



# IT'S TIME FOR BRAZIL IN SINGAPORE

RIO 2016  
**Sprinting to the  
'Finish' Line**



Special Report on  
**Rio Grande  
Do Norte**

Brazil's Foreign Minister  
**Mauro Vieira Proposes Fresh  
Investment Agreements**

Baptism of Vital De Oliveira  
**Research Ship Launched  
from Singapore**



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# FOREWORD



It is no secret that 2015 was a difficult year for Brazil. The end of the commodities boom and the sharp decline of oil prices took its toll on our economy, the seventh largest in the world. Adjustments were needed. They have been carried out during 2015 and will continue in 2016, in order to control inflation and put economic growth back on track. Some results can already be seen: after the devaluation of our currency, exports are on the high and the trade balance shows now a positive result.

In such an adverse scenario, creativity and hard work were particularly more important in delivering results. And there were many accomplishments! Several art exhibitions at the Embassy's cultural space, the Keppel Latin American Film Festival, the now traditional concert PianoBotanica at the Botanic Gardens

and the beautiful celebration of our National Day at the Fullerton Hotel, just to mention a few cultural events promoted by the Embassy. Of course, none of it would be possible without the help of our sponsors, who, throughout the years, have been supporting and believing in the ties between Brazil and Singapore.

During the year, we had the honour of welcoming the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, H.E. Mauro Vieira, on an official trip to Singapore. He had a very busy agenda in the few days he spent here, as you will see in the magazine. Additionally, we had many technical, political and business missions to this country. Due to space constraints in the magazine, we can't address all of them, but they are a testament to the fact that, in spite of the economic difficulties faced by Brazil, the integration between the two countries has kept evolving.

We are also pleased to inform that one of Brazil's largest company, the giant IT service provider Stefanini, decided not only to open a branch in Singapore but also to create its first research and development laboratory outside Brazil here in Singapore. The company is still finalizing its installation process, but very soon we will hear a lot about them.

And, of course, 2016 is the year Brazil will host the Olympics and Paralympics Rio 2016 Games. With the infrastructure almost ready, the rehearsal contests are happening at full speed to better receive the whole world, with our traditional hospitality! We do hope that many of you, readers, have a chance to attend the Games and support Brazilian and Singaporean athletes!

Enjoy the reading!

*Rodrigo Bovo Soares*

**Secretary  
Head of Trade Department  
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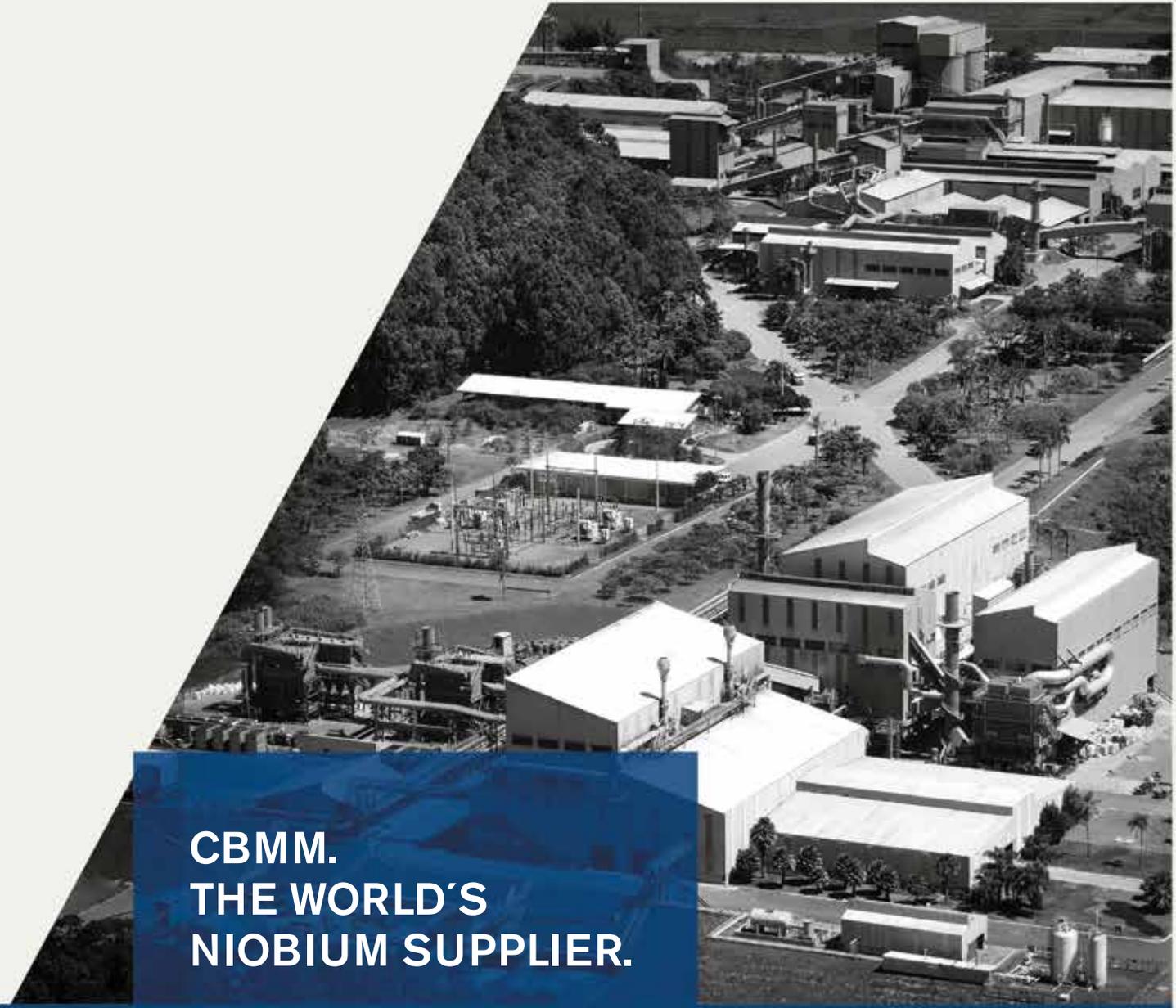
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# Reflecting on Growth of Brazil - Singapore Ties During SG50

■ Ambassador HE Luís Fernando de Andrade Serra reviews what has been achieved during his tenure and why investors can be positive about Brazil

By Nomita Dhar

**As SG celebrates 50 years of nationhood, Brazil and Singapore have been consistent partners in progress. Please share your thoughts about this relationship.**

This is the year in which to assess the degree of intensity of our relationship and I think that we will agree that Singapore and Brazil have a lot of things in common like our belief in multilateralism, in the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the rule of law, racial integration, social harmony, equality of gender, sustainable development, religious freedom and human rights.

These are things we have in common and, I believe, the only factor that separates us is geographical distance. However, nowadays this has been mitigated by the direct flight from Singapore to Brazil that was inaugurated in March of 2011.

**The upcoming Olympics in 2016 will be proudly held in Brazil. As the Ambassador of the hosting nation, can you share with readers about readiness and what to expect during the games in Brazil.**

The infrastructure for the city and for the games is almost ready. Part of it was done for the World Cup held in 2014. The second largest stadium in Rio was ready for the Pan-American Games in 2007. I think that the Rio Olympic Games 2016 follows the same pattern as that applied in Barcelona Summer Olympics 1992 which is to revamp down-graded areas such as the port area which will also be ready for the games. We still have a few months before the games begin and, in the worst case scenario, 85 per cent of the infrastructure is already completed.

**Looking at Latin America and yet looking away, quoting distance as deterrence, Asian investors have been cautious. Your comments.**

I always say that, if some Europeans had thought like some Singaporeans, firms such as Siemens, Philips, Nestlé, Bayer wouldn't be in Brazil. Note that they arrived in 1905-1910 when travel to Brazil used to take more than 20 days. So I believe that Singaporean firms are cautious and feel safe in their comfort zone which is Southeast Asia. I am trying to convince these skeptical businessmen that distance should not be a problem if you have opportunities. But, of course, it's deterrence, though I believe this will change with the availability of more flights and with more awareness of the opportunities that can be found in Brazil.

**The word Brazil conjures an image of carnival and festivities. What are other aspects of Brazil which are important but lesser known?**

There are many aspects which are less

known. Brazil is the sixth largest economy in the world. Its economy is as big as that of the entire ASEAN countries. Brazil is number four in cell phone users. It is number one in exports of chicken, coffee, sugarcane, orange juice; second, in soy bean, beef and corn exports and third, in pork. Besides, we are the seventh largest producers of cars. We have the third largest manufacturer of aircraft in the world and we are number one in offshore oil.

So, as you can see, we have a lot of good things beyond carnival and festivities. Not to mention that beyond these two, in sports, for instance, we are number one in football and in volleyball.

**Brazilian exports to Singapore have been increasing steadily, especially that of poultry and meat products, would you say the market is saturated or there is scope for other players to enter and expand?**

The market is not saturated in spite of the fact that Brazil supplies 80 per cent of the Singaporean market for chicken. If you divide the imports of poultry from January to October, you will find that the figures are very good. Singapore imported almost 56 thousand tons of poultry. But dividing the imports by population and by number of days – between January and October there are at least 300 days – you will see that Singaporeans can certainly eat more poultry. One good thing is that we now have a joint venture between a Brazilian company and SATS which will, for instance, help with the expansion of the consumption of Brazilian chicken beyond the borders of Singapore since SATS is the official caterer of Singapore Airlines.

As for meat products, we are not number one in Singapore and I believe we can grow in this area. The good thing is that our meat products are exported by Brazilian firms established in Australia. It is not Brazilian meat but it is Brazilian companies that are producing in Australia to export to Singapore.

In a nutshell, I don't believe the market is saturated and I believe that there is a great possibility that after the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), Brazilian chicken could be processed in Singapore to then be re-exported to other country members of ASEAN. Of course, in order to make this feasible, non-tariff barriers have to be abolished inside AEC.

**Traditional players from Singapore such as Keppel, Sembcorp and Temasek, have kept the investment flag flying. What is your assessment of the growth potential of these and others in the Brazilian market?**

I think these companies are well established in Brazil. They have invested much but

among them there are other players that are non-traditional, for instance, Changi Airport International. Changi, today, is the largest Singaporean investor in Brazil. In 25 years, Changi Airports International will invest almost US\$8 billion, which is a good figure that proves that Singaporean companies believe in Brazil.

Another company that is expected in Brazil is PSA. We have more than 65 ports and PSA is assessing which is the best opportunity in order to come to Brazil.

ST is also expanding its activities in Brazil. GLP (Global Logistic Properties) is already the number one in warehouses in Brazil. It is an investment that came a few years ago and GLP is already the number one with twice the capacity of the number two. So I think that the potential for Singaporean firms is in the sector of services. As mentioned, Changi, ST, probably PSA as well as GLP are concentrating their efforts in this sector.

**International issues like climate change and the growing menace of terrorism, what is Brazil's stand point in these issues and in your opinion, what can be done for a more peaceful and green world?**

Brazil wants COP21 in Paris to be a major breakthrough. We believe that we have the greenest energy matrix in the world because of hydro energy and ethanol.

If you put together hydro energy and ethanol you will see that 45 per cent of our matrix is renewable. I don't think there are many countries that can say the same.

Brazil is very proud of this record because we started investing a long time ago in hydro energy which is, of course, renewable and without any carbon emission. And since the 70s we have been developing our ethanol programme which has been very successful.

As for terrorism, of course, we believe there is no negotiating with terrorists. We support all the efforts of the United Nations in order to stop this phenomenon.

**In terms of cooperation between Brazil and Singapore, many delegations have been visiting the island. Could you brief us in the sectors and the training they have undergone in Singapore?**

Yes, there have been many delegations in various sectors. And, in particular, I would like to refer to an initiative promoted by Singapore under the umbrella of FEALAC (Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation) which invites Brazilian journalists to come every year to visit Singapore.

Besides, we have some students studying in Singapore that belong to our programme, Science without Borders. In this field, I think we can do more. We could be sending more students to Singapore under this pro-

“Singapore is today the number one market for Brazilian products in ASEAN, number five in Asia and number 15 in the whole world. But even more important than these records of Brazilian exports is the surplus which is very large. It is the fourth largest in the world with almost US\$2.5 billion.



gramme, but we have to understand that it is not the government's choice. It's the student's choice. So if they haven't chosen Singapore as much, for instance, as some countries in Europe, it's something we have to deal with. We need to promote more awareness of the opportunities that Singapore has to offer to Brazilian students.

**Your last few years as the Ambassador of Brazil in Singapore and also as the Dean of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps, you have been tremendously active in promoting your country and supporting initiatives of others, please share with us the highlights of your tenure.**

Since I came to this country, I decided that there were three main goals I needed to achieve. One was to promote Brazilian exports, another was to attract Singaporean investments into Brazil, and the third one was to help Brazilian firms to go global. Let's take each one of these goals separately.

The first one, the promotion of Brazilian exports. In 2011, when I took office, our exports to Singapore were US\$2.7 billion which was a big growth compared to the exports of the previous year of only US\$1.3 billion. So when I came the trend was good. Since 2011, which was my first year in this country as ambassador, the record was beaten twice. In 2012, we reached US\$2.942 billion in exports and in 2014, we reached the figure of US\$3.34 billion which is the historical record of all times. If you compare 2014 with 2003, for instance, you will see that in these 11 years Brazilian exports to Singapore have grown 10 times. This growth of our exports to Singapore took place when Brazilian global exports were shrinking by 12 per cent in 2014. As a result of this growth, Singapore is today the number one market for Brazilian products in ASEAN, number five in Asia and number 15 in the whole world. But even more important than these records of Brazilian exports is the surplus which is very large. It is the fourth largest in the world with almost US\$2.5 billion. So this shows the importance

of the Singaporean market for Brazilian products. Besides, for Brazil, Singapore is the eighth largest market in the world for frozen chicken and it is also the ninth largest market for fuel oil.

The second goal was related to the attraction of investments into Brazil. I think I have been very successful. Since I took office, Brazil has had investments from Sembcorp (Aracruz shipyards of EJA - Estaleiro Jurong Aracruz) and more investments from Keppel that is now employing almost 10 thousand people in Brazil.

My country had the investment from Changi Airports International of 25 billion reais, that's more than US\$6.5 billion as well as the investments from GLP which, as I said before, is number one in logistics and warehousing in Brazil.

As for the third branch of my activities here - the globalization of our firms - I can mention that when I arrived in Singapore, there were only seven Brazilian firms established here and now there are 14. And the trend is growing.

**It's Time for Brazil in Singapore was first printed in 2000, this year we complete 15 years. Do you have a special message for our readers?**

I've always supported *It's Time for Brazil in Singapore*. I think it is an insightful publication and I did my best in order to get sponsors for this magazine. It's very important that this magazine is addressed to people with deep knowledge of Brazil. We are very happy that this magazine is free for its readers and today doesn't represent a single cent for the Brazilian Government. Everything is paid for by the sponsors and this is excellent, in my opinion, because it shows commitment from these firms with Brazilian interests.

**The current economic situation in Brazil is quite challenging, how would you respond to press reports and critics about the challenges and problems facing the country?**

In Asia, you say that a crisis means an op-

portunity. This is exactly what I think. Before coming to Asia, I was not very sure about this sentence, that crisis means opportunity. But watching from Asia the problems in Brazil, I say that this crisis will give us a stronger country with stronger governance, with stronger accountability, with stronger responsibility from our politicians. We are already proving that our institutions are very solid because it is unusual to have, for instance, the richest man in Brazil in prison without any contestation from the judicial side. This shows that no one is above the law and that our police is supported by the government in its investigations. This is what is called the rule of law. As I told you, Brazil has faced in the recent past many serious problems, but, in my opinion, Brazil is stronger than any crisis. As we say in my country, Brazil is bigger than the hole some people are digging to bury it in. In other words, Brazilian rhymes with resilient.

**If you were to replicate something from Singapore's success story in Brazil and the strengths Brazil has as a country, what would it be on each side?**

I think that one of Singapore's success stories is its lean and clean bureaucracy. The four pillars of the success of Singapore are, in my opinion, meticulous and long-term planning, transparency meant as no tolerance to corruption, high patterns of quality for every procurement and rule of law. I think that this should be replicated not only in Brazil but in many countries because I believe that these are the true reasons for Singapore's success.

From Brazil's side, I have a suggestion. I think it's high time for Singapore to expand its network of embassies and consulates. Maybe Singapore has already understood that it's time to be more present in Europe, Africa and Latin America, for instance. I am convinced that this will help better promote the interests of Singapore.

# New Ambassador Designated by Brazil to Singapore

■ H.E. Flávio Soares Damico set to spur a renewed momentum to Brazil-Singapore ties

*By Carlos Brian Pheysey*



**W**hile saluting our departing Ambassador Luís Fernando Serra, who served bilateral interests so well in his over four years of tenure in Singapore, we also welcome the arrival of our new Ambassador, H.E. Flávio Soares Damico, taking office in Singapore in early 2016.

Born in 1960, Ambassador Damico is a native of Porto Alegre, in Brazil's far south. He read Economics at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul and joined in 1987 the Instituto Rio Branco, the school for diplomats.

Rising up swiftly through the ranks of Brazil's Ministry of External Relations, he assisted Brazil's foreign policy in various key positions: starting in science and technology, he rose through executive ranks toward a posting to Brazil's mission at the UN office in New York; he also served in Uruguay in the mid/late 1990s.

In the new century, he began work with other international organisations and was posted to Geneva; onward to Rotterdam and Brasília, he handled foodstuff, agricultural and livestock matters, heading the Ministry's Division of Agriculture and Basic Products from 2004 to 2008; he followed to the WTO from 2008 to 2011; thence, he was Director of Inter-Regional Mechanisms from 2011 to 2015, a task that brought him close to the BRICS grouping.

In late 2015, he was selected to head the Embassy of Brazil to Singapore, a move taking place in early 2016. Find out more about his expectations, projects and insights on Brazil-Singapore links and joint endeavours, outlined in the interview granted by him to this magazine as follows.

