

## 4. THE SOUTH REGION

The South region comprises Brazil's three southernmost states: PARANA, SANTA CATARINA and RIO GRANDE DO SUL, 6,76% of the country's total area with 22,080 thousand inhabitants, 15,10% of Brazil's population. The South region's main features are:

- \* The smallest region in Brazil, yet the second most densely populated.
- \* The country's major agricultural region, holding first place in the production of rice, wheat, soybeans, corn and potatoes, and also Brazil's major livestock raising area.
- \* Second largest industrial zone, surpassed only by the Southeastern states.
- \* Paranagua Port, in Parana State, Brazil's third busiest port.
- \* The most unusual landscape in Brazil, featured by two dominating plateaus with scrubland and pasturelands called "pampas" and by Pine Forests. The area also displays two coastal ranges covered by the Atlantic Coast and 1.200 km (746 mi) of coast with beautiful beaches, cliffs and lagoons.
- \* Heavily irrigated by rivers from the Southeast basin and by the Uruguay and Parana rivers' basins.
- \* High hydroelectric potential in the Parana River basin.
- \* Itaipu Dam, the world's largest installed hydroelectric capacity.
- \* Magnificent Iguassu Falls, the world's widest waterfalls.
- \* Vila Velha's weird geological formations, in Parana State.
- \* Blumenau and Joinville, German style cities in architecture and life style.
- \* European Style Mountain resorts.
- \* The largest non Iberian colonization in Brazil: Germans and Italians in Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul States; Italians, Japanese, Poles, Dutch and Ukrainians in Parana State, all integrated to the Brazilian culture, although keeping their main cultural features.
- \* The "gauchos", Southern cowboys and their nomadic and independent life style.
- \* Rich folklore, showing the immigrants' influence and the gaucho culture.
- \* Local cuisine characterized as much by the "Churrasco" typical gaucho barbecue and the "Chimarrao" mate herb tea served very hot, as for German and Italian specialties.
- \* Wide lodging options.

The main cities are IGUASSU, CURITIBA, FLORIANOPOLIS and PORTO ALEGRE, all of them linked to other cities in Brazil and in Southern South America by road and by air. The region's major ports are Florianopolis and Itajai in Santa Catarina State and Paranagua in Parana State.

## 4.1. FOZ DO IGUASSU



Located close to the point where the Iguassu River empties its waters into the Parana River forming the world's widest waterfalls and giving rise to the double border of Brazil and Argentina, the city of Foz do Iguacu, with 325.137 inhabitants (2009 census), is of great tourist interest. Although not being big, Foz do Iguassu is a busy city, thanks to the many visitors that come to see the falls and also to Brazilian shoppers that come to purchase imported goods in Ciudad Del Este, the Paraguayan tax-free city right across the border. The Itaipu Hydroelectric Dam also brings great activity to the city thanks to the high number of its employees living in Foz do Iguassu.

### Foz do Iguassu - Excursions

#### **Brazilian Falls from Das Cataratas Hotel (2h)**

Walking along the 1.500 m (4.921 ft) long paths following cascades and then walking along the catwalk that leads very close to the bottom of the Devil's Throat, the guests will enjoy magnificent views. There is also an elevator for those wishing to view and shoot the falls from the top.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

#### **Brazilian Falls from other Brazilian Side Hotels (2h30)**

Leaving from your hotel on the Brazilian side by motorcoach and crossing Iguassu National Park as far as the Brazilian Falls. Walking along the paths following cascades and then walking along the catwalk that leads very close to the bottom of the Devil's Throat, the guests will enjoy magnificent views. Taking an elevator to go up to the road, and there boarding the motor coach to get back to the hotel.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

#### **Brazilian Falls from Meliá Iguazú Hotel (3h30)**

Leaving from Meliá Iguazú Hotel on the Argentinean side by motorcoach and crossing the border, proceeding to the Iguassu National Park as far as the Brazilian falls. Walking along the paths following cascades and then walking along the catwalk that leads very close to the bottom of the Devil's Throat, the guests will enjoy magnificent views. Taking an elevator to go up to the road and there boarding the motor coach to get back to the hotel.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

#### **Argentinean Falls from Brazilian Side Hotels (6h)**

Leaving from other hotels on the Brazilian side for a drive and a quick customs check, crossing the Tancredo Neves Bridge over the Iguassu River, which forms the border between Argentina & Brazil. Once in Argentina, tour takes a scenic highway up the Argentinean Iguazu National Park. Tour starts with ample time to visit Argentinean falls. Stopping at the Visitors' Center and proceeding from there the Superior Circuit, the up-river cascades, to the Inferior Circuit, the down-river falls and then takes the Ecological Jungle Train that leads visitors to and from the most impressive observation point of the falls – The Devil's Throat. Return to the hotel

