

THE RADAR JET SET

BY KEVIN RAUB

BLAME IT ON SÃO PAULO *There's more to Brazil than just Rio!*

One flyover proves it: The city of São Paulo is an absolute monster. The region's real charms lie in the 20 million *Paulistanos*, as locals are known, who are staunchly devoted to the arts of eating, drinking and living well. A soundtrack of samba beats echoes through its gleeful crisscross of neighborhoods—from Jardim Europa to Higienópolis to Itaim. Visitors enjoy a dizzying menu of remarkable cuisine, sweat-doused nightlife and sexy hotels. São Paulo is Latin America's jet-set city of the moment, and, no doubt, the future.

THREE ABSOLUTELY MANDATORY RESTAURANTS: Alex Atala, São Paulo's most daring chef, takes poor man's indigenous ingredients like manioc and tapioca and whips them into masterpieces at **D.O.M.** (www.domrestaurante.com.br, 011.55.11.3088.0761). Brazil's rich Italian heritage and impeccable service are the stars at **Restaurante Fasano** (*Jardins*, www.fasano.com.br, 011.55.11.3062.4000). And the largest Japanese population outside of Japan can't get enough of chef Tsuyoshi Murakami's meticulous Kappo cuisine at **Kinoshita** (*Vila Nova Conceição*, www.restaurantekinoshita.com.br, 011.55.11.3849.6940).

WHERE TO DRINK LIKE A ROCK STAR: The rooftop **Skye Bar** (*Jardim Europa*, www.hotelunique.com.br, 011.55.11.3055.4700) offers one of the world's most spectacular nighttime vistas, with sprawling skyscrapers lined up like sentinels guarding the entrance to another galaxy. The garden patio at **Le Roi** (*Itaim*, 011.55.11.3071.1303) brims with fashionable urbanites. And on weekends, the exclusive **Museum** supper club (*Brooklin*, www.museumrestaurant.com.br, 011.55.11.5507.3650)

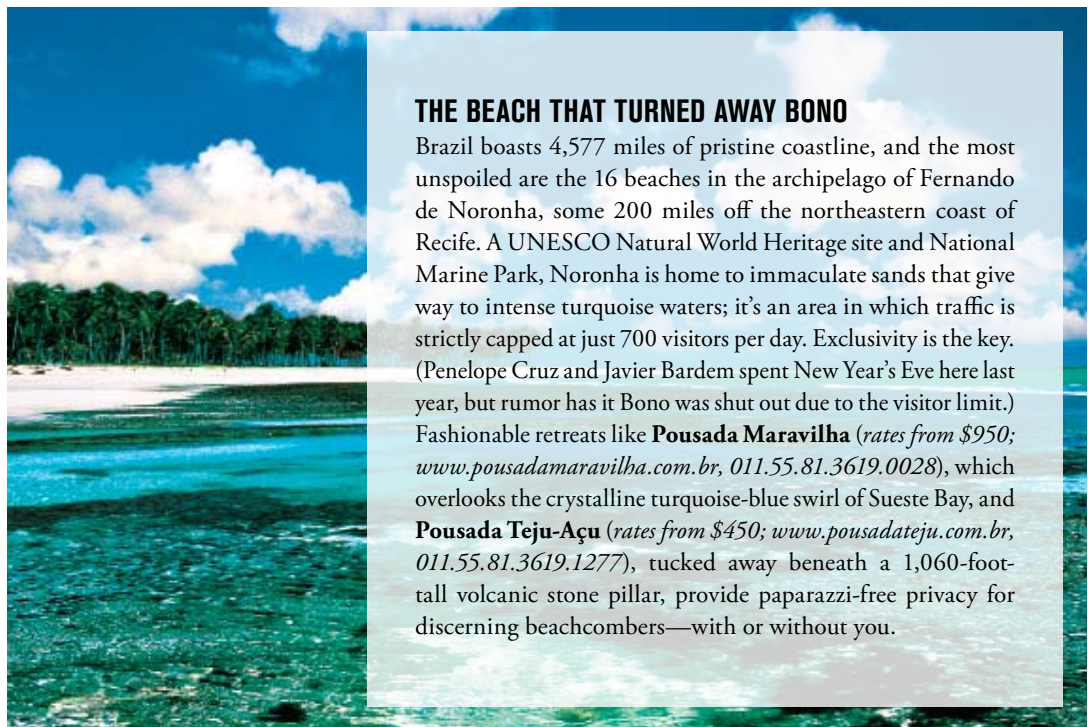
becomes a full-scale samba shakedown frequented by the city's *patricinhas* and *mauricinhos* (as the beautiful and rich are called).