## 1. What are your expectations about leading the Embassy in Singapore?

Of course, I am thrilled and excited about the prospects of moving to Singapore and continue to carry out the exceptional work being carried out by our Embassy in strengthening bilateral relations. Besides being an exceptional observation post of all important political and economic, commercial and financial developments taking place in Asia, the dynamic centre of the world economy, the natural area of concentration of the Embassy work is to strengthen trade ties, promote investments in both directions and assist Brazilian companies to establish themselves in Singapore and, to the extent possible, attract Singaporean companies to Brazil.

## 2. What are your views on Brazil-Singapore relations?

Bilateral relations are excellent. Our countries share a very similar view of the international system and on the importance of a strong, vibrant and updated multilateral system to democratize international governance. Brazil and Singapore have acted together and share similar views on the reform of the United Nations, the conclusion of the WTO Doha Round and have contributed significantly to the recent Paris Conference. This is a fine base to build upon. On top of that, bilateral trade is very dynamic, Singapore is our largest ASEAN trade partner, the fourth largest Asian investor in Brazil.

Singapore companies are well established in areas crucial to Brazilian development such as shipyards, oil and gas exploration, logistics, infrastructure, urban

planning, among others. Future prospects are excellent.

## 3. How do you expect your track record will further the bilateral ties between both countries?

My professional experience is very diversified, as much as our relations with Singapore. Therefore, I believe I can add value both in the diplomatic dialogue and also in the area of trade and investment promotion and capitalize on the superb work carried out by my predecessors and, particularly, by Ambassador Serra.

## 4. What will your priorities be for 2016?

As this will be my first experience as Head of Mission, I will initially continue with the existing lines of work and assess which elements might require my further involvement. As indicated above, the focus should be to strengthen economic, trade, financial and investment ties between the two countries.

## 5. Would you like to leave a message to the Brazilian community in Singapore?

I will avail myself of this great opportunity to reinforce that the Embassy is a gathering point for the Brazilian community and that we stand ready to assist it in whatever way possible, be it through our consular assistance and also in the trade and investment promotion activities, as well as through the promotion of the Brazilian culture.

# Baptism of *Vital De Oliveira* in Singapore



Because of the importance of the watercraft, three countries were represented at the ceremony

*By Octavio Lopes*



The research vessel “Vital de Oliveira” was baptized in a ceremony held at Keppel Marina on 24th March, in a beautiful ceremony to welcome the inclusion of this prime research ship the Brazilian Navy fleet (see details on the ship’s capabilities in the adjoining box). It is the result of the Government’s effort to furnish the Navy with the most advanced equipment available to research and map the Brazilian coast.

Because of the importance of the watercraft, the baptism ceremony had the presence of the Brazilian Navy Chief of Staff, Fleet Admiral Wilson Barbosa Guerra, the Navy Secretary for Science and Technology, Fleet Admiral Sérgio Roberto Fernandes dos Santos, the Ambassador of Brazil, Luís Fernando Serra, as well as the Ambassador of Norway, Tormod Endrensen, among other authorities.

*“Vital de Oliveira is the most advanced Hydro-oceanic ship ever to be incorporated into the Brazilian Navy”*





Representatives of VALE and Petrobras, companies that contributed to the project, also graced the event.

Due to the demise of Lee Kuan Yew on eve of the ship's baptism, the national anthems of Brazil, Norway and Singapore were not played during the event, but the official anthem of the Navy, titled "Cisne Branco" (White Swan), served as background music for the boarding of "Vital de Oliveira" by its 90 crew members.

### About the Ship

"Vital de Oliveira" is the most advanced Hydro-oceanic ship ever to be incorporated into the Brazilian Navy. The commissioning of this ship is the result of a cooperation programme between the Brazilian Navy, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, VALE S.A. and Petrobras. It was designed by a Norwegian company, in partnership with Brazilian military researchers, and built in Xinhui, China.

"Vital de Oliveira" is equipped with an azimuthing thruster system, which means that its propellers can be rotated to any horizontal angle, providing great manoeuvrability to the ship. Its five labs are furnished to carry out scientific research in oceanography, hydrography, geology and meteorology. It is equipped with tools to collect samples from the atmosphere, the ocean and marine soil and subsoil, to be used in physical, chemical, biological, geological and environmental monitoring of the country's coastal areas.

The research vessel may also be used to evaluate the potential for natural resources in the seaboard, such as oil, gas and minerals. "Vital de Oliveira" represents, therefore, a significant contribution to Brazil's project of exploring the riches under the sea, of which the pre-salt oil extraction is the best example.

It has the capacity to carry 90 crew and 50 researchers on board and autonomy to navigate for 60 days. Another special feature of the vessel is its Remote Operation Vehicle to scan deep water, reaching four thousand metres into the ocean.

The main objective of Vital de Oliveira is to consolidate knowledge of the large Brazilian continental shelf, with its vast geology, mineral resources and marine life.





## A "Navy Maker:" The Brazilian Navy Exports its Excellence to Namibia

The Brazilian Navy is renowned for its excellence and rich history. It was established in 1822, when Brazil became independent, and fought important battles and wars such as the Battle of Independence (1822), the Paraguay War (1864-1870) and the First and Second World Wars. Furthermore, since 2004, the Navy is present in the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Haiti and in Lebanon, playing a crucial role in stabilizing those two nations.

The Brazilian Navy is the largest navy in Latin America and the second largest in the Americas, after the United States Navy. It has approximately 112 ships in commission and operates around 85 aircraft. It is one of the ten Navies in the world to operate an aircraft carrier.

The excellence and tradition of the Brazilian Navy raised the interest of friend nations on the other side of the Atlantic, in Africa. Namibia, specifically, felt the need for a naval force which could have both a coastal defence role as well as a fisheries watchdog aspect. In order to enhance its naval presence in the Atlantic, the Namibian Government then turned to the Brazilian Navy and both countries signed a maritime cooperation agreement in 1994, according to which the South American

nation agreed to help to train Namibians and develop their naval capabilities. In effect, Brazil assisted Namibia to build its Navy from scratch.

Brazil gladly undertook the task by providing Namibia with a hydrographical survey of its coast, training the Namibia Defence Force (NDF) naval personnel, and overseeing the building of a naval base. By 1997, the Brazilian Navy was conducting hydrographical survey along Namibia's coast and training sixty-five NDF members. The programme was very successful and has been renewed and improved upon since then.

The numbers of the programme are impressive. Between 2003 and 2013, over 1897 Namibian Navy personnel benefited from it, including hundreds of Navy Officers. Brazil's "Grupo de Apoio Técnico de Fuzileiros Navais" (GAT-FN – Technical Support Group for Naval Marines) proved instrumental in the creation of Namibia's Marine Corps first battalions. The above-mentioned numbers do not take into account Brazilian instructors that provided or are currently providing training in Namibian territory.

Brazil also assisted Namibia toward equipping its Navy by means of the acquisition of Brazilian vessels. In 2004, Brazil donated to the Namibian government the former Brazilian corvette Purus, renamed NS Lt. General Dimo Hamaambo. Later, Brazil built the 200-tonne Naval Patrol ship, NS Brendan Simbwaye and two smaller patrol boats, the LP Terrace Bay and the LP Möwe Bay, both delivered to Namibia in 2009 and 2011, respectively.

The partnership between Brazil and Namibia is a model of bilateral cooperation in the South Atlantic and certainly a solid contribution for peace and security in the region.

### ABOUT VITAL DE OLIVEIRA - THE MAN

After all, who is Vital de Oliveira, the person after which the Brazilian research vessel was named? Navy Officer Manoel Vital de Oliveira (1829-1867) is considered the Patron of Brazilian Hydrography for his pioneering work in surveying and mapping the Brazilian coast. He entered the Brazilian Navy Academy in 1843 and already in 1854 he was commissioned to survey the coast of Pernambuco Province (Pernambuco State today). Because of the high precision and quality of his work, he was assigned to several hydrographic works thereafter.

In 1863, the Brazilian Government trusted him to draft the chart of the country's coast, but soon the Paraguay War broke out, drawing Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay in a war against Paraguay. Vital de Oliveira served with bravery as warship Commander and soon became famous among his peers for his serenity and bravery in the battlefield, undaunted by enemy fire. After several successful missions during the war, Vital de Oliveira died in 1867 as a result of battle wounds.



# Brazil's Foreign Minister Visits Singapore

■ Proposal for a Cooperation and Investment Facilitation Agreement was put forward by Minister Mauro Vieira

*By Octavio Lopes*

**O**n 22 July 2015, the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, Mr Mauro Vieira, made a brief yet productive official visit to Singapore, when he met Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam and the Minister for Law and the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, K Shanmugam. The call happened two years after Shanmugam's trip to Brazil in 2013, when the former Minister of Foreign Affairs inaugurated the Embassy of Singapore in Brasília.

Ministers Vieira and Shanmugam held a work lunch at restaurant ME@OUE, with the presence of Ambassadors Luís Fernando Serra and Mr Choo Chiau Beng, and discussed a variety of themes on the bilateral agenda, as well as a few topics of International Politics.

Minister Shanmugam started the meeting by stating that the inauguration of an Embassy in Brasília (the only Singaporean legation in Latin America) is an expression of the relevance of the economic and political relationship between both countries.

He emphasized that Singapore not only offers many commercial opportunities, but is also an important



Minister Mauro Vieira called on Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam

door to business in other ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries. With many fast-growing nations like Vietnam and Thailand, ASEAN's combined GDP is expected to reach USD 4 trillion by 2020. According to Shanmugam, the Asian Development Bank offers an excellent framework to tap into these opportunities.

Minister Mauro Vieira observed that Brazil is interested in receiving more

investments from the island-state and reminded Shanmugam that numerous tenders for logistics and infrastructure will take place between now and 2018. Brazil's Foreign Minister also observed that Brazil is eager to cooperate with Singapore and benefit from this

country's expertise in water recycling and desalination.

## Visit to DPM

After the work lunch, which occurred in a friendly atmosphere, Shanmugam accompanied the Brazilian Minister to the restaurant's balcony, where they enjoyed the view over Marina Bay and Singapore's contemporary architectural landmarks.

The visit to Deputy Prime Minister Shanmugaratnam, at The Treasury, was also held in an ambience of utmost cordiality. Mr Shanmugaratnam praised the adjustment measures carried out by Finance Minister Joaquim Levy to rebalance Brazil's economy and expressed confidence that the country will soon resume economic growth.

During the visit, Minister Mauro Vieira proposed the signing of a Cooperation and Investment Facilitation Agreement. The proposal was welcomed by Minister Shanmugam and DPM Shanmugaratnam, and now both countries are advancing toward inking this agreement in 2016.



Minister Mauro Vieira in discussion with the then Minister for Foreign Affairs K Shanmugam

# Building Better Homes for All



■ Home sweet home: envisaging affordable housing for all in the state of Rio de Janeiro

*By Carlos B Pheysey*



(Above): Singapore houses 85% of its population in high-rise public blocks such as these but (top inset) public housing in Rio de Janeiro can be other than multi-storey

**A** man's home is his castle. This popular saying rings ever more true when one bears in mind that people want to strike down roots and belong to a place. Folks want to have a stake in their community and be full citizens having a say, once a roof over their heads has been secured. Singapore understands the concept well and has made the pairing of housing with a sense of nationhood a pillar of its nation-building efforts, shaping a new civic spirit of loyalty to the nation and orderly life in society. Singapore has proved to the world that affordable public housing can be provided to 85% of the city-state's population. The island has become a world reference as a provider of a viable and successful framework to house lower and middle classes with quality of life and a sustainable network of services and amenities.

## Housing Deficit

It is only natural that the State of Rio de Janeiro, which encompasses not just the city that will stage the Rio 2016 Olympics but also another 91 municipalities, should wish for the same outcome for its disenfranchised shantytown dwellers. The state of RJ has a deficit of 500,000 housing units and risk-prone areas (landslides, flooding, etc.), which prompted its new Secretary of Housing, Mr Bernardo Rossi, to seek out Singapore as a model and partner for the pressing matter of resettling large numbers of people in his home



Bernardo Rossi, Secretary for Housing, State of Rio de Janeiro

state, while bearing in mind the significant differences, realities and resources that separate RJ and the Island-State.

Visiting Singapore in July, he met key players in Singapore's success story, starting at the Ministry of National Development and the headquarters of the Housing Development Board, or HDB for short. HDB takes pride in its world leadership in finding a viable model to house the vast majority of the nation. Gone are the days of squatting. What's more, the housing estates are mini-cities in themselves, i.e. configured to include economic life, jobs, offices, manufactures, retail, entertainment, parks, schools, clinics, metro-rail, bus interchanges and all amenities that make local life in such townships vibrant, thus precluding the need to commute daily to a distant old city centre.

Thus settled, people become full participants and economic actors in the nation. The delegates had a chance to visit the

*Mr Rossi hopes that RSP can help with the shantytown known as Maré, to serve as a pilot showcase, a pioneer set-up to impress upon other squatters that the idea of relocation to better quarters is a desirable outcome.*

iconic seven residential towers interlinked by elevated bridges, the “Pinnacle@Duxton”.

The delegation also met with International Enterprise Singapore, as organiser of the mission and statutory board that launches worldwide a range of Singaporean companies and their know-how. The Urban Redevelopment Authority was also object of a meeting, for Mr Rossi to see the small-scale models of how the URA integrates housing, economic life, transportation, utilities, etc. into a cohesive and coherent whole. Concept plans and master plans in Singapore are drafted by professionals from the field and approved at a speed that seems dizzying to Brazilians.

The Centre for Liveable Cities organises the biennial “World Cities Summit” and hopes that RJ can send delegates to the July 2016 edition, or else to the CLC’s courses likewise. Mr Rossi also met Alpha Investment, a company that builds upscale developments. Its parent company, Keppel Land, asked pointed questions about the economic outlook of RJ and Brazil overall, before it makes any commitment to assist in developing land, housing, etc. The larger conglomerate, Keppel Corporation, has also a marine subsidiary that constitutes Singapore’s largest investment in Brazil, i.e. shipyards in the states of both Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina, to build rigs and platforms for the deep-sea oilfields off Brazil’s coast.

### Worldwide Experience

The mission held discussions with the renowned Jurong Consultants, a government enterprise that designs and implements technology parks couple with townships entailing housing, retail, entertainment for its executives, professionals and workers, thus very much attuned with HDB’s principles. The delegates were impressed with Jurong’s worldwide experience. In fact, Jurong Consultants helped to shape a dynamic airport city, an “aerotropolis”, around Confins, in Minas Gerais, Brazil, linking municipalities with logistics, manufactures, commerce, housing, and recently has done the same for Brazil’s capital, Brasília, the surroundings of which needed a new airport, an ICT park, a financial sector, transportation and more.

RSP, an architecture, planning and design firm also met with the visitors, given the company’s success in developing townships and business parks in China, the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, aligned with the principles of HDB and Jurong Consultants too. Mr Rossi hopes that RSP can help with the shantytown known as Maré, to serve as a pilot showcase, a pioneer set-up to impress upon other squatters that the idea of relocation to better quarters is a desirable outcome. Indeed, housing for all remains a noble pursuit, and it has been with high hopes that the mission returned to the State of Rio de Janeiro to begin drafting partnerships with Singapore’s expertise. The case has been built. Let the lessons be driven home, building homes for all.



Recreation and interaction space for residents of Rio's blocks of flats



Public housing in Nova Friburgo



Singapore's award-winning and iconic “Pinnacle@Duxton”



## Brazil's Independence Day

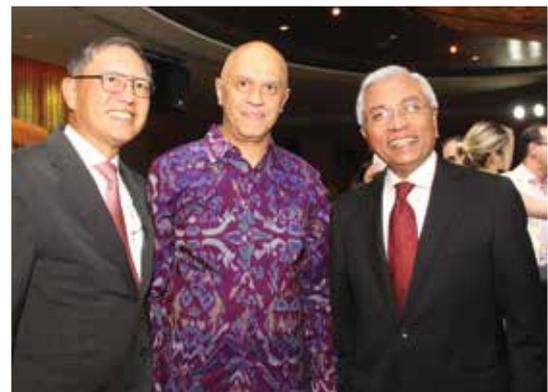
# Celebrations at Fullerton

■ Pictorial record of the festivities of Independence Day, 7 September, with Singapore's diplomatic corps, invited guests and friends of Brazil celebrating the 193rd Anniversary of the country's independence.

*Photos by Michael Ozaki*



(Above): Guest of Honour, Singapore's Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education Hawazi Daipi with HE Ambassador Luís Fernando de Andrade Serra





# UNESP Seeks S&T Ties

One of Brazil's top universities sends mission to explore high technology tie-ups to trade innovations and patents as well as establish joint-research with labs here

By Octavio Lopes

In January 2015, Ms Fabíola Spiandorello, Intellectual Property Manager at Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho (UNESP), visited Singapore to gain knowledge of the Science & Technology (S&T) environment in this country. Invited by the Intellectual Property Intermediary (IPI), a Singaporean government organisation dedicated to the matchmaking of creative researchers and innovation-seeking industries.

Ms Spiandorello met researchers and government officers of the most important institutes and universities in the Lion City: Intellectual Property Intermediary (IPI Singapore); Exploit Technologies Pte. Ltd. (ETPL), the technology-transfer unit of A\*STAR (Agency for Science, Technology & Research); NUS's technology-transfer office, the Industry Liaison Office (NUS-ILO); Nanyang Polytechnic's technology-transfer office (Centre for Technology, Innovation & Commercialization – CTIC); and the Centre of Innovation for Electronics – COIE.

Ms Spiandorello's main goal was to create ties with local organisations that



Bird's eye view of UNESP campus in São Paulo

will eventually permit UNESP to trade innovations and patents developed by its researchers and establish partnerships with Singaporean labs for joint research.

