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Reality Check: Life In Brazil Through The Eyes Of A Foreigner



REALITY CHECK

Life in BRAZIL
through the eyes
of a foreigner

MARK HILLARY



Synopsis

Reality Check: Life in Brazil through the eyes of a foreigner is an observation of life in modern Brazil. Mark Hillary is a British writer who moved to Brazil in 2010, bought a home, started a company, and has experienced the difficulties of navigating the legendary Brazilian bureaucracy as well as the joys of life with Brazilian people in a land of sport, sun, and endless beaches. The book covers a range of issues from the difficulties of finding new friends, using a new language, finding a job, and the fast-changing society in Brazil that has resulted in extensive street protests during 2013. It is an observation on modern life in Brazil for anyone planning on living, working, or just visiting the country. Sections in the book include:

1. Why Move to Brazil?
2. Sorting the basics
3. Handling the language barrier
4. Finding a Home
5. The jobs market
6. A whole load of holidays
7. Getting around in Brazil
8. The health system in Brazil
9. Let's go shopping
10. A nation paranoid about security
11. The Brazilian climate
12. Going out in Brazil
13. We are not in Kansas anymore
14. Rebuilding your social life in Brazil
15. The 2013 Troubles: Should we be concerned about Brazil?
16. Conclusion & Final Thoughts
17. Appendix: The HuffPo Articles
18. Further Discussion

This book features a foreword by Richard Turner, the UK Deputy Consul General in São Paulo and Deputy Director of UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) Brazil. Extract from the foreword by Richard Turner: "This book is a series of Mark's observations on the realities of living and working in Brazil during this period of rapid change. Mark has started a Brazilian company, employed local people, bought a house, married a paulistana, and lived in both the big city and the Brazilian countryside. He has often worked on projects for the British Consulate to help promote the UK in Brazil. All of these experiences are captured in the book in a way that is easy to read and yet with an insight into the difficulties of negotiating the legendary Brazilian bureaucracy. Mark's book is practical and very perceptive. If I had read something like this before I arrived for the first time then some of his insights would have helped me on my own journey to settling down in this enormous country. I strongly recommend putting a couple of hours aside to read this book if you are thinking about investing in or moving to Brazil." Extract from the preface to the book: "What you will find contained here are my thoughts on what daily life is like for a foreigner based in Brazil. What is different about this enormous nation? What is important to know before you make the decision to move here? From what I have observed in my time here, much of the 'foreigner-in-a-strange-land' literature in books or blogs is focused on how much the author hates their new home or how to see 128 tourist destinations in 10 days. I'm not backpacking around Brazil; I'm living and working here, running my own company and taking my dog for a walk every morning. I hope this book gives some insight for people from other countries that might be considering a move to Brazil, or even if you just

have an interest in a foreigner's perspective of the country. You might be watching the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and just wondering what it's actually like in Brazil – beyond the stereotypical images of football on the beach. If I can throw some light onto the reality of life in Brazil for foreign visitors and residents then this exercise will have been worthwhile."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'm a Brazilian (from the central region of the country) living abroad with a foreign partner and thinking about moving back home with him. I bought this book to see Brazil through the eyes of a foreigner and to try to see how living there would be for my partner. The book delivers what it promises, and I found it quite accurate. So accurate that it was even a little bit boring for me - nothing was new. But isn't that exactly the point? For Brazilians, what he writes there is just common sense. For someone who has never lived there, it is exactly what is needed to go past the stereotypes and learn what is it that the country (or, at least the southeast area, the richest region of Brazil) offers. It is a self published book, and I think that this really shows. I caught a few wrong sentences here and there (I'm not a native English speaker but I'm quite sure the sentences had to be reviewed). The rhythm of the book was a bit weird, some very short chapters and some long

ones; articles published elsewhere put in the middle of the book when they could be just links or appendices (especially because the topic - the June 2013 unrest - is dated and very complex to be discussed in full there). Overall, the book felt to me like a huge blog post. I think that the content is accurate, clear and very useful, but in my humble opinion this book could be so much better with some more careful editing.

Not bad, and gives you what it says it says...."life in Brasil through the eyes of a foreigner." I bought the book to catch up on what I have missed in the years since I lived there, and while all of the advice and info was useful, there wasn't much new. I was surprised at the author's assessment of crime, not as bad as publicized, but equally wondered why he never mentioned "despachantes" in the pages on getting documentation. I don't know anyone, foreign or Brazilian, who tries to make it through the bureaucratic jungles without the "jeito" that the despachantes can offer. They are specialized and so you go to one for your tax docs, and another for your car registration, etc. Yes, it costs, but not that much when you consider the hours you can spend waiting in lines that are constantly moving back to let in the "malecas" standing in line for the agencies. Details on this are significantly lacking in this otherwise worthwhile book.

I am from Brazil and as a Brazilian I have no idea what a foreigner have to do in order to live in Brazil. I loved Mark's perspective, and how patient he was with the country and the culture yet giving an honest view of possible improvements that can be made. His honesty will help other to know what they might have to go through to get things done in Brazil. I believe that having an expectation will help foreigner to be prepared. I have a few friends that have mentioned that they would consider living in Brazil and I am definitely recommending them to read this book. I was pretty tired of reading books with just the overused stereotypes of Brazil, this one is fresh and seems realistic to me. Very useful read if you are moving to Brazil.

Reality Check should be required reading for any foreigners planning to move to Brazil! I read it in one sitting and found the information to be spot on and the content to be captivating. I am from Atlanta Georgia and have been living in Belo Horizonte Brazil for 6 months. Like the author Mark Hillary I have truly fallen in love with this country and it's people. I have also experienced the frustrations of learning Portuguese and adjusting to life in a new country. Mark shares his personal experiences in acclimating to Brazilian life and tries to prepare the reader for some of the positive and negative things they are likely to encounter. It's easy to feel like a stranger in a strange land and

become overwhelmed with how different life as a foreigner in Brasil can be and Mark holds back nothing in his honest portrayal of his stay here. Brazil is an amazing place to live and I have found that the positive aspects of life here far outweigh the negative. I also agree however that anyone planning to move here should prepare themselves in any and every possible way and this book "Reality Check" is a great place to start!

I enjoyed this book, and it has a lot of firsthand experience information that I think is priceless. I've loved Brazil since my college days in 1968-69, and I still do. I come from a large city on the Mexican border, and Mark's book really made me see how similar the 2 nations are in drug problems, and in public sector corruption. It's amazing. But I believe that, romance aside, both national societies are now far too complex for a true "revolution"--too bad. Change, probably spurred by violence, is; but why would anyone want to destroy a politically democratic structure that took almost 2 centuries to finally institute.

This is a very well written book which clearly outlines the problems a foreigner would encounter if they wish to live in Brasil. Nothing has been left out and it shows the difficulties encountered obtaining the correct documentation and having it authenticated, this being essential for any official papers in Brasil. I would advise anyone thinking of coming to live here to read this book, especially if you are looking to obtain work other than teaching English. You may think that at times he is exaggerating but having been through the process myself I can assure you that the account is accurate, expect to spend a considerable amount of time on paper work. The country and people are as he describes and it is a wonderful country to live and work in.

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