

FAQ's Concerning "Brazil Geo Mine Tour"

Question 1: Who will lead our group?

The Crew on all tours consists of a professional Driver, a specialized local guide and the Tour Leader. Where necessary, crew may only consist of a tour guide.

Question 2: What's included in the tour price?

All accommodations throughout; daily buffet breakfast during the tours, from put-in till put-out point all meals are included, all internal transportation; all day trips as outlined in the itinerary; services of an experienced English speaking Tour leader; and airport transfers from start day till departure from Brazil. All mine and other sites admission fees.

Question 3: Where does the tour depart from?

If you are on "Wonders of the South" trip, the tour departs from Porto Alegre. We will pick you up at the Airport Salgado Filho on dates and times specified. If you are taking "Gem Storm", departure is from Belo Horizonte and pick up is at the Confins Airport.

Question 4: What about optional tours & activities

Optional tours and activities are not labeled at this time, however we always consider improvements in our tour, by adding new sites or activities. If any additional activities comes up, you'll be notified in advance. We welcome suggestions.

Question 5: What will be the weather like?

Seasons in Brazil are the reverse of North hemisphere states . As our tour are in May for "Wonders of the South" (Autumn) and August for "Gem Stom" (Winter), you can expect higher variations in temperatures and rain, but not cold at all. In the South you'll face cooler temperatures, varying from 10°C to 25°C and in the Southeast from 15°C to 30°C.

Question 6: How big is the group?

Each group is limited to 10 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in Geo Tour travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

Question 7: What are our accommodations like?

We always stay in good accommodations — hotels and lodges all have private bath or shower. Accommodations have been chosen on the basis of location, atmosphere and local charm. Accommodation are based on a twin share basis, with a single supplement charge for single people.

Question 8: What about U.S. and Canadian Customs?

Brazil is covered by the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which means that many Brazilian products including gem, mineral and jewelry items have lower duties when coming into Canada, and are duty free when brought into the U.S. GST in Canada will be charged as per Customs discretion and regulations.

Question 9: What meals are included?

Full daily meals specified during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1, and finishing with breakfast on departure day if the itinerary demands or specifies. We eat a variety of local foods prepared in a wide range of settings. In many cases, we simply order a number of dishes and share, allowing you to sample new foods and decide what you enjoy best.

Question 10: What if I would like more information?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office or your travel agent for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked on the tour. You can also refer to the "Background" and "Related Links" sections of this web site.

Question 11: When is payment due?

A non-refundable deposit of \$ 500 is due at time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full land cost is due 60 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and are outlined in the "Terms & Conditions" section of our website.

Question 12: How do we travel during the tour?

All local transportation is included in the land price of the trip. Most of the transportation is by tour bus or van, except where alternate vehicles are needed to access some mines. Of course, we also explore on foot.

Question 13: Are these "educational" tours?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". We visit many temples and historical sites, and develop an overview of Brazilian history and culture. Museums and technical lectures are included in all tours, as well geographic and geologic explanations on the go. But this is only a portion of the educational experience. We believe that it is equally educational to meet local people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in Portuguese. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent sipping a cold drink in a street market.

Question 14: Do I need Passpor & Visas?

Yes, passports and visas are required for citizen's even infants of the U.S, Canada and Australia for entry to Brazil. U.K and New Zealand citizens need only a passport. Tourists and visitors from Mercosul countries do not need to present passports. Business travelers may need a special business visa. Following is a Toronto Brazilian web site URL:
<http://www.consbrastoronto.org>.

Question 15: Are there any health requirements?

For travel anywhere in Brazil no immunizations are normally required; however, it is recommended that you have updated vaccines for diphtheria, tetanus, and polio. Children must additionally have current inoculations against measles, mumps, and rubella. A yellow fever certificate is mandatory if you have visited certain third-world countries within the previous 90 days. Contact your personal physician for individual recommendations.

Question 16: What taxes do I need to pay in Brazil?

Airport Tax for international flights internal flights are normally taxed and included in your total airfare. All other goods and services taxes are included on displayed tag prices. No taxes are refundable.

Question 17: How are the rates handled by your office?

Tour fares and rates are quoted in Canadian dollars and are based on tariffs and rate of exchange in effect as of July, 2008. These rates are subject to change prior to the operation of the tour.

Question 18: What are the Brazilian business hours?

Most shops in Brazil are open from 9am-6: 30 or 7pm, weekday, and 9am-1pm on Sunday. Many shopping centers stay open as late a 10pm. Banks open 11 pm, Monday- Friday, and

close at 4pm. Most of the small towns we're going to maintains the tradition of closing for lunch time between 11:00 am to noon or 1:00 pm.

Question 19: How do I tip?

In most restaurants and bars a 10% service fee is added to the bill. Normal gratuities to porters and waiters are included in the price of the tour. Feel free to tip when you think it is appropriate, it is always appreciated. End-of-tour gratuities to the guides and drivers are customary, but not compulsory, and are left to the discretion of the tour members.

Question 20: How about electricity?

