Yes, they have it...intermittently! Just kidding, sort of...a couple of years ago Brasil was experiencing serious power grid problems, with rationing and occasional brownouts and blackouts, but everything seems to be fine now. The Brazilian standard is 110 volts (some hotels will have 220v outlets as well), and while the standard outlet is two round pins, most hotels have outlets that accommodate both the round and flat blade (US) plugs. Still, it's not a bad idea to pick up plug converter, especially if you're staying in an older hotel or an apartment.

Finding Your Way: A good map is a necessity. I like the one put out by Berndtson and Berndtson in their "B&B City Streets" series. It's a laminated map so you can write on it with an erasable marker, and it includes the Metro system. You may be able to find (or order) it at larger bookstores, or you can track it down at <http://www.mapmyway.com>. You might also find a guide book of some use. Nothing very elaborate is needed, and I like Frommer's Portable Rio de Janeiro.



Arriving in Rio:

Most likely, you'll arrive at the international airport (at the Antonio Carlos Jobim Terminal), which is a good distance from the places in Rio where you'll want to make your home. After exiting your plane you'll first go through immigration. Beginning in January of 2004 Brazil began a practice of fingerprinting and photographing all Americans entering the country. This policy was in response to the US decision to do the same with many foreigners (including Brazilians) entering the US. After a rough start, the process seems to have smoothed out, but there are advantages to being near the front of the line, for what it's worth.

After passing through immigration, getting your luggage and clearing customs (usually hassle-free), you'll head out to get a taxi. When you exit customs you may be accosted by guys wearing quasi-official looking uniforms trying to get a taxi for you. Do NOT take them up on their offers. Despite their uniforms, they are scam artists and will charge you at least double the highest rate you should pay. Instead, you have two options. The cheapest of the two is to go directly ahead and outdoors and look for a metered cab (a yellow cab with meter). You may have to walk a ways to your right or left to find one. A metered cab ride to Copacabana should run you between \$28-35 reais (all amounts in Brazil's currency, the Real, unless otherwise noted). These cabs may or may not be air conditioned (and can charge extra for aircon), and the driver will likely not speak a word

of English. However, if you bring a sheet of paper with your hotel's name and address, you should be fine. I've only had a couple of cabbies in Rio try to cheat me (with rigged meters), but I also speak some Portuguese and know my way around the town. The other option is to turn to the right as you exit customs and look for the "radio cab" booths. You'll see a line of 4-5 booths ("Coopertramo" etc) with women trying to get your attention. Here you'll pre-pay for an air conditioned "radio taxi" cab to your destination but pay more (about \$50 R one way); if they ask for more, ask for a discount ("tem desconto?") or start to walk away and the price will come down. The advantage: guaranteed air conditioning and no haggling over the fare. Also, you can pay in dollars here and get a fair exchange, but you risk being ripped off if you try to pay with dollars with a metered cab. BTW, there are banks at the airport where you can exchange currency, including one by the baggage carousels and a couple outside of customs, but the rate is not very good (but better than you'll get at your local bank at home). Take note that if you arrive on a holiday (they have lots of them in Brazil; see <http://www.holidayfestival.com/Brazil.html> for a current listing)) or a Sunday, exchanging money may be a big problem. More on currency exchange later.

Hotels, Apartments, and Where to Stay:

Copacabana Beach is ground zero for the nightlife action, and many prefer to stay somewhere in that area. A good source for information on hotels in Rio is <http://ipanema.com/>. They provide information on hotels and often offer discounts when booking through them. Another choice for booking hotels is through Bobby at <http://www.blameitonrio4travel.com>. Two popular hotels among mongers in the Copa neighborhood are the Hotel Debret and the Rio Roiss Hotel. Both are within a couple blocks of the Help Discoteca (more later). Both are fairly small, basic hotels. The Debret is slightly less expensive (and the rooms somewhat shabbier), but you can get a room with a full ocean view. The oceanfront rooms on the top floors are pretty nice. The Rio Roiss has only a few rooms with partial ocean views (it's a block off the beach, behind the Othon Palace Hotel), but the rooms are larger and the breakfast is better. Both allow "guests" but will charge you about \$15-20 (US) per night (the prices seem to change).¹ A few blocks further off the beach is a very nice new hotel, the Princess Copacabana, with larger and more modern rooms (apartments and suites) and a nice swimming pool. They are "guest-friendly" but also charge 60 Reais per night that you have a guest.

Some of the bigger hotels, such as the Othon Palace and the Sofitel, charge much more, and others won't allow guests. The new Marriott allows guests sometimes and not other times, and rooms start at around \$200 US (most recently, the word was that they were allowing guests). Other hotels, such as the Luxor Regente, will allow guests if you pay the double rate. If you have questions about a specific hotel, just ask about their "guest

¹ In mid-July of 2003 both the Debret and the Rio Roiss were featured in a Brazilian magazine article about prostitution. Both hotels responded by declaring that they would no longer allow "guests." Local reports indicate, however, that this public position was basically a PR move and that the hotels still allow guests.

policy" when you make reservations. They won't be shocked when you ask, and you can avoid a rude surprise later.

Renting an apartment is another option. While you may do without maid service and food service, there are no problems (or costs) with guests. If you are interested in an apartment (or "apart-hotel" as they're often called), check the aforementioned websites or contact Don or Karl at **Riotrips.com** (Don@Riotrips.com). Kenn at EZ-RioRentals (<http://www.ez-riorentals.com>) also has a stock of apartments available and provides a variety of other services to hobbyists. Most apartments have security guards and are quite safe. I also highly recommend Don's guide services for newbies who would like a little assistance during their first visits. More on this later.

Another option is to stay a bit further away. I actually prefer to stay in the Ipanema area. I find Copacabana to be a bit touristy and dirty. The Copa beach is often overcrowded and polluted, and overrun with scam artists. Most robberies I know of occur in the Copa area (after all, that's where the tourists congregate). Ipanema is a more upscale community, the beaches are nicer, there's less crime, and it's still very close to the Copa nightlife...just a \$4-5 reais cab ride or a 20 minute walk. There are many hotels and apartments to choose from. A fellow I met on the plane back to the US swears by the Ipanema Inn...says it's basic and inexpensive, but clean, and does not charge for guests. Another option is the Arpoador Inn, on the beach and guest-friendly...again, no charge for guests. The Arpoador Inn is one of only two hotels in Rio (the other being the Sheraton) located right on the beach. It's my usual choice even though it is fairly basic. Further up Ipanema (actually in Leblon) is the Marina Palace Hotel, more upscale and also more expensive, but guest-friendly and it has an excellent restaurant. Further out yet is the Sheraton—the other Rio hotel located on the beach—which some guys like but which I find too removed from the real Rio. The Promenade chain, which owns the Princess Copacabana Hotel mentioned above, also has several properties in Ipanema and Leblon (the far end of Ipanema). You can view these options on their website: <http://www.promenade.com.br> Other options include the Sol Ipanema and the Everest.

Money Matters:

The Real is the official unit of currency, having replaced the Cruzeiro some years ago. One Real equals 100 centavos. Bills come in 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 Real denominations. You can see the currency (bills and coins) at <http://www.brazilnet.net/aboutus/moeda.htm>

The exchange rate bounces around quite a bit. In 1998 it was pretty close to \$1 US = \$1 Real. The Real was allowed to float in Jan. 99 and its value plummeted. When I was in Rio in June 2000 I got between \$1.88 and \$1.93 per dollar. More recently (September 2002) I got as high as 3.89 per dollar, with the most recent devaluation reflecting investor concerns over the election looming in early October. Unfortunately, by mid-2003 the rate had dropped to around 2.85 and currently sits at 2.96 (as of this revision of the Guide). Watching the exchange rate is one of the Brazilian national pastimes, and the rate appears on the front page of all major newspapers. While the exchange rate is down a bit

these days, travel in Brazil is still a great deal. You can get an estimate of what you'll get at the exchange houses at <http://www.xe.net/ucc/>. Another source, where you can also print out handy currency conversion cheat sheets to carry with you, is <http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>.

If you are exchanging cash, rates are always better at the currency exchange shops, called *cambios*, than they are at the banks. Hotels generally offer the worst rates, so don't change money at your hotel unless it's an emergency. Also, you'll get a better rate for cash than for traveler's checks. If you bring cash, try to bring newer bills to avoid concerns about counterfeit currency. You can hunt around and will find different rates at different places, and the rate may vary from hour to hour, although those fluctuations shouldn't be too large. I found a *cambio* offering somewhat better rates by asking one of the girls at Help where she exchanged her dollars. The girls understand money matters well; everyone in Brasil is an amateur economist!

The *cambios* and banks will be closed on Sundays and holidays, and many close early on Saturdays. Bank hours are 10-4, M-F. If you arrive on either a Sunday or a holiday, you may want to try to arrange to get some Brazilian currency before you arrive, but the rates you get outside Brasil tend to be pretty poor. You can get by in a pinch by paying for a radio cab with dollars and exchanging some currency at the hotel or paying for entrance at Help with dollars (see below).

The best rates, though, are to be had using your ATM card. Most of the Boys in Brazil can be found lined up at the Citibank ATM machines located next to the Blockbuster store at Av. Nossa Senhora de Copacabana and Rua Figueireido de Magalhães (there's another Citibank branch on Rua Visconde de Pirajá in Ipanema). Some banks also have ATMs that will work with the CIRRUS and STAR network cards, but others don't. One big advantage of ATMs is that some are open on days when the banks and *cambios* are closed, so even if you are usually exchanging cash at the *cambios*, the ATMs at Citibank will be available should you run out of reais on a Sunday.

Speaking of money, I suggest you always try to pay the girls in reais rather than dollars, as you'll tend to get a better price. Tell them you don't carry cash, only an ATM card. Or tell them you're Canadian, that you don't have US dollars, only that worthless Canadian stuff, and you'll do fine. If a girl negotiates in dollars, you might want to be a bit wary of her; most will mention an amount in reais.

