



### Personal Information

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### General experience

I recommend everyone to go on exchange student program, and highly recommend on Brazil as a destination.

The reason I chose Brazil is mainly because of the nice, opened and helpful people. I wanted to go to a country in which I will have many interactions with the locals. Since I like interesting and exotic countries – I chose one that can learn the language and communicate with the locals (as opposite to China, for example, which also crossed my mind). The Brazilians are super nice, they love strangers and will always be happy to help you with everything, even if you have a language obstacle. Interactions with them are super easy, you just have to smile or ask something and after 5 minutes you'll find yourself with a new Brazilian friend on Facebook 😊

Of course Brazil has plenty of other benefits- amazing trips opportunities, good food and exotic fruits, interesting history and economy, mix of cultures and more.

#### **São Paulo Vs. Rio de Janeiro**

When you think about Brazil, most people automatically think about Rio de Janeiro, but São Paulo is very different (read the next session). When I had to choose my application, I was asking a few people (also Brazilians) and the impression that I received was (note- this is my own personal perception only. Others may say different things) :

- São Paulo is safer than Rio – in Rio the favelas are more accessible to the city so there is more crime.
- São Paulo is the center of Brazil in everything that has to do with business and education. People from all around Brazil arrive to SP to find a job, so there is a "business" atmosphere around the Paulista (people are dressed with suits) while Rio is more like a beach city.
- The center of FGV school is located in SP and all the best teachers and programs are there. In Rio it's just an extension and therefore less recommended.
- The night life in SP is much better than in Rio.

For those reasons I've chosen SP, and looking back I think it was a good decision. I liked living in SP and visited Rio for vacations (it's only 6 hours away by bus or 1 hour by flight).

### The city of São Paulo

São Paulo is a (very very) big city, but probably you will hang out most of the time in the area of the "Paulista avenue", which is the main area for business and tourism and in general the best area of the city with people in a good social status (it doesn't represent the real face of SP).

If you like Tel Aviv, you'd love SP! It's a very live city. The night life is amazing, and the number of restaurants, pubs, shops etc is endless! I loved walking in the streets and discovering different cool places to have a drink or eat in. There are very good restaurants of all kind (many Japanese with great sushi , Italian, Peruvian with amazing "Saviche" and many more).

### **Neighborhoods**

I recommend to live in the neighborhoods mentioned below, and as close as you can to the Paulista , not only because it's nice to walk to school, but also because most of your friends from school will live around and when meeting them (almost on a daily basis) it's very nice to be nearby. Anyway, try to live as closest to metro or bus stations as possible.

So those are the neighborhoods in the area:

- Jardim Paulista- I would definitely recommend to live in this neighborhood! I just loved it. First, it's very safe and a little bit fancy (reminded me of Ramat Aviv G- mostly big buildings with guards), and second it's full of restaurants and great, lively streets to walk in (Oscar Friere, Lorena, Augusta, Consolação).
- Bella Vista – this is the area where the school is. It's considered a safe neighborhood, but personally I didn't like it very much and didn't feel safe like in Jardins and other areas. Here also, try to live as closest to Paulista. As you get farther from it and closer to the city center it gets more dangerous.

- Vila Madalena- you'll probably get to know this place very fast. At day it's bohemian / artist place, very nice and calm, and in the evenings it's a night life area, full of pubs and samba dance bars. Really cool neighborhood, a few metro stations far from school.
- Higienópolis- A very rich neighborhood, big Jewish community. It's a little bit farther from school (a bus ride) but nice and safe area.
- Pinheiros, Paraisópolis and Vila Mariana- a bit farther from school (walking, metro or bus) but still very close and good for living.

### **Navigation in the city**

Metro is the most comfortable, fast and safe way to travel.

Busses are also useful but it takes a little time to get the principal. I used "routes" option in "google maps" all the time to find the bus numbers and also used to ask the guy that collects the money in the bus to tell me where to get off.

I recommend buying the "Unico" card which you can charge and use in the metro and busses (and change busses up to 2 hours or something like that). I didn't issue it through school to get the student discount, since it was a lot of bureaucracy and not THAT worth it to my opinion, so I just bought it in the metro station.

Taxis are available everywhere and not so expensive. I recommend using the application "taxi99" it's like our "get taxi" and then you can pay with credit card through it.

### **Portuguese**

I really, really, really recommend studying Portuguese before arriving to Brazil. Right, they offer a course in FGV during the beginning of the semester, but people who relied on this course didn't really do so well with it and didn't have enough confidence to practice and in the end pretty much gave up on it. I can promise you that knowing the language in advance will make your entire experience different! Most of the daily encounter with local people is with non-English speakers, it's really fun to practice small talks with taxi drivers, to ask for help on the bus or to ask for your order in a restaurant. For me it was super important to have contact with Brazilians. And also thanks to my previous knowing I had the courage to go to places and experience things in my field of interest, that I would probably have given up otherwise (cause everything is in Ptg).

I studied Portuguese in "Central Cultural Brazil" near Rabin square in TA but every other course/ self-studies is also recommended.

### **Caution**

Everyone will tell you that, in SP, you should always be alert! Watch your bag, never walk with your cellphone in the street and in general don't look too lost. I was always careful and took taxis at night (even for 1 km between the Paulista and my house) and luckily nothing

happened, but I know that people (also locals) are getting robbed sometimes. It's not an issue, just don't fight for your stuff and you'll be alright.

In general, the area of the city center is considered to be more dangerous (around metro stations Republica, Luz, Se etc). Its ok to visit during the day (pay attention..) and at night try to avoid (its full of drug addicts and homeless people), and if you go out to a club always take a taxi to the entrance and back!

