

# Regatta Venue Information

## Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



### Event

Paralympic Games

9 – 12 September 2016

### Event website:

<http://www.worldrowing.com/events/2016-paralympic-games-regatta/event-information>

<http://www.rio2016.com/en/the-games/paralympic/sports/rowing>

### Getting there:

The venue is located at the south east side of Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas and can be accessed via Avenida Borges de Medeiros.

It can be accessed via the following major roads:

From the west via Rua Mario Ribeiro

From the south east via Avenida Veira Souto

From the north west via Tunnel Andre Rebouças or Rua Humaita

The nearest Metro station to the venue is General Osorio. The venue is a 2km walk from this station.

A number of bus routes serve the venue, and taxis are freely available in the city and able to drop passengers at the designated venue taxi load zones. For more information about public transport routes, click the links below:

Metro: [www.metrorio.com.br](http://www.metrorio.com.br) Bus: [www.vadeonibus.com.br](http://www.vadeonibus.com.br) Trains: [www.supervia.com.br](http://www.supervia.com.br)

A limited number of paid parking spaces are available in the parking area of the Lagoon restaurant, adjacent to the competition venue. Free public parking is located next to the Parque dos Patins approximately 700m from the spectator entrance.

### Where to stay:

For accommodation it would be worth looking at the Rio Tourist office  
<http://www.riodejaneiro.com/>

Some supporters have managed to get good deals with AirBnB.

## **The Rowing Lake:**

Situated in the heart of Rio de Janeiro, buffered by the up-market neighbourhoods of Ipanema, Leblon, Copacabana and Jardim Botânico, Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas is one of the city's most beautiful landmarks. Connected to the Atlantic Ocean by a narrow canal, the huge lagoon was originally inhabited by the Tupí Indians. It is framed by the lush vegetation and mountains of Floresta da Tijuca, the world's second largest urban forest, whose impressive peaks include the Pedra da Gávea and Corcovado. Atop of the latter stands the Christ the Redeemer statue, the quintessential symbol of Rio, which will watch over the 2015 World Rowing Junior Championships, and then the rowing and canoe sprint events at the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Lagoa, as it is simply referred to by Cariocas, is a magnet for sports enthusiasts. The wide path that circles the water is loved by walkers, joggers, cyclists and skaters, and there are courts for basketball, tennis, volleyball and football. On the water you can see people wakeboarding, canoeing and using pedalos, but it is rowing that is most associated with the lagoon. It is the birthplace of the sport in Brazil and the major clubs of Flamengo, Botafogo and Vasco da Gama are all based around Lagoa, bringing a rich rowing history to the area. The famous football clubs of the same names grew out of the rowing clubs.

Lagoa plays a lead role in the city's Christmas celebrations. Each year a giant Christmas tree is mounted on a floating platform in the centre of the lagoon, and the switching-on ceremony draws an audience of thousands. There are many good restaurants and bars that overlook Lagoa, while the recently constructed Lagoon Centre brings together gastronomy, cinemas, live music and nightlife.

A beautiful natural setting and everything required for hosting major events are found together in the 'Marvellous City', famous around the world for its breathtaking beauty and the welcoming spirit of its people, known as cariocas. Rio recently held several FIFA 2014 World Cup games, hosted the 2013 World Youth Day, and regularly welcomes millions of visitors for the New Year's Eve and carnival celebrations.

Framed by lush tropical rainforest, stunning mountains, beaches and lagoons, Rio de Janeiro has been enchanting visitors since the Portuguese arrived in 1502. From the Sugarloaf to the Christ the Redeemer statue and the Maracanã stadium, Rio is home to some of the world's best-known landmarks. It is also Brazil's cultural hub: the birthplace of samba and the home of carnival – the world's biggest party. The city boasts a wide range of museums, art galleries, theatres, live music venues, cinemas and shopping options, along with a plethora of fine restaurants.

On and alongside the beaches of Copacabana, Ipanema and Flamengo, people are constantly playing volleyball, football, foot-volley and beach tennis, as joggers, power-walkers, cyclists, skateboarders and roller-bladers cruise by. The more adventurous souls look upwards towards the mountains for rock climbing and hang-gliding, while surfers are always seeking the next wave. Rio truly is an enchanting place!