One interesting side note: an excellent rate of exchange is often offered at the *termas* and at Help Disco. They won't allow you to exchange money, but they will allow you to pay in US currency, give you a very good rate, and give change in reais. Help was giving a rate of 2.95 when the *termas* and *cambios* were giving about 2.90.

You will also run into folks on the street offering to give you a good exchange rate. I think it's never wise to admit to someone on the street that you're carrying money. Robberies are not uncommon in Rio, so use good judgment.

Getting Around:

Travel in Rio is pretty easy, although one can get in a bit of trouble if you end up in the wrong part of town. Cabs are the best way to travel. It's about \$2.50 to get in the cab, and the distance charges are quite reasonable. Always check to make sure the cabbie is using the meter and ask him/her to if he/she starts off without it. The most common tourist ripoff (or as the Rio veterans say, "tourist tax") is the "no meter" scam. Some cabbies will try to negotiate a flat fare, which is always at least double what the meter fare would be. If a cabbie quotes you a fare when you get in the cab, point to the meter and say "metro." If the cabbie balks, get out of the cab and flag down another. Few will speak anything but Portuguese, so if you don't, write your destinations on a piece of paper and give it to the driver. I was surprised to find how often cabbies didn't know my hotel's location or the location of the business (a major firm) I was visiting, so carrying a map is always a good idea.

Cabs are also a reasonable means of going to see some sights. If you want to take in Corcovado (the statue of Christ overlooking Rio) or Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf), you can either arrange it with a tour company (see <http://ipanema.com/>) or just take a cab. The latter is much cheaper, but you'll have to negotiate tickets, transportation, etc., for yourself.

If you want to get away from Copacabana or Ipanema and try another beach out, I recommend Barra da Tijuca. Barra is a beautiful, wide, white sand beach about 20-25 minutes from Copacabana. The best way to get there is by minibus. If you stand on the main beachfront roads in Copacabana or Ipanema, you'll notice little minivans with cardboard destination signs passing frequently, stopping and picking up folks. These are truly "mini" vans...they cruise the beaches and other parts of town and are an alternative to taxis. The cost from Rio to Barra da Tijuca is 3 reais (it would probably be 25 via cab). Look for a van with a "Barra" sign in the front window and flag it over and ask if it's going to the beach (praia). If the sign says "Recreio" on it, it's beach-bound for sure. You can also take the vans to the shopping centers, such as Barra Shopping or Rio Sul Shopping, or to the Hard Rock Café in Barra. When you're ready to head home, you can flag down almost any minivan and ask if it's going to Copacabana or Ipanema. The majority are, even if the sign says Centro, Rio Sul, or something else. These minivans seem to have no shocks or seat cushioning whatsoever...your butt will get a real workout.

Another travel option for some locations you may want to visit is the Metro subway system. It's a very clean, efficient, and safe subway system. I use it when I want to head into the Centro area to visit the museums and the termas there. There are now two Metro stations in Copacabana, at Rua Siqueira Campos (which opened in March 2003) and at Praça Cardeal Arcoverde. You can take a cab to the station and take the subway on from there. The subway costs about 2.96 reais for a "duplo" (round trip ticket) and 1.50 for a "unitario." Eventually the subway system may extend down to Ipanema, but probably not during my lifetime. For more info on the Rio Metro system, including a map, see

<http://www.metrorio.com.br/index.asp>. This Metro line (Linha 1, or Linha Vermelha) has become unofficially renamed the “Termas Shuttle” since many of us will use it to run between the Centro and Copacabana termas (see below).

Safety:

Much has been said about the dangers of Rio. Most of what I’ve read is overstated, based on old information, but there are a number of precautions one should take to reduce the chance of being victimized. Rio is a very big city, and like any big city anywhere in the world that has a lot of poverty and attracts a lot of tourists, there will be some crime. Most of the violent crime occurs in parts of town you will not be likely to wander into, such as the larger favelas. Much of it also involves members of the drug gangs, so be very careful if you decide to try to purchase drugs.

There is a fair amount of petty crime in Rio directed at tourists. Most of it is of the pickpocket and petty theft variety. What can you do to avoid being a victim? First, simply don’t carry around anything you don’t need at the moment, and make sure you have a good grip on anything you are carrying. I almost never carry a wallet with me, and if I do, I make sure I’m wearing pants or shorts that close in a way that makes theft more difficult (buttoned or zippered pockets work fairly well). You should always carry a photocopy of your passport (the inside page with all the info), but not your actual passport. It’s a good idea to carry a card with your hotel information as well. Otherwise, carry whatever money you need for your purposes and not much more. Second, don’t wear any flashy jewelry. Leave your Rolex at home and wear your cheap Timex. Third, don’t leave anything on the beach unattended that you can’t live without. You’ll notice that the locals will bring a t-shirt, a cheap pair of sandals, and a towel to the beach and nothing else. I have a little waterproof case that I put a few reais in and keep in my pocket while I’m in the water. Fourth, stay off the beach after dark. Lots of muggings by groups of adolescent males occur at night on the beach, especially on Copacabana. Fifth, take cabs most places after dark. Cabs are dirt cheap, and a mugging will pretty much ruin your Rio experience. Sixth, keep valuables (cash, passport, cameras) in the safe in your room, especially when you’ve brought a garota back to your room. Most are trustworthy but a minority may not be. Follow these rules and you should be able to relax and enjoy the greatest show on earth.

Staying in Touch:

If you have even minimal competence with Portuguese, then you might want to look into renting a cell phone. You will find yourself collecting the phone numbers of many girls as well as those of the fellow hobbyists you meet. Running back and forth to the hotel to make calls is a nuisance, and the public phone system in Brasil is a bit of a pain. You’ll notice that nearly everyone in Rio is walking around with a cell phone, unless they’re on the beach. It’s a rare working girl who doesn’t have a cell phone. You can rent a phone for a daily rate of about \$5 from **Blame It on Rio Travel** (located on Rua Xavier da Silveira, behind the Othon Palace Hotel) or from **Tudo é Facil** internet café (just a few doors from Blame It on Rio Travel). Some of the people who rent apartments or provide

guide services, such as **Don from Riotrips**, provide cell phones for their clients. If you'll be hanging around Rio a good deal, you might consider buying your own phone, as I have. Most phone providers, such as Telefonica and GO, sell phones that work with pre-paid phone time cards. The costs are quite reasonable. By the way, you'll have to purchase these pre-paid cards with most phones you would lease or get from a guide. Having your own phone allows you to store those invaluable phone numbers you collect in a safe place. These phone numbers can become valuable commodities ("I'll trade you an Ana and a Daniella for a Thaiza...").

Internet cafes have popped up all over Rio, and most have pretty decent service. I like **Tudo é Fácil** (Rua Xavier da Silveira, 19); access speeds are generally good, and they offer many other IT services (CD burning, inexpensive LD phone services, etc.).

Enjoying Rio

Sure, you came for the sex, but Rio has so much more to offer. In Rio you can have your cake and eat it too, so try to enjoy the sights. Among the things you must do at least once: take the train up to the top of Corcovado, take the cable lift up to the top of Pão de Açúcar (Sugar Loaf), visit the Jardim Botânico, take a long walk in the Tijuca Forest (which contains a rain forest and lots of interesting wildlife), visit the "Hippie Fair" in Ipanema (Praça General Osório) on Sunday, watch a sunset from the Arpoador Rocks or from the top of the hill in Garota de Ipanema Park, eat feijoada on Saturday at the Casa de Feijoada in Ipanema, rent a bike and ride along the ocean on Sunday when the main beach roads are closed and all of Rio seems to take to the streets, visit a "rodizio" style churrascaria (Marius or Porcão are my favorites), visit a samba school or go to a samba show (Platforma is a little touristy, but the show is great), take a "favela tour" and see how many Cariocas actually live their lives, go to Maracanã (Brasil's shrine to soccer) and watch Brasileiros pursue their national passion, visit one of the big shopping malls (Rio Sul or Barra Shopping) and watch Brasileiras pursue *their* national obsession. The list could go on and on. The point is, you'll actually have more fun if you dig deep and taste all that Rio has to offer.

Guide Services:

The first-time visitor can sometimes find himself overwhelmed. Rio is a huge city, and if you're new to the scene and don't speak the language, you can find yourself wasting a lot of precious time stumbling around, literally and figuratively lost. Many less experienced visitors find the services of a guide, specializing in the needs of hobbyists, of considerable value. What services do these guides provide? They can arrange for cell phone access. They will take you on trips to the termas and the boites? They will translate for you with the girls. They will call an escort agency for you and arrange for a girl to come to your hotel. They will take you out to dinner, or arrange dinners with the girl of your dreams. They will bail you out when you get in trouble. They will arrange a VIPS festa for you (more on this later). They will arrange for a trip for you and your new girlfriend to Buzios or some other resort for a few days. They will even arrange for you to see the non-hobbyist tourist sites, such as Corcovado.

There are a number of guides who provide some or all of these services. Kenn of EZ-RioRentals does so, as does José of Rioturist. The guide I know personally, though, and can thus recommend with complete confidence is Don of Riotrips. He can be counted on to show anyone who wants assistance a very good time. And he will (and often does) go above and beyond the call of duty. Don bailed one client out of jail when a misunderstanding with the Brazilian police landed him in the Rio clink. And Don rescued one client from a berserk garota who was threatening to tear an apartment up at 4 a.m. (Don ended up with a nice black eye) Most importantly, Don is a good guy who knows the town and will look after his clients' interests and guarantee plenty of fun and laughter. He has many repeat clients who probably don't require their services but return because they enjoy the camaraderie. Don can be reached by email (Don@riotrips.com) or phone (55-21-9108-1502). I have heard good things about Kenn and José as well but just don't know them personally.

