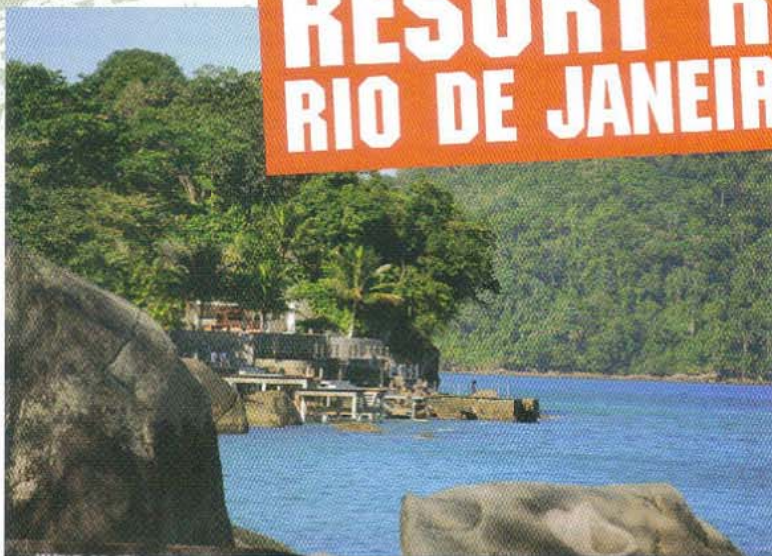


RESORT REPORT: RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

CAPTION → Litewave Dave doing the hot sand line dance at Barra



The catch 22 with a kitesurfing holiday is often finding a place with conditions worth spending lots of money on getting to, that also has the appeal of a vibrant, bustling city to provide non-stop entertainment when you're off-the-water. Cape Town is probably the first place to spring to mind, but whether you're an adventurous couple, or a group of lads looking to cram in more fun experiences than just kitesurfing, Rio de Janeiro should be starting to make its way up your wish-list of places to visit. At the very least it should have crept up a few positions by the time you've read this...

The northeast of Brazil is famous for amazing kiting conditions, but it's much quieter than the south. It's no mystery why coastal cities of Brazil conjure up such attractive images in the mind as the truth is that these areas are crammed with beautiful bronzed people who like bouncing around playing beach sports in tiny swimwear! Visitors only need a few moments here to understand why Rio is also called 'Cidade Maravilhosa' - 'The Wonderful City'. Urban areas are cradled between a magnificent bay and gorgeous beaches on one side, with dramatic mountains covered with lush tropical forest on the other. It is precisely this

unique geographic setting that permanently places Rio de Janeiro among the world's most beautiful cities.

The jewels of Rio are its beaches and are just one reason why people from all over the world fall in love with the city. They are also an essential part of life for the Cariocas (Rio locals) as they lie in such close proximity to the city areas. Chatting, playing, flirting, relaxing or meeting friends; the beach is somewhere that Rio locals love to spend time.

Litewave Dave recently spent some time in Rio and called the office raving that we needed to do a feature on the place. But even before he endlessly enthused about mammoth downwinders and dancing all night with hot girls, he said:

"What surprised me most about Rio was the grandeur of the terrain. It wasn't what I expected. Granite pinnacles with kilometre high vertical faces are everywhere. The scenery is spectacular. In the USA, only the most expensive homes have granite counter tops, but in Rio, they even make side-walks and high-rise buildings from it! It's beautiful."

Martin Stockl runs MaximRio, a kitesurfing adventure operation that will look after all your kiting needs, as well as be on-hand for all your evening

INTRO → Kite all day and party all night. You'll need another holiday when you get back from Rio!

CAPTION → Reno Romeu, Araruama

requirements, taking you to the best clubs in style and safety, regularly jumping you to the front of the queue. It's taken him six years to be able to command such kiting knowledge and powers in the local party scene, and it all started when he found himself standing in Barra Da Tijuca Reo sipping on a fresh Acaai (the anti-ageing fruit drink from the local Acaai berry), watching a dozen or so kitesurfers ride beautiful peeling lefts with side-shore wind, surrounded by all the beauty that nature had to offer. 'It seemed quite surreal,' he says.

When his vacation was over Martin returned to his corporate office in cold San Francisco and took kite lessons from the local school in town. As a mortgage broker with a great passion for exotic travel he always found spare time and money to travel and kite at many of the world's best spots. He even purchased shares in the Best Odyssey in pursuit of finding the best places to kite. "Kiting took over my life; it was all I wanted to do. As I kited at all these great places I found myself returning again and again to Rio." He says. "The combination of the warm weather, people, food and culture create an electric energy that I haven't experienced anywhere else."