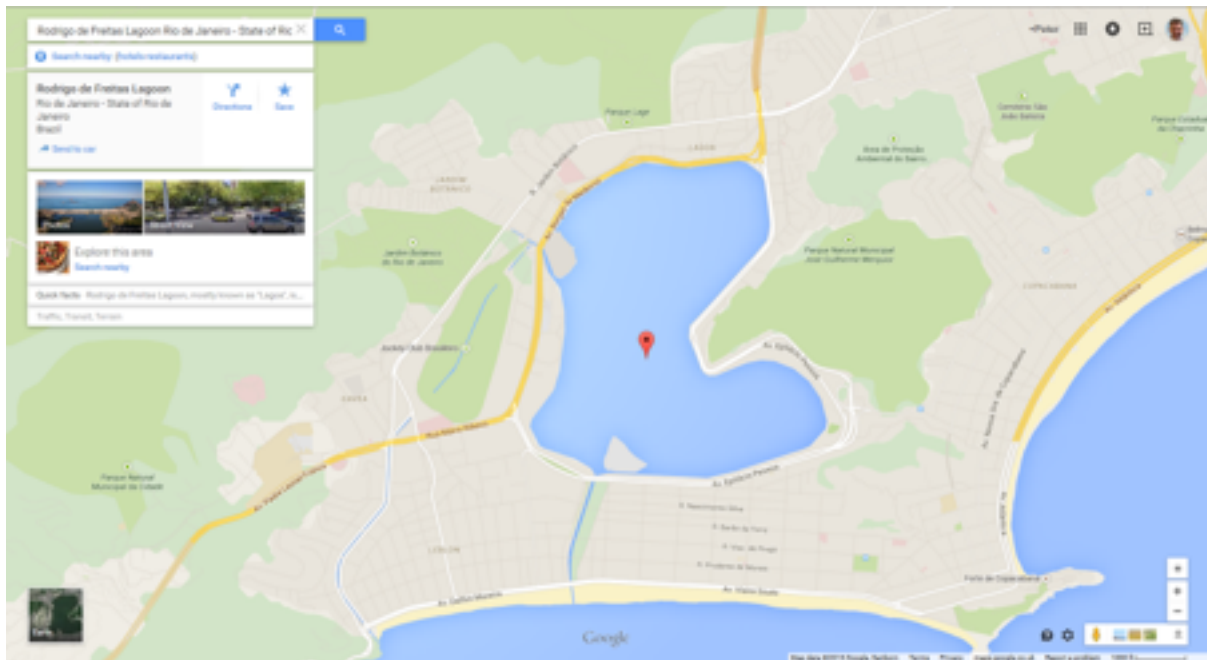
## What to do:

Rio tourist information: <http://www.riodejaneiro.com>

## Maps:

Interactive map:

<https://www.google.com/maps?ll=-22.971618,-43.209107&z=14&t=m&hl=en-GB&gl=US&mapclient=embed&q=Rodrigo+de+Freitas+Lagoon+Rio+de+Janeiro++State+of+Rio+de+Janeiro+Brazil>



## More Information:

This has been compiled as a guide for supporters by the committee. It contains personal opinions and experiences of supporters and shouldn't be taken as complete or definitive in any way – only in the spirit of which it was intended.

Ticket information for events is available via the British Rowing website. World Rowing ([www.worldrowing.com](http://www.worldrowing.com)) has updated information about events including dates, schedules, racing draws and results.

If there are errors or you would like to submit updates please send to Pete Beaumont ([prk\\_beaumont@hotmail.com](mailto:prk_beaumont@hotmail.com))

## **Feedback received after 2015 Junior World Championships**

### **FLIGHTS**

Due to team selection being made so close to the departure date it did make it more expensive to book flights than if we had booked months earlier. We booked our flights through Ebooker being BA/Iberia codeshare flights, although they were all Iberia planes (not as nice as BA). We saved approx £300 pp using Ebooker rather than directly with the airline.