The Women:

This is why you came to Rio...right? There are many options, so we'll take them in turn.



The Termas

Termas are a marvelous institution...they should exist everywhere. The termas is a combination spa/health club/massage center/ bar/brothel (literally, it means “bathhouse”). There are dozens of termas in Rio, and they are to be found in all major cities in Brazil. I will give some information on the ones I know best.

Some general tips on termas: in most cases, after arriving you’ll be sent to a locker room to change into a robe and sandals. You’ll have a key to your locker that you’ll wear on a band around your wrist. Your locker number is what all charges are credited against, so bartenders will ask for the number when you order drinks and the girls may ask you to give them your key when you’ve agreed to go back for a session in one of the rooms. Don’t put the key in the pocket of your robe; the robes can get accidentally swapped in the shower rooms, and you don’t want to lose that key (trust me, I speak from experience on this one). One friend gave his key to a garota and then took a nap. While he was napping she charged about \$50 worth of drinks to his account! Keep track of your key at all times.

After changing you can head to the shower room for a shower and sauna (advised) and then to the bar. When you first enter the bar area where the girls are, you might want to walk around awhile and check the talent out before taking a seat. If you see someone you want to check out closer, just say hi and ask if she wants a drink. If you sit down when you enter, you’re likely to be trapped by one of the more aggressive girls, and my experience is these girls use this tactic because they’ll get no takers otherwise. If you get trapped by a girl you’re not interested in, head off for a shower or sauna, or tell her you’re looking for a specific girl you’ve been with before (you can claim you’ve forgotten her name). They’ll get the picture.

Relax and enjoy yourself. Have a few drinks and chat with the girls. Drinks are pretty reasonable, so be generous and offer girls a drink even if you don't plan on getting to know them "up close and personal." Eventually you'll probably find someone who appeals to you, but don't just rush back to the cabines for a session; take some time to get to know her. These girls can be very affectionate, and you'll enjoy your time in the room more if you get to know your girl a bit first.

So you've decided on the garota of your dreams, or at least the one you'd like to spend the next 20-90 minutes getting to know better. You'll have to decide for how long (sessions vary in length from 20 minutes (only in the low-end termas) to 90 minutes) and in what kind of room (they vary from small "cabines" to very fancy suites with huge beds, whirlpool baths, etc. You can get the prices for the various options at the desk. When you're ready to head back to the rooms, just tell her and she'll let you know what to do. The routine varies in the different termas, so just follow her lead. Also, it's common to experience "buyer's remorse"—after settling on a particular garota, you'll invariably see some stunner who will cause you to question the choice you've made. Get over it...there are too many beauties, and you can always come back another day. As the song says, "love the one you're with."

Speaking of return visits, sometimes you will find that a girl you spent time with earlier in your visit will "lay claim" to you. If you do not want to spend your time with her, be nice but direct and tell her you'd like to meet some of the other girls at the termas. I have never had a girl make a scene when I've done this. Just be friendly and polite...give her a kiss, buy her a drink, and maybe even ask her advice.

If you don't speak Portuguese, you'll be fine. The girls all know why you're there, and the only things you have to decide are which girl (or girls), which room (cabine or suite) and for how long. If you do speak the language, even if just a little bit, you'll have even more fun. I often arrive around 4:30 or earlier, in order to beat the crowds of men coming after work. Some of the termas will only have a few women around at that time, but many more will be showing up around 5:00. Between 5 and 6 is a good time to find the best selection, and the women often seem more energetic then.

Termas rules (these rules apply more generally when interacting with the working girls, or garotas de programa): Repeat after me—this is not your first trip to Rio, you will be in Rio for several weeks, and you won't be leaving for at least another week. None of this may be true, but these are the correct answers to the invariable questions you will receive from the girls. "Is this your first time in Rio?" "How long will you be in Rio?" "When are you leaving?" You may think these questions are just an effort on the girl's part to make polite conversation, and in a sense they are, but the girls are also sizing you up. Neophytes will be seen as someone who can potentially be taken advantage of. Newbies don't know the ropes and can be overcharged and underserved. The person who is staying only a few days may receive less attention and poorer service because he is less likely to be a steady customer. Similarly, the guy who says "I'm leaving tomorrow and won't be back for a year" is begging for an unenthusiastic quickie from the girl (known by veterans as the RTF, or "Rio Tourist Fuck"). If, on the other hand, you tell the girl

you've been in Brasil several times and will be around for awhile, she's more likely to give her best effort in order to assure customer loyalty and repeat business (yes, from her perspective it is about business). Only after you've been around awhile and know specific girls pretty well should you answer these questions truthfully.

An interesting innovation has been popping up among the termas over the past year: customer loyalty—or Frequent Fucker—programs. Termas 65, Solarium, and Monte Carlo all have programs in place. I wonder if I can convert some of my airline miles into termas points? Check for details at the termas. If you're favorite termas doesn't have a Frequent Fucker program, recommend that they join in or lose out.

A word on paying: credit cards are accepted at most termas. The charges appear on your billing statement in an innocuous form ("Harry's Grill"). At least one requires that you pay the girl's fee in cash. Tipping the girls is not expected, but a small tip for the locker room attendant is always in good form. Some add an additional charge for using a credit card, and some require that the girl's fee be paid in cash (Solarium, Monte Carlo, for example).

If you're going to be flitting between "favoritas" at several termas, there's something you need to know about. Eventually, there's a very good chance your favoritas will learn about one another and your philandering. **"GarotaNet"** is an all-powerful, all-knowing communications/espionage network that allows the garotas to keep tabs on your whereabouts. Don't think for a second that you can sneak off and bang that cutie at L'uomo without your regular at Solarium learning about it. You will be caught. I'll share a brief story about the reach of GarotaNet: In January 2004, I was leaving Terraço Atlantico (more on this spot later) when my cell phone rang. I answered only to be greeted by a regular of mine who was living in Italy at the time. She just wanted me to know that she knew I was in Rio (I hadn't told her!) and that she hoped I was having a good time but not too good of a time, and that she'd see me on my next trip. A friend of hers who had met me on a prior visit saw me at the Terraço and called her in Italy to let her know I was in town. I got a call a minute later. There is no escaping the reach of GarotaNet. This is why it may be better to admit upfront to the girls that you're a dog (Cachorro Safado) and that you'll be seeing various girls around town. If you take this approach, you do have to be somewhat tactful or you risk less than inspired service.

Now, the Termas Tour...



Termas L'uomo (Rua Siqueira Campos, 143, second level): in Copacabana, is an old favorite of mine. It was the first termas I visited, so there's a soft spot in my heart for it. It's in a little shopping/antiques mall, on the upper level facing out onto the street. The set-up is like every other termas--there's a dressing room, shower and sauna area, a place to sit and relax and watch TV, a bunch of rooms (suites and cabinas) for “doing the deed,” and the bar area where most of the girls hang out. The facilities are excellent, having been renovated in 2001. Prices are reasonable. In January 2004 they charged a 50 reais entry fee (which I believe is reduced to 30 if you have a session with a girl), and the rest depends on type of room (cabine or suite) and length of time. A standard cabine is quite small and includes 40 minutes with the girl. I used a suite for an hour (about 200 reais) and got out for around 280 reais total, including drinks. Check with the management; they have special deals on certain days. On Saturdays they have typical Brazilian food for free, and other days they have other specials. The girls are less numerous than Quatro por Quatro (4X4) or Centaurus, and more variable in quality, but the best are great, and they seem to want to work harder to please you than many other places. Some of my most memorable termas experiences have been at L'uomo.

When you enter L'uomo you'll first go to a dressing room and change into a robe and sandals. You can then head through the bar and to the sauna area for a shower, a steam bath or sauna, etc. The bathroom has disposable toothbrushes, razors and shaving cream, etc. Next to this room is a large room with a television and chaise lounges. Here you can kick back and relax alone for a few minutes. The action takes place in the bar area. Head into the bar, grab a seat, order a drink, and watch the action. Depending on the day of the week and the time of day, between 10 and 30 girls will be working. If you see a girl who strikes your fancy, motion her over. It's really very simple. It is perfectly acceptable to talk with a number of women before settling on one. Once you find a good candidate, take a seat with her and get friendly. She'll soon likely have her tongue down your throat and her hand on your cock. Take your time, and don't rush back to the rooms...the Brazilian women are great at foreplay and love to get close. When you do decide it's time to get to know her even better, let her know and she'll arrange the rest. Like I said, they tend to be great at their work. You can expect oral and standard sex. The oral sex may or

may not be bareback (but is usually BB); while some girls propose using a condom for oral sex, most do not and it is often negotiable. Condoms are always used for standard sex. After your time is up you can shower and leave, or shower and head back to the bar and have more fun. If the place isn't crowded, the girl you've been with will often be content to just sit with you and play around. It's a great way to spend an evening. You'll pay your tab when you leave. It's open Mon-Sun. (one of only two termas open on Sunday), and they open at 4 p.m. (but it's pretty quiet until 5:30) and close at 2 a.m. on M-F and 12 a.m. on weekends. It's located just a block from the Siqueira Campos metro station. Their web site is <http://www.luomo.com.br>.

