



Rio Grande do Sul

POP 10.7 MILLION

Includes ➔

Porto Alegre	311
Serra Gaúcha	316
Gramado.....	317
Cambará do Sul.....	322
Rota Missões.....	324
Litoral Gaúcho.....	327
Torres.....	327
Rio Grande.....	329

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Valle Rustico (p312)
- ➔ Belle du Valais (p319)
- ➔ Mamma Gema (p313)
- ➔ Casa di Paolo (p319)
- ➔ Atelier das Massas (p313)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Parador Casa da Montanha (p323)
- ➔ Pousada Borghetto Sant'Anna (p312)
- ➔ Jardim Secreto Pousada (p319)
- ➔ Pousada Corucacas (p323)
- ➔ Pousada das Missões (p327)

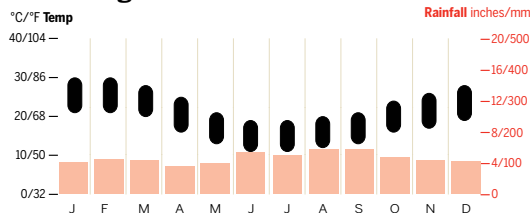
Why Go?

From the jaw-dropping forest-covered canyons of the national parks near Cambará do Sul, and cascading river valleys near cozy Brazilian alpine villages like Gramado, to the stunning Vale dos Vinhedos, where Italian-descended vintners produce wines to rival those of Chile and Argentina: the Rio Grande do Sul defies notions of typical Brazil.

Brazil's southernmost state is its most culturally distinct, home to an independently minded population steeped in cattle herding and cowboy culture. *Gaúchos*, as residents of Rio Grande do Sul are known, are a fiercely proud and traditional lot. In the countryside, it is not unusual to see old-timers sporting wide-brimmed hats and other traditional dress. Grilled meat, or *churrasco*, is still the state's favorite food, and everywhere – even in the cosmopolitan capital of Porto Alegre – locals suck down *chimarrão*, the distinctive, traditional tea made from the *maté* plant.

When to Go

Porto Alegre



Jan-Mar Hot days and cool nights during harvest season in the Vale dos Vinhedos

May-Oct Prices are higher, but you might just see Brazilian snow in Cambará do Sul

Dec & Jun-Jul Gramado is in Alpine Wonderland mode for Christmas, then winter.

History

Living on land long disputed by the Spanish and Portuguese, the people of Rio Grande do Sul used the conflict to create an identity distinct from the rest of Brazil. The region even declared its independence during the ill-fated Guerra dos Farrapos, a decade-long civil war ending in 1845. A wave of immigrants, mostly German, Italian and Swiss,

began arriving in the late 19th century, reinforcing the region's cultural differences.

i Getting There & Around

Porto Alegre is the state's transportation hub, with air and bus services to every major city in Brazil. Excellent roads and the efficient regional bus service makes traveling within the state relatively easy.



Rio Grande do Sul Highlights

- 1 Peer over the edge of the Cãnon da Fortaleza in **Parque Nacional da Serra Geral** (p322)
- 2 Taste your way through the New World's emerging wine region in the gorgeous **Vale dos Vinhedos** (p244)
- 3 Wander the stunning grounds of the ruined Jesuit

mission at **São Miguel das Missões** (p326)

- 4 Look skyward in wonder while tackling the stunning Trilha do Rio do Boi through **Parque Nacional de Aparados da Serra** (p322)
- 5 Wander the carefree Swiss mountain village of **Gramado** (p317),

where fondue flows freely throughout a gorgeous Brazilian winterscape

- 6 Learn to sip *gaúcho* tea with a *chimarrão mestre* in **Porto Alegre** (p311)
- 7 Hole up in splurge-worthy tented luxury at the gorgeous **Parador Casa da Montanha** (p323)