

# Brasília



Brazil's futuristic capital is an attempt to create a workable, modern utopia. It's the result of a long-harnessed Brazilian dream of an inland capital, carved out of nowhere in the 1950s in a spectacular feat of urban planning, architectural design and political prophecy.

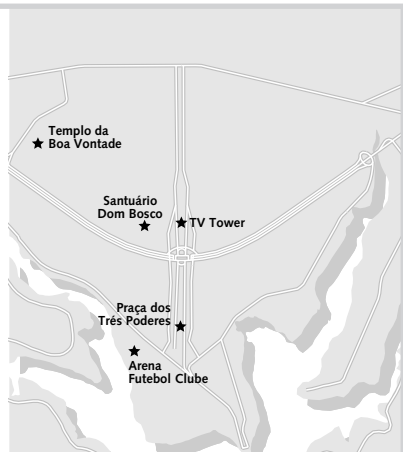
The purpose-built city and its surrounding area, known as the Distrito Federal (DF), occupies part of the Brazilian central plateau – the Planalto – with rolling hills and a large artificial lake, Paranoá. Wide-open, spectacular cerulean skies characterize the whole area, a picturesque backdrop to Brasília's clean-lined design and marvelous architecture.

For a nation often tipped as the country of the future, Brasília is its revolutionary testament to that end, a living museum lauded the world over for everything from its avant-garde grid of perfectly planned streets to its uberorganized residential apartment and commercial blocks (though the city is not without its detractors). As Brazil's seat of government, it's a city of bureaucrats and government workers, all of whom relish the national capital as a '60s version of a third-millennium city. It remains the only city in the world constructed in the 20th century to achieve World Cultural Heritage designation by Unesco.

Just over 50 years since its inauguration, Brasília is affluent, well manicured and lively. If you're interested in modern architecture, you'll easily spend a few days visiting the city's impressive buildings and monuments, each day fueled by some of Brazil's top restaurants and vibrant *vida nocturna*.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Step inside the ethereal **Santuário Dom Bosco** (p384) and watch your 'seen one church, seen them all' attitude adjusted on the spot
- Cleanse your soul or just take a walk on the weird side at the **Templo da Boa Vontade** (p383)
- Watch the sun set over the monuments from the **TV Tower** (p382)
- Dance to the sensual rhythms of samba at **Arena Futebol Clube** (p387)
- Cruise Brasília's futuristic architecture at night when the **Praça dos Três Poderes** (p382) takes on an otherworldly glow



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 061

■ POPULATION: 2.6 MILLION

■ AREA: 5802 SQ KM