Termas Monte Carlo: Just a few blocks away is Termas Monte Carlo, also known as Club 19 (Rua Hilario de Gouveia, 19, in Copacabana). Monte Carlo is very convenient, just a block from the beach and Avenida Atlântica. It's also just a few blocks from L'uomo, making it convenient to run from one to the other. The routine and set-up at Monte Carlo is nearly identical to L'uomo. You enter and change clothes on the ground floor, take the elevator or stairs to the showers/spa on the second (facilities are fairly similar to L'uomo's) and take the elevator to the club on the 3rd floor, where the girls are to be found. Prices at Monte Carlo are about the same as L'uomo. In the past I had not found the girls at Monte Carlo to be as attractive on average as those at L'uomo, but that was not the case during my last two visits, and it only takes one (unless you want a "three-way", which is available at all the termas). MC always has a few stars around who will make a visit worthwhile. Monte Carlo is open Mon.-Fri. from 3pm-2am and Sat. and Sun. from 3pm-12am. Their fees seem to be similar to those charged at L'uomo (entry is 50 reais), and they are actually owned by the same folks that run Solarium. Their web address is <http://www.termasmontecarlo.com.br/principal.php>.

Centaurus (Rua Canning, 44 in Ipanema): is considered by many to be the star of the termas. I have mixed feelings about the place, and rarely go there. They often have more women, and more gorgeous women, than the other termas I've been to. When Centaurus is crowded, the place really jumps. Thursday nights, for some reason, are particularly zoo-like. On the other hand, the place is poorly managed and the facilities (showers, etc.) are less well maintained than should be the case. It's also been hard to figure out the prices at Centaurus. I've had them try to charge me different amounts for the same services on different nights. When you enter Centaurus, you are required to leave a deposit (usually around 290 reais); this is the only termas that has such a requirement (that I've been to, at least), and it seems tacky. Tourists are charged more than locals, a practice I find offensive. If you're a regular here these practices (advance payment and "tourist surcharge") are dropped, and you can often talk your way out of them. It simply bothers me that they have these policies in the first place.

After you pay they may assign a girl to you to help you change into your robe...and of course she immediately wants to hook up with you. This is something I don't care for, and I always ditch the girls by telling them I'm heading to the sauna. After a shower on the ground floor you head upstairs to the bar area. There is a small room with a TV and massage tables that is often crowded with guys and girls getting friendly while watching soccer (what else!). This "relax" room is the staging area used by couples when the

rooms are all full and they must wait for one to open up. The bar area is fairly large and has seating at the bar and bench seating elsewhere where it is easier to get to know the girls. There is a small stage where they have live music on some nights and where the girls do striptease routines every evening. The great thing about Centaurus is the girls. The girls at Centaurus are on average very attractive and good at what they do. I detected more pressure to go with the more expensive "suite" option, but I suspect this is partly due to the fact that there are a limited number of cabinas, and there is often a backlog to the point that you have to cool your heels for a 1/2 hour or so waiting for a free one. Centaurus is clearly the most expensive of the termas I've visited. The 290 reais deposit will cover 40 minutes in a standard cabina. If you decide to do something out of the ordinary, like take two girls with you to a suite, they require that you go back downstairs and pay in advance, something I've never experienced in any of the other termas. Their old web site, <http://www.centaurusnet.com.br/>, seems to be dead. As you can tell, I have qualms about the place, but you'll find few who would disagree with the claim that you'll find more stunners here than anywhere else. Many of the girls at Centaurus are college students (many from one of the local Catholic colleges, and they all seem to be law students or psychology majors) and are better conversationalists than girls at the other termas. I have heard from guys who have had unsatisfactory experiences at Centaurus, though. Unfortunately, their policies have pissed me off to the point that I prefer other options and rarely visit Centaurus any longer. Centaurus is open Mon.-Thur. from 4-12 and until 2 a.m. on Fri. and Sat.

Termas Solarium (Rua JJ Seabra, 21, Jardim Botânico) is another favorite, located in a nice neighborhood about 15 minutes from Copa or Ipanema. The facilities are quite nice, the location is accessible, and the girls work hard to please. Solarium is located in the Jardim Botânico neighborhood, just a couple of blocks from the Lagoa. It's a nice, safe neighborhood with some excellent restaurants in the surrounding area. It costs about 10 reais for a cab from Ipanema. One of my favorite aspects of Solarium is their truth in advertising. Their prices are posted right on the wall as you enter, along with any daily specials. On average, entrance is 50 reais, a cabina is R\$30, and the girls are R\$130 for 40 minutes. It runs closer to R\$280 for an hour in a suite with a jacuzzi. During a recent trip they had a lottery where the prize was a free 40 minute session, and I had a winning ticket (they drew one per hour). The management is extremely friendly and go to great lengths to make sure you have a good time. They will recommend girls if you're looking for something specific. The girls were on the whole very attractive, with a few real stunners, although fewer in number than many of the other places mentioned. They are open on Sundays (open every day), and Sundays can be interesting (but also a bit weird) because it is also open to couples on Sunday evenings. I once had a woman give me a bbbj in the sauna while her husband was getting the same from another woman. Their web site can be seen at <http://www.solarium.com.br>

Quatro por Quatro, located in the Centro area (Rua Buenos Aires 44), has emerged as my favorite termas. 4x4 is an excellent termas, with loads of friendly women. It is the largest termas I've been to, and there always seem to be 60-100 or more women around. The management seems helpful and upfront about costs and such, which are posted in several locations. There are plenty of women available and they are of comparable

quality to other termas. The place is so big that one can get lost in it! You enter through a narrow hallway and go up a flight of stairs to the desk, where they give you a locker key. The lockers are to your right, down a half flight of stairs. After changing you can go to the showers and sauna (go back to the stairs you entered up, and go up one more level). The shower and sauna facilities are not the best, but I'm not there for the "health club" amenities. After that you can hit the bars. There are two bar areas, one on the second floor (directly across from the desk) where most of the action is (including regular strip shows) and another large one on the third floor (the VIP lounge), which is much quieter and a good place for conversation, cuddling, and getting something to eat. Prices are quite reasonable: entrance is \$30 reais (or 50 reais for access to the upstairs VIP lounge) and an hour in a suite is only \$150 reais(!), and the management gives you a clear up-front indication of how much the different services cost. If you take a girl to a room to do the deed before 5:00, your entry fee is waved. The basic cabina is smaller at 4x4 than at some other places, but large enough not to feel cramped. Larger and fancier suites (including some with Jacuzzis, KS beds, ceiling mirrors, and dance floors) are available at higher prices. The only downside is location: 4x4 is in Centro and thus a bit of a haul for those staying in the Zona Sul neighborhoods of Copa or Ipanema (my preferred location), although it is easily accessed via Metro (just a few blocks from the Uruguaiana station). It is, nevertheless, absolutely worth a visit. I've imbibed in numerous threesomes and one foursome at Quatro X Quatro and have always had a great time. Quatro X Quatro did have a web site: <http://www.quatroporquatro.com.br/> but it was pretty worthless and seems to be dead. This termas is located in the center of Rio's business district and caters to businessmen. As a consequence of its location, it is open only Monday-Friday, from 2 until midnight. One interesting aspect: I noticed an inordinate number of blondes at 4X4, and one of the girls there told me they "specialize" in blondes, so if that's a fetish of yours...

Termas 65 (Rua do Rosario, 65, Centro) also has some fans, and I count myself among them. This is another termas located in the Centro business district, just a block from 4X4, and it primarily attracts a local business clientele. Prices are fairly similar to those at 4X4, but with a smaller range of suites available (it seems to me that 4X4 is just a bit more "upscale"). The folks working at the front desk are helpful and will explain the prices and options in English. Termas 65, also like 4X4, is located on several floors. Just follow the noise to the boite upstairs where you'll find about 30-40 girls crammed into a fairly small space. During my last visit I was very impressed with the quality of the options here, and there were enough stunners to make a visit definitely worthwhile. There are other rooms where you can get something to eat and have a quieter conversation, but the action takes place in the main boite. Termas 65 has a "Frequent Fucker" program: entrance is free on your third visit within a month. Like the other downtown termas, Termas 65 is a midweek place: open M-F from 2 p.m. until midnight. It is located just a few blocks from the Uruguaiana metro station. Their website can be found at <http://www.termas65.com.br>

Termas Aeroporto (Av. Beira Mar, 216-C, Castelo) is another termas highly regarded by some but not by others. I fall into the latter camp. After years of saying "this will be the time I go there" I finally did. I was surprised that Termas Aeroporto is as small as it

is—just a bit larger than L'uomo or Solarium)—and was not particularly impressed by the quality of the girls (although I did have great fun with a set of twins!). Recent reviews have not been very positive. Like Centaurus, many seem to be college students, and I ran into several girls who spoke English quite well. Also like Centaurus, when you enter a girl is assigned to you to help you change into your robe and such. It is quite easy to get away from the girl, assuming you haven't fallen instantly in lust, by heading to the saunas and showers, which are very clean. An upstairs bar is where most of the mixing takes place, but there is also a "relax" room on the first floor where many of the girls hang out. Prices are Centaurus-like: \$50 reais to enter and \$240 reais for an hour in a suite. Unlike Centaurus, you pay when you leave, although you may be asked to pay the entrance fee upon arrival. Aeroporto is just a few (5-6) blocks from the Cinelandia metro stop and just a door or two from the Othon Aeroporto hotel. The web site address is <http://www.termasaeroporto.com.br/usa/start.htm>, but the site seems to be out of commission at the moment. Like Quatro X Quatro, this is primarily a businessman's termas, being located in a business neighborhood. It opens at noon, Mon.-Fri., and is a reasonable place for an early afternoon romp.