During the first half of 2014, UNESP had hosted a Singapore delegation comprising leading officers from top universities and public organisations dedicated to innovative scientific research. Ms Spiandorello's visit

represents the continuation and deepening of the partnership between UNESP and Singapore's Science & Technology agencies. UNESP considers Singapore, with all its expertise in S&T, a key partner for cooperation in research and innovation, with two world leading universities and a well-established network devoted to linking academia and private sector.

## About UNESP and Science & Technology Development

by Fabíola Spiandorello, Intellectual Property Manager-UNESP

Asian and Brazilian markets have extraordinary complementary facets and offer a wealth of opportunities for creative researchers and entrepreneurs from both regions. By partnering with Singaporean universities and organizations, UNESP expects to enhance cooperation in Science & Technology (S&T), for the benefit of companies and research institutes in Brazil and Singapore.

UNESP is a leading Brazilian public university created in 1976 and is fully funded by the São Paulo State Government. It has campi in 24 cities across São Paulo State, with 34 Institutes and Colleges – the most successful multi-campi university in the country. UNESP develops teaching and research activities in several fields, such as engineering, agriculture, human and animal health, communications, humanities, social sciences and arts, among others.

UNESP is ranked among the top 100 universities in Times Higher Education BRICS & Emerging Economies and is in the world's top 500 universities list, according to Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a leading consulting company on higher education. In 2014, the Brazilian University Ranking (RUF)

considered UNESP the sixth best national institution. UNESP is aligned with contemporary trends in research and teaching and committed to becoming a globalised university.

The first links between science and technology may be traced back to Antiquity, but their strong association for the development of new products and processes is a modern phenomenon. Each innovation player (universities, companies, government agencies, etc.) has its own role, but it is desirable and necessary that they interact with each other for a more efficient innovation environment.

Universities play a crucial role in the innovation process simply by fulfilling their institutional role: First, universities must educate human resources for the use of technical skills in productive environments and the creation of innovation (education); secondly, they have to generate knowledge with mediate or immediate applications (research); and finally, they must assist the transfer of knowledge they generate to the productive sector, by offering capacity-building and extension courses for the non-academic actors, such as entrepreneurs and company executives.

# SEA-LATAM Bridging Business Frontiers



■ SEA-LATAM 2015 Conference is a one-of-its-kind effort to connect the two fastest-growing emerging markets in the world

*By Priya Ramakrishnan*

The inaugural Southeast Asia – Latin America Conference (SEA-LATAM) 2015 brought together government and trade representatives, key industry leaders, 100 SME executives and industry thought leaders in a day of sharing sessions and talks on business opportunities for emerging markets. The conference was pioneered by the Asia-Latam Connection (ALC) in partnership with the Latin American Chamber of Commerce, and INSEAD Emerging Markets Institute acting as the official knowledge partner.

Themed ‘Bridging Emerging Markets’, the conference was one-of-its-kind with an aim to fuel closer business and trade relations between the two regions. Held on 14 September 2015 at the Singapore Exchange (SGX) Centre, it was a first foray for ALC which is a Singapore based company founded by two Yale-NUS students, Sheryl Foo and Shermin Chan, whose shared interest in SMEs, international business trends and developing markets led them to conceptualise SEA-LATAM.

Founder and Director of ALC, Ms Foo in her welcome address remarked, “There is a need to understand what markets to enter, what business model to adapt, and how to locate independent parts of the supply chain to exploit the advantages of specialised production. More Singapore-based companies are looking to expand their markets in Latin America, diversify their operations and skills. Some have successfully shifted their values and activities

to these competitive markets.” She further added, “However, with the rapidly-developing, inter-regional government engagements such as the Pacific Alliance and the ASEAN economic community, there is no better time to follow suit.”

Eminent speakers who shared their shared valuable insights on the new opportunities included prolific speakers such as Mr Emmanuel Daniel, Founder and CEO of the world-renowned The Asian Banker, Latin American Ambassadors from Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru and several other distinguished panellists.

Featured panellists came from various high-profile companies and organisations, including DHL, Proctor & Gamble (P&G), Kensteel Group, ProMéxico, the Asian Trade Center, and Ernst & Young.

In his opening address, Mr Daniel said “When we look at Latin America and parts of Asia, we do not necessarily look at countries that are middle income or high income, there are opportunities to be found in countries that are low income, depending on where in the value chain you want to play.” His observations echoed throughout the conference, with much discussion on encouraging SMEs and investors alike to make the step

towards a fully integrated economy.

The panellists also pointed out that seizing trade opportunities was of utmost importance, as they are many in emerging markets in Southeast Asia and Latin America. While trade is just the first step, to sustain consistent growth and success, it is crucial to establish more meaningful linkages with mutual investments at the forefront of beginning connections.

His Excellency, Luís Fernando Serra, Ambassador of Brazil, highlighted the role played by Brazil in Latin America’s economy. “Brazil’s economy is now the sixth largest in the world, and is steadily maintaining this track, with Singapore as the largest ASEAN trading partner with Brazil, fifth in Asia, and 15th in the world. It is significant to note that Singapore’s investment in Brazil is one of the largest in the country.”

Taking its efforts across the Pacific, ALC is hosting the Latin American edition of the SEA-LATAM Conference in February 2016 in Mexico City.



# Carnival Fever Spread Throughout Brazil

■ Brazil's famous Carnival attracts millions of visitors every year and Brazilians celebrate the festival in different ways across the country

*By Catarina Longman*



**W**ith a multitude of colours, sounds, costumes and people dancing everywhere, Brazilian Carnival is one of the most exuberant and energetic festivals in the world, considered by many as “the greatest party on earth”. Every year, over a million tourists visit the country to experience the festivities. But Carnival in Brazil is much more than Rio de Janeiro’s parade of Samba schools. During those special days, the entire nation is celebrating in a myriad of ways.

## Salvador

The capital of the state of Bahia, Salvador is a city with strong African heritage and a revered musical culture. Different musical styles, such as “samba-reggae” and “axé”, were born in Bahia. During Carnival, the streets are taken up by flocks of people that follow a “trio elétrico” – a truck-like vehicle outfitted with giant speakers and a platform on top where bands play live. There are several famous local bands that play every year during Carnival in different “trios elétricos”. The public can choose which “trios” and routes to follow.



(Top & above): Street parties in Salvador

However one must purchase a ticket in order to be able to follow the bands on predetermined street circuits. “Chiclete com Banana”, for instance, is a well-known band from Salvador, and tickets to follow their “trio”

(Right ): Recife - where the world's largest street carnival takes place.  
(Below right): Olinda is famous for its "blocos" street parades

can cost hundreds of dollars. There are also VIP areas called "camarotes", set up in buildings along the way where guests can watch the crowds and "trios" pass by. In the Pelourinho, the historic centre of town, "blocos" – groups with bands that perform on the streets – entertain the crowds with their contagious music. Traditional "blocos" include "Olodum", a percussion group with afro-origins.

### Recife and Olinda

In Recife, capital of the state of Pernambuco, the largest carnival parade in the world – in terms of number of participants – storms the streets every Carnival on Saturday morning. The "bloco" is called "Galo da Madrugada", which means "dawn's rooster", and the party starts in the early hours of the day and goes until the evening. There are many folkloric performances and different music genres originating from Pernambuco, including "Frevo", "Maracatu" and "Ciranda", with its roots in African cultures and traditions brought to Brazil centuries ago. Many performances can be seen in the "Recife Antigo", the old and historic city centre.

During Carnival days, the streets of the old town of Olinda (Pernambuco), locally known as "Cidade Alta" due to its hilly terrain, are reserved for pedestrians, so that people can walk freely. Not that there is much space to roam around – the narrow brick roads and small alleys are flooded with people in colourful costumes. Dozens of small and large "blocos" parade around the streets, some with huge followings. One famous "bloco", "O Homem da Meia-noite" ("midnight man"), is known for its giant papier-mâché dolls that go out only late at night.

### Parintins

One of the greatest folkloric festivals in Brazil happens in Parintins, a small town in the state of Amazonas, but not during Carnival. The celebration happens on the last weekend of June, in an open air stadium, named the "Bumbódromo", built specially for the occasion. There is a presentation involving local folkloric performances, where two symbolic figures, called "bois" (oxen), compete for the win – the "Boi Garantido", decked in red, and the "Boi Caprichoso", in blue. The festival incorporates regional myths, indigenous rituals and local customs.

Find out more about Brazil: [www.visitbrasil.com](http://www.visitbrasil.com)



# Cultural Space Showcases International Art Made in Singapore

■ A connection to Singapore and South-East Asia was a common thread in this year's exhibits. The Brazil Cultural Space hosted a series of art exhibitions in 2015, with collective and individual showcases of paintings and photography. Located within the Embassy, the space is open to display the work of international artists, based in Singapore or elsewhere, everyone dispersed from the actual venue.

*By Catarina Longman*



## **“Connections” by Apprentices @ Cabaleiro**

The first collective exhibition of the year at the Cultural Space brought together artists from 8 different countries with one thing in common: Patricia Cabaleiro, their art teacher. After learning painting techniques with the Brazilian artist, the 8 women formed the group “Apprentices @ Cabaleiro” and put their skills into creating their own artworks. Named “Connections”, the exhibition had an eventful opening night, on October 2nd, with over 120 guests in attendance.

“Apprentices @ Cabaleiro” is made up of Gillian Duncan (Scottish), Inken von der Luehe (German), Marleen Aldorf (Dutch), Michele Royston (Irish), Montse Oliver (Spanish), Nishta Sipahimalan (Singaporean), Rosie Oliveira (Brazil) and Shruti Gupta (Indian). The 16 paintings showcased different aspects of each artist's work, exploring the linkages and bonds developed between ones' origin and the host country, Singapore.



### “Immersing in Tradition” by Deise Dias

Brazilian artist Deise Dias returned to the Cultural Space with a new theme. Her second solo exhibition at the Embassy, titled “Immersing in Tradition”, took place in November. Members of the Brazilian community in Singapore and local artists came to view the art showcase during the opening night, held on 30 October. The artist, having lived in Singapore for over 20 years, specializes in artworks made on rice paper, typically seen in Chinese Art. Her paintings of intricate mandalas and batik prints are inspired by South-East Asian cultures and traditions.



### “Soul Solace” by Magali Pagani

Exhibiting for the first time at the Cultural Space, Magali Pagani displayed paintings and photography, in a showcase named “Soul Solace”. The opening night took place on 20 November, with over 60 people present at the event. Pagani started painting after taking courses at the Lasalle College of the Arts in Singapore. An experienced photographer, she uses her camera to express her need to portray reality and the associated emotions derived from it, in their purest form. On the other hand, Pagani uses her paintings to escape reality and the related consequences of it.





# Blissful Music at PianoBotanica 2015

■ Brazilian Duo takes centre stage at the Singapore Botanic Gardens

*By Catarina Longman*

Once again, crowds gathered at the emerald lawns of the Singapore Botanic Gardens for a Brazilian musical evening. Brazilian Duo Bastos & Borges headlined PianoBotanica 2015, held on Sunday, 6 September, at the Gardens' Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage. In its third edition, the event attracted over 2,000 people, many of whom have become regulars of the yearly musical affair.

Flutist João Bastos and pianist Yara Borges make up the Duo Bastos & Borges. Both artists received classical training at top music institutions in Europe, and together they have performed extensively across the continent with a repertoire of both classical and popular Brazilian music.

The Duo has also performed in Singapore in 2013 upon invitation by the Embassy of Brazil.

## Second Visit

Expressing their excitement over their second visit to Singapore, Borges said, "Our last time in Singapore was too



short but great. People here were very interested and welcomed our music with open arms. We are sure that Singaporeans will appreciate Brazilian music, and together with the beautiful nature around the stage, there will be a very nice

atmosphere for the audience. It will be a fantastic experience and we are very excited and happy to share a bit of our culture in Singapore."

## Samba Masala

Families and friends arrived early in the afternoon and settled onto the lush grounds, enjoying a picnic in the park while awaiting the concert. Before the main attraction, local percussion group Samba Masala entertained the crowd with their vibrant drumming session. Presenting the audience with a thrilling musical journey into the sounds of Brazil, featuring many Bossa Nova and popular tunes, the Duo performed hits such as "Asa Branca" and "Garota de Ipanema", as well as classics from Pixinguinha and other Brazilian artists.

PianoBotanica 2015 was made possible by the support of Keppel Offshore & Marine, a leading offshore and marine company worldwide, and Ritz G5, a top international property development and investment company with offices in Brazil, the UK and Singapore.

# HEITOR CAPUZZO: ARTIST, SCHOLAR & EDUCATOR

■ A major influence and guide at Singapore's School of Art, Design and Media College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences

*By Octavio Lopes*

It is not easy to present a multi-talented person such as Brazilian artist and scholar Heitor Capuzzo, who is currently Full Professor at the School of Art, Design and Media of the Nanyang Technological University (ADM-NTU). His activities encompass not only that of an accomplished academic career, but also filmmaking, cinema reviews, researching and writing. The commitment, creativity and intellectual honesty shown by Prof Capuzzo in all these activities can only be summarised by one word: passion.

Capuzzo has written well over a thousand articles for academic journals, art magazines and newspapers, authored or co-authored seven books and contributed towards another nine. After obtaining a PhD degree from the Universidade de São Paulo, the most important in Latin America, Heitor Capuzzo developed an international career as educator and researcher, which took him to numerous countries and universities, such as to the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil), the University of Southern California (Los Angeles), the University at Buffalo (New York), and finally NTU. The fact that Professor Capuzzo was tenured in all these institutions, except for University of Southern California (where he was a visiting scholar), is a testimony to the depth of his knowledge and skills as lecturer.

His unshakeable kindness and commitment to his students rendered him the Nanyang Award for Excellence in Teaching, the highest honour conferred by NTU to faculty members in the realm of teaching. Always searching for ways to improve his lectures and never bringing notes to the classroom, I cannot but speculate if he views every class as a theatrical performance in the best sense of the expression, in which his students

form an audience thirsty for knowledge and wisdom, in the best Greek humanistic tradition.

But academia is just one facet of Professor Capuzzo's works. In 1970, in the huge metropolis of São Paulo, he started his path in the dramatic arts as an actor. Soon his affinity with the technical side of theatre and filmmaking surfaced and he was drawn to theatre and film direction, sound production, special effects and animation. From under the limelight he moved to back stage and behind the camera. He worked as assistant director and sound assistant in a few films from 1975, gaining experience before becoming himself a film director.

## Best Film & Director

In 1979, barely 25 years old, Heitor Capuzzo made an important break. He directed, with José Armando Pereira da Silva, a short movie titled *Strange Smile*, a 13-minute documentary about the day-to-day life of deaf-blind children. The premise of the film is brilliant: to show through image and sound (as cinema is defined) the challenges of children with no sensory access, precisely, to image and sound. For *Strange Smile*, Capuzzo received one Golden Kikito award (Gramado Film Festival) for best short film and three Candango awards (Brasília Film Festival) for best film, best director and best sound. These are simply the two most important movie accolades in Brazilian cinema.

The fact that Professor Capuzzo, just in his mid-twenties, received distinguished prizes for direction is telling of his future path. From that moment, he would delve deeper and deeper in sound, traditional animation, computer animation,



(From left): HE Luís Fernando Serra (Brazilian Ambassador in Singapore) and Prof Heitor Capuzzo

special effects and other technological components related to the Seventh Art. Always a learner and always a teacher, he accumulated for over more than 3 decades a bulk of knowledge of history of cinema, history of animation and special effects that few other people in the world can claim to have. Here is a short list of some of his areas of research: digital technologies in cinema and animation; multimedia and narrative techniques; the narrative structure of cinematic drama from David Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916) to James Cameron's *Titanic*; and on to Hitchcock's brilliant evolutions; plus, graphic strategies used in political posters in the 20th century, etc.

The respect accomplished worldwide as a scholar and artist prompted several movie and animation festivals to invite him to work as curator or jury member. A few examples are The Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film in Germany, AniFest in the Czech Republic, and The Kecskemet International Animation Film Festival in Hungary, not to mention several others in his homeland, where he frequently serves as advisor for government projects related to culture.

This article just skims over Professor Heitor Capuzzo's admirable work. He has produced much more and much more is still to come from this true visionary.

# Sprinting Towards the "Finish" Line

■ Rio 2016 now ready for the Olympic Games and the incoming sports fans

By Carlos B Pheysey



(Clockwise from above): The Rio de Janeiro Olympic Park is next to the water's edge. The 2016 Olympic Games' mascot is named Vinicius. The logo of the Games in Rio and map of the venues

It's the final leg of the race now, with Rio de Janeiro just about ready to begin the Olympic Games in August this year. The momentum is building and the excitement is palpable, as the city readies itself to host athletes and spectators alike, including those from far-off Singapore as well. It is to be hoped that both Brazil and Singapore will score plentiful medals in their chosen sports.

A warm-hearted welcome is assured, stemming from the cordiality of Brazilian people. The flame of passion will be re-ignited on 5 August, when the Olympic flame touches the podium of Maracanã stadium, a venue recently used during the World Cup of 2014. Brazil is to be the first South American nation to hold the Games, a most appropriate choice taken by the IOC in 2009, given the country's harmony, diversity and hospitality in welcoming all immigrants - past, present and future ones - in a present-day era fractured

by intolerance elsewhere in the world. A culture of peace and solidarity has evolved, which is conducive to fair play and a sporting spirit. Also, the managerial acumen, along with volunteerism, led to a successful World Cup in 2014, to be emulated this year as well.

Brazil has invested much in its sports infrastructure and also its athletes. Thus, Brazilian athletes are now much better prepared and backed by considerable resources made available for them to grow and win medals. In schools, children are receiving a wider range of sports and resources, thus preparing the next generation of star performers and a health-infused society. Hand in hand, education and sport will lead to social inclusion, a sense of individual and team achievement and respect for their peers, in the arena of life.

The beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro, which acts as a postcard for wider

Brazil, has worked on its grid to support the Olympics. A new metro line has been implemented, a tramway now connects downtown points, and express lanes have been set aside for buses linking the sports venues in August. Also, 17 kilometres of bicycle tracks were laid out. This legacy of mobility will remain in place long after the Games are over. Cab drivers themselves have been ministered English courses to handle visitors. Some venues will become permanent athlete-training centres, designated to remain active in decades to come.

The harbour facing the Guanabara Bay is also being revitalised, transforming itself into a leisure, cultural and office space for residents and tourists alike. It is to be noted that much of the investment was not from public coffers, but rather from private investors who placed bets on the city's potential. Companies such as Odebrecht, Bradesco, TAM Airlines



and others pitched in, expanding the range of possibilities. Thus, the hotel network grew in leaps and bounds, and the Olympic Village itself, housing athletes from across continents, is to become a residential complex after the Olympics, with its apartments already being advertised for sales in late 2016. Three extra wastewater treatment plants have been built. The overall amount invested into the sports legacy in Rio and wider Brazil in preparing for the Olympics totals US\$1.2 billion and has triggered the biggest urban redevelopment since the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona.

What's more the facilities are to be sustainable in several manners. For instance, the "Future Arena" at the Olympic Park is made up of temporary modules, quickly dismantles after the Games and converted into 4 schools. Other steps were taken to likewise meet eco-friendly targets, low-cost solutions, long-term benefits to the community and more.

The International Olympic Committee, in August 2015, i.e. a year before the

Games, praised the Rio 2016 Organising Committee and its local governmental partners (at municipal, state and federal levels) for their teamwork efficiency in delivering the pre-Games test events. Such smaller contests served the purpose of rehearsing for 2016 and streamlining kinks and bottlenecks. The IOC Chairperson, Ms Nawal El Moutawakel, commended the unity of spirit that drove Team Brazil to hold smooth performances in volleyball, triathlon, rowing, equestrian events and more.

The 31st Summer Olympic Games, extending into the Paralympic Games, were slated to stage 28 sports, including recent add-ons such as golf and rugby sevens, though some sports didn't make it, such as baseball, squash, softball and roller sports. A total of 7.5 million tickets were scheduled to be sold, half of which made available at prices below US\$20, thus making them affordable to the masses of local spectators. Street events became available free of charge, naturally.

The mascot of the Games is called

Vinicius, after the Brazilian diplomat and composer Vinicius de Moraes, who helped to give birth to Rio's bossa nova genre. The ensuing mascot evokes artfully the agility of cats, the sway of monkeys and the grace of birds. The logo of the Games of Rio 2016 portrays 3 figures in yellow, green and blue, colours present in Brazil's flag. The colourful strands join arms as if embracing the Sugar Loaf mountain that graces the city, thus conveying notions of energy, diversity, Rio's nature and the Olympic spirit.

The torch relay begins its journey on 3 May 2016, starting in the nation's capital, Brasília, and then passing through the capitals of the 26 states of the Union, before lighting the pyre in Rio de Janeiro on 5 August. The closing ceremony on 21 August, however, marks not the end. The flame is to remain ablaze in other dimensions. The spirit of Rio 2016 will live on in the hearts of athletes, foreign spectators, and the native citizens that make up this magical place that is Rio de Janeiro.

# RIO GRANDE DO NORTE: Open for New Frontier Business

■ Outlook and prospects for investors in one of the most dynamic states undergoing dramatic changes

*By Carlos B Pheysey*

**K**nown by its acronym RN, the State of Rio Grande do Norte, in Brazil's northeast, is diversifying its economy. Formerly an agribusiness state with somewhat modest prospects, it has been undergoing dramatic changes. One example is the new airport outside its capital, Natal. This piece of infrastructure is to become the leading airport in the Northeast, at the closest point to Europe and Africa.

The state used to be known for the production of tropical fruit, cashew nut, sugar cane, salt, fish and seafood. Nowadays though, its processing industry has been adding value to such products, through innovations, improvements, training and benchmarking. Cotton textiles are also a major component of RN exports. Mining and drilling for oil and gas are also mainstays of the economy. Wind-power towers have been set up to make good use of the year-round winds that prevail in that angle of Brazil's coast, thus lighting up cities and powering the manufactures that supply goods to the Americas, Europe and beyond. Construction has also played a major role, particularly as more and more Brazilian, European and other tourists flock to the amazingly uncrowded and pristine coastline of Rio Grande do Norte. The World Cup of 2014, having staged matches in Natal, was also a bonanza for Rio Grande do Norte by compelling that state to incorporate more infrastructure and services.

## Tourism - Major Driver

In fact, tourism has become a major driver of the local economy, compelling the state to offer a growing range of infrastructure, services and products to meet the exacting demands of visitors. Dozens of hotels, condominiums and other facilities have been built with private capital from Brazilian, European and other investors, including now a growing number of Singaporean players as well.

Elsewhere in Brazil, Singaporean companies have been setting up shipyards, electronic manufactures, logistics facilities and more ventures, but RN is the new frontier to bear in mind, as much can still be done in the improvement of Rio Grande do Norte's tourism and hospitality services, the logistics and port network, its food processing, textiles, the marine sector, transportation, housing, urban solutions, technology parks, vocational training and capacity-building, plus the supply of water and power, state health and sanitation services, the telecommunications grid and other sectors. RN counts on both Brazilian and foreign investors and expertise to keep up the flow of inputs feeding its booming performance.

With that aim, the Secretary for Economic Development of RN, Mr Flávio Azevedo, travelled to Singapore in October. To further the partnerships between his state and Singapore's expertise and finance, he met with the Agri-food & Veterinary Authority, the financial giant Temasek Holdings, the urban/business-park planners Jurong Consultants, the seafood importer "F.i.s.h. Group", the solutions of CWT Cold Chain Logistics, the developer Ritz-G5 - which has built condos in Rio Grande do Norte - and also eminent participants at the Latin Asia Business Forum, an annual affair congregating executives and authorities from both regions of the globe.

While mentioning Ritz-G5, it is worth elaborating on property investment in RN and Brazil overall, since much of the growth of infrastructure, housing and business offices in Rio





Grande do Norte will be driven by external players and offered to parties hailing from outside that state: tourists, executives, retirees, investors and others.

The shortage of housing and office developments translates into a boom in demand, whether catering to lower classes or the elite. As incomes rose in the first decade of the present century, there has been also a trend toward home ownership and smaller families. Almost half the population of RN lives in the cluster of municipalities abutting its capital, Natal, making Rio Grande do Norte a substantially urban state, with only a small share of the population now residing in rural areas. And yet, despite its apparent density, plentiful land is still available, not far outside Natal, making RN an attractive state when one considers how thoroughly taken up, overdeveloped and costly Brazilian states farther south have become.

### Right Time

Brazilian currency has undergone devaluation, thus the time is right for property buyers, bearing in mind the advantage that foreigners are allowed to own real estate in Brazil. It is important to begin with a reliable power-of-attorney, taking care to avoid on-line scams perpetrated by dodgy operators in Europe and elsewhere.

Individuals residing in Brazil are subject to taxes on income, capital gains and also dividends and profits. For those interested in knowing more about taxation in Brazil, it is important to recall that there are three tiers of taxes: municipal, state and federal. Urban property is subject to IPTU, the Municipal Real Estate Tax.

It is advisable to hire a tax consultant if striking out on one's own into purchases or undeveloped or developed land, more so if you intend to develop offices, a shopping mall, manufactures, warehouses, etc., in which case other regulations apply (zoning, environmental permits, plus other fiscal encumbrances on economic activities). To make itself more attractive, Rio Grande do Norte occasionally offers incentives, tax breaks and other draws to investors, therefore it's advisable to check what becomes available throughout 2016 and beyond. The Embassy of Brazil to Singapore has the booklet "Investing in Real Estate in Brazil", for perusal by anyone visiting its Trade/Commercial Section.

We invite everyone to take a fresh look at this smaller but plucky player in the economy, the state of Rio Grande do Norte, where new opportunities abound for those savvy enough to be first in the market, staying thus ahead of the curve.



(Clockwise from top left): RN juts out into the Atlantic, towards Africa and Europe; Wind power for urban centres, generated in RN State; new international airport outside Natal; salt production is a pillar of RN's economy; Natal's riverside harbour; mining retains a place in the state's economic activities and a cashew-nut plant in Rio Grande do Norte



*This special report brought to you by Ritz-G5*



# Sun, Sand and Sea

■ Northeast is already famous as the holiday hinterland of Latin America

By Carlos B Pheysey

**A**mong the 3 states of Brazil that begin with the word “Rio”, everyone knows about the vibrant urban shore of Rio de Janeiro, but much farther north there are other seafronts in Brazil yet untouched by intense urbanisation. The north-eastern corner of Brazil, where the country’s coastline makes a sharp angle and juts out toward Africa, is home to a state little known to Asians, but actually a hidden gem that Brazilian and European sun-seeking holidaymakers have known for long: the state of Rio Grande do Norte, a place of pristine white-sand beaches and year-round sunshine.

Rio Grande Norte receives 2 million visitors a year, a testament to its attractiveness. Flights connect its capital, Natal, to the rest of Brazil and to Europe, since the Old World is not far from northern Brazil. In fact, Natal has now a brand-new airport that vies for a spot among the best in Brazil.

Natal offers much to the international traveller, from the iconic Morro do Careca (Bald Hill) flanking Ponta Negra beach, thru to the city’s colonial Portuguese fortress of Reis Magos, and on to the dunes of Genipabu in the northern outskirts for motor buggy rides or a ride on the back of dromedaries!

Farther afield, the Carcará Lagoon is a sheer eden of crystal-clear water. More dunes can be found far to the northwest in Galinhos, oddly contrasting with its wind-power mills. In fact, given that the Brazilian coast turns at a sharp angle at that spot near the Equator, the presence of incessant strong breezes is a constant, mitigating any heat. The sun itself shines 300 days a year in Rio Grande do Norte, rendering it the sunniest state of Brazil. Other noteworthy beaches along the north are Maracajaú, for diving aficionados, plus the remote and rustic seaside village of São Miguel do Gostoso. If one wants to go all the way to far-off Tibau, the town is a byword for the famous little bottles holding images formed by patient hand-pouring of distinctly colourful sands, layer by layer into the bottle till the desired artwork takes shape.

Other beaches to the south, such as Tabatinga, Camurupim, Pipa, Madeiro, Tibau do Sul, Barra do Cunhaú, Baía Formosa and others enable dolphin-watching, eco-walks through the bush,

mangrove tours, the practice of kite-surfing, or just sea-front relaxation while savouring coconut water. Some of these very beaches also offer a vibrant yet laidback nightlife. Rather than upscale accommodation, lodgings are more commonly smaller hotels, inns, bed-and-breakfast places, thus providing a more down-to-earth feel to the place. There is much seafood to be savoured, and all manner of exotic fruit are turned into exquisite juices: cashew, cajá, guava, mango, melon, pineapple, tangerine, passion fruit, etc.

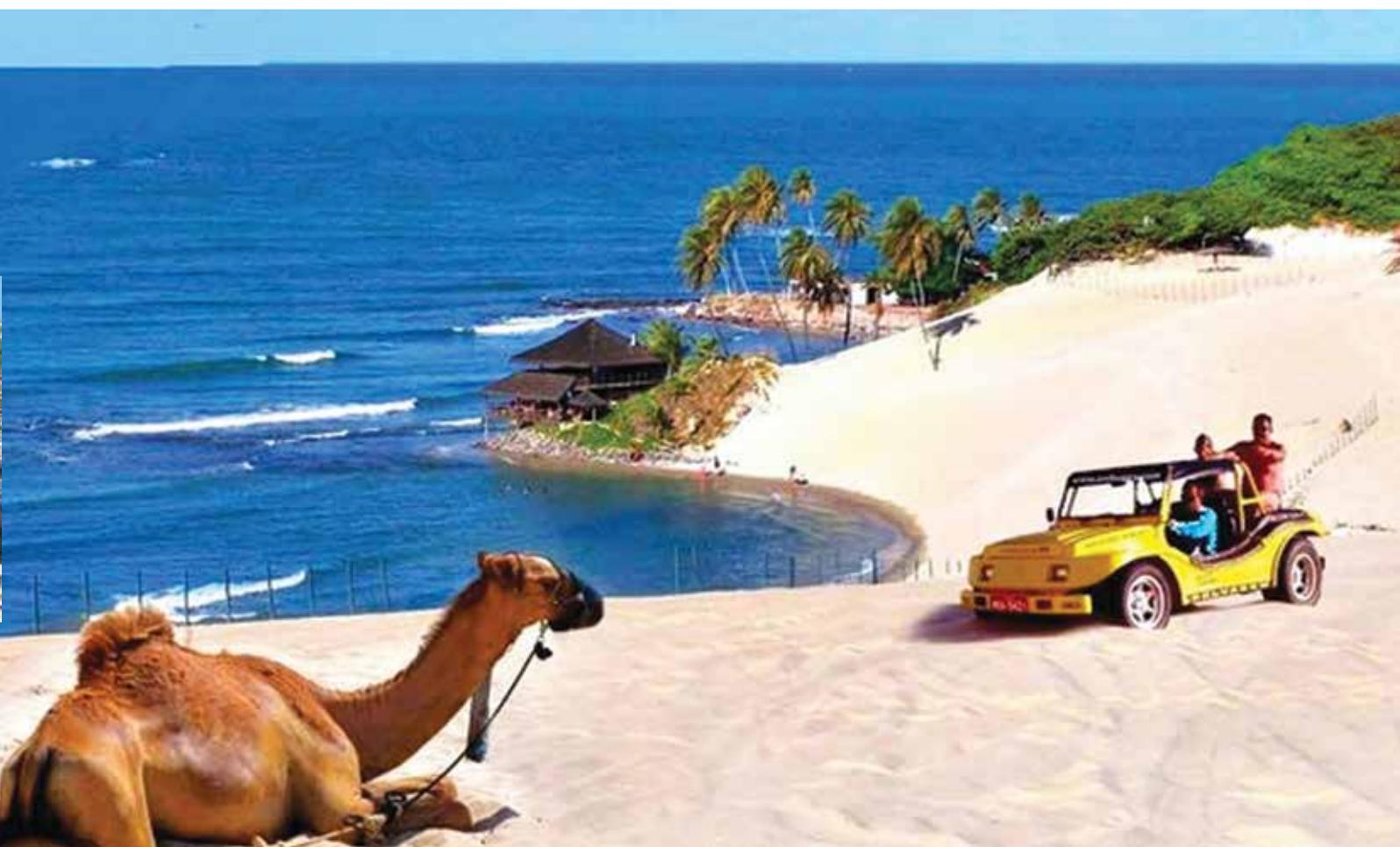
For those wanting something beyond the beaches, there is a range of museums in Natal, and pre-historic rock-art upstate. Just south of Natal, one finds the largest cashew tree in the world, a genetically flawed tree that has come to occupy an entire town block! From that shore of Parnamirim, one can take a boat ride to see the reefs, called parrachos. The rocket-launch facility at Barreira do Inferno is also a draw, located as it is near the ocean and the Equator, where the gravity pull of the planet is reduced.

Handicraft abounds in Rio Grande do Norte, from lace cloth items, thru semi-precious stones, to leather artefacts, and more. The Carnival parade, held in February-March, is a spontaneous and colourful affair. Likewise the processions and bonfire held in June for the Catholic saints are not to be missed, particularly in the upstate Mossoró, the second largest city in Rio Grande do Norte. The eerily rocky hinterlands are also home to semi-precious stones, caves, canyons, thus a haven for rapel, cave exploration, mountain-biking and

such. The highlands near Portalegre are also a chance to escape the coastal heat if thus needed. The lodges there aren’t far from waterfalls, trails, lookout points and charming settlements.

The state receives massive private Brazilian and European investments towards hotel and condo developments. Various Singaporeans who have bought a stake in Ritz-G5 properties in the environs of Natal have already visited the state. Whether you are seeking to invest or to just go and enjoy as a traveller, the state of Rio Grande do Norte ought to figure in your plans. The native potiguares welcome you to their unspoiled paradise at the “Elbow of Brazil”, as the Northeast corner of the country is so lovingly termed, blessed by the sun, currents, winds and breaking surf of the South Atlantic.

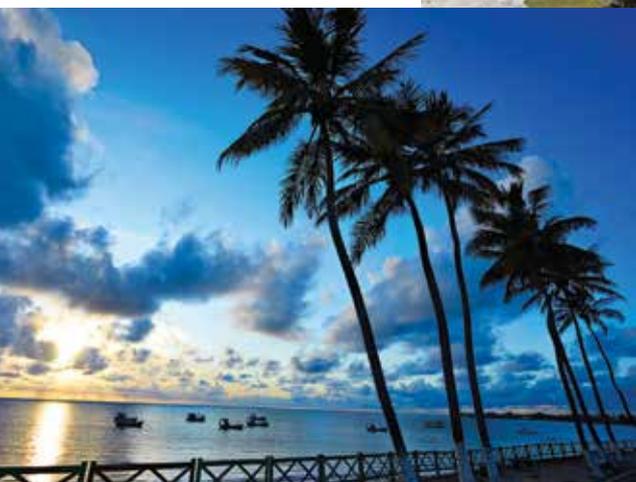




(Top left, opposite page): Morro do Careca, or Bald Man's Hill, on Ponta Negra beach and (above) the dunes of Genipabu

(Right & below): A luxury resort development in Natal by Ritz G5 and the view during sunset.

(Far left, opposite page): Fortress of Reis Magos in the foreground, and the city of Natal



*This special report brought to you by **Ritz-G5***

# Property Investment in Natal

■ What you need to know to consider buying a property in Rio Grande do Norte State's city of Natal in Northeast Brazil

## Did you know...

Natal is rated 5th best place to invest in Brazilian real estate in a recent business survey. This is an extraordinary finding considering that nearly all Brazilian municipalities were studied, out of which the 100 best were shortlisted and ranked.

