

Travel

A Holiday in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Tijuca National



The entrance to Tijuca National Park.



Travel With John Daye

Photos & Editorial by John Daye

The summer months always propose the same seasonal question; where should we go for our vacation!? Well if I may, let me suggest one place in particular. That's right, you guessed it; Rio de Janeiro! Rio is a city full of many wonderful sights, sounds, smells, and tastes. It is a city with a past, a present, and a future. It has its problems also, but for the most part it has its people, and they make up the culture; and all things considered Rio is an excellent choice for your vacation destination, whether you are single, a couple, a family, or group – Rio has plenty to offer.

As we covered in last week's photojournalistic essay, the Statue of Christ the redeemer atop Mount Corcavado should definitely be your first stop. From this holy perch, the statue of Christ seems to bless this world renowned tourist destination with open arms, and from most appropriately, the best view. That is the reason I suggest you make Corcavado your first stop, because of the breathtaking view of Rio de Janeiro from what would be Christ's vantage point.

There are many other tourist locations that are deemed necessary to have made your trip worthwhile, among them, to name a few are: 1) The world famous Sugar Loaf Mountain, where you can take the cable car for a more awesome view; 2) National Library; 3) War Memorial; 4) Burle Marx's House; Largo do Botafario – Cosme Velho District; 5) Copacabana & Ipanema Beaches. There are many other sights and destination of interest including many great dining establishments, outdoor cafes, and a bustling nightlife, but one place in particular is coming up in the next paragraph.

Parque Nacional da Tijuca:

"As a consequence of intensive deforestations for the creation of sugar cane- and coffee plantations until the mid 19th century together with severe erosion effects and dramatic rainfall reductions, Rio de Janeiro's drinking water supply was reduced to such extent, that King Don Pedro II in 1861 decided to reforest the respective areas. In painstaking and detailed work and with the help of only 6 slaves the engineer M. G. Archer achieved within 10 years to replant more than 40,000 species of native Atlantic Rainforest"

Parque Nacional da Tijuca, or Floresta da Tijuca as it is also named, is the largest urban forest in the entire world.



Taunay Small Waterfall

Home to one of nature's greatest genetic reserves of flora and fauna, the Tijuca protects more than 7,900 acres of forest and is part of Brazil's famous Atlantic Rain Forest. Much of the flora and fauna found in Brazil's rain forest is native only to Brazil. "There are also the highest mountaintops of Rio de Janeiro, waterfalls and hidden caves." In the magnificent forest there is one very beautiful flower that stands out; it was originally brought over from Africa and is known as "Impatience." It is also fondly called the "dizzy lizzy."

Tijuca National Park is 20 km away from downtown; to go on a tour along its sinuous roads and to visit the many attractions may take an entire day. It is divided into three nucleuses – the Tijuca Forest, the Carioca Hill and the Gávea Stone/Bonita Stone. The Pico da Tijuca (Tijuca Pick), with an altitude of 1021meters, is the summit of the park, and also the second highest in the whole municipal district of Rio de Janeiro; second only to Pico da Pedra Branca (White Stone Pick) at 1024 meters high and locat-



The bartender making a Caipirinha



The African flower "Impatience."

Park, Copacabana and Ipanema Beach, Part 2



Elaine Tomaz de Aquino, my "Girl from Ipanema."



Copacabana & Ipanema Beaches.



There are many jeeps available for tours.



Our jeep parked at the Tijuca country store.

ed in Bangu, the Western Zone of Rio de Janeiro. "One of the most beautiful waterfalls of the park emerges from the Fall of Rio Tijuca. It is named after Nicholas Antoine Taunay, one of the members of the French artistic mission that came to Brazil in 1816 invited by King D. Joao VI. Tunay bought Count Gestas' estate in 1817 and settled down next to the Cascatinha (waterfall) in a house of wattle and daub. Later on, he built a beautiful house in the area where the parking lot is today."

"The painter's house, in colonial style, was demolished at the beginning of the twentieth century and a restaurant was built in its place." It was in that restaurant where I first sampled two of the most popular refreshments in Brazil; one was "Feijoada: which is considered a national dish made from black beans, meat, vegetables and herbs. The second was "Caipirinha," the national drink made with grinding sugar with limes/lemon, and adding sugarcane or regular rum. I will never forget my first visit to Tijuca National Park.



A jogger on Copacabana Beach.



Life is very casual along the beachfront.



It's all in the game.

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