Rio Antigo (Joaquim Silva, 2, in the Gloria neighborhood) has some fans, although I'm not among them. Prices are fairly similar to L'uomo and the set-up is fairly standard. There is a main bar area where most of the girls hang out and occasional strip shows are held. A TV room nearby is a quieter place to sit with the garota of your choice and watch soccer or the ever-present telenovela (Brazilian soap opera). The facilities (showers, sauna, and steam bath) were all recently renovated and are very nice, possibly the nicest of any terma I've visited. I have not found this terma to be as interesting as many of the others on this list, but others have told me they've had good experiences here. The problem has mainly been a fairly limited selection of girls. I did visit her several times in 2003 to enjoy the company of the marvelous Patricia, but she has since left Rio Antigo. It's certainly worth a visit or two. Rio Antigo also has a new customer loyalty (frequent fucker) program...ask at the desk for details. Again, because of its proximity to downtown, it is only open on weekdays, from 2 p.m. until midnight. Rio Antigo is within walking distance of the Gloria metro station. Their web site can be found at <http://www.rioantigo.com.br>

Budget Termas: There are cheaper options as well. **Termas Beach Girls** (formerly **Termas Pedagio**) (corner of Rua Siqueira Campos and Rua Barata Riberio, 2nd level) is very inexpensive...you can get in and out for \$100 reais, but my take is you get what you pay for. The facilities are pretty gross, the girls variable but less attractive than other places, and the sex is less enthusiastic. Some guys like it because it's a good place for a little voyeurism: the girls often give the guys head in the communal steam bath. If this appeals to you, it's an option. I have not been here in years, but I peeked in during my last trip and was not impressed.

There are a number of budget termas in and around downtown, and a low-end terma tour can be great fun. In these termas you have to be patient and look a bit harder, but I've uncovered some real gems in these places, and the price is certainly right. A complete rundown of these places would probably be impossible, so I'll just mention four. The

first three are unlike those previously described, in that you will not change into a robe; rather, you enter a bar area where you will meet the girls, and after you've made your selection you'll head off to the rooms for some fun. **Termas 502** is located just a block from 4X4, at the corner of Av. Rio Branco and Rua da Alfandega (Rua de Alfandega, 502, Centro). Entry is 10 reais and covers 2 or 3 drinks. 20, 30, 40, and 60 minute sessions, in either a cabine or a suite, are available at very low prices. I believe an hour in a suite is 140 reais. The 20 minute session is known as the "MitchC Special." I have only visited the suites, and they are, as one would expect, not as nice as the suites in the more upscale places, but perfectly clean and comfortable. I found three real cuties in this termas. **Termas 61** is in the Praça Mauá neighborhood in Centro (Rua do Acre, 61) just a few blocks from the intersection of Av. Presidente Vargas and Av. Rio Branco. It's a bit bigger than Termas 502 and has upstairs and downstairs bars. Prices are similar to Termas 502, and there were a number of very cute girls there with whom I sessioned. One of the interesting features of this termas is that you can pay a "bar fine" (40 reais) and take a girl out with you for the night (I negotiated a rate of 150 reais for all night with the girl). **Club 30** (Rua Alcântara Machado, 31, Centro) drops the termas pretense altogether. Located just a few blocks from Termas 61 in the Praça Mauá area, it was very basic, and I actually never found anyone to my liking here, but I never stopped by after 6 p.m., when I heard the selection got better. They have a "two-for-one special every Wednesday evening; pay for one girl and get a second, for a "dupla" free. **MV 30** (Rua Mairink Veiga, 30, Centro) is just a block or two from Club 30 and Termas 61, and is set up more like a typical termas but with much lower prices. As with all the other downtown termas, these four are open only on weekdays, and most are open from 2 or 3 p.m. until 2 a.m.

You will not find the numbers or the same average quality at these low-end termas, but you may be the one who discovers a new gem, and the price is certainly right. And these girls often appreciate the attention when a group of guys roll in. One afternoon about 6 of us walked into MV 30 and the girls stood up and applauded us!

I enjoy sampling the various places, and recommend that anyone new to Rio do a Termas Tour. You can't possibly have more fun! And given that the turnover in the girls working at the termas is fairly high and constant, even the Riophile should do a Termas Tour on a regular basis. The constant turnover means that various termas rise and fall in terms of selection and quality of girls available, so a termas that's highly rated at one point in time may not maintain its standing over the long run. That's why you have to keep exploring.

Now that the Metro station has opened at Siqueira Campos, you can access L'uomo, Monte Carlo, Rio Antigo, Aeroporto, Termas 65, 4X4, and the Praça Mauá budget termas easily. Wouldn't that be a challenge: hit all six major termas and the four low-enders over a two-day period!!! Do a little research and discover your own favorite, then tell us about it. There are dozens of other termas I've yet to report on, many of them fairly far afield (Barra da Tijuca) and new ones (usually budget spots) pop up constantly. If any major ones open, I'll get out there as quickly as possible and investigate. It's a dirty job...

Brothels/Massage Parlors: Centro, and to a lesser degree Copacabana, are populated with a vast array of tiny sex shops that one would never notice if you didn't know exactly where to look. These places sometimes advertise in the classified sections of the local papers (O Globo and O Dia, under "massagistas" or "massagem") but often are known primarily through word of mouth. There are quite a few in the Carioca and Uruguaiana neighborhoods in Centro. Most of these places have only a handful of girls available, along with just a few rooms. The girls are of variable quality; they generally are not as pretty as the cutest of the termas girls, but they are often just as skilled, and seem willing to work just as hard or harder for their money. Speaking of which, these places tend to be very inexpensive. Standard sessions are 20-30 minutes (with 10 minute programs available in some), and the price is usually 1 real per minute (i.e., about \$10 US for a 30 minute session with the current exchange rate). The rooms often leave something to be desired in the hygiene department, but are upscale compared to most of the facilities at a place like Vila Mimosa (see below). The majority of these places are located in the upper floors of downtown businesses. Several are located on Rua Buenos Aires (see #85), on the block across Av. Rio Branco from Termas 4X4. One small place that I enjoyed is located a few blocks south of Rua Buenos Aires, on Rua Ouvidor (number 130, room 707). There were just a few girls here, but I found a keeper and had a very good 30 minute session for the price of a couple of beers in LA. I've never bumped into anyone who spoke a single word of English in these places, but talk is not what they're selling, and negotiation skills are not needed: just pick a girl, do the deed, and pay on your way out. Some of these places do sell drinks, but socializing does not seem to be focal activity.

The Night Clubs (Boites)

Another common place to search for that girl of your dreams (those lust-filled wet dreams, that is) is the night club area, which is located around Ave. Princess Isabel in Leme. There are many nightclubs in this neighborhood (also sometimes referred to as the Lido). These clubs (or "Boites") open relatively late and feature some exotic dance shows. The cover charges varies from \$15-\$40 reais and sometimes includes the first drink or two. Drink prices tend to be VERY expensive, so keep an eye on your bar tab and check it each time you order something. I've talked with guys who were surprised to find at the end of the evening that the bar tab was well over \$200 US. Some of the clubs have been known to pad the tab with mystery charges.

These clubs are filled with women, some who dance and some who are just there to keep you company, share your drinks, and maybe go home with you. The dancers are also available to head home with you. The house makes its money off the drinks and cover. I have not paid a "bar fine" in any of these clubs, but then again, I don't frequent them. The best-known places are Barbarela's, Frank's, La Cicciolina, New Pussycat, Don Juan's, and the New Scotch Bar. Barbarela's is known to have the most attractive women, but an evening here can get pretty expensive, and the place will pad your tab if you're not very careful. Most of the girls will ask for \$300-400 reais for 2 hours but will negotiate from there. Many will not want to spend the night...they would prefer to make the quick money

and then find another customer later. Also worth noting is the fact that while many these places open late, many of the hottest garotas get pulled out by 11 or so, especially at Barbarela's. Not being a huge fan of the clubs, I can't offer more in the way of details. They are worth a visit, though. Frank's has a pretty cool live sex show that usually takes place at 1 a.m. Make sure you wear protective eyewear if you sit in the front row! A researcher's work is never done.

Help Discoteca



Everybody knows where Help is. Help is headquarters of the evening sex scene in Copacabana. Rumored to be the largest disco in Latin America, it is the favorite hangout of working women in Rio and the men looking for them. Located on Ave. Atlântica, a block from the Othon Palace Hotel, Help gets rocking after midnight, and the crowds don't get heavy until about 1:30. You'll see it all in Help: the good, the bad, the ugly; from the sublime to the absurd. At times it looks like something out of a Fellini movie. If you're looking for someone to spend the night with, this is a good place to come. The crowd starts gathering around 10:30pm at the outdoor cafe, Terraço Atlântica, (also affectionately known as "Ground Zero" or "The Snake Pit") next door, and begin drifting in around midnight (admission prior to midnight is discounted). Any earlier and you'll find the place virtually vacant. The admission price has increased over the past few years from 9 to 12 to 16 and now to 25 reais, but inside drinks are quite reasonable (3 reais for a beer), and as I mentioned earlier, Help gives a great exchange rate for your dollars.

Many guys actually never make it into Help because they negotiate a deal at the café outside Help. I have met girls out front who didn't want to go inside (too smoky, too loud, etc.) and just wanted to talk and drink outside before heading back to my hotel. This is a reasonable strategy—the lighting is better outside and you get a better view of your potential partner—but everyone must experience Help at least once.

The disco itself is big and the music tends to be deafening. I hate disco and techno, so I just grit my teeth and bear it as best as I can, but I do get out and dance. The girls appreciate the effort, even if you're a crappy dancer like me. As the evening wears on, the DJs play more samba and less disco. If you want to escape the crowds on the floor, you

can head upstairs where there are tables and have drinks and even order from a small menu.

Nearly all (but not all) of the women you see inside will be working girls...they are available. It is the largest “putaria” in Rio! For the most part they won't approach you, especially the stars. Of course, the real dogs will be more aggressive and grab your ass every time you walk by. The others may try to make eye contact and flirt from a distance, but generally you are expected to make the move. I'm constantly amazed at how many guys stand off to the side and seem to expect that the prettiest women will just walk over and say "Take me!" Making contact is pretty easy. Catch her eye, approach her and say hi, ask her if she wants a drink or wants to dance, and that's it. Everything else will follow. Prices are negotiable and get somewhat lower as the evening wears on. Don't be surprised, though, if your friend wants to stay until 3 or so. These women love to dance and have a good time, and some are amazing dancers. They may be working, but they're trying to have fun, too.