SHOPPING EXTRAVAGANZA! The stunning **Shopping Cidade Jardim** (*Cidade Jardins*, www.cidadejardimshopping.com.br, 011.55.11.3552.1000), which opened during the summer, is vying to be the continent's most flawless retail experience. In addition to Hermès and Armani, you'll find the cutting-edge men's line Zapàlla as well as an \$18 baked potato with white truffles. For eclectic home wares and Pop Art from funky Brazilian designers, **Benedixt** (*Jardins*, www.benedixt.com.br, 011.55.11.3081.5606) is like a three-story garage sale of cool. It's just off Rua Oscar Freire, Brazil's answer to Rodeo Drive.

CULTURAL STARS: Four contemporary art spaces are housed in the **Galeria Vermelho** (*Higienópolis*, www.galeriavermelho.com.br, 011.55.11.3257.2033). Expect experimental and new media work from Brazilian and international artists. Alternatively, the acclaimed, Recife-born, Miami-based artist **Romero Britto** (*Jardins*, www.britto.com, 011.55.11.3062.7350) has a whimsical, must-see gallery on Rua Oscar Freire.

WHERE TO BED DOWN: The Ruy Ohtake-designed **Hotel Unique** (*Jardim Europa*; rates from \$375; www.designhotels.com/unique, 011.55.11.3055.4700) remains the city's coolest, by far; its watermelon-slice-shaped exterior stands out in the upscale Jardins district like a piece of fruit fallen from a market cart. The city's first boutique hotel, the Gisele Bündchen-preferred **Emiliano** (*Jardins*; rates from \$450; www.emiliano.com.br, 011.55.11.3068.4399), remains São Paulo's most impeccable hospitality experience thanks to Japanese heated toilet seats, Belgian beer, Brazilian glamour and complimentary 15-minute welcome massages. ▲

From top left: São Paulo, day and night; Hotel Unique. Inset, from top: Seared tuna at Kinoshita, the spa at Emiliano; the maître d' at Restaurante Fasano.



THE BEACH THAT TURNED AWAY BONO

Brazil boasts 4,577 miles of pristine coastline, and the most unspoiled are the 16 beaches in the archipelago of Fernando de Noronha, some 200 miles off the northeastern coast of Recife. A UNESCO Natural World Heritage site and National Marine Park, Noronha is home to immaculate sands that give way to intense turquoise waters; it's an area in which traffic is strictly capped at just 700 visitors per day. Exclusivity is the key. (Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem spent New Year's Eve here last year, but rumor has it Bono was shut out due to the visitor limit.) Fashionable retreats like **Pousada Maravilha** (rates from \$950; www.pousadamaravilha.com.br, 011.55.81.3619.0028), which overlooks the crystalline turquoise-blue swirl of Sueste Bay, and **Pousada Teju-Açu** (rates from \$450; www.pousadateju.com.br, 011.55.81.3619.1277), tucked away beneath a 1,060-foot-tall volcanic stone pillar, provide paparazzi-free privacy for discerning beachcombers—with or without you.

SÃO PAULO SKYLINE AND FERNANDO DE NORONHA PHOTOS BY CHRISTIAN KNEPPER, COURTESY OF EMBRATUR; ALL OTHERS COURTESY OF VENUES