Rio Grande do Sul, 220 volts. Minas Gerais, 110 volts. Plugs are of the two-pin type and most electric outlets will accept North America-style two-pronged plugs, but not those with one wider prong. You can bring a converter plug for the wider 2 prongs type. If you have 3 prong outlets, bring an adapter to the 2-prong system. Most hotels provide 110-volts and 220 outlets.

Question 21: Do I have to take any medication?

Yes. Don't forget to bring any needed prescription medication. Most prescription and non-prescription drugs are available at pharmacies in Brazil, but you may not find exactly what you are used to. Pack prescription drugs in your carry-on luggage.

Question 22: What currency should I carry? What's Brazilian currency?

Cash is the best. Travelers checks are troublesome, since in the country side it is not accepted, or you won't do well on the exchange rate when dickering with dealers. The larger dealers will usually take personal checks or credit cards, but again you may not do as well as with cash. In general, you'll be able to pay travel expenses with a credit card. Gem and mineral transactions are usually best done in U.S. dollars. We recommend that you wait until you arrive in Brazil to exchange money. Note that if you are carrying monetary instruments in excess of US\$10,000, you are required to file a report with both U.S/Canada and Brazilian Customs.

The Brazilian currency unit is the Real (R\$).

Question 23: How do I ship commercial goods from Brazil?

Depending where you are we'll advise you of the best carrier or air cargo and rates. In case you get bulk buying, we can accommodate your goods along with one of our all year long several air freights and ocean shipments. Arrangements are made on individual basis.

Question 24: Is it easy to use telephone in Brazil?

Yes, very simple and easy. Anywhere you can find a Regular or Cell Phone. Just get a telephone card at any Magazine vender's at the street (about \$2.00). To make an international call, dial: 00 + operator code* + country code + area code (if there is one) + telephone number. For reverse charge international calls dial 0800 7032111.

Question 25: What about smoking & alcoholic beverages?

Passengers are not permitted to smoke in the vehicle. Drinking alcohol is also not allowed on the vehicle, however, feel free to relax around at the hotels and towns with a drink in the evenings. Usually the passengers will run a communal bar with an honesty system.

Question 26: What about travel insurance?

We strongly recommend travel insurance against loss of possessions, accidents and cancellation through unforeseen circumstances. Stonebridge and Geo Tour is not responsible for loss or damage or theft of luggage and/or personal injury, accidents, illness, hospitalization or medical expenses. Call your travel agent.

Question 27: Does the itinerary ever change?

Every effort is made to follow the itinerary as laid out in the brochure, however, factors such as road and weather conditions may make it necessary for the tour crew to vary the itinerary. Stonebridge (Brazil Geo Mine Tour) do not accept responsibility for expenses incurred due to weather or road conditions, strikes, bushfires or floods. Should any activities not be available, substitution will be made to the best of our ability and no refund will be made. Any additional costs necessitated by such changes are the responsibility of the tour member.

Question 28: What If I have an emergency?

If you would like to leave a contact phone number with family while you are on tour, please give the office phone number on 1-877-859-4367. The office can always get a message to crew for passengers to call home for any urgent matters. All messages are treated as a priority by the office and are actioned as soon as possible.

Question 29: Are there any luggage restrictions?

Each person is allowed two checked bags not exceeding 70 lbs each. This is a very liberal allowance and we recommend that you bring considerably less to make travel less cumbersome. There will be opportunities to have laundry done along the way. Your carry-on bag should not exceed 45 inches in total dimensions (length + width + height).

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Question 31: What do I pack?

Equipment: Don't forget your camera, plenty of film (or memory cards) and extra batteries. A pocket calculator comes in handy for currency conversion and dickering with the dealers. A hand lens and small flashlight (penlight) are useful for examining gems (and some minerals). Collecting gear is not necessary, but a few small hand tools might be useful. If you decide to bring a pick, pocket knife or any other sharp implement, pack them in your checked luggage; otherwise airport security will confiscate them.

Clothing, etc.: Bring casual wear for mild days (60s & 70s) and cool nights (50s & 60s). Rain is always a possibility. Cooler temperatures are possible in Ouro Preto and cities in Rio Grande do Sul only. A medium-weight jacket is suggested. Bring sturdy, comfortable footwear with good traction that you don't mind getting dirty. It's good to have a hat and sunscreen for sun protection. While bugs are not usually a problem, there may be occasions when insect repellent will come in handy. You might want to bring some old clothes for the mines and then leave them behind. Our Brazilian leader, Ulymar Rocha, will gladly accept clothing donations for distribution to the needy in the poorer mining communities.

Medications: see question 21 above.

Question 32: How much travelling will be done in a day?

Brazil is a big country, and so are the States we'll be touring. On full days of travelling you may cover approximately 300km a day on paved and rough roads. Despite this, even on travelling days we always strive to get into cities before dark. All of our vehicles have air-

conditioning, reclining cloth seats, foot rests, and seat belts and are the ultimate for comfortable travel.

Question 33: What are Brazil Time Zones?

Because of its continental dimensions Brazil has 4 time zones. The official time is Brasília time and it corresponds to 3 hours less than GMT. From September to February the clocks are put forward one hour in most Brazilian States.