The initial asking price seems to be 300 reais these days. Remember, this is just an opening salvo, and most expect you to negotiate. Think of some funny way to convince her that 150-200 reais is more realistic (“you’re worth a thousand, but I can only pay 150”). Expect to pay between 150-250 reais for all night (I hold the line at 250 reais and generally try to pay 200 for all night and 150 for a couple of hours), and try to be clear whether you’re asking for all night or a few hours. Many will try to bargain in dollars, and will ask for \$100 and up. Some will quote a price and be unwilling to negotiate. What you decide to do is up to you, but most of your fellow hobbyists will appreciate your efforts to keep prices within reason. Don’t let your “little head” do all of your thinking!

Spend some time with the woman before you decide she's the one. There are a lot of great ones at Help, but there are some bad apples as well. Several men have reported being drugged and robbed by their overnight visitors from Help. Exercise caution when accepting a drink from someone else, or leaving your drink unattended. You can often get a pretty good sense of the girl by spending an hour or two with her. If she seems too anxious to leave the disco and consummate the deal, you might ask yourself why, and whether she’ll be in a similar hurry to leave your hotel room.

Who are the women in Help? Well, they run the gamut. Some are hardcore pros who are there virtually every night. There are a handful of women I’ve seen almost every time I’ve been in Help over the past 7 years. Others come one or two nights a week to make some spending money. Others are students financing their education, and still others are girls in Rio on vacation looking for a way to cover their vacation costs. I have met many girls in Help who I'd seen earlier that same evening working in one of the termas (most of which close at 12, giving the girls plenty of time to get to Help), and I have also met girls from the boites who come to Help on their nights off. During one trip I met a stunner in Help who dances at Barbarela’s every night except Saturdays. On numerous occasions I’ve left with college girls in town during their semester or summer breaks. You should

probably assume that the girls here are working girls and expect to be paid, even if money never gets mentioned.

When leaving Help for the evening, heed the advice on the signs at the door and do not take one of the cabs waiting out front. They are rip-off artists and will charge you quadruple the actual rate. Walk a block or so in either direction (it's safe if you stay on the sidewalk) and then flag a cab. Do take a cab to your location, though. I know of many guys who have been robbed after leaving Help who decided that it wasn't worth \$2 for a 5-block cab ride.

If you'll be at a hotel, the hotel staff is likely to ask your guest to fill out a card and show identification. Some hotels will ask her to leave her ID card at the desk. The Luxor Regente, for example, does this and then calls you before they return her card to make sure there are no problems. This is for your own protection and is pretty standard. I actually find it comforting to know that the hotel will have the girl's ID information should she decide to rip me off. In your hotel room, always use your safe, and keep valuables and extra cash locked up. Most of the girls are honest (I've only once had a problem in countless trips), but it's better not to tempt fate.

Paying the girls can be an art form. I do not pay girls in advance, and have sometimes had bad experiences with those who demand it. In those cases I show the girl the money to prove I have it, and imply that if we have a really great time there might be a bonus. Other girls are a bit shy and embarrassed when the "financial transaction" part arrives, so I find it best to thank the girl with a kiss and somewhat discreetly slip the "present" into her purse or pocket. Most appreciate the gesture. Adding 5-10 reals for her cab fare is a welcome and thoughtful gesture that the girls will appreciate.

Vila Mimosa

If you're in the mood for something different—something "down and dirty"—you may want to check you Vila Mimosa (or VM, as it's known to most). VM is a small section in the old downtown area (not far from the soccer stadium, Maracanã) that is home to some very seedy and inexpensive brothels. VM is a local institution that primarily serves locals. It can get a bit rough, so if you do not look like a local and speak Portuguese, you may not want to wander in here on your own. Go with a group and book the services of a guide.

What will you find in VM? There are a bunch of tiny beer bars and small houses each with several small rooms. You can select a girl and head to one of these rooms and do the deed on site. Here's the deal, though. If Cleanliness is next to Godliness, VM borders on Hell. The rooms run from dirty to disgusting. The girls vary wildly in quality, from "butt-ugly, wouldn't get close enough to beat it with a 10-foot stick" to surprisingly pretty. I saw quite a number of girls who looked underage as well (if underage girls appeal to you, you might want to tour a Brazilian jail before you decide to imbibe). But this is budget-sex central: you should never pay more than 20-25 reals for a turn with a girl here. You may pay double that if you decide to take her back to your

place (not a bad idea if you're averse to cum-covered sheets). To be honest, this is not my cup of tea, but it's another of those places that any visitor should see at least once.

The action seems to get going around 5 p.m. and goes well into the night. As I mentioned earlier, go with a group or a guide. VM has its own website, which set records for number of hits in a day in Brasil after it was featured in a newspaper article:

<http://www.vilamimosa.com.br>

The Street

Avoid the women working the street along Av. Atlântica in Copacabana. Some cruise the sidewalks while others stand at the end of parked cars in the street. Many are IV drug users, a fair number are transvestites, and a high percentage are HIV+. Many of their customers find themselves robbed and beaten by a nearby pimp/boyfriend. Pickpocketing is rampant. If they approach you, head the other way. Just say no. Really! There's also street action to be found on Praca Juniao and in Praca Maua, but the same caveats/warnings apply.

Amateurs

By amateurs, I mean girls who will spend the night with you for free. The term "non-pro" gets used in a variety of ways, but usually to signify someone who is not a hardcore pro but who still expects to be paid. Amateurs are just party girls who you might sweet talk into spending the night with you. Generally, if you don't speak Portuguese quite well, you can forget it.

Awhile back I took a friend's advice and went to Maxim's, a disco atop the Rio Sul Shopping Center. He said there were often women there looking for a one-nighter, and he was right. I had all kinds of fun and ended up back at my hotel with a 22-year-old bank teller who just wanted to have some fun and practice her English. It was an awesome evening. Don't know if I just got lucky or what, but there were plenty of girls there on their own, and several flirted with me.

Sadly, Maxim's has now closed, but there are clubs all over Rio. One of my favorite restaurants, Mostarda, has dancing on the 2nd floor after midnight, and there are lots of beauties. A newer club I have visited several times is called "The Bedroom" and is decorated in a bedroom motif, with mattresses scattered around the club. Lots of groping goes on but no actual sex. Another cool club is Bunker 94. Nuth, in Barra da Tijuca, is a great dance club. Getting in these places is much like getting into a trendy club in NY. You have to dress right and look right. I do neither, but I got in because I was with people who did. You will NOT find pros in these clubs, but it is possible to sweet talk your way into some beautiful young thing's pants...if you speak Portuguese and/or if you look like you have \$\$\$\$. Again, if you can't speak Portuguese, you'll have a hard time picking up any amateurs. Don't assume that all Brazilian women are dying to fuck foreign men. Picking up amateurs is not as simple as some posters have made it sound.

Daytime Options

So it's 3 p.m. and you're horny as hell. What are you going to do about it? You have a few options. First, as noted above, some of the termas are already open, although the action tends to be pretty slow before 4:00. Termas Aeroporto and Quatro X Quatro are your best mid-day bets. But what if it's noon? Or what if you don't want to make the trek downtown?

If you want to hang a bit closer to home there are two main options. Late in the afternoon (meaning 4 p.m. in Brasil's summer and 2 p.m. in the winter) some garotas gather at a couple of cafes looking for customers—Meia Pataca (next to the Othon Palace hotel) and Mabs (in Leme, at the other end of Copa). There are occasionally some beauties to be found at these places, but I've only once taken a girl from Meia Pataca back to my hotel. If you see something of potential interest, just grab a table and make eye contact. These girls are pros and are quite assertive...you won't have to wave them over. More likely you'll have to chase them off. The other option, earlier in the day, is on the beach directly in front of the Othon Palace hotel. On nice days about 20 or so pros work the beach. You can rent a beach chair from the guys there (negotiate in advance what all costs are; these guys will cheat you if given a chance) and, again, just make eye contact. The guys renting the chairs fashion themselves as big time pimps, but don't let them serve as intermediaries or the price will go up. I've never taken a girl from the beach, although there are occasionally some really beauties there, and some enjoy prancing around topless. Let me reiterate one point: the guys working the beach here are thieves. Have as little to do with them as possible. If you don't pay as you go, you'll receive an unpleasant surprise when you leave.



A mid-day short-time experience should cost you no more than \$75-150 reais depending upon the amount of time you're looking for.

Many independent escorts advertise their services in the local papers (see O Dia and O Globo classified sections, for example) and they are very reasonable. Take note, however, of that fact that quite a number of transsexuals advertise in the papers. If that's not your style, avoid the ones who use the term "quase mulher."

Escort Agencies

There are dozens of escort agencies through which you can book girls for a few hours during the day or evening. Many have web sites where you can check out the girls pics (usually minus views of their faces), and many also have advertisements in the classified section of the local newspapers. Descriptions of the girls are rather sensationalized, but they will often tell you if the girl does anal ("completa") and what other services she offers. Many also have books of photos, so you can go to their offices and select a girl from the book. Most agency staff speak only Portuguese, so arranging something by phone can sometimes be a challenge if you don't speak Portuguese. The prices vary considerably, but you can often find a beauty to come to your hotel for two hours for between 100 and 250 reais...that's between \$35 and \$86 as of the time this was written. Try to find a deal like this in New York or LA! I've had very good luck with girls from Karla Models, and it's hard to beat their price (100 reais for two hours, completa).