### **Costs**

The rent prices for living with roommates is between 1500-2000 (and more) BRL (Reals) a month, usually including all the bills. That's for the Paulista area, based on my own research and knowledge from my friends. You can also find in less than 1500 but then it's usually a very small room without a window (almost all the apartments in Brazil has this rooms that historically made for the maid).

All other expenses are up to your standard of living... Restaurants and Supermarkets are cheaper than in Israel (but not SUPER cheap like in India and 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries). There is a good and cheap cafeteria at school, and if you live near school you can walk and save some money on transportation.

Try to make your grocery buying in the big supermarkets – Extra (in Brigadero street) and Carrefour and not in the neighborhood "Pão de Açúcar" etc which are more expensive.

### **Weather**

The weather in São Paulo is crazy! You can have all the seasons in one day...

And it's a very rainy city unfortunately, also (mainly) in the summer, starting around October. So be prepared to walk in the rain, wearing shorts and flip flops ☺

I recommend to bring clothes for all situations, but like 70% summer wear, 10% for a real winter, and the rest for in between. And get yourself a good and big umbrella.

### **Shopping**

Girls, don't count on it too much. The Brazilian fashion is mostly... well, terrible. I almost didn't find anything to buy and was sorry for not bringing with me more nice daily cloths. Almost all my shopping there was in Forever 21 (which in Israel I don't get near it but there its like H&M). In case you would find the Brazilian colorful fashion as interesting and nice, you can buy many cheap cloths in the street shops. There are also many shopping malls, with good quality and nice stuff, but expensive (at least like in Israel or more).

### **FGV business school**

Many people told me that this is the best business school in Brazil and probably in all South America. I haven't heard that before going there... but obviously it has a very good reputation.

Don't expect super easy experience. Some courses are very demanding and some are less (see details below), but anyway the method of teaching is a bit different than what we're used to in Israel. Many courses are not based on material learned in the lectures but follow reading material.

### **The campus**

The school is basically 2 buildings with a small outdoor area; don't expect a big green campus like TAU ☺

There are 2 entrances to the school: The bottom one (ground floor) from "9 de Julio" street, this area is not so nice, especially at night, so unless you get to school by bus (there is a huge bus station right in front), I recommend using the other entrance.

The 7<sup>th</sup> floor entrance from "Itapeva" street is much nicer if you walk to school from the Paulista/metro.

A few days before the semester begins they invite you to "welcome week", which is basically 3 days that includes some informative meetings, city tour etc. it's not a must but I really recommend to participate, mainly for social reasons.

### **Registration to courses**

In this part the school is pretty organized, you will get all the relevant mails after the approval of acceptance to school. Then you will get the dates of the registration period, which is on the basis of "first come first take".

The semester is divided to 2 parts, and the registration in the beginning is for the 2 parts, but you'll have another period before the 2nd half to make some changes.

In the school there are a few different programs, MBA is called "MPGI" and most of the courses you'll take will be from it, but if I'm not mistaken you can also register to courses from other programs (although there are not many English courses that aren't under MPGI). You will get that exact information in the email before registration.

### **Courses**

I will try to recommend from my personal knowledge of some courses:

- *Low Income Population and Social Business - Edgard Barki*: This course was really interesting in the beginning, leaning about marketing to Low income populations (in Brazil, India etc). Later it became a little bit boring for me, talking about different aspects of "social business". But in general it's a very interesting course and the teacher is very clear and knowledgeable. This course demands reading case studies every week (like most of the courses in FGV), and doing one big project along the semester, which is quite headache in groups of 5-6 people. In general, I recommend.

- *Consumer Behavior and Research - Prof. Maurício Morgado:* This is a very "light" course, very easy going and nice teacher, the lessons are light and fun, easy tasks and test and good grades. Take it if you want something light and basic.
- *Internationalization of emerging country multinationals- Maria Tereza Leme Fleury and Germano Glufke Reis:* The course deals with different strategies of companies to become international. This is also pretty light course, not a lot of material and a few case studies during the semester (not every week) and one project and presentation, not too hard. The teachers are nice, friendly and easy going, both of them speak English very slowly so you might get bored in class.
- *International Marketing Management - Prof. Luis Henrique Pereira:* this is a basic marketing course, will be very boring if you already did some/any marketing courses. The method of learning is reading cases every week with some group work around it (every week!) and participating a discussion in class (which is a must), I don't recommend this course, it's a lot of work and without real value.
- *Brazilian Economy - Prof. Manfredini:* This is the most popular and famous course. It's very interesting but VERY demanding- there is a lot of reading and work to do each week + an ongoing group project during the semester and the professor is very harsh and unfriendly. I've decided to give up this course, but my friends worked like crazy for it and said it was indeed interesting. Make your own choice if it's worth it or not.
- *International Economics for Emerging Markets - Prof Julia Pacheco:* The professor is a German woman, she's in charge of the academic program in school, she's very nice and speaks clearly. This is basically a macroeconomics course, for me, without any background in this field, it was a little bit hard to follow, but I guess it depends on personal interest. Anyway it's not super hard or intense course, there is material to read every week and she expects everyone to participate the discussion in class (like in many other courses).

### **Social activities in school**

In the welcome week one of the meetings is with some of the options you could take part in: The student unions / sports teams/ the FGV magazine etc. Personally I haven't joined any of this but some of my friends did and they enjoyed it a lot. I was looking for a running team but they don't have one...

### **Visa and bureaucracy**

Before your trip you'll have to get a visa from the embassy in Tel Aviv, try to start with this process and soon as possible, since they are pretty slow and probably you'll have to get there a few times.

In Brazil there is also a procedure of getting a stamp from the local federal police.

The school is very organized with that and will send you all the procedures in mail and also explain everything in the welcome week, so don't worry about it just get it done with.

That's it; I hope that my notes were helpful for you! You're welcome to contact me for more information and questions 😊 Orit