We flew out with TAP Portugal via Lisbon. The flight to Lisbon was fine, about 2.5 hours and straight forward. Upon landing we all (10 on the GB Supporters package) went down the corridor to the wing of the terminal where the onward flight would leave from. We had about 3.5 hours to wait with one small café and very limited seating. This was a mistake. On the way back we went through passport control and then departure security to get into the main departure area where all the shopping is and there is a nice food court with some local and healthy options. If this is the way you go, this is much the best place to spend time.

### **TAXI**

From the airport to the hotel we used a licensed yellow cab. It cost us 70reals for 2 passengers (£14). At the airport we were approached constantly by other transport providers, who we were told are double the price. You just have to ignore them and join a short queue outside for a yellow cab. The journey took us about 40min at 6pm.

For those travelling independently, we pre-booked transport from the airport to our hotel, however, in hindsight it would have been as safe and much cheaper to use the booths located just before exiting the arrival hall. There are two booths which are manned 24 hrs a day and you pre-pay your journey and are given a slip to give to your driver so they are less likely to take a lengthy detour.

On arrival in Rio we were met by our guide, who was friendly, very helpful and professional. He answered all our questions, asked what we wanted of him and the minibus and driver provided and was flexible as rowing sessions changed when windier weather was predicted. He and the minibus took a lot of the stress out of moving around.

### **HOTEL**

#### **Golden Tulip Ipanema Plaza**

We made a reservation through Booking.com earlier in the year, as it was fully refundable if we cancelled. This was at the Golden Tulip Ipanema Plaza (the same hotel as the people who had booked through the supporters package). The rooms we had were very large, slightly dated, but always cleaned each day with clean sheets and towels when required. We had taken the wrong travel plugs and they kindly provided one for the week. There was also a USB connection on the TV, handy for changing phones!

The food at the Oriental restaurant at the hotel was very good, especially lunch and dinner.

The hotel, the Golden Tulip Ipanema Plaza, at first viewing was a little worn and tired. We soon forgave

it! It is one block back from the beach, with views of the sea from the windows if you press your head to the window and only 20 minutes by car from the Lagoa. The bar and restaurant on the ground floor had a nice terrace on the street sides, good for observing Rio life as it moves past, much of it heading back and forward to the beach. The food in the hotel is great, it is mainly Sushi, but very well done and surprisingly good value. They also do steak and chips, etc. for the less adventurous palate.

On top of the hotel is a small pool and sunbeds for about a maximum of ten. It gets full quite easily, but being only 100m from Ipanema beach, the roof never seemed to be overly full. There are some sunbeds and umbrella's belonging to the hotel on the beach. I didn't use these but some other guests did happily. There is no marked boundary between these and the rest, but just be aware that most of the couples on this section of the beach are all male.

Miramar Hotel, Copacabana Beach

We stayed in the Miramar hotel directly on Copacabana Beach. The hotel was excellent and the staff provided an exceptional level of service. .

## **JOURNEY FROM HOTEL to ROWING**

The supporters who booked the package had a mini bus which collected them each day and drove them to and from the rowing venue. We walked there and back each day, it took 30 mins at a decent pace. If you are fit and active it's a very easy walk. The streets in Ipanema are in a grid system, so it's very hard to get lost - then when you see the lake, take a left and you can't miss the entrance.

We felt safe walking around during the day, but did hide our camera and Union Jack flags in a large bag when walking.

We travelled by metered taxi to the course each day and every taxi took a different route and charged a different amount (average 20 reals). We hailed yellow taxis on the street outside the hotel but always made sure they were licensed and had a meter. Taxi travel is very cheap - avoid hotel transport as this is very overpriced. I know of at least two families who stayed closer to the Lagoa who walked to the course each day with no problems but did use taxis to travel around at night

## **EXCURSIONS**

We visited Corcovado/Christ the Redeemer - this is a must and has fabulous views over the rowing venue and much of Rio.

The only other trip we did was Sugar Loaf Mountain. I would definitely recommend this at sunset, as the views were stunning. There is a crowded cafe at the top level but we opted for the much quieter lovely bar at the mid section where we enjoyed the best Caipirinha's of our trip.