Many of the agencies are listed in the local yellow pages, and many also advertise in the classified sections of the major papers. Here are a few web sites and phone numbers just to wet your appetite:

Karla Models	http://www.karlamodels.com.br	2502-4290
Company Girl	http://www.companygirl.com.br	2513-1867
Cia Plus	http://www.ciaplus.com	2525-4546
Scort Show	http://www.scortshow.com.br	2523-6115
Loren Models	http://www.sexyhall.com	9747-0242
Barra VIPs	http://www.barravips.net	2421-3140

The escort agencies generally will not let you make a booking unless you have a landline telephone, so if you are staying in an apartment and only have access to a cell phone, booking escorts can be difficult.

Motels

The Brazilian motel is not the same as a US motel...a cheesy, down-at-the-mouth hotel. Brazilian motels are designed for sex, not really for sleeping. If you're staying at a hotel that does not allow guests, if you prefer to be discrete, or if you just want a special night with a special garota, you might consider a trip to a motel.

The Brazilian motel is an institution in Brazil. Its existence reflects certain realities in the lives of most Brazilians: most live in crowded households, many share bedrooms with children or other roommates, and few have anything resembling privacy. Hence, motels: places where couples—married or not—can have a few hours of privacy for sex.

Because motels are intended for sex, they are designed for sex. Most have nice big beds with strategically placed mirrors. Many have whirlpools, most have TV with one or more porn channels. Upscale rooms have saunas, steambaths, swimming pools, waterfalls, and all sorts of electronic goodies (including internet connections in some cases, so you can download those pictures as soon as you take them!). Some have special "equipment," like chairs especially designed for sex play. Several have on-site sex shops where you can purchase toys and such.

The motels can be found all over Rio. Some of my favorites are Hotel Bambina and Panda Motel in Botafogo, and VIPs, Sinless (great name!), and Shalimar in Leblon (all a short cab ride from where you are likely to be staying. VIPs is the most expensive, but many of the nicer suites have fabulous ocean views and are equipped to the max (complete with big screen TVs, pools, waterfalls, sex chairs, etc.). VIPs is especially well suited for “festas,” which are essentially orgies involving groups of men and working girls. Festas usually involve four or more guys renting the Millennium Suite and individual apartments, and then bringing in several groups of girls (often from some escort agencies) for fun and games. Bring along swimsuits for the girls (which get removed after a few minutes) and lots of alcohol, and interesting things are bound to happen.

Rates at the motels vary considerably, as does the amount of time you get the room. Usually your fee covers the room for 12 hours, but some motels give you only 4-8 hours on Fri. and Sat. nights. The fee varies by the room amenities, so you’ll pay more at VIPS for a room with a view and with all the toys than for a basic room with bed, mirrors, and a shower. Still, all the rooms are nice, and are likely much nicer for sex than your hotel room. Most motels offer breakfast in the morning.



Scene from a “festa” at Motel VIPS

For more on this marvelous Brazilian institution (second only to the termas), see the Playboy motel guide (you'll first need to register on their site) for Rio at:

<http://www2.uol.com.br/playboy/guiademoteis/riodejaneiro.html>.

Also see: <http://www.terra.com.br/cidades/rio/moteis.htm>

Here are my four favorites, all located close to Copacabana:

VIPS Motel (Av. Niemeyer, 418, Leblon, Ph: 3322-1662)

<http://www.vipsmotel.com.br/>

Sinless Hotel (Av. Niemeyer, 214, Leblon, Ph: 2512-9913)

<http://www.sinless.com.br/>

Bambina Hotel (Rua Bambina, 65, Botafogo, Ph: 2539-0713)

<http://www.bambinahotel.com.br/>

Panda Hotel (Rua São Clemente, 298, Botafogo, Ph: 2537-3134)

<http://www.pandahotel.com.br>

Photography

A favorite souvenir of many a monger is a collection of photos from his sessions. Brasileiras are often very open-minded about photos, and many will willingly and happily pose for you. Indeed, sometimes it's hard getting them to break off the modeling session. Some will also allow you to videotape your encounters with them.

How do you get a girl to pose for pictures? Ask her. I suggest that if photos are really important to you, ask in advance of securing her services, as she'll be more motivated to say "yes" if the deal has not yet been finalized.

Taking photos in a termas is a touchy issue. Virtually all (if not all) termas officially discourage the practice, yet it goes on all the time. Again, it is best to secure your garota's assent beforehand; then the trick is to smuggle your camera into the room. Obviously, small cameras work a lot better in these situations—don't show up at a termas with your 35mm Hasselblad and collection of lenses. Be as discrete as possible when getting your camera and taking it to the room.

Digital cameras are popular with the girls because they love to see the photos of themselves. I've had some girls ask me to burn a CD of the photos when we were done shooting, and I generally try to honor requests for copies and such.

Over the past several years more and more girls have gotten antsy over being photographed, due largely to the fact that they have learned that guys like us may be posting their pictures on various websites. Some of the girls have their reasons for not wanting their pictures—especially explicit pictures—plastered all over the web, so I always ask if they care one way or the other about this. If they say they don't want me to

share their pictures, I honor their request. Others will ask that I not post any photo featuring their face, and I honor that request as well. You are free to do as you wish in this regard, but I know of a few guys who have gotten into a great deal of trouble after posting pictures of girls without their permission. You should assume that if you do so, they will find out. GarotaNet is more powerful than the NSA, CIA, and Mossad combined.

Some Thoughts on Money

It is, after all, play for pay, so it's not surprising that money matters become one of the messiest issues guys deal with in Rio. The money issues are complicated by the fact that decisions are often made under less than ideal circumstances, when a guy is half (or wholly) drunk, smitten by a garota who's promised to suck his dick like it's never been sucked before, and is consequently doing most of his thinking with his little head.

Still, it's important to keep one's wits when negotiating, paying, etc. Many guys prefer the termas, massage parlors, and escort services because there's little if any ambiguity around costs. But if you're pulling girls from Help, the streetside cafes like Meia Pataca, the beach, or just negotiating a deal on your own with a girl from another venue, there are some guidelines you might want to keep in mind. First, with respect to the question of how much should I pay, my own rule of thumb is that a short afternoon session should cost between 75 and 150 reais. A short session (my definition is 2 hours) in the evening with a girl from Help should cost about 150 reais, and never more than 200. All-night sessions should generally run between 200-250. I know that some guys pay more because they think they need to in order to land a "superstar," but I've never found that to be true. At a minimum, you should negotiate, and never accept the first figure she offers. If she says "300," counter with "175" and see how she responds. More than likely she'll counter, and you'll hopefully arrive at an agreeable compromise. If not, you should be prepared to walk away, just as you would if someone were trying to stiff you in negotiations on a car. And just because you can afford to overpay doesn't mean you should. Will your session be better because you paid 400 reais instead of 250? Absolutely not, but you will be marked as a sucker, and your mongering comrades will not appreciate your distorting the marketplace unnecessarily. You don't go to Starbucks and offer a 30% premium on their asking price for coffee, so why should you do precisely the same thing when acquiring the services of a girl?

If the price changes once you're back in your room, stick to your deal. Smile, but be firm, and if she persists, show her the door. She may also ask you for cab money when she leaves. Guys vary in how they respond to this request: some feel that cab expenses are built into the negotiated fee, while others feel the request is legitimate. I usually will give the girls 10 reais without their asking, saying "this is for your cab fare," and they are always quite appreciative. On the other hand, I've heard of girls asking for 20-50 reais for cab fare, and this is probably too much to offer. While some girls live considerable distances from Copa and Ipanema, most will probably catch a bus home that costs under 5 reais.

I've had many conversations with working girls about money over the years. They are surprised at how many men accept the first offer, agree to requests to go shopping, and so forth. In general they think less highly of men who are especially loose with their money. Sure, they love to have these men as clients, but they think of them as fools who mistakenly think that they're getting something for the extra money (a better session, genuine affection, a relationship, etc.) that they are not getting. Guys...we are clients and they are service providers. Yes, the services they offer are something special, but in all but the rarest of circumstances, it's still a business transaction, *and nothing more*. There's no virtue in getting screwed (sorry) in any such transaction. You can get thoroughly fucked without getting fucked over, and emerge with your self-respect and your vacation funds intact. If you always let the girls dictate the terms, you will eventually feel like a chump, and that will put a damper on your enjoyment.

Dining in Rio

No, this is not a section about “dining at the Y.” There’s real food to be had in Rio. I’ve heard many a hobbyist complain about the food in Rio and, upon further questioning, learned that their culinary explorations had been limited to MacDonalds’, Bob’s, and a couple of Avenida Atlântica tourist trap restaurants. This is sad, because good food is readily available and relatively cheap in Rio.

Recommending restaurants can be like recommending women: one man’s “9” is another’s “6.” With that caveat in mind, these are some I’ve visited and enjoyed.

Bwana’s Top Ten (in no particular order):

Quadrifoglio (Rua JJ Seabra, 19, Jardim Botânico, tel: 2294-1433). Killer Italian; this upscale restaurant is a place to take a special garota. They feature wonderful fresh filled pastas and an array of marvelous sauces. Located just up the street from Termas Solarium.

Porcao Rio’s (Av. Infante Dom Henrique, Flamengo, 2554-8862). My favorite churrascaria (Brazilian BBQ) featuring great meats and a fabulous salad buffet. All-you-can-eat rodizio-style dining in a beautiful setting overlooking Sugarloaf. Another restaurant the garotas love.

Antiquarius (Rua Astrides Espinola, 19, Leblon, 2294-1049). Elegant (and pricey) Portuguese and exotic Brazilian cuisine; one of the best restaurants in the city in which to get a sense of Brasil’s culinary heritage.

Felice Caffé (Rua Gomes Carneiro, 30, Ipanema, 2579-3030). A more modest entry, this comfy café serves great pasta and meat dishes (try the Penne Gorgonzola), good sandwiches, and some of the best ice cream in Rio. This is probably my favorite non-upscale restaurant in Rio.

Marius (Av. Atlântica, 290A, 2542-2393, Leme). This is my other favorite churrascaria, where the food keeps coming until you plead “Não mais!” This is another spot the garotas appreciate coming.