In the list published by a leading Brazilian fortnightly business magazine, *Exame*, the survey was conducted by consulting firm Prospecta Inteligência Imobiliária (Prospects Intelligence Real Estate). Natal was also defined as a great place for investment in all types of real estate - residential, hotel and commercial.

Rather than considering the valuation of real estate by taking into account the average price per square metre (which only reflects sold property values) the researchers chose to investigate the demand by tracing future trends. The study used several variables which measured per capita income, education levels and employment, a number of operating companies in the city and the housing deficit.

One hundred municipalities were compiled showing the potential for real estate investment, with Natal ranked 5th best in the whole Brazil (the other top four are dominated by the state of São Paulo). Thus, in the Northeast region, Natal ranks in the top position, ahead of Maceió (8th) and João Pessoa (10th).

According to an independent real estate investment consultant, Mike Smith (based in Natal) and his blog on this survey, these study findings have already drawn attention of the investor groups onto the advantages of investing in Natal.

## Also a Strong Migratory Pull

Ritz-G5's Brazilian Director of Marketing, Fernando Lessa, pointed out that Natal is a city with great characteristics and attractiveness, and although it does attract tourists and holidaymakers, it has a very strong migratory pull too. This is because it offers a superior quality of life in Brazil; e.g. faster and shorter commute to work, stunning beaches which are easily accessible and far better quality housing found at much cheaper prices than in the largest cities in the South.

According to data collected by Prospecta Inteligência Imobiliária, Natal has experienced a large increase in purchasing power of the average citizen. The average income of the economically active population (EAP) in Natal has six times the minimum wage (nearly R\$5,000). The increased purchasing power of the population nearly always translates into the growing real estate demand and prime assets.

The survey also revealed another interesting fact about Natal; of the top five best cities, Natal has the largest housing deficit, standing at 34.18%. The other four have: 27.83% hous-

ing deficit in São Bernardo do Campo (1st place), 29.24% in Campo Grande (2nd place), 29.71% in Santo André (3rd place), and 33.82% in Osasco (4th place).

**Moreover, there is a current opportunity to buy property in Natal at highly discounted prices for overseas investors. In particular, the Brazilian real fall has resulted in a 12-year low against the British pound, US dollar, Euro and some other hard currencies.**

The Real's depreciation, which is nearly 55% against the British pound, in combination with the above-mentioned factors, makes great timing for overseas buyers to invest in Natal's property.

(Right): Ponta Negra beach's Bald Hill, famous symbol of tourism for Rio Grande do Norte



## Natal Key Areas

...the good and the bad

Natal is geographically divided into four zones:

**North:** This is the industrial and working-class zone of the city, which is now the most populated area of Natal. Redinha beach is located here, providing some great views of the city, coupled with a local feel.

**East:** The East of Natal has the historical centre and important sights such as Forte dos Reis Magos and Ponte de Todos. The beaches here are Praia do Meio and Praia dos Artistas, visited by both local residents and tourists. There is also the entrance to Parque das Dunas, the second largest urban park in Brazil.

**South:** This is the most affluent zone of the city and the area that is most visited by tourists. The famous Ponta Negra beach is located here as are most upmarket hotels, shopping malls and restaurants.

**West:** This is the humbler area of Natal (some parts of it remain rundown). The western zone has the intercity bus terminal that can be used to reach other cities, e.g. Tibau do Sul



*In a recent independent business survey Natal is rated 5th best place to invest in all types of Brazilian real estate - residential, hotel and commercial.*

*Moreover, there is a current opportunity to buy property at highly discounted prices for overseas investors. The Brazilian real fall has resulted in a 12-year low against some other foreign currencies.*



## Prices

...compared with rest of Northeast Brazil

In the Northeast region, Brazilian house price index Fipe Zap measured that the three largest cities in the region, Recife, Salvador and Fortaleza have recorded very strong growth in recent years. Recife is leading with 101.9% growth between Q3 2010 and July 2015. Over the last 6-12 months, growth has slowed due to the economic downturn. However, it is still positive at 6.6%Y-O-Y to July 2015.

Looking back, the prices available for some of the most attractive areas of Natal have shown an extraordinary growth over the last seven years. In particular, since September 2008 to July 2015, the house prices in Petrópolis have grown by a total of astonishing 273% whilst in Lagoa Nova the house price increase amounted to incredible 146%. Thus, the house price growth which occurred over the last seven years is equivalent

to an average of 39% growth per annum for Petrópolis district and 21% per annum for Lagoa Nova district.

In terms of how Natal stands on average house prices compared to other cities in the Northeast region, according to Ritz-G5 sales data, Natal presents as a very good investment in comparison to other cities which are more expensive. The average house price across Natal as a whole currently stands at R\$ 3,470 per m<sup>2</sup>, which is a better value than in Recife R\$4,888 per m<sup>2</sup>, Fortaleza R\$4,876 per m<sup>2</sup>, Salvador R\$ 4,277 per m<sup>2</sup>, João Pessoa R\$ 4,675 per m<sup>2</sup>, Maceió 3,774 per m<sup>2</sup> and Sergipe R\$ 3,927 per m<sup>2</sup>. That also implies that there is potentially more space for house price growth in Natal in the future, compared to other cities in the region.

*This special report brought to you by **Ritz-G5***

# How to Buy a Property in Natal

■ The single most important piece of advice would be to hire a credible, qualified lawyer to represent you and handle your property purchase in Natal

By Nina Booty

## The most important thing...

Clients buying properties in Brazil will require a lawyer to receive comprehensive advice on all aspects of the procedure, from who the developers are down to planning permission. This will identify any potential risks inherent to a particular deal. The lawyer will check the ownership and any charges, encumbrances or liens registered on the 'matrícula' (registration) of the property. They will also inform clients about the financial credibility of developers, apply for a CPF number (equivalent to an NI number in the UK), provide advice on the contracts and assist with the transfer of funds to Brazil.

The buyer must have a CPF number in order to purchase a property in Brazil. Your lawyer will also provide any general advice as well as explain how taxes work (Brazil imposes various taxes on Municipal, State and Federal levels) and ensure that the property is registered correctly in the client's name. In summary, a credible and qualified lawyer will check all the documentation needed for your property purchase and ensure that your transaction runs safely and smoothly.

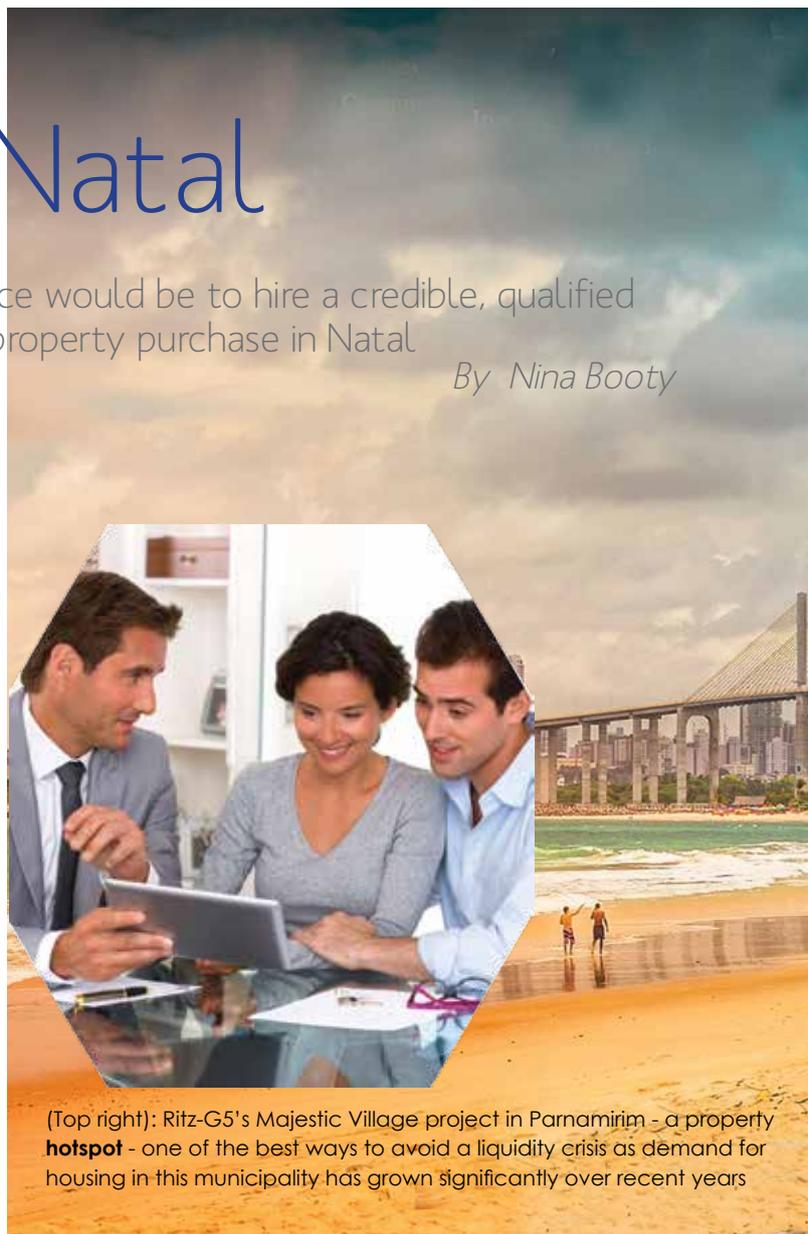
If you are buying an already built, existing property, a verbal offer can be made through an estate agent. Once the negotiation has been settled with an agreed price, a lawyer should be appointed to oversee your purchase proceedings, including deposit and reservation payments to secure the deal for both buyer and seller, which is generally 10%.

## Paying Substantially Lower Prices

With off-plan properties (purchasing at the planning stage, before it is built), the price is usually fixed as the developer is already offering discounted prices at the pre-launch stage. The biggest benefit of buying off-plan properties is paying substantially lower prices compared to the price on completion.

It is also important to keep in mind the property transaction costs, which include legal fees. In Brazil legal fees cost on average between £1,300 and £1,800 per transaction. However fees can be lower than this depending on the transaction and can amount to only 2% of the property price according to *Global Property Guide on Brazil*. Legal fees are usually based on time and labour required, the difficulty of the questions involved and the length of the professional relationship with the client. A Brazilian Notary should also be used; the notary fees usually amount to 1.25% of the purchasing price.

Other associated costs are the charges to transfer the prop-

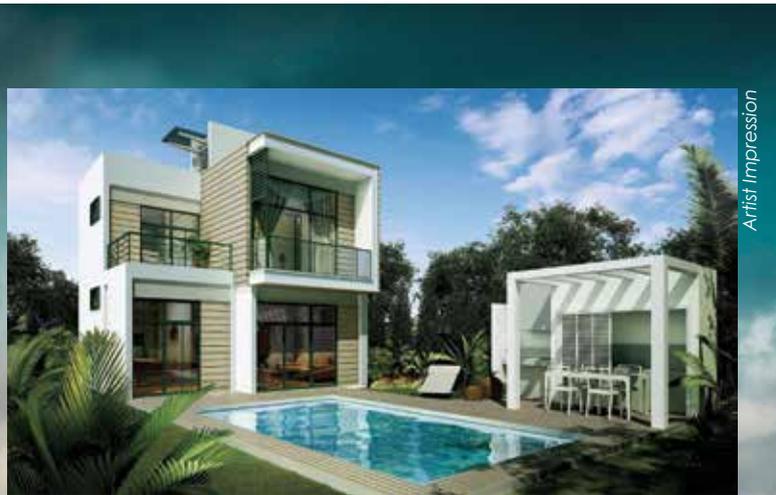


(Top right): Ritz-G5's Majestic Village project in Parnamirim - a property hotspot - one of the best ways to avoid a liquidity crisis as demand for housing in this municipality has grown significantly over recent years

erty title in Brazil. These are the responsibility of the buyer and the fees can average between 3% and 8% of the purchase price (often averaging around 5%). These costs are called property title transfer or registration fees. However, the costs differ according to location and type of property that you buy (for example, with beachfront property it generally costs more) and also the State in which you purchase.

In terms of buying safely, foreign investors with a freehold title deed are afforded the same rights as Brazilian buyers for residential and commercial property. Every jurisdiction has its own Land Registry Office (Cartório) where the property should be registered. The registrations are public and anyone can request a copy of a Certificate of Registration (Certidão de Matrícula).

Agency fees are another part of the transaction costs. However, these are only applicable when selling the property and do not apply to buyers of the property. Property sellers pay between 3% and 6% of the property price.



Artist Impression



*In terms of buying safely, foreign investors with a freehold title deed are afforded the same rights as Brazilian buyers for residential and commercial property.*

Another important thing is to do your own research. This involves thoroughly investigating Natal or the chosen market in Brazil, to identify the potential and possible investment pitfalls. One has to gather as much information as possible about the process of buying property in Brazil and we hope that this guide can assist you with that. It is also advisable to have your documents translated before signing them, as it is essential that you as a purchaser fully understand the agreement you are signing into.

Finally, but very importantly, it is imperative to look at the developer's track record when investing in off-plan properties/developments. If the developer has a solid track record and history, then it is a more attractive and safer investment to purchase from them. The Ritz-G5 Group is an award-winning developer with 30 years of experience in property construction in Brazil. Within the last 3 decades, 21 projects have been completed thus far, delivering Ritz-G5 an outstanding track record in terms of project completions in the state of Rio Grande do Norte.

## What are the Risks?

...and how to mitigate them

A very important factor when investing in international property markets is **transaction costs**. They vary greatly depending on which foreign market and can be very high. However, according to *Global Property Guide on Brazil* property transaction costs in the country are moderate as the buyer pays around 6% to 8% of the property price while vendors pay on average 3% to 6% (real estate agency fee).

Another area of concern is **currency volatility**. Property buyers have to convert their domestic currency into a foreign one to purchase. On this matter, now is the best time to invest in Natal and Brazil. This is because the Brazilian real is at a 12-year low (it has dropped around 55% and 50% in value against the British pound and US dollar resp.) Theoretically it means British, US and Singaporean citizens can currently buy over 50% more Brazilian property for the same amount of money (compared to buying at end 2011).

Other risks include a higher **liquidity risk**. Depending on the asset and the location, it can take longer to sell the asset than in some well-established Western locations. **This is why developers Ritz-G5 invests in the prime areas of Natal such as Petrópolis and Ponta Negra as well as other surrounding property hotspots.**

Another risk is **transparency** which is inherently higher in most emerging markets as there is generally less information available compared to established markets. Ritz-G5 invests in its own research team to decrease the transparency risk while maintaining a solid network of local real estate contacts in Brazil to keep abreast with Natal and Northeast as well as Brazil's national property markets.

There is also the risk of some developments being **significantly delayed** or in some cases, being **abandoned** by developers. The best way to avoid this risk is to look at the developer's track record and reputation. Ritz-G5 is an award-winning residential and commercial real estate developer with 30 years of industry experience in Brazil, having 21 real estate projects completed thus far. Ritz-G5 is also an AIPP accredited company, which means it follows AIPP's code of conduct within the international property industry.

Finally, there is a **legal risk** of not employing a credible and qualified lawyer for your purchase or leaving it too late to seek legal advice. The investor needs to use credible, legal representation from the very start of the buying process. Addressing the legal risks, Ritz-G5 employs André Elali Advogados, who have extensive expertise in Brazilian Corporate Law (for more information on our legal representatives please visit the website: <http://andreelali.com.br>).

In conclusion, it is a well-known fact that the emerging markets normally carry somewhat higher risks. However, they also carry higher returns and opportunity of capital appreciation given the right type of property investment with the right developer.

*This special report brought to you by Ritz-G5*

# Dream Homes & Investments Closer than You Think



Ritz-G5 is an award-winning international property developer and investment company with offices in Brazil, UK and Singapore, with much of its investment activity focused in Northeast Brazil's Rio Grande do Norte and its capital city, Natal.

By *Nina Booty*

## Find out more about...

Ritz-G5 is an award-winning international property developer and investment company with offices in Brazil, UK and Singapore. Much of the Ritz-G5 Group's investment activity is focused in Northeast Brazil's Rio Grande do Norte and its capital city, Natal. Ritz-G5 invests in all types of real estate: residential, hotel and commercial. Our company presents a number of opportunities to invest in our projects, offering very competitive rates of return. The Ritz-G5 Group is shaping a new skyline in Northeast Brazil with 4,000 acres of prime beachfront land. The following provides a brief overview of Ritz-G5 headline projects in Natal.



### ▲ Majestic Village

Majestic Village is a sought-after serviced land plot condominium development set across 75 hectares in Parnamirim, one of the most up-and-coming residential areas in Natal. It was designed to appeal to the domestic market and Brazil's middle and upper class population, which is over 90 million and rising.

Using an impressive build density of only 34%, Majestic Village will present a condo neighbourhood set in beautifully landscaped gardens. The impressive facilities will include a school, supermarket, kindergarten, clinics, swimming pools, tennis courts and club, volleyball courts, football pitches, children's play area, gym, stunning feature river and club house. A central square will provide a focal meeting point and will be surrounded by bustling cafés and restaurants.

### Costa Azul

Inspired by the Atlantic Ocean, Costa Azul or 'Blue Coast' is a new, modern and luxurious 168-apartment development in Petrópolis, one of the most exclusive and exciting districts in Natal to live, work and play. Its prime hill-top positioning com-

plements its bold design statement, where residents can enjoy captivating beach and ocean views and first-class amenities including a swimming pool, gym, private bar and spa. With excellent commuter links into the city and its close proximity to some of Brazil's best beaches, Petrópolis is quickly becoming the sought-after location for investors, purchasers and tenants.



### ▲ Palm Springs

Palm Springs is a recently completed project by Ritz-G5 and it is the first, flagship project jointly developed by the group since Ritz Property and G5 merged and formed the Ritz-G5 Group in late 2014.

From its humble beginnings as an ostrich farm, Palm Springs has been transformed into one of the most captivating and exclusive beachside condominium developments in Natal. Nestled in a glorious 100-acre setting, this development incorporates a 40% density build in its masterplan so residents can enjoy lush landscaped surroundings and spectacular beach and ocean views.