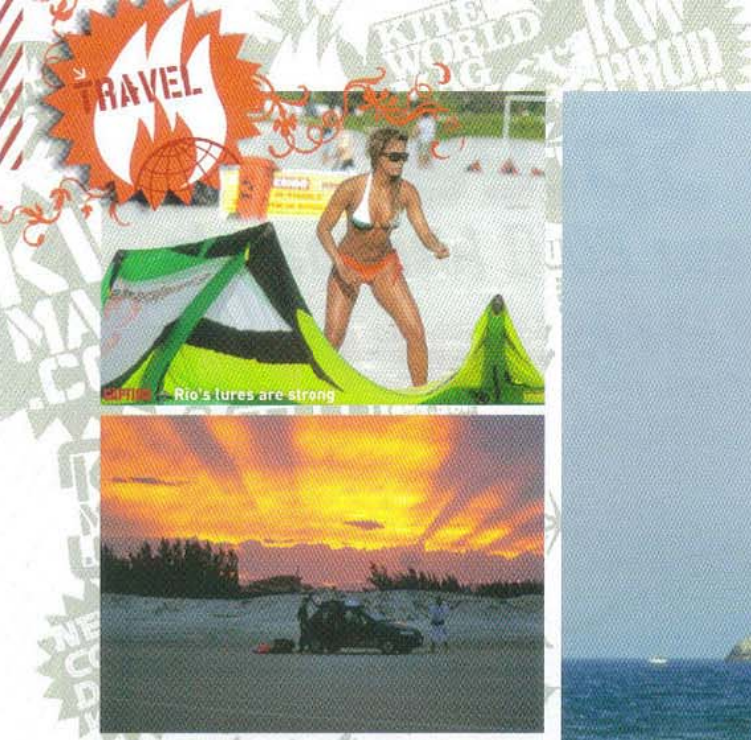
He got out of the mortgage game, sold

his house, flashy Mercedes CL 55 AMG and any other superfluous luxuries and simplified his life ten fold by moving to Rio and setting up a business guiding and riding with his kiting clients who needed help joining all the dots to get the most out of their Rio experience.

Enough high brow; we know you just want to know about the kiting scoop and getting sloshed with hot chicks, so here's Martin's guide to both:

HOT KITING

The kiting in Rio takes place in Barra Da Tijuca, 35 minutes from Ipanema and Copacabana. 35°C air and 25°C waters combine with medium-to-head-high beautiful peeling lefts and side-shore 20 to 25 knot winds. The finishing touch is the soft sand bottom. As you leave this area and kite along Barra beach you feel as if the sun is only a few miles away, but you can ride for miles in an endless wave session. The high-rise buildings become fewer as you enter into a spot called Recreio, where the waves get bigger and the sections in-between them provide buttery flatness. Huge Granite spire mountains in the background and the lush tropical forest create a pre-historic landscape, which you'll see better as you



Rio's tures are strong



Reno abusing the kicker action at Barra Da Tijuca

boost off the biggest waves.

A few times a month the wind will blow from the opposite direction, towards Ipanema beach. If you are lucky and these storm front winds hit, pump your kite up and experience something that will last you a lifetime: a view of the Cristo and Sugar Loaf as you kite in front of the one and only Ipanema beach!

If waves are your game then Cabo Frio, a little over two hours from Rio, is the place for you. Excellent wave riding along a five kilometre beach with huge sand dunes on one side and an old white fort on the other are the calling cards for many. Most of the beach is lined with luxury condos and kiosks, which provide refreshments and you can end your day by checking out the historic fort.

Araruama Lagoa provides the best flat water around Rio. Just under three hours away it's as good as it gets for freestyle kiting. Araruama is always windier than Rio and, even in 35 knot winds, the water behind the natural sand bar, (stretching over two kilometres into the middle of the lake), is perfectly flat on one side. On the other, small waves are broken up by the unique sand bar providing a kicker park to make all your freestyle dreams come true in one spot. If your skills are up to it, you can even jump the sandbar. Some of the world's best professional kiteboarders are often found here because of the strong thermal winds that will give your small

kites a work out. On lighter days, Araruama is perfect for kite lessons due to the space, sandy beaches, lack of obstacles and chest-deep warm water. Amazingly, it's never crowded – probably because there are no road signs and you have to drive through umpteen small fishing villages to find it!

Located about three-and-a-half hours, or 170 kilometres from Rio, Búzios (Armação dos Búzios) is on a peninsula with 23 beaches, attracting visitors from all over the world and has even been called the 'Brazilian St. Tropez'. The peninsula is bathed by currents from the Equator on one side, and on the other, currents from the South Pole. Some beaches have warm water; others, cold. The beaches also vary in width and length, others have still water for swimming and others are popular kitesurfing and surfing beaches. Most of the kitesurfing in Buzios takes place at Praia Rasa, one of the longest beaches in Buzios with cross-onshore conditions. Manguinhos is also very popular with kite- and windsurfers with more onshore conditions. Geriba can be kited only when the wind hits from the other side of the island, meaning you're covered whatever the direction. The stunning beauty of this small fishing village will be remembered for a lifetime as you kite during the day and enjoy the peace this island offers afterwards.

HOT NIGHTS

Your Rio adventure is only just beginning when the sun goes down. As

enticing as the sun and sea may be, Rio nightlife has an even better flavour. Renowned worldwide for its uniquely pulsating atmosphere and beautiful people, the Rio locals love to party from sundown to sunrise. There is a wide array of local bars and clubs where you can choose to end your day in style, ranging from the sensuous and laid back to the shockingly exotic and up-for-it. Take things as smoothly or as wildly as you like; but remember there are waves and wind to ride and sun to soak up the next day!

Many nightclubs in Rio are also restaurants, as Cariocas like to eat when they go out. The Rio party scene is constantly evolving, but these are Martin's current top recommendations:

- MELT:** www.meltbar.com.br
- BOOX:** www.boox.com.br
- NUTH LOUNGE:** www.nuth.com.br/nuth1
- RIO SCENARIUM:** www.rioscenarium.com.br

*For multiple reasons, Rio isn't a 'roll the dice' and 'play it by ear' city. Safety can be a concern in the wrong part of town, but at the same time, you don't want to just rely on guide books, touristy websites and strangers who will send you to the tame run-of-the-mill tourist traps you could end up in anywhere. The magic of Rio reveals itself the closer you can get to its core, so let those in the know guide you on and off-the-water. Hook up with Martin at: www.maximrio.com **max***