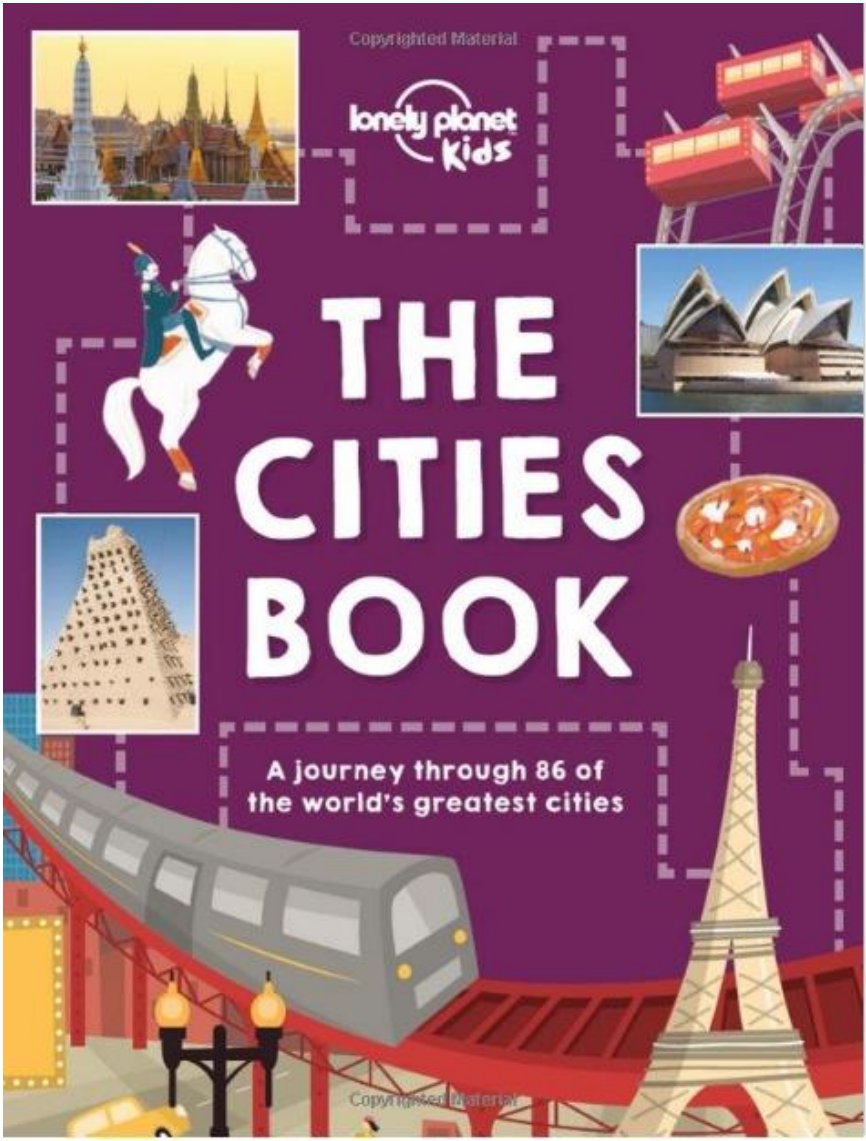


lonely planet
kids


THE CITIES BOOK

A journey through 86 of
the world's greatest cities



THE CITIES BOOK



You probably think you know what a city is. It's a place where lots of people live – like a town, only bigger. You might even live in a big city yourself, and be tempted to think that all of them are the same.

This book is going to blow your mind.

Around the world people come together to live, work, and play in thousands of exciting and extraordinary locations. Each time, the geography of the land combines with the culture and history of its people to create a city that is as incredible as it is unique.

Inside this book you'll discover cities filled with sand-swept mud houses, beautiful felt yurts, ancient stone buildings, and eye-popping modern architecture. Some have canals instead of streets, others cling to snowy mountain peaks, while some are lapped by ocean waves.

Find out about daily life for the people who live there – their clothes, the food they eat, their festivals, and the sports they love to play.

Are you ready to get up and go?
The ultimate city break starts now!

LOOK FOR THE LOCATOR

At the start of each new city page, you'll find a handy locator map. It pinpoints where the city sits within its country, and also where it is placed in the world. Each continent is shown in a different color. The introduction underneath will give you a flavor of the city before you dive down into its streets.



RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZIL South America



Life's a beach in the Cidade Maravilhosa (Marvellous City)! Rio de Janeiro has the perfect nickname. The city is a beautiful blend of samba, soccer, sun, sand, and surf. In this cool coastal capital, a laid-back attitude is your most fashionable accessory. When in doubt, just figure tranquilo (don't worry) - you're on the beach in Brazil!

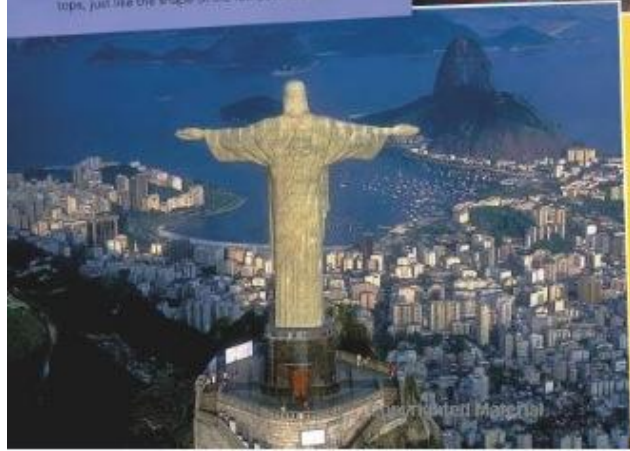
FLAMBOYANT FAVELAS

The colorful houses on the hillside of Rio are independent communities called favelas - small cities within a larger city. Favelas emerged in Rio after slavery was abolished. Former slaves, poor men and women with few opportunities to work, gathered together in crowded and basic settlements. Some favelas are still extremely poor, while others are flourishing hotbeds of creative activity. These streets and houses inspire resident artists and travelers alike with their vibrant colors and culture.



SUGARLOAF

Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf) is a mountain with a funny name and a very funny shape. It is one of Rio's most famous natural landmarks, rising 1,299 feet (396 m) above Guanabara Bay. Before sugar cubes were invented, sugar was sold in sugarloaves. The mounds of refined sugar were formed into tall cones with rounded tops, just like the shape of the famous mountain.



CHRIST THE REDEEMER

Standing high on the peak of Corcovado Mountain, the iconic Christ the Redeemer is a powerful symbol of Rio de Janeiro. It's the largest Art Deco sculpture in the world, created in a style that favors simplified, flowing shapes. The mighty statue, designed by French sculptor Paul Landowski, is a perfect example of Art Deco design. Made of concrete and soapstone, the statue is a towering 98 feet (30 m) tall, with arms that stretch 92 feet (28 m) wide. It was completed in 1931.



CRAZY FOR COCONUTS

The beverage of choice in Rio is água de coco (coconut water). Up and down the city's beaches and streets, machete-wielding vendors slice the tops off chilled green coconuts, then stick straws into the openings.



THE BEAUTIFUL GAME

Brazilian futebol superstar Pelé called his sport a jogo bonito, meaning "the beautiful game." Soccer is an integral part of Brazilian culture and lifestyle, popular with all ages. It is played everywhere from beaches to city places to patches of grass on the side of the highway. The most famous venue in Rio de Janeiro is the Maracanã Stadium, opened for the World Cup in 1950. Today, the stadium hosts matches between Rio's rival teams.



LIFE BY THE SEA

Copacabana is one of the most famous beaches in the world. Skateboarders and in-line skaters on the beachfront sail past sunbathers in leery-sexy swimwear. Teams square off in futebol (soccer) and beach volleyball matches, surfers take to the crashing waves, and vendors sell everything from coconuts to beach blankets. Young people practice capoeira on the sand - a unique hybrid of dance and self-defense invented and developed by African slaves during the 16th century.



GIRL FROM IPANEMA

The second most recorded pop song in history just behind The Beatles' "Yesterday," is "Garota de Ipanema" ("The Girl From Ipanema"). The classic tune was written in 1962, and inspired by a real-life Rio resident. Nineteen-year-old Heloisa Eneida Meneses Paes Pinto lived in the fashionable oceanfront neighborhood called Ipanema. On her way to the beach every day, she walked past the Veloso cafe, where the song's composers often sat. Translated from Portuguese, the lyrics to the song go, "Tall and tan and young and lovely, the girl from Ipanema goes walking... when she walks she's like a samba, that swings so cool and sways so gentle..."

RIO DE JANEIRO

Each year, Rio explodes into a huge open-air party, and everyone is invited! According to the Christian calendar, Carnival is a traditional celebration that takes place in February or March during the lead-up to Lent. Rio's version – Carnaval – is the largest celebration in the world, attracting two million revelers to the city streets every day.

