



Walking Tour: Historic Centro

A mélange of cobblestone streets and colonial architecture, Centro is a fine place to delve into Rio's past. Weekdays are the best time to visit, as the area is deserted (and unsafe) on weekends.

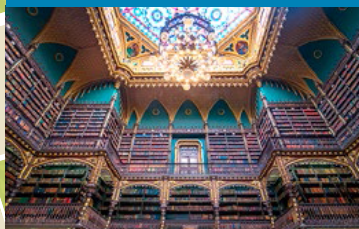
Start Praça Floriano
Length 3km
Distance 4 hours



4 Stop in **Confeitaria Colombo** (www.confeitariacolombo.com.br) for caffeine, pastries and art nouveau surroundings.

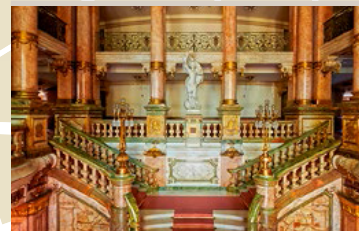


Classic Photo: Interior of the Real Gabinete Português de Leitura



5 **Real Gabinete Português de Leitura** (www.realgabinete.com.br) is a historic reading room that seems straight out of 19th-century Portugal.

3 On the hill above Largo da Carioca, **Igreja São Francisco da Penitência** (www.conventosantoantonio.org.br) is an 18th-century church with a jaw-dropping gilded interior.



2 One of Rio's finest buildings, the neoclassical **Theatro Municipal** (www.theatromunicipal.rj.gov.br) has a lavish interior and stages opera, dance and classical concerts.

1 The heart of downtown is the **Praça Floriano**, a scenic plaza dotted with outdoor cafes and framed by grand architecture.

Take a Break...

Cais do Oriente is set in a charming mansion from the 1870s and features gastronomic delights.

7 One of Centro's oldest lanes, the **Travessa do Comércio**, springs to life at workday's end with open-air bars on the cobblestone streets.

6 Once the seat of the Portuguese rulers in Brazil, the **Paço Imperial** (www.amigosdopacoimperial.org.br) today houses cafes and intriguing art exhibitions.

