

LOCALS INSIDER

Rio de Faneiro

by Vitor of Hidden Rio

SOCIOLOGIST · FOUNDER OF HIDDEN RIO

SAMBA FOR THE
WORKING PEOPLE

Clube Renascença, Mondays

WHERE SAMBA WAS BORN

Pedra do Sal, Pequena África

THE BEACH THE MARKET
COULDN'T SWALLOW

Grumari, Zona Oeste



Vitor *of Hidden Rio*

Carioca, sociologist and founder of Hidden Rio, a conscious-tourism project he runs with his partner Isha, taking visitors beyond Rio's usual tourist circuit.

Born and raised in Rio and trained in Social Sciences at UFF, Vitor works alongside his twin brother Lucas, a photographer. His Rio is a city of neighbourhoods, music, history, beaches and communities, much more than the postcard view: the culture and nightlife of Zona Norte and Centro, the old port district, and beaches worth leaving Copacabana behind for.

[Instagram @hidden.rrio](#)



[Hidden Rio tours and VIP support](#)



Samba & dance



Clube Renascença — Samba do Trabalhador

MONDAYS 4.30–9PM · R\$30

One of the last urban quilombos in Rio. Moacyr Luz has led the Samba do Trabalhador here every Monday afternoon for twenty years: the most traditional samba circle in the city, for the working people, and you feel it in your chest.



Rua Barão de São Francisco 54, Andaraí, Rio de Janeiro

Baile Charme de Madureira

SATURDAYS FROM 10PM

Founded in 1990 and declared intangible heritage of Rio in 2013. Black American charme and R&B under the concrete of the Madureira viaduct, and generations of dancers who invented a whole vocabulary of choreography.



Viaduto Negrão de Lima, Rua Carvalho de Souza, Madureira, Rio de Janeiro

Pagode da Garagem

TUESDAYS

A weekly roda that keeps downtown samba alive on a night when the city is quiet, on one of Rio's most historically layered squares. The roda has moved between spaces on the plaza; ask locally for the current spot.



Praça Tiradentes, Centro, Rio de Janeiro

Trapiche Gamboa

PORT ZONE · CHECK PROGRAMME

A converted 19th-century warehouse with brick walls and high ceilings, a short walk from Pedra do Sal. Resident and guest samba groups keep the old port-zone samba houses breathing.



Rua Sacadura Cabral 155, Gamboa, Rio de Janeiro

Pequena África

Cais do Valongo

DAYLIGHT HOURS · FREE · VLT PRAÇA MAUÁ

Vitor's hidden gem. Built in 1811, buried under the city and rediscovered in 2011, the Valongo Wharf is the largest arrival point for enslaved Africans in the history of the Americas, around 900,000 people by UNESCO's count. A World Heritage Site since 2017, preserved at the level of the original stones.

 Rua Barão de Tefé, Saúde, Rio de Janeiro

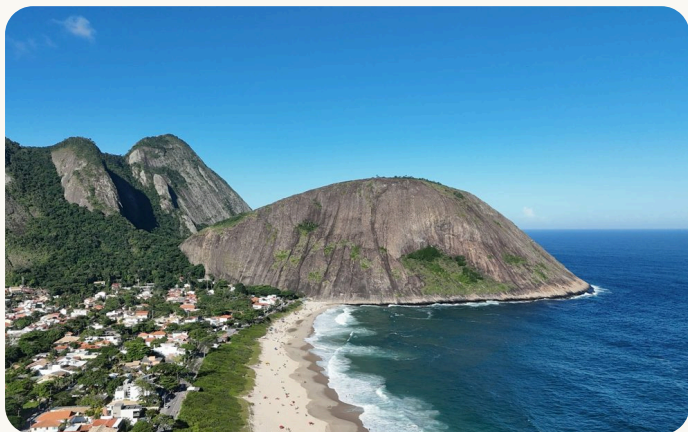
Pedra do Sal

RODA MONDAYS & FRIDAYS FROM 7PM

A quilombo of the historic Black port community and the birthplace of carioca samba, where Tia Ciata's gatherings produced "Pelo Telefone" in 1917, the first samba on record. The outdoor roda draws hundreds and spills into the streets. Bring cash for the kiosks.

 Largo João da Baiana, Saúde, Rio de Janeiro

Beaches, across the bridge



Itacoatiara

SERRA DA TIRIRICA STATE PARK · 45–60 MIN FROM RIO

700 metres of fine white sand wrapped in Atlantic Forest, between two rocky headlands. Strong surf, no high-rises behind it, and in Vitor's biased carioca heart simply the most beautiful beach in Brazil.

📍 Praia de Itacoatiara, Niterói

Praia do Sossego & Prainha de Piratininga

CALM COVES · SHORT TRAILS FROM PIRATININGA

Two small sheltered coves most visitors never hear of. Sossego means tranquility, and the rocks keep the Atlantic out. Prainha de Piratininga is quieter still, where locals swim before lunch.

📍 Praia do Sossego, Piratininga, Niterói

Beaches, wild west

Grumari

PROTECTED SINCE 1986 · ARRIVE EARLY · CASH ONLY

2.5 kilometres of sand and forest, protected by law from the tower blocks that took the rest of the coast. One winding road over a green hill, no boardwalk, no ATMs. This is what Rio looked like before the developers arrived.

 Praia de Grumari, Barra de Guaratiba, Rio de Janeiro

Prainha

SURFERS · FEW FACILITIES

Small and wild, 700 metres of coarse sand at the base of a green cliff, with the most consistent waves in the city. Bring water and snacks.

 Prainha, Recreio dos Bandeirantes, Rio de Janeiro

Praia da Reserva

LONG · UNDEVELOPED · 45 MIN FROM RIO

A long, sparsely built beach between the ocean and protected restinga vegetation. Flatter than Prainha, good for surfers and for an uncrowded weekday walk. Almost no infrastructure.

 Praia da Reserva, Recreio dos Bandeirantes, Rio de Janeiro

Read his full story

Vitor on whether Rio is dangerous, why he refuses to draw a map of fear, Carnaval, and the Rio most visitors never see.

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