## Dunas de Muriú

Adjacent to the stunning, idyllic Muriú Beach, Dunas de Muriú is the new extension to one of the most popular luxury beachside condominium developments in Natal — Palm Springs. This stylish and contemporary build of 250 luxury apartments is inspired by the natural curves created by the surrounding, sweeping sand dunes. Residents can enjoy spectacular beach and Atlantic Ocean views, as well as all the trappings of a tropical oasis within Palm Springs, including natural springs, a spa, swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, and beach and football courts. Many domestic and international visitors make Muriú beach one of the most visited in Northeast Brazil. With direct access to the RN-60 — the main highway linking the development to central Natal — residents have easy access to the city as well as Natal's new international airport.

## Mercure Natal ▶

Home to some of the most fashionable beaches and neighbourhoods in Natal, Mercure Natal is a contemporary 252-suite, 4-star hotel in the upmarket district of Ponte Negra - a cosmopolitan borough that attracts approximately 80% of the city's tourist influx. This development occupies the last available plot on the prestigious Via Costeira and offers excellent amenities including a business centre, private swimming pool and 24-hour concierge. At 43 metres above sea level, 300 metres from Ponta Negra beach and on a 30-degree elevation, residents have stunning direct views of the Atlantic Ocean and a Brazilian landmark, the Morro do Careca. Mercure Natal is managed by Accor, one of the world's biggest hotel groups.



## Pirâmide Natal

In its private, secluded setting on the beach by Parque das Dunas, the Pirâmide Natal hotel stands out as one of the most prominent and bespoke designed beachside hotels in the area. This 4-star hotel has 315 guestrooms, a water park, five swimming pools and a swim-up bar, a rooftop terrace, a fitness centre and spa tub, two restaurants, 24hr concierge and a business centre with a capacity for 2,500 seats. Sitting directly on the doorstep of the Atlantic Ocean just behind Parque das Dunas, the Pirâmide Natal hotel is perfectly located for discovering the surrounding areas and central Natal, via Via Costeira.

In summer 2014, Ritz-G5 purchased the existing hotel and in 2015 Pirâmide Natal's ambitious refurbishment plans were announced by the new owners. After the 12-month redevelopment, the hotel will be granted the prestigious title of Grand Mercure, first in Natal, and join the global Accor Group. Its doors are set to open in Q1 2016. The Accor Hotels Group is one of the largest hotel groups in the world, with more than 3,700 hotels across 92 countries. Currently, the Accor hotel brand operates in 10 countries across Latin America with 244 hotels.

For more information on Ritz-G5's and how to invest in our projects, please contact the team on +65 6338 3672 or visit [www.ritz-g5.com](http://www.ritz-g5.com).



Since it was launched in 2012, Palm Springs has been a unique success story, attracting much interest and endorsement from the Government and Ministers who have purchased plots. The region is also hugely popular with celebrities and the wealthy, and, following its completion in January 2014, buyers have been able to start building their dream villa or townhouse here.

Celebrating the third anniversary of Ritz-G5 in Singapore on 12th August 2015, Singaporean clients who had invested into this project 36 months earlier have all received their first Exit Pay-out Cheques during the event.

*This special report brought to you by Ritz-G5*

# Brazil's Pride and Joy

■ Ritz-G5 has good reasons to celebrate the company's third anniversary which reflected its successful track record as well as commemorating Brazil's Independence Day



*The event welcomed distinguished VIP guests: Ambassador of Brazil in Singapore, Luís Fernando de Andrade Serra and his wife Mrs Rosana Serra; Deputy Senator of the Federal Republic of Brazil, Mr Jean-Paul Prates; Professor Marco Nobrega; CEO of Ritz-G5 (and) estimated total of 1,000 investors..."*

*“Our flagship project in Natal, Palm Springs, is fully complete and has undoubtedly been a success upon which we shall build upon in the future. The past three years have seen a great deal being achieved, but this is only the beginning.”*

Leading Brazilian real estate developer, Ritz-G5, looks to further expansion as the award-winning company marked its third year of successful operation in Singapore along with celebrating the first Asian project exit payouts and Brazilian Independence Day at a glittering evening reception on 12 August 2015.

The anniversary was marked by a prestigious, by invitation-only event held at the stunning Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore.

Senior members from the global Ritz-G5 teams (based in Singapore, Brazil and UK), treated guests to an outstanding dinner with first class entertainment and high calibre speakers.

The event welcomed a number of distinguished VIP guests: Ambassador of Brazil in Singapore, Luís Fernando de Andrade Serra and his wife Mrs Rosana Serra; Deputy Senator of the Federal Republic of Brazil, Mr Jean-Paul Prates; Professor Marco Nobrega; CEO of Ritz-G5, Mr Luiz Fernandes; Founder of André Elali Firm, Mr André Elali; Managing Director of Ritz-G5 Asia, Mr Arun Rama; General Manager of Ritz-G5, Mr José Henrique Azeredo; and Business to Lawyers in São Paulo, Mr Rubens Gaspar Serra.

An estimated total of 1,000 investors, affiliates and professional suppliers were in attendance and the audience was truly international with guests arriving from Singapore, Brazil, UK, Thailand, Malaysia and Philippines.

Speaking at the glittering third anniversary event, Ritz-G5 CEO, Luiz Fernandes, enthused:

“I would like to extend my congratulations and best wishes to Ritz-G5 Asia, celebrating tonight three successful years of operation in Singapore. Working in partnership with our clients is a core value at Ritz-G5, which is why I am so delighted to be able to honour our promises and deliver the first Exit Payouts to our investors in Palm Springs.

“Our flagship project in Natal, Palm Springs, is fully complete and has undoubtedly been a success upon which we shall build upon in the future. The past three years have seen a great deal being achieved, but this is only the beginning. I thank you for your ongoing commitment to Ritz-G5 and I look forward to presenting many more exciting and innovative investment opportunities to you over the coming years.”

Speaking at the event, Arun Rama, Managing Director of Ritz-G5 Asia, highlighted:

“August 2015 marks a very special milestone for Ritz-G5.

Not only is the award-winning Brazilian developer celebrating its third anniversary of operations in Asia, but clients are also now receiving their first Exit Payouts from the superb Palm Springs investment.”

Ritz-G5 have launched five (5) projects: Palm Springs, Majestic Village, Residencial Currais Novos, Costa Azul and Airtropolis Village in Asia of which three (3) have been completely sold out. Ritz-G5 is proud to announce that the Palm Springs Asian investors are now receiving in batches their payouts.

### **Ritz-G5 celebrates Brazilian Independence Day in Singapore**

Ritz-G5 celebrated Brazilian Independence Day together with the Embassy of Brazil in Singapore on 15 September 2015.

The prestigious event took place at the beautiful Marina Mandarin Hotel and marked the first time that the Asian office has celebrated Brazil's Independence Day along with the Embassy of Brazil.

International guests were invited to a stunning evening dinner reception with traditional Brazilian entertainment and high calibre speakers.

The event was attended by a number of distinguished VIP guests: Ambassador of Brazil in Singapore, Luís Fernando de Andrade Serra and his wife Mrs Rosana; CEO of Ritz-G5, Mr Luiz Fernandes; Managing Director of Ritz-G5 Asia, Mr Arun Rama and Professor Marco Nóbrega.

Brazil gained its independence in 1822 and this national holiday is commonly referred to as Sete de Setembro (September 7th). In Brasília, the celebration is usually attended by 30,000 people each year and takes place at the Ministries Esplanade with a military parade in the presence of the President of Brazil.

Celebrating this great achievement, Ritz-G5's CEO, Luiz Fernandes congratulated Brazil and wished it further prosperity,

“I am very much honoured to be a part of such a determined and strong-willed nation as Brazil. Today we are celebrating its independence amongst our Asian friends, which is a great achievement in itself, highlighting the close ties between the two countries. I would like to congratulate all Brazilians and wish our country prosperity and further expansion within the international markets!”



# Building a Path for the Builders

Real-estate developers from the São Paulo chapter of FIABCI explore partnerships in Singapore

By Carlos Brian Pheysey

**B**uilding a city's future entails numerous thrusts, be those in training, budgeting, expert management, eco-considerations, and more, but, above all, it's a matter of erecting buildings, naturally. Plus, all the associated infrastructure, fixtures, grids and everything that makes an urban hum with life.

Real estate developers, construction firms, engineering firms, architects, law firms and other players in Brazil have been most active in that domain. The construction boom in Brazil is a force that cannot be stopped. In particular, various eyes have been turning toward Singapore, a global reference point in urban planning, land use and good construction practices. With that in mind, FIABCI-SP, the chapter in São Paulo of FIABCI - the International Real Estate Federation - staged a mission in June to Southeast Asia to form bonds that may shape further the growth of São Paulo and other Brazilian cities, whether entailing office complexes, condominium estates, popular housing, underground metro-rail, expressways, shopping malls, warehouses, industrial facilities, airports, bridges etc.

In attending a global FIABCI conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the delegates decided to extend the journey to include Singapore. The range of companies represented was impressive. For those familiar with property and construction in Brazil, the corporate names resemble a roll-call of the leading enterprises: Sabel, Jafet, Ingai, Construtora Phoenix, MPD, Pedra Grande Serviços e Negócios Imobiliários, R. Yazbek, Plano & Plano Construções e Participações, Trietro Engenharia e Construções, Sergio Porto Engenharia, as well as law firms specialised in real estate.

The executives secured a tour of the Gardens By The Bay, the over-the-top futuristic green landscape crafted at the southern edge of Marina Bay. They also became acquainted with the operations of the URA (Urban Redevelopment Authority), which made Singapore a hub of meticulous,

integrated, efficient and successful urban planning, thus constituting a reference for the world to emulate.

They were also directed toward the firm Jurong Consultants, a state-owned planning board that has been taking its expertise to countries eager to tap into Singapore's combination of Live-Work-Play, i.e. business parks in tandem with tech-parks aligned with tasteful lifestyle residences, retail centres, transportation hubs, leisure options and more, all combined into vibrant and self-sustainable satellite townships. Jurong Consultants has assisted various states in Brazil towards arranging efficient integration and economic dynamism in towns and environs where coherence was lacking, and now São Paulo and other Brazilian states can be next on the list.

## Sustainable Model

In particular, the delegates were keen on meeting the Commercial Section of the Embassy of Brazil, so as to hear about bilateral tie-ups and challenges between Singapore and Brazil and also regarding the operational framework of HDB (Housing Development Board), responsible for successfully housing almost 90% of the population, having done away with the shanty-towns that existed up to the 1970s. The HDB blocks of flats are a sustainable model, subject to unflinching maintenance, servicing and upkeep, integrated with transportation, public services and other amenities, and built on a solid foundation of a compulsory levy on workers' wages (the Central Provident Fund), so that each citizen bears a stake in home ownership, civic pride and national welfare.

The deliberation at the Embassy also addressed matters of consultation processes (whether in urban planning or wider issues of concern for the populace),



demographic growth, particularly the matter of ageing cohorts, also the intake of foreign workers and professionals and the corresponding adjustments within Singapore's tightly-run social and political order. The staff from the Embassy highlighted the aggressively meritocratic and pro-business stance of all activities of the country, be they public or private ones. The two countries hold a rich interaction in several spheres: bilateral trade, mutual consultations, exchange rate matters, company branches having been set up in each other's jurisdiction (shipyards, electronic manufactures, mining companies, banking, sovereign funds, foodstuff and more).

The Embassy's Commercial Section and delegates concurred that prospective Singaporean investors take precautions before trusting any agent to help them buy property in Brazil, or anywhere in the world for that matter. There are fly-by-night dealers of various nationalities in global financial centres (London is but one example) who travel to Singapore to stage seminars selling impossible get-rich-quick deals and outright forgeries to eager and unsuspecting Singaporeans eyeing Brazil's property market. Buyers are to avoid being *kiasu* (Singaporean slang for "fear of missing out", i.e. being left behind on a bonanza) and are to do research before signing contracts and wiring funds. Seek independent due diligence, financial and legal counsel. Above all, one should fly over to see if the construction site is active and then do so again six months later to see if there was any real progress. In this manner, buyers can remain safe in the knowledge that serious work is being done by properly operating developers.



# Nine Reasons Why SMART English is for You

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British Council Singapore is offering adult learners a special promotion. Please scan the QR-code or follow the link (<http://bit.ly/201512brazil>) to book for a **free-of-charge** placement test from 1 to 31 December 2015. This placement test helps to gauge your English knowledge as well as a professional expert consultation. With this placement test, you have up until 31 January 2016 to register for at least four consecutive weeks of SMART English and get a **free** course book worth S\$50.



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British Council (Singapore)

# San Pedro Valley - Booming Brazilian IT Hub

■ It is Brazil's own Silicon Valley which has captivated the international media such as *The Economist*

by Octavio Lopes



Belo Horizonte is the third largest city of Brazil

**S**ilicon Valley, located in the southern part of San Francisco, California, is home to several of the world's largest high-tech companies and a leading cluster of start-ups that flock to the area in order to benefit from its substantial density of knowledge, creativity and capital. All around the world, several aspiring IT hubs adopt nicknames that refer in playful ways to the Silicon Valley, the model to be emulated. Chilecon Valley (Chile) and Silicon Wadi (Tel Aviv) are two of the most famous examples.

Belo Horizonte, the third largest city of Brazil, has its own innovative IT hub, dubbed "San Pedro Valley", located in São Pedro district - the Portuguese word "São" became "San", as the latter sounds more "California-like". The region has 228 start-ups, five accelerators, seven incubators, six investors and two hacker-spaces. The surrounding Minas Gerais state has four of the ten best universities in the country, a large and well-educated middle class and abundance of capital from iron-ore mining and agribusiness. These elements, combined with lower costs when compared to the cities of São Paulo e Rio de Janeiro, have made Belo Horizonte one of the most exciting IT centres in Brazil.

San Pedro Valley has drawn the attention of international media and made the pages of *The Economist*, *Next Web* and *TechCrunch* as a place to watch in the high-tech world. Brazil as whole has a "voracious appetite for social media", as *The Economist* has put it, and has some of the "world's keenest social shoppers", according to a survey by Rakuten, a Japanese e-commerce firm. This is explained by the propensity of Brazilian people to communicate and to engage socially. Eduardo Saverin, co-founder of Facebook and resident in Singapore, and Mike Krieger, co-founder of Instagram, are both Brazilians and certainly carried some of their native country's eagerness to communicate and connect over to their own enterprise.

Since Akwan, a San Pedro Valley start-up specializing in developing search engine systems, was bought by Google back in 2005, there have been several success cases for appreciation. Google now has an R&D facility in Belo Horizonte, an evidence of how innovative San Pedro Valley's tech community is. Another illustrative example is Samba Tech, which started in 2004 selling on-line video platforms and now has offices in São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Miami. Check San Pedro Valley's business community website on: <http://www.sanpedrovalley.org/new/>



# Look out for More of Brazil in Singapore

■ New, unusual, niched or offbeat – Brazil is able to offer unique products and services to Asia

**H**elio Galvão Ciffoni, CEO of Sapiens Global, just came back from Brazil in November and he returned to the island with some good news. He says, “You can expect more of Brazil in Singapore and ASEAN. There is going to be more Brazilian products as well as services being introduced to the region because there is great level of interest by SMEs there to internationalise.”

Sapiens Global is an international consulting firm that has offices in Brazil, Tokyo and Singapore, that is experienced in bridging and facilitating firms to enter and expand in Asia and now the scope has extended to Southeast Asia as well. The DPR (Brazil's Department of Trade and Investment Promotion), Ministry of External Relations, also shares his assessment of the business climate in Brazil. He was there in Brasília, where he attended the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Department. The message there, said Mr Ciffoni, was how prospects for growth is very positive and that the potential for Brazil products, innovation, supply chain and commercial intelligence is mind-boggling.

## IT and F&B

He cited the examples of two industries in particular, “There are many opportunities that are emerging especially in the fields of IT and in the F&B sectors. Besides the usual meats, in the Brazilian F&B industry there are many new as well as unusual Brazilian product manufacturers who are eyeing the Asian market via Singapore.” He gave some examples of the new products that will soon be on supermarket shelves such as crunchy waffles of Bauducco; Coffee Beans-Coffee to eat; Palmito (Palm Heart), supplied by Qualidouro and on the drinks menu labels like ‘Ouro de Morretes’ and processed food by Vapza, to name a few, that are set to make an impact.

He said the present situation is especially very favourable for Brazilian companies who have a global outlook and want to internationalise because of the currency rate. The interest goes both ways as Singapore companies are also still keen in the Brazil market. “We are working in collaboration with IE Singapore and are involved in bringing three companies to the Brazilian market in the areas of cyber security, tracking cargo and in the mining sector,” says the CEO.



Helio Galvão Ciffoni (extreme right) connecting companies and creating opportunities

## Singapore Airshow

In February, for the Singapore Air Show 2016 in Changi, he said, “We are very interested in getting a Brazil pavilion set up with at least eight companies who have shown interest in participating. They provide offbeat services in terms of training of pilots, and helicopter companies which are interested in the Asian market. We also have six software companies providing IT solutions for the aviation sector.”

“We are also working closely with EDB to bring Brazilian companies to Singapore in the area of software testing, social media advertising etc. We consider ourselves a networking partner who uses Singapore as a hub and getting businesses to expand in the region especially in Myanmar, Indonesia, Japan and Thailand.”

One amazing success story for Sapiens Global is Playkids, a kids entertainment app for children up to 5 years old. It was created in Brazil and is now in 30 countries with 12 million downloads and the software developers are ready to bring it to Asia.

Sapiens Global has grown in terms of numbers since last year with a 35 per cent increase in profits over the previous year, but, according to Mr Ciffoni, “In real terms, we measure our growth in how well we can connect companies, create opportunities and bring Brazil, Latin America, Singapore and ASEAN closer.”



