

Copacabana & Leme

Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Soaking up the sunshine on **Copacabana Beach** (p87), followed by a meal at an oceanfront eatery.
- 2 Exploring the **Forte de Copacabana** (p88) and taking in the view across the beach.
- 3 Walking to mountaintop heights along a forested trail inside the **Forte Duque de Caxias** (p88).
- 4 Admiring the breathtaking sea views from the **Bar do Alto** (p89) in Babilônia favela.
- 5 Listening to samba jam sessions at **Bip Bip** (p96).



For more detail of this area, see Maps p244 and p248 ➔



Best Places to Eat

- Churrascaria Palace (p92)
- Bar do David (p89)
- El Born (p90)
- TT Burger (p90)
- Boulangerie Guerin (p88)
- Joaquina (p93)

For reviews, see p88 ➡



Best Places to Drink

- Escondido (p93)
- Estrelas da Babilônia (p89)
- Ponto da Bossa Nova (p93)
- Sindicato do Chopp (p96)
- Mais Que Nada (p96)
- As Melhores Cervejas do Mundo (p96)

For reviews, see p93 ➡



Best Places to Shop

- Brecho de Salto Alto (p97)
- Bossa Nova & Companhia (p97)
- Galeria River (p97)
- Loja Flá (p97)

For reviews, see p97 ➡

Explore Copacabana & Leme

With the construction of the neoclassical Copacabana Palace hotel in 1923, Copacabana – and Rio – became South America's most elegant destination, one frequented by international celebrities. Copacabana remained Rio's untarnished gem until the 1970s, when the area fell into decline. Today's Copa is a chaotic mix of discount stores and noisy traffic-filled avenues, with a humming red-light district and slightly edgy streets. While paradise it clearly is not, the beach remains beautiful. Framed by mountains and deep blue sea, the magnificent curve of shoreline stretches more than 4km.

Packing the beach are sun-worshippers of every age and background, from favela (slum, informal community) kids to aging socialites, from tourists to families from the Zona Norte. Copacabana's democratic mix, old-school *botecons* (small, open-air bars), eclectic restaurants and nightclubs, myriad shops and of course the handsome shoreline still entrance many visitors. While the cool kids cling to Ipanema and Leblon, Copacabana seems poised on the edge of a renaissance. Its glassy kiosks have brought class to the neighborhood, while Baixo Copa has become a nightlife destination.

The small neighborhood of Leme, just northeast of Copacabana (Av Princesa Isabel divides the two), has a village feel, with its mix of old-timers, upper-middle-class families and favela residents. The lack of major roads through Leme creates a more peaceful vibe, and the oceanfront restaurants make for a more relaxing setting for a drink than the buzzing Copacabana strip.

Local Life

➤ **Markets** Copacabana has a handful of weekly produce markets held at various locales. Our favorite happens in peaceful Bairro Peixoto (p88).

➤ **Hangouts** One of Copacabana's liveliest areas for a drink is Baixo Copa, a bar- and restaurant-lined strip just back from Av Atlântica around Rua Domingos Ferreira and Barão de Ipanema.

➤ **Arts** Little frequented by tourists, Espaço SESC (p97) often hosts an excellent lineup of dance and theater performances.

Getting There & Away

➤ **Bus** Ipanema (161 and 573), Leblon (161, 511 and 583), Gávea (161 and 583), Jardim Botânico (161, 573 and 583) and Centro (121, 123 and 124).

➤ **Metro** Cardeal Arcoverde, Siqueira Campos, Cantagalo and Ipanema/General Osório.