The trips were very reasonably priced through Prestige Travel but a few others took a taxi from the hotel and purchased their own tickets for the attractions which I think turned out even cheaper. (Expect excursions to be fully booked or have very long queues during the Olympic period)

We spent the first two days doing a couple of half day tours, with Luis and the minibus. Corcovado, is the mountain with Christ the Redeemer on top. The trip up the mountain is done mainly by a cog train built originally in the 1880's and takes you up through the Atlantic Rainforest with various great views back down to various parts of Rio. At the top there are 120 or so steps or an elevator, but it is then fantastic, with views in all directions covering the entire Rio area, Guanabarra Bay, the coast, Ipanema and Leblon and of course the Lagoa, where the Regatta course is clear and we could just about make out the difference between singles, pairs, fours and eights practising. With a long lens, one parent managed a blurred shot of the GB Junior Eight, later confirmed as genuine by the coach.

We followed that with a trip up to Sugarloaf Mountain at sunset the following day. Again, a great view after a ride on two cable cars, first to Mount Urca and then to Sugarloaf itself. The top was quite small and crowded, with everyone trying to squeeze in to one side to get the image of sunset over the mountains. There are also a few rather tacky gift shops. We all rather enjoyed the mid station at Urca which was larger, much less busy and has a rather nice swish new restaurant/bar where we stopped for a drink. I would like to have eaten there, although obviously I do not know how good the food was or how pricey it may have been.

Transport around the city is an issue. On one trip at Friday evening rush hour, it took 45 minutes to get to the far side of the Lagoa, about 4 km from the hotel. With the city built around several mountains travelling around can be slow or worse. Patience is needed. The tunnels are great but create pinch points with traffic queuing several kilometres back from some entrances. It is worth noting the hotel is only a 20 minute walk from the grandstands at the Lagoa.

## **RESTAURANTS**

On the night of the opening ceremony we ate at the restaurant on site at the rowing venue. The food was very nice, but the service was very slow. Beware that they bring you cocktails to the table and ask if you'd like to try. We thought they were being very nice and providing us with a couple of free cocktails to taste since we were such a large party, but when it came to paying the bill they had been added and were probably the most expensive ones we had all week.

After Sugar Loaf mountain we ate at Porcao Rios, a traditional Brazilian BBQ. Great place if you like meat! Flagged a yellow taxi from Sugar Loaf mountain which was very cheap.

A block from the hotel is Garota de Ipanema, the restaurant where The Girl From Ipanema was written. The food was good, but the proportions were enormous. It's common practice there to order perhaps only 2 dishes for 4 people. We ordered 5 for 5 people and except from the teenager in our group, we left a huge amount of food uneaten.

Closer to the Hotel, we had a basic steak and chips evening in "Garota de Ipanema" (Girl from Ipanema) the bar where the famous song was written in the 1960's. It is one block from the hotel heading west. Nothing fancy here but probably a must for at least a drink given its history.

Opium Restaurant at the hotel (not sure which hotel). Very nice tapas, sushi, Thai, Japanese dishes. The portions are generous but no where near as large as Garota. Very reasonably priced too.

I read beforehand that prices were similar to European levels, but we and the other families found it remarkably good value, meals working out at roughly half of what you would expect at home. We based

our estimates on a rough 5 Rias to the Pound. This may of course change.

We ate out every night except one when we opted for the hotel, which as I have said was great and good value. We went to Porcau (pronounced poor-cow appropriately enough), somewhere near Flamengo, on the edge of Guanabarra Bay, a very large restaurant that is a meat grill with the unusual system of red/green cards, which you use to indicate whether you are up for more meat or are finished. We met nearly all the GB Supporters/parents there, almost forty in all. A good place for a large group, with reasonable food, equivalent to perhaps a Harvester Pub here at home.

We also ate at Lagoon, right next to the Lagoa and the spectator area close to the finish. There are four restaurants here, any of which you can choose from on the terrace they share. We took this option with about 25 of the GB parents after the opening ceremony. Also pretty good food with a wide choice. They were keen to fill our glasses, seeing an opportunity to sell a little more of the local beer and slightly less local, but generally very average South American wine.