Mr Ciffoni with (left) Ms Marinês Gomes, Sapiens Global's Director in Brazil and Ms Val Freitas, Director of Helisul

# BRF & SATS Partnering for Meat Processing

■ BRF from Brazil and SATS from Singapore set up a joint plant on the island

By Carlos Brian Pheysey



(Above): A SATS delivery aboard a plane at Changi Airport (top right): Sadia, familiar to Singaporeans, is but one of BRF brands

Airport, you might be selecting ingredients when choosing between fish and chicken – hopefully you'll enjoy the latter!



The plant is located in the west of the island, within a cluster of other food industries. It is hoped that significant exports to other Southeast Asian nations will materialise in the second half of the decade, boosting this promising joint-venture to new heights and horizons. Gone are the days when BRF simply exported raw cuts from Brazil to the region and Singaporean consumers would find thus frozen cuts from Brazil predominating in all supermarket gondolas around the island – the order of the day henceforth is to climb the value-added ladder in the client regions likewise, by adopting a go-to-market strategy and processing the cuts locally into something the Asian middle class and its rising buying power will crave.

Joining hands, two giants of the food business have set up a joint-venture manufacturing plant now meeting Southeast Asia's demand for products derived from poultry and pork meats. On the one hand, BRF, a Brazilian giant not just within the country but also the seventh largest food company worldwide, and, on the other hand, SATS Ltd., a subsidiary of the giant Singapore Food Industries Pte. Ltd. (SFI), have partnered to form SATS BRF Food Pte. Ltd. The joint-venture's plant became operational in Singapore in mid-2015, geared to the production of branded food products to retailers, restaurants, wholesalers, distributors and ship chandlers.

The strategic move means that Brazilian poultry and pork cuts, already dominant in Singapore's market, far ahead of their Australian, European and other suppliers, no longer shall appear on tables as mere cuts but rather in processed, value-added formats. SFI made available for SATS BRF Food the conglomerate's distribution centre, two production plants and a warehouse. To the existing machinery, more will be aggregated. Thus, value-added products, higher productivity, greater outputs, economies of scale and better quality will reach Singaporean and other Southeast Asian consumers. Indonesia is a particularly relevant target, given its large consumer base.

BRF has been implementing akin arrangements in other continents – also in next-door Indonesia – thus making it a truly global Brazilian brand. In this manner, 8% of BRF's production will actually be outside Brazil. One interesting fact about its partner in Singapore is that SATS also supplies catering to various airlines, as the largest provider of such airport services in Asia. It may well be that, on your next flight out of Singapore's Changi

## Massive Expansion

In Brazil itself, BRF has about 60 plants, a number that grows further as the company continues to buy out smaller plant operators in southern and western Brazil. It has supplied the Brazilian and world markets for decades, and has had an office for over a decade in Singapore for its frozen poultry and pork supplies to the island. The new joint Sadia, familiar to Singaporeans, is but one of many BRF brands-venture translates into a massive expansion of its former foothold in Singapore, with staff numbers booming exponentially. Elsewhere, BRF has 24 global offices to its name. In fact, in late 2015 the external market surpassed the domestic one for BRF's overall revenue.

BRF inspires such confidence in global markets that the sovereign fund GIC (Government Investment Corporation) that it increased in 2014 its stake in the Brazilian giant to 4.4%. GIC bears equity in various Brazilian companies, a testament to the confidence it has in Brazil's long-term growth. It comes as no surprise that the fund has set up an office in São Paulo.

The sky is the limit for BRF. Everyone will be watching closely as the SATS BRF partnership unfolds in 2016 and beyond, making waves in the animal-protein market in Singapore and its surrounding region. The joint venture constitutes a landmark in private-enterprise cooperation between Brazil and Singapore, hailing thus a milestone in the bilateral business relations, provision of superior services and products and, ultimately, quality of life and prosperity for both nations.

# Second BIFA Boosts Confidence

■ Experts show how to channel Asian capital flows and credit lines for the financing of Brazil's growth

By Carlos Brian Pheysey



(Above): BOVESPA, the stock exchange in São Paulo; (right): Pablo Fonseca, Undersecretary for Regulation & Infrastructure at the Ministry of Finance

**B**anco do Brasil (BB) stands out as the largest Brazilian bank by assets and has gone global through its branches overseas, such as BB Securities Asia Pte. Ltd. right here in Singapore. As the latter's name suggests, it transacts in bonds and similar financial instruments, liaising closely with Asian financial institutions.

Following the success of its first forum in Singapore for Asian investors, in early 2015 the BB Securities decided to stage in June of the same year the second edition of its "Brazil Investors Forum Asia", congregating experts, gurus and heavyweights flown in from the Brazilian financial and industrial sectors and including a second day held in Hong Kong, where BB has an office likewise.

The event in Singapore staged an impressive array of speakers. Carlos Massaru Takahashi, CEO of BB Asset Management and Board Member of BB Securities, provided the opening remarks. His opening was followed by the presentation from Pablo Fonseca, Undersecretary for Regulation and Infrastructure at the Ministry of Finance of Brazil. Mr. Fonseca did not attend just the Forum, having come to Singapore to also circulate news of opportunities being opened for bidders interested in 4G mobile telephony in Brazil.

A panel on Brazilian private equity opportunities followed, made up of: moderator Eduardo Nascimento, Head of Private Equity and Investments of Banco do Brasil; Paulo Guedes, Executive Chairman and Chief Strategist of Bozano Investimentos; Nelson Rozental, Chairman of the Board of BRZ Investimentos; and, Fernando Lohmann, Managing Director of Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets.

## Corporate Panel

Opportunities for question-and-answer rounds were granted for the 50 executives present in the audience, whereby Asian investors

were able to gain further insights, details and, ultimately, the confidence needed to become operators in the Brazilian financial sector. There was also a corporate panel, comprising: moderator Daniel Maria, Managing Director of Banco do Brasil Securities in New York; Leonardo Loyola, Finance Director Banco do Brasil; Guilherme Hernandez, Corporate Strategic & Financial Planning Manager at CSN (2nd largest steel mill in Brazil); and, Simon Cheng, Managing Director of BRF Asia (local branch of the Brazilian conglomerate BRF, the world's lead producer of frozen chicken).

The luncheon provided by the events was also graced by a presentation from Nataniel Cezimbra, Head of Research at BB Banco de Investimentos. The afternoon was devoted to B2B meetings between Brazilian and Asian operators, so that the points raised in the morning could be discussed in greater depth and common ground could be found between parties for the maturing of deals eventually. The Forum served thus the purpose of restoring confidence in Brazil as a country delivering solid returns on investments.





# Dr Marco Faria Corrêa Doctor of Good Looks

■ The leading plastic surgeon introduces the new Da Vinci Surgical System and describes how the cosmetic surgery scene in Singapore has evolved

**B**orn in the Mecca of plastic surgery, Brazil, Dr Marco Faria Corrêa has been serving patients for the last 15 years here in Singapore. Constantly keeping up with the latest technology, he brings out the best in his patients from across the world. He shares his views with It's Time for Brazil in Singapore Editor-in-Chief, **Mrs Nomita Dhar**, on how plastic surgery has changed in the past decade and introduces a new tool, the robotic Da Vinci Surgical System that redefines one of the latest cutting-edge technologies in the field of plastic surgery.

**Please share in brief a little about your background**

I was born and brought up in Brazil and also pursued my studies there. It is well known that Brazil is often called the paradise of plastic surgery. Rio de Janeiro has been a destination of choice for plastic surgery for people from all over the globe. I grew up in that environment and dedicated myself to the craft of plastic surgery.

Once I had honed my skills, I was like a globe trotter, sharing my techniques of minimally invasive surgery around the world. I created a very strong international

clientele. I got an invitation to practice here and provide my services in the field of cosmetic surgery. I was also looking for an English-speaking country where I could serve my international clients and Singapore fit the bill perfectly while also providing advantages such a strategic, clean and safe environment.

Even though cosmetic and plastic surgery procedures appear to be costly to clients, there are some procedures that can be covered by insurance such as cases of heavy breasts that cause severe back pain, for which they may undergo breast reduction and lifting. Abdominal problems like ventral hernia and dermolipectomy to treat lower abdominal apron and nose with septum deviation can be covered.

**Having been in Singapore for the past 15 years, what are the changes you have observed in your area of expertise?**

I find that there are more takers for plastic surgery than ever before. Also the techniques have vastly improved and the results are more predictable. Furthermore, the quality of post-surgery care is far better now. We seek to achieve beautiful results. Plastic surgery is no longer a taboo; today it is considered to be prestigious and acceptable.

**How much does a plastic surgery procedure cost on an average?**

The cost may vary from simple to complex procedures; the surgeon / doctor who performs them and the hospital or facility where the procedure has to be

done. It may range from a few hundred for a botox injection to a few thousand to 20 thousand for a full facelift and necklift or full body make-over.

**Please explain in detail how the techniques of plastic surgery has changed for the better?**

Plastic surgery is a very fast-moving field and there are many improvements including the use of new machines. The latest technology, a robot called the Da Vinci system, is a surgical machine which is controlled by a skilled doctor. It helps in preserving nerves. I use it in tightening the inner stomach muscle. This is a new technique that I have introduced here. Made in the United States, the machine is very precise in giving three-dimensional images and it costs about one and a half million and the patient just pays for the use of the machine. It may increase the cost of the operation by a few thousand, but the benefits outweigh the cost. I have been undergoing training for last two years and also improving the new instruments that complement the machine. There isn't aggressive promotion of this machine but we introduce it to the patients and it has gained immense popularity.

**Are your clients more females or males and who in your opinion should undergo these treatments?**

Although plastic surgery is popular with women nowadays, about 20 to 30 per cent are male clients who seek cosmetic treatments as a means to gain self-confidence, or to feel better about themselves. As a plastic and cosmetic doctor, I am here to help them.

## About Dr Marco

Skilled in microsurgery, he rose to fame when he successfully operated on two boys to reattach their severed arms. He then added to his expertise in microsurgery with a six-month stint at the University of Tokyo. What really struck him was the guiding principle of perfection that defines the Japanese way, especially in plastic surgery.

Today, his renowned expertise in improving aesthetic appeal, symmetry and proportion of facial features and bodies is complemented with some of the most advanced technology ever invented. Having practiced for more than 25 years, Dr Marco's skills and passion have made him a worldwide pioneer in many areas of plastic and cosmetic surgery.

In 2000, he was invited to practice here as part of the 'Hunting for Talents' programme to boost the medical tourism sector. Its objective was to attract more international patients and make Singapore a leading hub for cosmetic surgery in the region.

Dr Marco has lived up to this promise with a thriving practice with many among his patients being today's famous celebrities and international personalities. Arriving from Europe, Australia, US, Russia, Indonesia and Malaysia, they consult him regularly for his expert skills as a surgeon and caring disposition as a doctor.

His reputation has been further enhanced by the publication of numerous medical journals and reports. He continues to share his expertise with his peers around the world and has over the years won several international awards for his pioneering work.

While performing plastic, cosmetic or reconstructive surgery, Dr Marco fervently adheres to the tenets of the great Brazilian plastic surgeons. One living legend is Ivo Pitanguy, who is famous worldwide and was appointed Head Professor by several medical universities in Brazil.

Testimony to the great skills and endearing personality of Dr Marco is the fact that many of his patients continue

to consult him through the years and many new patients are referrals from these happy and satisfied clients. Given the stature of some of Dr Marco's patients, you can be assured that your privacy will be strictly safeguarded and all personal information will remain highly confidential.

Dr Marco is adept in all aesthetic surgery procedures, including female genital rejuvenation. Although a relatively new area, it is fast gaining popularity here. Among the treatments available is vaginoplasty or vaginal rejuvenation. This is a procedure to restore muscle tone after childbirth or ageing. Some patients combine it with other procedures such as breast augmentation and tummy tuck.

As Dr Marco frequently caters to overseas patients who fly in to seek his expertise, his assistants are also able to offer advice on travel and accommodation arrangements.

For more information or to arrange for an appointment with Dr Marco, please call tel: (65) 6464 8075.



### CLINIC LOCATION

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- Female Genital Rejuvenation



**Dr. Marco Faria-Correa  
Plastic Surgery**



## Tom Jobim International Airport A Bit of Changi in Samba Nation

More than a year since the concessionaire RIOgaleão - in which Changi Airports International has a 20.4% stake - took over its operations, Rio de Janeiro's Tom Jobim International Airport has undergone a remarkable facelift.

**A**s Brazil's second busiest international airport and an important gateway into the country, Tom Jobim International Airport has experienced a rapid upgrading of its facilities and service offerings. The scene is vastly different from a year ago, where the airport was crowded, options for retail and refreshment were found wanting, and travelers had to navigate through hordes of people confused by conflicting signage.

Fast forward a year, the airport now boasts rows of new check-in counters, larger holding areas, and better signage to facilitate passenger flow. Commercial areas are spruced up to offer a greater variety of shops and F&B choices - over 100 new establishments have been brought in by the concessionaire. Soon to

come are a multi-storey car park with 2,300 new parking spaces as well as a new 100 thousand m<sup>2</sup> South Pier with 26 new boarding piers to cater



to increasing passenger traffic. In time to come, new duty free areas totaling 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> is set to open its doors at Terminal 2.

### Great Strides

"The airport has made great strides within a short timeframe.

This is possible only with the close collaboration among concessionaire partners," said Changi Airports International's (CAI) Mr Jimmy Oh, General Manager, Brazil.

In 2013, CAI and Odebrecht TransPort (OTP) were awarded the rights to develop and maintain the airport together with Infraero for 25 years. An agreement was signed in April 2014 for Concessionária Aeroporto Rio de Janeiro S/A (CARJ), rebranded as

RIOgaleão, to take over the airport's operations in August the same year.

The airport has since welcomed 60 new flights to seven new international and domestic destinations.

New services have also been put in place: information counters, round-the-clock bilingual customer service

*CAI leverages its global expertise in investing, consulting and managing airports worldwide to bring in best-in-class, sustainable airport management solutions, while its Brazilian partners complements it with their experience in local infrastructure development.*

agents, revamped baby care facilities were rolled out late last year to provide greater comfort and convenience to passengers. In recent months, RIOgaleão also launched its first mobile app to enhance communication with passengers.

### Common Goal

The common goal of winning back passengers' confidence binds this Singapore-Brazil partnership. CAI leverages its global expertise in investing, consulting and managing airports worldwide to bring in best-in-class, sustainable airport management solutions, while its Brazilian partners complements it with their experience in local infrastructure development. The result is a rejuvenated Tom Jobim International Airport that reacts better and faster to passengers' needs.

RIOgaleão is now revving up its engine towards the 2016 Summer Olympics. Beyond doubling its efforts in airport enhancements, which is 75% completed, the

concessionaire is actively engaging the airport community to ensure a seamless travel experience for athletes and visitors. Test events are also being conducted to identify and address potential chokepoints.

### Games Welcome

"We hope that when visitors converge in Rio de Janeiro for the biggest sports event in the world,

they will experience an airport that embodies the spirit of the two countries. The warmth of the Carioca hospitality combined with the focus on passengers' needs that is the signature of the Changi brand," said Mr Oh. "The dedication to providing a high level of service quality will ensure a comfortable and memorable travel experience for all passengers."



### About CAI

Changi Airports International is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Changi Airport Group (CAG) - the operator of award-winning Changi Airport in Singapore and the world's sixth busiest airport for international traffic. As an investor, consultant and manager of airports worldwide, Changi Airports International leverages its expertise working on airports globally to bring best-in-class, sustainable and practice-based solutions to its airports.



# Scaling Up Asian Market Share

■ Over 50 years old, JBS Foods is now the world's largest producer in the world protein sector. Its latest Seara division is ramping up poultry processing volume for the Asian region

*By Nomita Dhar*



**J**BS Foods history began in 1953 in Anápolis, a city in the Brazilian state of Goiás. Characterized by a history of acquisitions and sustainable growth, the company operates in the processing and industrialization of beef, pork, lamb and chicken. The diversified portfolio of the group has recognized brands throughout the world. JBS is present in 150 countries on five continents, serving more than 300,000 customers, and employs more than 215,000 employees around the world.

JBS scale of operations and manpower of over 215 thousand employees worldwide also means the company has full control over its processes with the help of cutting-edge technology and structured programmes. The care that JBS puts into its products is reflected in its nationally and internationally recognised quality, and these practices, added to acquisitions, make sustainable growth.

## Singapore & Asian Plans

It also has strong presence and market share in Asia and Singapore. It enjoys 38 per cent of the island's poultry market share. To develop the market further, Seara is increasing its products processing capacity in the region by building up its JBS Foods poultry volume in Malaysia and Myanmar.

Just like any other public-listed JBS companies, JBS shares the same challenge to ensure its stakeholders get the desired results and remain on the top. According to JBS management team, those objectives are achieved by adhering to its mission, that is: "To be the best at what we put our minds to, focusing entirely on our own activities, offering customers the best products and services, supplier solidarity, profitability for shareholders and the opportunity of a better future for all of our employees."

Food handling and processing practices are a matter of great debate and have direct implications on health. JBS is sensitive to this and has taken steps to implement best practices so that only the best reach the customer. The JBS portfolio is composed of products that cater to all lifestyles and aspirations. For example, recently, it was launched in Brazil the chicken "Seara da Granja", a line that has international certification of animal welfare, which certifies that at no stage of rearing did these chickens receive any kind of hormone, antibiotic or preservative.

Furthermore, the animals are fed with vegetable feed and the air conditioning plant is monitored.

## Acquisition Trail

In the last two years, the company has also been on an acquisition trail that will augur well for its future growth. Its latest and most important acquisitions were SEARA (2013), Moy Park (2015) and Cargill Pork (2015). With the acquisition of Seara, in Brasil, JBS has consolidated its position as a global poultry processor. The transaction increased its daily production capacity by 33 per cent for chicken, 30 per cent for pork and 14 per cent for leather and the number of employees has also risen by 30 per cent. Additionally, the group entered the industrialised foodstuffs market, becoming Brazil's second-largest production and distribution platform for added value products.