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STIFF COMPETITION

At the very heart of Carnival is an intense competition between Rio's top samba schools. Fifteen perform at the Sambadrome. In the first two days of the Carnival festivities, but the top twelve vie for the championship at the end of the celebrations. Each samba school's parade tells a story. The crowds are guaranteed outrageous costumes, original music, creative choreography, and a few special surprises!

DRESS CODE

Fabulous feathers, shiny sequins, glitter, towering headdresses, over-the-top platform shoes – the samba schools' costumes are out of this world. Just one costumed samba dancer makes an incredible sight. Imagine what it's like to see hundreds of them parading before your eyes all at once!



KNOW THE LINGO

Blockos and bands are percussion bands that parade through the streets, playing traditional samba music. Hundreds of groups participate in Rio's Carnival every year, and each has its own culture, style, and set of rhythms and songs. People of all ages and walks of life take to the streets, and anyone can join the march. Many wear a costume or buy their favorite blocko official shirt.

POWER COUPLE

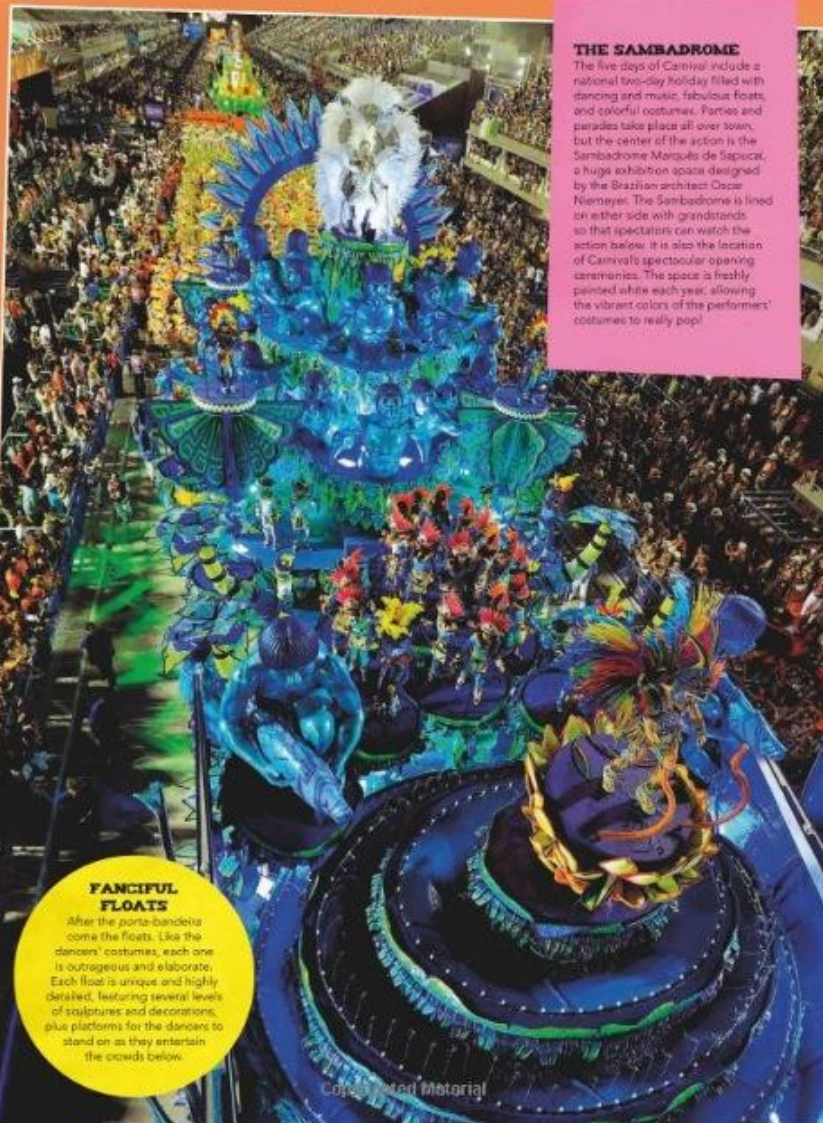
The porta-bandeira, or "flag bearer," is at the head of every samba school's parade.

She is the most important woman in the show. Her duties include performing difficult samba steps, charming the crowd and the judges, and carrying the flag without letting it touch her body. Just a brush is an infraction that could cost her school a few precious points! At her side is the mestre sala (ballroom master), a male protector and guide who leads the porta-bandeira on her way through the Sambadrome.

