Jewish Heritage Tour of Brazil



Brazil Jewish Heritage Tour Sep 19 – 28, 2027

Sun Sep 19/ Sun Day 1 — Departure for Rio de Janeiro

Depart on your overnight flight to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Mon Sep 20/ Day 2 — Arrival in Rio de Janeiro

The Marvelous City — A Gateway Between Continents

Your journey begins as your flight descends toward Rio de Janeiro, revealing one of the world's most spectacular urban landscapes: dramatic granite peaks, the sweeping curve of Guanabara Bay, and the vibrant neighborhoods that have made Rio one of the world's great cultural capitals.

Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel before beginning your first introduction to this extraordinary city.

Explore Rio's legendary beaches, including Copacabana and Ipanema, before continuing to the historic heart of the city. At Praça Mauá, discover the revitalized waterfront district that reflects Rio's transformation into a modern cultural center.

Continue through downtown Rio, passing the striking Metropolitan Cathedral, the elegant Municipal Theater, and the famous Sambadrome, where Carnival transforms the city into a global stage of music and celebration.

Travel to Urca for a cable car ascent to Sugarloaf Mountain. From the summit, Guanabara Bay stretches below in a breathtaking panorama, offering a memorable introduction to the geography that shaped Brazil's history.

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Rio Hotel

Tuesday Sep 21/ Day 3 — Rio de Janeiro

Jewish Memory and Living Traditions

Begin the morning with an ascent of Corcovado Mountain to visit the iconic Christ the Redeemer monument. From this extraordinary vantage point, Rio reveals itself as a city shaped by Portuguese colonial traditions, African and Indigenous influences, and successive waves of immigration.

Among those who arrived on Brazil's shores were Portuguese New Christians — Jews forced to convert during the Iberian Inquisition whose family histories and traditions sometimes survived quietly across generations.



Visit the Jewish Museum of Rio de Janeiro to explore the history of Jewish arrival, adaptation, and contribution. Through its collections, discover how Jewish immigrants helped shape Brazil's commerce, medicine, arts, sciences, and civic life.

Continue to an active synagogue, where contemporary Jewish life provides a connection between earlier generations and the vibrant Jewish community of Brazil today.

In the evening, enjoy dinner and live samba at Carioca da Gema in Lapa, experiencing the warmth, music, and communal energy for which Rio is renowned.

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Rio Hotel (B,D)

Wednesday Sep 22/ Day 4 — Rio de Janeiro to Salvador da Bahia

From Colonial Ports to Hidden Histories

Fly north to Salvador da Bahia, Brazil's first capital and one of the most culturally significant cities in the Americas.

Founded in the sixteenth century, Salvador became a major Atlantic port connecting Europe, Africa, and the New World. It was also a place where New Christians arrived, bringing complex histories shaped by forced conversion, migration, commerce, and questions of identity.

Upon arrival, begin discovering Bahia's extraordinary cultural landscape. Colorful streets, colonial architecture, music, and cuisine reveal the remarkable fusion of Portuguese, African, Indigenous, and other influences that created Bahian culture.



Enjoy a panoramic exploration of the city's historic districts and magnificent views across the Bay of All Saints.

As evening falls, experience Bahia's distinctive cultural traditions through a performance celebrating the region's rich heritage.

Overnight: Fiesta Bahia Hotel (B,D)

Thursday Sep 23/ Day 5 — Salvador da Bahia

Colonial Splendor and Sephardic Memory

Explore Salvador's historic heart, where centuries of Brazilian history remain visible in its streets, buildings, and traditions.

Begin in the Lower City, where Salvador's maritime position made it one of the most important commercial centers of colonial Brazil. Continue through Pelourinho, a UNESCO World Heritage Site celebrated for its colorful facades, churches, and cobblestone streets.

Visit the Lacerda Elevator, connecting the Upper and Lower Cities, and continue through Mercado Modelo, where local artisans and traditions reflect Bahia's creativity. Proceed toward Farol da Barra, where the Atlantic horizon recalls the maritime routes that connected Portugal, Africa, and Brazil for centuries.

Throughout the day, explore the historical presence of New Christians in Bahia, the records that illuminate their lives, and the impact of the Portuguese Inquisition on families navigating faith, identity, and belonging.

Conclude with a special dinner featuring traditional Bahian cuisine.

Overnight: Fiesta Bahia Hotel (B)

Friday Sep 24 / Day 6 — Cachoeira

The Countryside, Colonial Commerce and Hidden Threads of Identity

Leave Salvador behind for the lush landscapes of the Recôncavo Baiano, a region that played a central role in Brazil's colonial economy through sugar production, tobacco cultivation, and Atlantic trade.



Travel to Cachoeira, one of Bahia's most atmospheric historic towns. Its colonial architecture, quiet streets, and traditional customs preserve the memory of earlier generations who built their lives in this fertile region.

Explore the relationship between commerce, family networks, and cultural identity in colonial Bahia. Local traditions, architecture, and historical accounts reveal how merchants, artisans, and families contributed to the development of the region.

Enjoy a memorable lunch at a traditional fazenda, surrounded by the landscapes that sustained colonial Bahia, before returning to Salvador in the late afternoon.

Overnight: Fiesta Bahia Hotel (B)

Saturday Sep 25 / Day 7 — Shabbat in Salvador

Reflection, Community and Continuity

This day is dedicated to Shabbat — a meaningful pause for reflection, prayer, and connection.

Guests may choose to attend services with the Jewish community of Salvador at Sociedade Israelita da Bahia, subject to arrangements.

Enjoy time for personal reflection, leisurely exploration, and conversation about the remarkable themes that have accompanied the journey: exile and renewal, hidden traditions and public identity, and the enduring strength of community.

Overnight: Fiesta Bahia Hotel (B)

Sunday / Sep 26 Day 8 — Salvador to Recife

Where Judaism Found a Public Voice in the Americas

Continue north to Recife, Pernambuco, one of the most significant destinations in Jewish history in the Western Hemisphere.

During the Dutch occupation of northeastern Brazil in the seventeenth century, Recife became home to a flourishing Jewish community where Judaism could once again be practiced openly. Here, Sephardic Jews who had lived as New Christians reclaimed their traditions and established Kahal Zur Israel, recognized as the first synagogue in the Americas.



Upon arrival, explore Recife Antigo, the historic quarter where bridges, waterways, and colonial streets preserve the memory of Dutch Brazil.

Discover how this remarkable community flourished during a transformative period in Jewish history — and how some of its members later helped establish Jewish life in New Amsterdam, today's New York.

Overnight: Atlante Plaza Hotel (B)

Monday Sep 27 / Day 9 — Recife & Olinda

Kahal Zur Israel and the Sephardic Legacy of the Americas

Begin in Recife Antigo with an exploration of the historic Jewish quarter and the remarkable story preserved at Kahal Zur Israel. The synagogue site, with its archaeological discoveries and restored spaces, offers a tangible connection to the first organized Jewish community in the Americas.



Continue through the historic streets of Recife, including Rua do Bom Jesus, once a center of Dutch colonial life and a gathering place for Sephardic merchants and families.

In the afternoon, visit Olinda, one of Brazil's most beautiful colonial cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Wander through its colorful streets, admire the views from Alto da Sé, and visit the São Bento Monastery, whose baroque artistry reflects the cultural achievements of colonial Brazil.

As evening falls, gather for a farewell dinner celebrating the friendships, discoveries, and shared experiences of this remarkable journey.

Overnight: Atlante Plaza Hotel (B)

Tuesday Sep 28 / Day 10 — Departure from Recife

After breakfast, transfer to Recife International Airport for your onward journey. (B)