Moy Park is a leading poultry processing company in UK, which has 13 production units and 11.8 thousand team members; 79% of company revenues comes from the UK and 21 per cent continental Europe.

Cargill Pork US has two well invested pork processing facilities and four genetic units. The huge capacity generates a net revenue of US\$ 2.56 billion.

## Sustainability

Looking at the future, JBS is also laying emphasis on sustainability for long-term growth and it has placed several measures to achieve this. To ensure its sustainable development, JBS adopts best governance practices, transparency in its relations with all stakeholders, and regular investments to improve the production chain of its units, focusing on environmental impacts and pursuing opportunities to strengthen its relations with employees, suppliers and the community. The company is based on working in a way that is ecologically feasible and correct, socially just and culturally acceptable, which are principles that have always guided the development and growth of JBS in all regions where it operates.

To make JBS a leader in beef, lamb and poultry processing and in pork production, several factors differentiate it from its competition. JBS believes that focussing on details makes a big difference. So, focused on details and results, the company invests in offering high quality products that comply with the needs of each one of its

300,000 clients around the world.

One good example of this is the huge demand from the Halal (food permissible for Muslims). JBS is always innovating to attend to such demands. It is very much aware of the importance of specific foods for ethnic groups and shall cater to the significant growth of the Halal market worldwide.

## Confidence in Food Source & Processing

It is also worth reminding consumers that it is important they are confident about the source of their foods. Firstly, they must know about the provenance and quality of the product they will consume. If these are suitable, from certified slaughterhouses and in accordance with the legislation of the country concerned, the consumers can choose according to their preference and the claims for which they look.

For example, in the JBS food processing chain, the journey of meat from the company's production house to a dining table in Singapore undergoes stringent quality care. In Brazil, JBS slaughter plants take great care to ensure all the chickens arriving in the plant are well kept and free of diseases. Then each process, from slaughtering, freezing, boxing and readying for shipment, is carefully planned and timed so as to retain the freshness and wholesomeness of the product. Shipments will take 25 to 30 days to reach Singapore and here, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority also performs stringent inspections. Only then are the products allowed to be sold in this market.

JBS major distribution partners must ensure their cold chain is HACCP-certified before they can distribute JBS Foods products. With the help of these distribution partners, the products reach the dining table in its best condition. The JBS Foods poultry brands in Singapore are SEARA, FRANGOSUL, LEBON, MACEDO and GRAND FRANGO.

They can be found in all major retailers such as NTUC Fairprice, Giant, Cold Storage and Sheng Siong as well as in F&B/hospitality, manufacturers and the ship chandling segment. JBS Foods Singapore's sales office manages the whole of Asia except Japan, Korea and Pacific Islands, which are taken care of by its Japan Sales Office.

# Postcard from Brazil

■ Highlights of the Han's family holiday. Some idea of what awaits you on a vacation to Brazil.

By Dylan Han

**T**he patriarch TS Han, a Singaporean businessman, brought his wife, Michelle (who is an architect) and teen son and daughter, Dylan and Samantha, to Brazil during the last school holidays in December. They shared some of what they saw, loved and enjoyed during their trip.

"Before visiting Rio de Janeiro, we made our way to the part of the **Iguazu Falls** which fell within the Brazilian border. What made crossing the border from Argentina to Brazil interesting was the change in language as communication switched from Spanish to Portuguese. The Falls were truly a tremendous spectacle, with cascades of water falling perpetually over the precipice.

The length of the falls was extensive and stretched beyond what our eyes could see. While the rocks were slippery and difficult to walk across, there were many watchful ushers around to make sure we did not encounter any mishaps. Despite the rainy weather, it was truly a worthwhile experience to visit this natural wonder.

After the trip to Iguazu Falls, we found ourselves in Rio de Janeiro for New Year's Eve. We were fortunate to be able to rent an apartment from AirBnB online marketplace, right by **Copacabana Beach**, which gave us a front row view of the 17-minute fireworks show at the stroke of midnight. It was absolutely breathtaking with nearly two million people filling up the entire four-km stretch of beach to watch.

## Incredible People & Culture

Other than that, the culture in Rio was incredible as well. The beach forms a big part of the locals' lives. Girls walk around in bikinis (even at supermarkets) and tanned broad-shouldered lads stride everywhere shirtless. It was scorching hot too, and temperatures soared to 35 degrees Celsius on some days.

Other places of interest that we visited were the Christ the Redeemer and Sugar Loaf Mountain. Christ the Redeemer took up almost half of our day tour as hundreds of tourists flocked to the iconic monument, but it was worth it because taking pictures with it was so surreal. Sugar Loaf Mountain also gave us a bird's eye view of the whole of Rio, where we could see all five beaches and favelas located right next to upmarket houses.

Apart from the sightseeing experiences, Rio de Janeiro offered many opportunities for us to satisfy our curious (and mostly ravenous) appetite. Some of the interesting dishes and beverages we sampled included the Churrasco and Caipirinha, the latter being the highly potent national cocktail of Brazil. Dining at a Churrasco restaurant also proved to be a highly interesting yet sumptuous experience as we had the opportunity to try many different types of meat cuts.

All in all, we had a great New Year's in Rio de Janeiro. After all, the Brazilians do know how to have a good time!"



CARTÃO POSTAL  
TARIETA POSTAL  
POST CARD

# Diplomats Unite for a Good Cause



Charity Bazaar commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the Republic of Singapore

*By Catarina Longman*

The Diplomatic & Consular Corps in Singapore joined hands for the first-ever Diplomatic Charity Bazaar, on the occasion of Singapore's 50th Anniversary. A total of 42 countries collectively participated in the organisation of the event, held on Saturday, 24 October 2015, at the Shangri-La Hotel. The large ballroom space was taken up by 39 booths displaying authentic national cuisines, handicrafts, local products and more. Proceeds from the sales were donated to the Singapore Children's Society and The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund.

Several cultural performances delighted the audience throughout the day, including acts from Brazil, France, Greece, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. Raffle draws also kept the audience entertained, as did the delectable variety of food and beverages offered at the stalls. Overall, more than 4,000

people attended the charity event, a remarkable number for its first edition.

In his opening remarks, the Dean of the Diplomatic & Consular Corps in Singapore, Brazilian Ambassador Luís Fernando Serra, mentioned that "It is remarkable to see so many nations gathered here today, actively cooperating and uniting for this noble cause. May this occasion also strengthen our countries' ties and friendship with Singapore".

Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, graced the event as Guest of Honour, along with his wife. He told the media: "The diplomats who are based in Singapore obviously feel that their time here is meaningful; that their relationships built up among each other as well as with the local Singaporean community are things which they treasure".



# Beating a Different Drum with Afro-Brazilian Music

Latin fusion with reggae, funk and ethnic rhythms thrown in, Idham Budiman is making waves with *Samba Masala* and *Wicked Aura*

By Nomita Dhar

It is impossible to stand still when the music from the Singapore Management University's (SMU) percussion band Samba Masala started its set in this year's PianoBotanica concert. The person largely responsible for creating the sound (BTW, "masala" means a combination of spices used in Indian cooking) which has the pull of irresistible Latin rhythms mixed with touches of afro and other ethnic beats largely rests on the group's music director, Idham Budiman.

## Could you share with us a bit about your background? How did you get interested in Brazilian music?

Hi, my name is Budi and I am of Javanese heritage and come from a rather musical family of singers. I'm currently the leader of Wicked Aura, a band that fuses Afro-Brazilian rhythms with rock, reggae and funk. I am also the music director of SMU's Samba Masala, a percussion collective that combines Afro-Brazilian Samba with local ethnic rhythms. Samba Masala have been around for almost as long as Wicked Aura have. I have an arts enrichment programme that I run in schools called Beats N Pieces (An Exercise in Rhythm & Movement) where I share with students a peek into the world of rhythm and percussions.



musical entity that would become Wicked Aura Batucada.

## What are the aspects of the music that make it different from other genres?

The difference, if compared to manufactured pop music, is rather stark of course. But it's not so much the "difference" I focus on, it's more about the similarities and likeness to what is out there in terms of the music and cultural surroundings that I grew up with. I find a sense of familiarity and comfort in Afro-Brazilian rhythms as I do with the Indonesian Gamelan rhythms that my late grandfather played, the James Brown funk and rock'n roll that my father used to play on the drum kit, the Malay Kompang (frame drums ensemble) that I used to play from when I was a kid, and all the Keronchong (Dutch-derived Indonesian popular music) and Jaipongan, a Sundanese-based style of music from Indonesia plus all the popular music of the time that surrounded me on a daily basis. All these celebrate a likeness of interlocking polyrhythms much akin to the African-derived Brazilian music that I love so much today.

The rich layers and texture of sounds have made their way into the psyche of modern electronica and popular culture as it has



when Sérgio Mendes recorded the Brasileiro album. I remember hearing the Sounds Of The Favela album for the first time. It was a breath of fresh air.

**The drum beats and energy of Brazil Percussion gets the heart dancing and more and more Singaporeans are falling in love with this music. What would you attribute the growing trend to?**

I don't want to sound brash or arrogant, I'd say Wicked Aura was one of the main reasons the masses here got really turned on to Brazilian rhythms. We weren't the first definitely. There have been numerous groups delving in it, like the famous Tribal Tide and Heartbeat Percussions, who were our idols here. But Wicked Aura took it to the streets on a weekly basis and simply made it popular. People like Syed Ahmad, who formed Bloco Singapura, took it to the next level with his deep sense of love and understanding for the craft. Along with me and the Wicked Aura guys teaching Samba rhythms in schools, and other people slowly forming their own little blocos, the growth was as inevitable as it was rapid. I would also say that the growing trend is also based on the love and appreciation of dance music which, at the end of the day, utilises similar layering of rhythm and noise. Suffice to say, people in Singapore fell in love with it and want to play the rhythms simply because of the joy it exudes, coupled with the communal vibe. And there have been local distributors of Brazilian percussions over the years too, the latest being Brasilando.sg that distributes instruments from Brazilian brand Luen Percussion. The guy, Sharanpal, was also part of the Wicked Aura cohort.

**Tell us about the different groups in Singapore that are involved in this music.**

The ones I know at the top of my head are Bloco Singapura, Samba Masala, RDP (not to be confused with the Brazilian hardcore band Ratos de Porão), Sambiesta, Sambarang, Beats Encore, Barracuda... I know there are countless more but I really can't keep track of it all. The jazz pianist, Aya Sekine, is a big champion of Brazilian music in Singapore, having played Maracatu, Baião and Forró music herself. She also loves Bossa Nova and runs a public facebook page called Brazilian Music



In Singapore, that keeps up to date on all the events, parties and happenings relating to Brazilian music in Singapore.

**How many groups have you trained and what differentiates them?**

I haven't trained too many groups at all. I first started with a bunch of special-needs students in the late 90s called The Stomptroopers. It wasn't really Samba per se but it had the leanings of it. There have been some small secondary school groups in between but the most notable group that I helped forming and taught, alongside some fine teachers like Hardy Aryano, Sharanpal Singh Gill and Riduan Zalani, was and still is, Samba Masala from the Singapore Management University. What differentiates them is the fact that they combine Brazilian rhythms with ethnic percussions and rhythms, the most notable being the Indian Dhol and the sounds of Bhangra. It's proven to be quite a hit, especially the times when they played during the Coburg Samba Festival in Germany. It is one of the biggest Samba festivals outside Brazil.

**How would you rate the standards of these groups and, for further training, do you think going to Brazil would enhance the quality?**

It's not really for me to say who is good or who's not so good. Every director or group has their own individual style. And the fact that they are still doing it and honing their craft needs to be respected. Wicked Aura started out playing some pretty "unsamba"

beats. Hahaha! Live and learn. The operative word here is LEARN. And you don't stop. I'm sure going to Brazil would enhance the entire kinaesthetic experience, without a doubt. It's all about immersing oneself in the culture isn't it?

**Where and what are the kind of performances these groups undertake?**

Usually these groups train in schools, community centres, universities, private studios, parks and wherever that allows loud noises to be made. A bulk of the performances are public or private events and festival shows. Some would take to the streets and simply busk.

**Are there any upcoming events/performances or competitions that our audience can look forward to in the upcoming year?**

I can only answer pertaining to Wicked Aura's upcoming second album launch. It has to be said that Wicked Aura has evolved more into a rock band while still retaining the batucada influence and spirit very much in us. I don't really want to be giving out the wrong information about all the other events and performances!

Haha! I know they had drumming competitions like Drumzout and the DBS Marina Regatta Drum Challenge. And there are always Capoeira Batizados and Brasil-related events set up by the Capoeira groups here which always showcases ritmistas, passistas and capoeiristas alike. So I suggest getting tuned in to social media and keeping a lookout for it all.

Thank you for having me. Saúde!

# BRAZIL 2016

## TRADE SHOWS CALENDAR

By Carlos B Pheysey

<p><b>COUROMODA – International Shoe, Leather Goods and Accessories Fair</b> 10-13 January <a href="http://www.couromoda.com/en/fair">www.couromoda.com/en/fair</a></p>	<p><b>EXPOSEC – International Security Fair</b> 10-12 May <a href="http://www.exposec.tmp.br">www.exposec.tmp.br</a></p>	<p><b>GREEN Energy &amp; BIOGAS Brasil – South American Expo for Renewable Energies</b> July <a href="http://www.greenenergyexpo.com">www.greenenergyexpo.com</a></p>
<p><b>Vitória STONE Fair – International Marble &amp; Granite Fair</b> 16-19 February <a href="http://www.vitoriastonefair.com.br">www.vitoriastonefair.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>FCE PHARMA – International Exhibition of Technology for the Pharmaceutical Industry</b> 10-12 May <a href="http://www.fcepharma.com.br">www.fcepharma.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>FENASUCRO &amp; AGROCANA – International Fair of the Industry of Sugar-cane Products &amp; Ethanol Energy</b> 23-26 August <a href="http://www.fenasucro.com.br">www.fenasucro.com.br</a></p>
<p><b>INTERMODAL South America – International Exhibition for Logistics, Cargo &amp; International Trade</b> 5-7 April <a href="http://www.intermodal.com.br">www.intermodal.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>AVESUI – Latin America Fair for the Poultry and Pork Industry</b> 13-15 May <a href="http://www.avesui.com">www.avesui.com</a></p>	<p><b>RIO OIL &amp; GAS EXPO</b> 14-16 September <a href="http://www.riooilgas.com.br">www.riooilgas.com.br</a></p>
<p><b>INFRAPORTOS South America – International Exhibition on Technology, Equipment &amp; Infrastructure for Ports &amp; Terminals</b> 5-7 April <a href="http://www.infraportos.com.br">www.infraportos.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>HOSPITALAR – International Technology Fair for Hospitals, Laboratories, Pharmacies &amp; Clinics</b> 17-20 May <a href="http://www.hospitalar.com">www.hospitalar.com</a></p>	<p><b>Navalshore MARINTEC South America – Shipbuilding &amp; Offshore Industries' Expo &amp; Conference</b> 19-21 September <a href="http://www.marinetecsa.com.br">www.marinetecsa.com.br</a> <a href="http://www.ubmnavalshore.com.br">www.ubmnavalshore.com.br</a></p>
<p><b>AUTOMECH HEAVY &amp; COMMERCIAL – Heavy and Commercial Vehicles Fair</b> 12-16 April <a href="http://www.automecpesados.com.br">www.automecpesados.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>AIRPORT INFRA EXPO – Latin American Commercial Aviation &amp; Airport Infrastructure Seminar &amp; Exhibition</b> 2-4 June <a href="http://www.airportinfraexpo.com.br">www.airportinfraexpo.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>MOVIMAT – Transport &amp; Logistics Brazil</b> 20-22 September <a href="http://www.expomovimat.com.br">www.expomovimat.com.br</a></p>
<p><b>LAAD Security- Public &amp; Corporate Security Fair</b> 12-14 April <a href="http://www.laadsecurity.com.br">www.laadsecurity.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>FISPAL Food Service - International Food Service Trade Show</b> 14-17 June <a href="http://www.fispalfoodservice.com.br">www.fispalfoodservice.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>FIMAI ECOMONDO – International Fair of Industrial Environment and Sustainability</b> 27-29 September <a href="http://www.fimai.com.br">www.fimai.com.br</a></p>
<p><b>SANTOS OFFSHORE – Oil &amp; Gas Expo</b> 16-19 April <a href="http://www.santosoffshore.com.br">www.santosoffshore.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>SIAL Brazil / FISPAL Food – the Latin American Food Marketplace</b> 14-17 June <a href="http://www.sialbrazil.com">www.sialbrazil.com</a></p>	<p><b>TRANSPQUIP Latin America (Expo Airport / Latin Port / Expo Urban / Expo Stadium) – Transport Infrastructure Expo</b> 4-6 October <a href="http://www.transpoquip.com.br">www.transpoquip.com.br</a></p>
<p><b>TECNOMULTIMEDIA &amp; INFOCOMM – Multi-media and Infocomm Fair</b> 10-12 May <a href="http://www.tecnomultimedia.com">www.tecnomultimedia.com</a></p>	<p><b>FRANCAL – International Shoes and Accessories Fashion Fair</b> 26-29 June <a href="http://www.feirafrancal.com.br/2013/">www.feirafrancal.com.br/2013/</a></p>	<p><b>EXPO LOGÍSTICA – International Supply-Chain Fair</b> October <a href="http://www.expologistica.com.br">www.expologistica.com.br</a></p>
	<p><b>ETHANOL Summit – International Technology Exhibition on the Sugar &amp; Ethanol Industry</b> June-July <a href="http://www.ethanolsummit.com.br">www.ethanolsummit.com.br</a></p>	<p><b>FUTURECOM – Information &amp; Telecommunications Technology</b> 17-20 October <a href="http://www.futurecom.com.br">www.futurecom.com.br</a></p>

Links to leading trade shows in Brazil in 2016. In each website, click on a U.K./U.S. flag or option for English.



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