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THE SAMBADROME

The five days of Carnival include a national two-day holiday filled with dancing and music, fabulous floats, and colorful costumes. Parties and parades take place all over town, but the center of the action is the Sambadrome Marquês de Sapucaí, a huge exhibition space designed by the Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer. The Sambadrome is lined on either side with grandstands so that spectators can watch the action below. It is also the location of Carnival's spectacular opening ceremonies. The space is freshly painted white each year, allowing the vibrant colors of the performers' costumes to really pop!



FANCIFUL FLOATS

After the porta-bandeira come the floats. Like the dancers' costumes, each one is outrageous and elaborate. Each float is unique and highly detailed, featuring several levels of sculptures and decorations, plus platforms for the dancers to stand on as they entertain the crowds below.

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BUENOS AIRES

ARGENTINA South America



Buenos Aires moves to the rhythm of the tango. The birthplace of this dramatic dance is a city famous for its passion – for friends and family, music, the fine arts, and, of course, fútbol (soccer).

CITY OF THE DEAD

The dead aren't buried underground in Buenos Aires – at least not the most influential people. Occupying over 18 acres (8 hectares) in the middle of one of the city's wealthiest neighborhoods, the Recoleta Cemetery is made up of more than 4,000 aboveground tombs and vaults. The elegant marble mausoleums are laid out in rows, like streets. They hold the remains of Argentinian presidents, Nobel Prize winners, and Eva Perón, better known as "Evita."



THE CANDY BOX

One of the city's famous landmarks – the home stadium for Boca Juniors, one of Buenos Aires' leading fútbol teams – is nicknamed La Bombonera (the Candy Box) due to its unusual shape. When Boca plays its rival, River Plate, the stadium fills to its capacity of 49,000, and the whole place seems to shake as excited fans in the stands jump up and down.



THE GIANT RUBBER TREE

Go ahead, hug a tree! If you want to do it in Buenos Aires, however, you'll need to bring some friends. The city is filled with giant rubber trees with twisting roots that look like the tentacles of an octopus. The most famous tree, nicknamed the Gran Comercio, is in Plaza Francia. It was planted in 1791 and measures an impressive 164 feet (50 m) wide!



A BOOKSTORE IN A THEATER

It's not every day that you can browse biographies in the orchestra pit, look at art books on the mezzanine, and enjoy hot chocolate on the stage. You can at El Ateneo Grand Splendid, a glamorous old theater that's been converted into a bookstore, complete with a café and restaurant on the stage where tango legend Carlos Gardel once performed.

DULCE DE LECHE

Who's that irresistible caramel spread? It's dulce de leche! It is found in every café, ice-cream parlor, and bakery. Children enjoy it with toast or pastries as part of their afternoon merienda (snack).



WALLS THAT TALK

A boy who's three stories tall, a walrus the size of a small apartment building, a turtle as big as a garage door? You'll find these characters and many, many more rendered in colorful paint all over walls in Buenos Aires. That's because, unlike in many other major cities, there are no laws prohibiting artists from using outdoor surfaces as giant canvases. The walls of Buenos Aires have tales to tell.



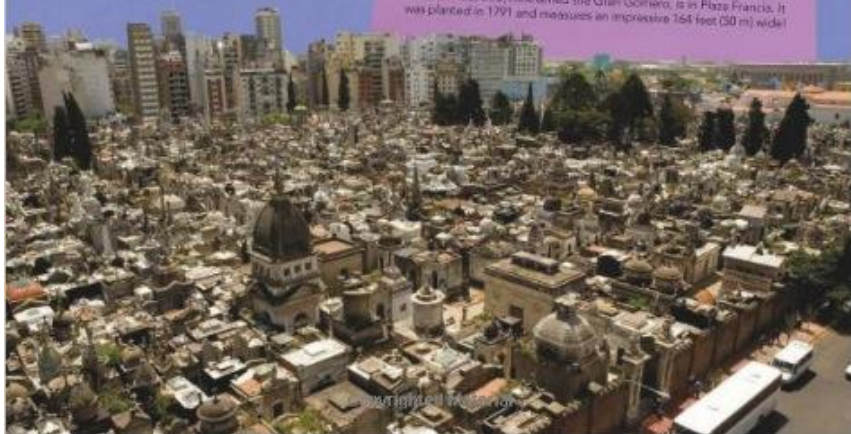
DANCING IN THE STREETS

Tango was born in Buenos Aires. By the time the dance form became popular in Paris in 1912, it was the symbol of glamour. But in its birthplace, tango had humble origins – it was practiced in the side streets and bars of immigrant communities around the port. Today, Argentinians love to show off the dance, performing in public spaces to the accompaniment of traditional tango music.