*Entrance fee is not included.*

**Argentinean Falls from Das Cataratas Hotel (7h30)**

Leaving from the Das Cataratas Hotel, for a short drive and a quick customs check, crossing the Tancredo Neves Bridge over the Iguassu River, which forms the border between Argentina & Brazil. Once in Argentina, tour takes a scenic highway up the Argentinean Iguazu National Park. Tour starts with ample time to visit Argentinean falls. Stopping at the Visitors' Centre and proceeding from there the Superior Circuit, the up-river cascades, to the Inferior Circuit, the down-river falls and then takes the Ecological Jungle Train that leads visitors to and from the most impressive observation point of the falls – The Devil's Throat. Return to the hotel.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

**Argentinean Falls from Meliá Iguazú Hotel (6h)**

Walking tour departing from the hotel, stopping at the Visitor's Centre and proceeding from there to the Inferior Circuit, the down-river falls, and then to the Superior Circuit, the up-river cascades. Taking the Ecological Jungle Train that leads visitors to and from the most impressive observation point of the falls – The Devil's Throat. Return to the hotel.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

**Itaipu Dam from Das Cataratas Hotel (3h)**

Leave from Das Cataratas Hotel, going through the city of Foz do Iguassu as far as Itaipu Dam. Stop at the Visitors' Centre to attend an audio-visual presentation of the construction of the dam and of the hydroelectric plant. Proceed for a guided visit to the world's largest hydroelectric complex.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

*Itaipu is closed on Brazilian National Holidays, Sundays and Paraguayan Holidays.*

**Itaipu Dam from Brazilian Side Hotels (2h30)**

Leave from other hotels on the Brazilian side, going through the city of Foz do Iguassu as far as Itaipu Dam. Stop at the Visitors' Center to attend an audio-visual presentation of the construction of the dam and of the hydroelectric plant. Proceed for a guided visit of the world's largest hydroelectric complex.

*Entrance fee is not included.*

*Itaipu is closed on Brazilian National Holidays, Sundays and Paraguayan Holidays.*

## 4.2. CURITIBA



Capital of Parana and one of the wealthiest state in Brazil, Curitiba is the Brazilian capital with the highest standard of living and also the one with the strongest European influence. With a population of 1.851.215 inhabitants (2009 census) the very cosmopolitan Curitiba is also an important university city. Largely industrialized nowadays, Curitiba is nevertheless a slow pace city and its high level of health, education and transport facilities provide the most European like life standard in Brazil. The city is very much pedestrian oriented and a great part of its downtown area is closed to the traffic.

### Curitiba - Excursions

#### **Half Day City Tour of Curitiba** (approx. 4 hours)

Curitiba city tour includes downtown and parks. Guests will visit the following attractions: Downtown, Garibaldi Square, Largo da Ordem, Cathedral, Tiradentes Square, Paço da Liberdade, Rua das Flores (one of Curitiba's main commercial areas), Santos Andrade Square, Oscar Niemeyer Museum (external visit - its nickname is "Eye Museum" due to its modern architecture in eye-shape), Pope's Woods, Botanical Garden.

*Private tour with bilingual guide assistance.*

*On Sundays there might be changes in the walking tour, as there is a handcraft market in the old town.*

*Pope's Woods - Houses closed on Mondays.*

#### **Half Day Tour to Vila Velha and Furnas** (approx. 6 hours)

Vila Velha State Park is located in Ponta Grossa, about 100 km from Curitiba. The landscapes until there are very beautiful, with rock formations, fields and farms (cattle raising and grains). The tour includes a visit to the main attractions: Arenitos (Stones with different formats), Furnas (big craters with vegetation and water inside) and Lagoa Dourada (Golden Lagoon- has its names as its waters become a golden color by sunset)

*Departure at 7:30h - return around 14:30h.*

*Entrance to the Vila Velha State Park included.*

*Not available on Tuesdays.*

#### **Curitiba By Night II with dinner** (approx. 3,5 hours)

Curitiba by night, a panoramic tour focusing the places with interesting lighting: Wire Opera House, Botanical Garden, Largo da Ordem, Tiradentes Square with Cathedral, Santos Andrade Square, Oscar Niemeyer Museum (external visit- its nickname is "Eye Museum" due to its modern architecture in eye-shape), Santa Felicidade (the traditional Italian neighbourhood. Adega Durigan (Colonial wine, cheese and salami tasting). The tour includes a typical dinner (all you can eat) with Italian specialties at Madalosso or Velho Madalosso.

*Departure at 18:30h – return 22:30h.*

*Dinner at Restaurant Velho Madalosso or similar (beverages and desserts not included).*

*Wire Opera House is closed on Mondays.*