Sergipe & Alagoas

POP 5 MILLION

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 and stylish restaurants, there remain plenty of isolated, paradise-like 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.

Best Places to Sleep
- Pousada Colonial (p476)
- Pousada da Amendoeira (p477)
- Pousada Aquarela do Brasil (p469)
- Pousada Canto de Yemanjá (p474)
- Pousada Olho D’água (p478)

Best Off the Beaten Track
- São Miguel Dos Milagres (p477)
- Laranjeiras (p467)
- Praia Do Francês (p474)
- Japaratinga (p477)
- Pontal de Coruripe (p474)

When to Go

Maceió

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Rainfall inches/mm
- 0
- 4/100
- 8/200
- 12/300
- 16/400
- 20/500

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

Mar–Aug Temperatures remain high and rain is possible; hotel prices drop.

Sep–Nov Near-perfect weather and few tourists.
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 in the area, alongside

Sergipe & Alagoas Highlights
1. Pedaling a rental bike along the friendly beach paths of happening Maceió (p468).
2. Boarding a dune buggy for a joyride along the smooth white sands of Praia do Gunga (p474).
3. Snorkeling the colorful coral reefs miles off the shore of Maragogi (p478).
4. Exploring the colonial churches and cobblestone streets of historic Penedo (p475).
5. Feasting on fresh crabs and listening to traditional forró music in the open-air eateries of Aracaju (p463).
6. Riding the slow local bus to Porto de Pedras (p477) and the laid-back beach villages north of Maceió.
7. Sunbathing and playing in the surf in the up-and-coming hot spot of Praia Do Francês (p474).
8. Stepping back in time in Sergipe’s colonial gems of Laranjeiras (p467) and São Cristóvão (p467).