THE WIDEST AVENUE

It takes a long time to cross Avenida 9 de Julio. The avenue – named after July 9, Argentina's Independence Day – is the widest of any city in the world. Some days it stretches 12 lanes wide, and at other times there are as many as 16. The avenue runs through the center of the city, linking up two important train stations – Retiro and Constitución. It's said that the quickest you can cross it on foot, if you pay attention to the signs and walk quickly, is around two and a half minutes.



USHUAIA

ARGENTINA South America



Remote and snow-covered, Ushuaia is the capital of Tierra del Fuego – an island known as the “Land of Fire.” It’s the southernmost city in the world, just a boat ride away from icy Antarctica. Despite Ushuaia’s faraway feel, the city is expanding fast. Streets dot the slopes as the Andes Mountains sweep down to meet the southern shores.

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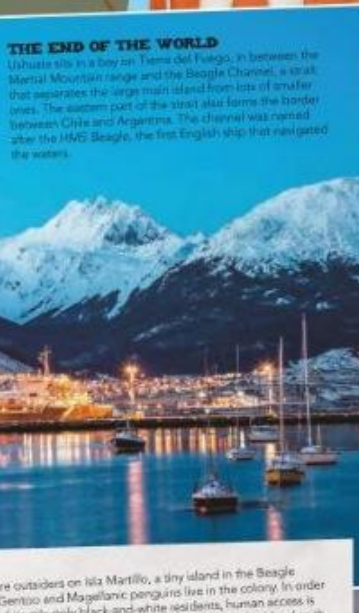
ANCIENT NOMADS

Ushuaia was untouched by Europeans for most of its history. For thousands of years, the land was the home of two peoples. The Selk’nam and the Yaghan. Both nomadic tribes were hunter-gatherers who walked around almost naked despite the cold climate. To stay warm, they rubbed their bodies with seal grease and stayed close to the fire at night.



THE END OF THE WORLD

Ushuaia sits in a bay on Tierra del Fuego, in between the Martial Mountain range and the Beagle Channel, a strait that separates the large main island from lots of smaller ones. The eastern part of the strait also forms the border between Chile and Argentina. The channel was named after the HMS Beagle, the first English ship that navigated the waters.



PENGUIN ISLAND

Penguins rule and the humans are outsiders on Isla Martillo, a tiny island in the Beagle Channel. Around 3,000 pairs of Gentoo and Magellanic penguins live in the colony. In order to protect this natural habitat and its rilly-polly black-and-white residents, human access is carefully restricted. Only a limited number of people are allowed to walk on the island each day, under the watch of a licensed guide. Penguins swim, play, and waddle across the path, while their fuzzy chicks huddle together in the breeze.

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A COLOSSAL CRAB

The centolla (king crab) might look too dangerous to eat, but it is a specialty in Ushuaia! At some restaurants, the staff allows guests to pick out their own crab for dinner. After it’s weighed and steamed, the waiter brings the centolla to the table with tools to help break through the shell and sample the juicy, delicious meat inside. It can be a messy business, so everyone wears a bib to protect their clothes.



WILD WEATHER

Ushuaia has a subpolar climate, which means that the weather is cold all year round. Even in the warmest summer months, the average temperature is only 50°F (10°C). The weather is also famously unpredictable. It’s not uncommon for a storm to sweep in on a sunny afternoon, warning all of the boat captains to return to port. It snows regularly in Ushuaia, too, particularly in the winter months of July and August, when crowds go skiing and snowboarding on the mountains outside of town. Most locals work in industries like fishing, sheep farming, and natural gas and oil extraction, plus, of course, tourism. Lots of people want to come and visit the end of the world!



A LONELY LIGHTHOUSE

An iconic red-and-white landmark stands guard at the sea entrance to Ushuaia – the Les Eclaireurs lighthouse. The lighthouse has been in service for nearly a century, but these days it’s uninhabited and operated by remote control! The beacon flashes every 10 seconds, and the light can be seen 7.5 nautical miles (13.6 mi/14 km) away.



A WALL OF ICE

You’ve seen pictures of glaciers on bottles of water, but have you ever had an ice-cold drink directly from a glacier? El Martial glacier towers high above the bay in Ushuaia, providing the city’s main source of freshwater. A charter travels up the wall of ice, offering amazing views of the Beagle Channel below.

