



AS THE WORLD TURNS...

Like SA, other Brics countries such as Brazil and China are spending billions on new infrastructure in expansion programmes that are benefiting both business and tourism. We look at some exciting business and leisure destinations in these regions

BRAZIL

With the Soccer World Cup and the ever-expanding Summer Olympic Games coming to the country in the next few years, Brazil's shaping up in every imaginable way. The First Princess prize for biggest cosmetic surgery industry and a gym on every block in its major cities are just small indicators of what to expect when the country hosts the world.

A giant tourist kernel that forms a broad part of South America – and happens to be the sixth-biggest economy in the world, having overtaken the UK last

year – it has magnificent attractions, like Rio's statue of Christ the Redeemer, the Amazon rainforest and the 20 million people-strong São Paulo metropolis that remains refreshingly billboard-free in the midst of all the skyscrapers, helicopters and cars. But besides the regular tourist snares, there's also an unexplored grandeur that Brazil's less known for: pared-down, natural luxury. Just off the eminent shopping hub of **Rua Oscar Freire** is the **Fasano Hotel** in business capital São Paulo. A family-owned establishment which was voted one of the Top 50 Hotels in the World by *Condé Nast Traveller*, it exudes an elegance that's in stark contrast to gaudy

colours, kitsch and festivals. A restrained interior is heavily edited and pays honour to the post-war beginnings of modernism. That, combined with a world-class restaurant and superior service balanced by South American conviviality, makes the Fasano unrivalled in a city which is often associated with bling, excess and rampant consumerism.

Visit: www.fasano.com.br/

A two-hour flight away from Saõ Paulo lies the small coastal town of **Porto Seguro**. A further hour's drive brings you to the landing point, dated 1500, of one of the first Portuguese explorers. Called **Trancoso**, the town's the starting point of the state of Bahia's environmental protection area and is surrounded by forests and open beaches. However, the main attraction is the *quadrado* (plaza), unique to this city, although Mediterranean-inspired. The whole town revolves around this tiny area where time is the most valuable commodity.

The Uxua Casa Hotel, with a local cuisine kitchen owned and run by Wilbert Das, ex-Creative Director of Diesel, spills out onto the square with its reworked fishermen's cottages. Inside the property is an arresting tree house built from reclaimed organic materials in the traditional Bahia-style in what Das calls "rustic modernism". It beautifully embodies the obsession with "new luxury", encompassing high-tech services like Wi-Fi and a gym, but pruned of opulence and flash. Visit: www.uxua.com

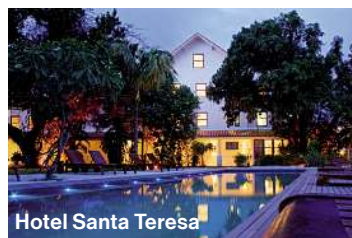
The Hotel Santa Teresa in the hedonistic seaside jungle of Rio de Janeiro is situated in a treed, mountain-top oasis with red-tiled houses and cobblestone streets. The 40-room establishment is in a preserved colonial building – a former coffee plantation mansion – in the middle of 3 995m² of landscaped heaven. The tropical-inspired design features burnt cement floors, indigenous woods and black and gold limestone slate. A romantic lounge bar, mystical art from Bahia and panoramic city views from all the rooms complete the offering. Visit: www.santa-teresa-hotel.com/en



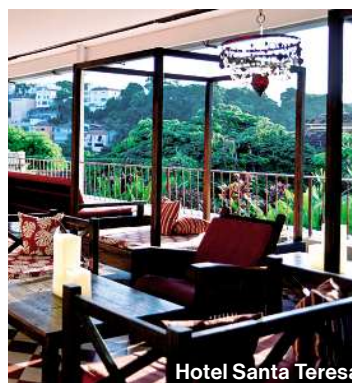
Fasano Hotel



Uxua Casa Hotel



Hotel Santa Teresa



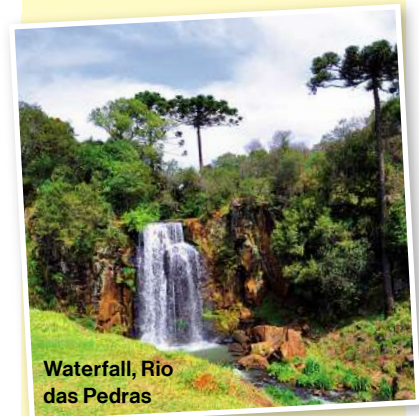
Hotel Santa Teresa

SOMETHING DIFFERENT WITH CLUB MED

Nestled amid lush greenery at the edge of a long beach in the heart of Brazil's second-largest nature reserve is Club Med's Rio das Pedras Resort.

An exciting holiday destination for couples and families alike, the resort offers a wide variety of sports and activities. From yoga to wakeboarding, there's something for everyone. A large seafront swimming pool is situated next to the La Jangada restaurant, where – after a day of water-skiing or excursions – a superb variety of dishes awaits you at the buffet.

Club Med's always led the way in creating Children's Clubs and at Rio das Pedras, youngsters from toddlers to teenagers are superbly catered for. The resort provides the ultimate comfortable, relaxing experience for the whole family.



Waterfall, Rio das Pedras

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