My star billing as a restaurant that you have never seen the like of before has to go to Aprazivel in Santa Teresa. It is a bit of a trip, as it is nearer the centre of Rio, but up a mountainside, passing several favella's on the way, a journey worth taking on its own. The village is one of the old "Portuguese" parts of town charming and quite rural in character, given its position overlooking central Rio. We were dropped by the taxi (80 Rials) at an elevator that took us down the hillside to the restaurant, which is a bamboo and leaf construction split into numerous levels and bays, down a rainforest hillside, with view to the north and west and beautifully lit as night falls. Get there for sunset if you can. The food here is high class European with a Brazilian twist, so such things as palm hearts and tropical fish feature highly. Again this is not the cheap option, about 110 Rials per main, but for the most memorable evening I would highly recommend it.

## **OUT and ABOUT / SAFETY**

We ran or walked most mornings around 6:15 and felt very safe on the running path by the beach at Ipanema, hundreds of people out exercising at that time. During the day we walked to the far end of Copacabana beach which again felt safe. We didn't take big cameras or flashy jewellery! It is a little confusing at the end of Ipanema beach getting the right route to the next beach of Copacabana, but if you stick to the road what connects the 2 beaches and not the park/hill where there are apparently lots of homeless people around, you can't go wrong.

Watches and jewellery should be kept to a minimum: very few tourists wear watches or jewellery in Rio to remove the temptation of an opportunist thief.

Smartphones and cameras should be out of sight: We didn't take any electronic equipment with us in the evening but did take them to the Lagoa and on daytime sightseeing trips.

Cash: Always split your cash and have a small amount ready to hand over incase you are mugged. Try to only use ATMs within hotels, banks, etc. Sterling can be exchanged at the hotel and the exchange rate was better than the UK.

Bags: Keep bags out of sight when travelling in taxis and don't carry anything facing the kerbside when walking.

Despite many first and second hand accounts of horror stories, personally we had no problems but were always vigilant and aware of our surroundings. Rio undoubtedly has more than it's fair share of crime but on the whole the majority of people are friendly, the weather is amazing (no bugs either!) and everywhere you look there is an iconic view. There are plenty of places to eat, particular in Leblon, and most tastes are catered for. I imagine the sheer volume of visitors to the Olympics will make for a different atmosphere to which we experienced and I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

Security is much talked about and we were concerned before going. Don't worry! Rio is a city that lives outdoors, there are people playing football on the beaches in the moonlight, we walked the streets in the day and evening happily and had a lovely walk right round the Lagoa (also good for jogging and cycling hire). There are lots of police around and to us, it did not feel any more insecure than any other major city.

The entire length of the beach is lit up at night but it is not advised to venture out for an evening walk along the promenade however tempting it may look. As soon as darkness falls (around 5pm) the beach empties and the walkers, joggers, cyclists, etc disappear.

## **THE COURSE**

(Expected that the course infrastructure will be different for Olympics)

The course itself is in a spectacular setting and we were not aware of any smell from the water. The grandstand has no shelter from the sun until around 10 30 am and then only the rear gets any shade. There was only a view of the last 500m. The grandstand which is to be built on the water will provide a better view and probably a bit of a breeze but is unlikely to get any shade at all. Although it was busy, but not by Olympic standards, the portaloos could not cope and were not very pleasant or hygienic. There were minor unmarked trip hazards on the way to the grandstand but these will presumably be rectified by next year. That said, the welcome from the staff and the atmosphere made up for any shortcomings.

## **MOSQUITOS**

Everywhere apart from the beach and hotel rooms!!

The rowing wasn't too bad when there was a breeze but evenings were terrible and even breakfast and lunchtime in restaurants unless you were right by the sea.

## **AIR QUALITY**

The other problem is pollution. Traffic fumes are almost visible at times and Guanabarra Bay and even the Atlantic Ocean are polluted. The problems in the Lagoa have been widely reported and although you probably wouldn't want to swim there, we spent the week observing the bird life on the lake and saw

numerous fish when walking round the lake. The locals are happy to swim and surf in the ocean, but we opted for the relative safety of the hotel pool.

## **WEATHER**

The weather is interesting. We were there, as you will be, in “winter”. The sea is apparently warmer at this time of year than during their summer. It was dry and humid with day–night temperatures roughly between 16 – 28 degrees, so a bit like a good August in England but with the added humidity. This was apparently unusually warm for this time of year. Winds were a factor, but not overly so, to my mind a breeze was a cooling experience.