Siri Mole e Cia (Rua Francisco Otaviano, 50, Arpoador, 2267-0894). This wonderful restaurant features the cuisine of Bahia (fish, fish, and more fish). Try the spicy shrimp moqueca.

Celeiro (Rua Dias Ferreira, 199, Leblon, 2274-7843). Conde Nast magazine raved about this salad and veggie restaurant, and I have to agree with their enthusiastic recommendation. The place to go the day after you’ve ODeD on meat at a churrascaria.

Garota de Ipanema (Rua Vinicius de Moraes, 49A, Ipanema, 2523-3787). Best known as the location where Vinicius de Moraes and Tom Jobim wrote the lyrics to “The Girl from Ipanema,” the food is both excellent and reasonable.

Confeitaria Colombo (Rua Goncalves Dias, 32, Centro, 2232-2300). Open only for lunch, this classic European-style patisserie serves a great buffet-style lunch in an elegant setting. No need to dress up despite the beautiful setting. This is a nice place to have lunch on the way to Termas 4X4.

Marius Crustaceos (Av. Atlântica, 290, Leme, 2542-2393). Apply the rodizio style to seafood and this is what you get. Seafood, shellfish, stews, and a great salad buffet, all in a typically “Marius” classy setting.

More good eating options:

Along the Beach:

Don Camillo (Av. Atlântica, 3056, Copacabana) Decent Italian.

Alcazar (Av. Atlântica, 3530, Copacabana). Don's office; cheap comida Brasileira.

Barril 1800 (Av. Vieira Souto, 110, Ipanema). Nice selection of typical Brazilian food.

Feijoada--Brazil's National Dish:

Casa da Feijoada (Rua Prudente de Moraes, 10, Ipanema). Served every day.

Confeitaria Colombo (see above). A great version served for lunch on Saturdays.

Bars with Great Snacks:

Bracarense (Rua Jose Linhares, 85B, Leblon). Voted best in Rio repeatedly.

Cervantes (Av. Prado Junior, 335, Loja B, Copa). Great food, and open until 4 a.m.

Salads and Light Meals:

Alface's (Rua Visconde do Graca, 51, Jardim Botânico). Great selection of salads.

Gula-Gula (Rua Anibal de Mendonca, 132, Ipanema). A great choice for a light meal.

Celeiro (see above). When you're craving salad and vegetables, this is the place to go.

Por Kilo:

Siqueira Grill (Rua Siqueira Campos, 16B, Copa). Massive quantities, good and cheap.

Juices:

Polis Sucos (Rua Maria Quiteria, 70, Ipanema). Killer juices from Amazonian fruits.

Sweets and Baked Goods:

The Bakers (Rua Santa Clara, 86, Copa). Great pastries, cakes, and light meals.

Cafeina (NS de Copacabana & R. Constante Ramos, Copa) Pastries and great breakfasts.

Traiteurs de France (NS de Copacabana, 386, Copa). French-style baked goods.

Ice Cream:

Felice Caffé (see above). Ice cream to die for.

Sorveteria Mil Frutas (Rua Barao da Torre, 510B, Ipanema). Specializes in exotic fruit flavors, some mixed with chocolate. Worth a trip.

Sorveteria Mil Frutas (Rua JJ Seabra, Jardim Botânico). Ditto; up the street from Termas Solarium.

Shopping in Rio

You didn't come here to shop, but you may want to take a few hours to see what shopping "Carioca-style" is like. Brazilians (especially Brasileiras) love to shop, so a trip to the mall is a great way to see some serious eye-candy.

Malls: The two largest and most popular malls are Rio Sul Shopping, which is located just a few minutes from Copacabana, and Barra Shopping, which is further out, in Barra da Tijuca. Barra Shopping is the larger of the two malls, but unless you're intent on some very serious shopping, you'll be fine staying closer to home. Both malls feature a few larger "department stores" along with lots of smaller specialty stores and food courts. If you want to "go Brazilian," the malls are good places to get that new wardrobe. Clothing prices are quite reasonable, although imported items tend to be pricey. The real reason for going to the malls, though, is to people-watch, or—more accurately—garota-watch. Brazilian women love to dress up and go to the mall for fun.

Souvenirs: In all likelihood you're expected to bring some gifts back from Brazil. A great place to look for fairly inexpensive souvenirs is the Ipanema Hippie Fair (Feira Hippie de Ipanema) which is held every Sunday at Praça General Osorio. From 9-5 you can browse the stalls for leather goods (wallets, purses, sandals), arts and crafts, clothing, etc., at very good prices.

If you're looking for more basic souvenir items, merchants set of stalls on the wide median on Avenida Atlântica, out in front of Help Disco, in Copacabana. This market is somewhat seasonal; in summer the stalls are in place Monday through Saturday evenings from about 8 p.m. until about 1 a.m. You should negotiate when buying souvenirs...it's expected, and if you don't get a discount, you're paying more than the locals would.

Farmer's Market: If you're staying in the Ipanema area and would like to get some great fresh fruit and vegetables to take back to your hotel or apartment, then stop by Praça General Osorio on Tuesdays. The plaza is packed with merchants selling beautiful produce, meats, fish, etc. It's worth an hour just to watch Cariocas as they bargain with the merchants here, but be sure to try some of the great fruit available here.

Music: It's hard not to fall in love with the music of Brazil; there are many styles that capture the atmosphere of the country, and I find the music irresistible. CDs, in my estimation, are among the best souvenirs one can get in Rio. There are many small CD stores located around town, but only a few stores with really good selections. My favorite store is Modern Sound, located at Rua Barata Ribeiro, 502 (near the intersection with Rua Santa Clara). This store has an excellent selection of Brazilian music at very good prices (most CDs costing \$10-\$11 US). The shop also carries DVDs and has a nice café that often features live music in the evenings (no cover).

Odds and Ends

Vitamin V: Yes, Viagra is readily available at any pharmacy/drug store in Rio. You should be able to buy it without a prescription. Enter any drogaria and go to the pharmacy counter—often at the rear—and ask for Viagra or, better yet, if you don't speak Portuguese, hand them a piece of paper with the word Viagra written on it, along with how many you want. Viagra is generally sold in boxes of 4-50 mg. doses. A box of four should cost about 65-80 reais. Drogarias sometimes hold sales on the little blue pills.

Vitamin “Ci”: Cialis is a new entry in the “erectile dysfunction” market, competing with Viagra. It is not available in the US yet but should be within the next year. Its fans (I'm among them) prefer it to Viagra because (1) it lasts for 36 hours, (2) it gives you a hard-on that is truly hard and long-lasting, and (3) there are none of the unpleasant side-effects (headaches, congestion, etc.) associated with Viagra. It's available at almost all drogarias, in 2- or 4-packs of 20 mg. pills, and is slightly more expensive than Viagra.

Condoms: I and many other men find the Brazilian condoms to be tight, thick, and a bit unreliable (I've blown a few), so I always bring my own, even to the termas. The condoms used in the termas are designed for her protection, not your pleasure, so bringing your own may enhance your session. I like the new “hi-tech” condoms such as “Pleasure Plus” and “Inspiral,” which can be found at condom specialty stores in the big cities or ordered through an on-line source (Condom Country, <http://www.condom.com> is very reliable). I have not found a place to buy decent condoms in Rio, and the premium brands are not available there.

These days there's a chance that your stash of condoms will be inspected by security personnel at an airport, but so what! I just smile and say “I'm going to Rio on vacation.” Indeed, on one of my latest Rio trips my luggage failed the “explosives test” and was thoroughly hand-searched by a young female TSA employee. She opened one bag in my suitcase and found 3 dozen condoms, some lube, and a variety of vibrators and other sex toys. I just smiled and said “It's going to be a great vacation.” She almost fell over laughing. And, no, your condoms will not be confiscated by the customs folks in Rio. They've seen it all.

You may also want to bring along a good lubricant for those garotas who insist that you give it to them up the ass. I prefer water-based lubricants like Wet Platinum. You needn't bring this to the termas; the termas girls all have their own little boxes full of supplies.

Further Readings

General:

James Page, *The Brazilians*. An excellent, relatively brief discussion of Brazil's history and the forces influencing its present. Good discussions of the roots of Carnaval and the Brazilian passion for "the beautiful game."

Robert Levine & John Crocitti, *The Brazil Reader*. A diverse collection of popular and scholarly articles on Brazil's culture and history, most of them fascinating and well-written.

Chris McGowan & Ricardo Pessanha, *The Brazilian Sound: Samba, Bossa Nova, and the Popular Music of Brazil*. A decent overview of Brazilian music, although it misses the newer styles of Brazilian funk and hip-hop. A good list of must-have recordings.

Priscilla Ann Goslin, *How to Be a Carioca*. The real survival guide for the Rio tourist. Funny as hell and right on target. Thanks to Rhonda of Riotrips.com for recommending this one.

Language:

David Appell & Paul Balido (Eds), *Hot! International: Love and Sex in 7 Languages*. The only phrasebook covering phrases like "Suck my cock" and "Take the handcuffs off." The seven languages include Portuguese, and the girls get a kick out of this book. Indispensable, but hard to find (see information in the "Language" section).

Sue Tyson-Ward, *Teach Yourself Portuguese Grammar*. An excellent brief introduction to grammar; it complements the Pimsleur CDs nicely.

John Nitti & Michael Ferreira, *501 Portuguese Verbs*. The complete conjugations of about every verb you can think of. More easily understood once you have a basic grasp on grammar (see *Teach Yourself Portuguese Grammar*).

Enough, Already!

That about wraps up this rambling monologue. Ol' Bwana is already counting the days until his next trip. I hope you find this useful. If you have additions or corrections, please post them or email me. See you in Rio!

Your intrepid reporter,

Bwana Dik