

Introduction. Tourism is becoming a major industry in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo are two of the most visited destinations in the country, offering visitors (whether in the country on business or pleasure) a fabulous peek into the complex heritage and natural spectacle of Brazil. Tourism rates sky-rocketed from the year 2000 onwards as awareness of its multifaceted appeal rose. There was a period between 2006 and 2008 that economic issues hindered the tourism industry somewhat. However, Brazil is the most visited country in the continent of South America today.

While the major draw-cards to Brazil continue to be its unique cultural integrity coupled with its absolute beauty, it is also a viable business-related destination. Services, industry and agriculture make up the vast majority of its annual GDP, and ensure that corporate personalities from around the world visit the manufacturing plants, corporate giants, and so on that have their headquarters based in Brazil.

The main natural attractions in Brazil are: The Amazon Jungle; The Amazon River; the many other rainforests of this tropical and subtropical region; the extensive beaches and bays that line the coast; the many unique and fascinating plant and animal species in Brazil. Because of the abundance and accessibility of many of its natural attractions, Brazil has also become acclaimed for its increasing focus on eco-tourism. This means that service providers and locals, in addition to those visiting the destination, are aware of and actively promoting tourism that does not harm the environment or its resources. In fact, support of and participation in some of the attractions and activities actually aid the local communities to preserve and protect the plants, animals and landscapes around them for the future enjoyment of other generations.

Conclusion. Most of the international visitors hail from Argentina, Italy and the United States of America. Interestingly, tourist visa requirements have been waived for many countries; including Greece, Italy, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, Turkey and many more. Whether for their historical import, cultural contribution or natural splendence, the following places have been deemed to be World Heritage Sites by the official body of UNESCO: Ouro Preto (a historic town) – declared as a World Heritage Site in 1980; Olinda (a historic centre) – declared a World Heritage Site in 1982; Jesuit Missions of the Guaranis: including San Ignacio Mini, Santa Ana, and the Ruins of Sao Miguel das Missoes - declared a World Heritage Site in 1984; Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Congonhas - declared a World Heritage Site in 1985; Salvador de Bahia (a historic centre) - declared a World Heritage Site in 1985; Iguacu National Park - declared a World Heritage Site in 1986; Brasilia - declared a World Heritage Site in 1987; Serra da Capivara National Park- declared a World Heritage Site in 1991; São Luis (a historic centre) - declared a World Heritage Site in 1997; Atlantic Forest Southeast Reserves - declared a World Heritage Site in 1999; Discovery Coast Atlantic Forest Reserves - declared a World Heritage Site in 1999; Diamantina (a historic centre and town) - declared a World Heritage Site in 1999; Pantanal Conservation Area - declared a World Heritage Site in 2000; Central Amazon Conservation Complex- declared a World Heritage Site in 2000; Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks - declared a World Heritage Site in 2001; Brazilian Atlantic Islands: Fernando de Noronha and Atol das Rocas Reserves - declared a World Heritage Site in 2001; Goiás (a historic centre and town - declared a World Heritage Site in 2001; Sao Francisco Square in the town of São Cristovão - declared a World Heritage Site in 2010.

References:

1. http://www.thefullwiki.org/Tourism_in_Brazil
2. <http://www.brazil.org.za/tourism.html>
3. <http://www.minube.net/travel/brazil>