



Sergipe & Alagoas

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Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Pousada da Amendoeira (p481)
- ➔ Pousada Ricardinho do Frances (p478)
- ➔ Maceió Mar Hotel (p474)
- ➔ Pousada Olho D'água (p482)

Best Off the Beaten Track

- ➔ São Miguel Dos Milagres (p481)
- ➔ Laranjeiras (p471)
- ➔ Praia Do Francês (p478)
- ➔ Pontal de Coruripe (p478)

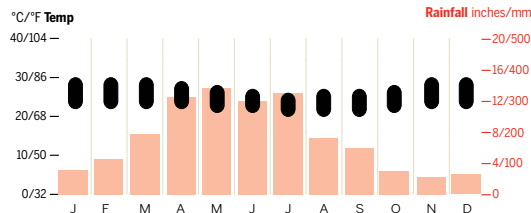
Why Go?

Overshadowed by big Bahia to the south, the tiny states of Sergipe and Alagoas have long been overlooked by travelers. But it's a tendency that's changing – in the past few years, the thoroughly likable coastal city of Maceió has emerged as a buzzing vacation destination for Brazilian tourists. Still, despite the influx of ecofriendly pousadas (guesthouses) and stylish restaurants, there remain plenty of isolated, paradisiacal stretches of white sand, emerald waters, swaying palms and quaint villages along Alagoas' coast.

Inland travel appeals to history-minded travelers: Penedo is a charming riverfront town with picturesque colonial churches and hilly cobblestone streets. Further south, Sergipe's provincial capital has fewer attractions of its own, but Aracaju serves as a gateway to more sleepy colonial towns. In these off-the-beaten-path hamlets, historic 17th-century churches attest to the region's prominence in the early days of European settlement in Brazil.

When to Go

Maceió



Dec–Feb High season brings crowds of domestic tourists to Maceió and Aracaju.

Mar–Aug Temperatures remain high and periods of rain are likely; hotel prices drop.

Sep–Nov Near-perfect weather and few tourists; an ideal time to visit.

History

During the invasion by the Dutch in 1630, many slaves took advantage of the confusion and escaped to the mountains behind the coasts of northern Alagoas and southern Pernambuco. Where the Alagoan towns of Atalaia, Capela, Viçosa, União dos Palmares and Porto Calvo stand today, virgin forests

with fruit and wildlife once provided for colonies of runaway slaves. Palmares, the mightiest republic of escaped slaves, led by the former African king Zumbi, covered present-day Alagoas and Pernambuco. In the 18th and 19th centuries, sugarcane and cotton brought the region prominence; today, sugarcane is still an important crop



Sergipe & Alagoas Highlights

1 Pedaling a rental bike along the friendly beach paths of happening **Maceió** (p472).

2 Snorkeling the colorful coral reefs miles off the shore of **Maragogi** (p482).

3 Getting away from it all on the white sandy beaches of **Praia do Francês** (p478).

4 Exploring the colonial churches and cobblestone streets of historic **Penedo** (p479).

5 Boarding a dune buggy for a joyride along the smooth white sands of **Praia do Gunga** (p479).

6 Feasting on fresh crabs and listening to traditional

forró music in the open-air eateries of **Aracaju** (p467).

7 Slowing down to discover **Porto de Pedras** (p481) and the laid-back beach villages north of Maceió.

8 Stepping back in time in Sergipe's colonial gems of **Laranjeiras** (p471) and **São Cristóvão** (p471).