

The Global Manager's Guide to Cultural Literacy

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By
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This book is dedicated to my husband Robert, who has a gift for understanding people and their cultures.

“Own only what you can always carry with you: know languages, know countries, know people. Let your memory be your travel bag.”
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

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INTRODUCTION

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.”
Mark Twain

The purpose of this book is to help global managers succeed in doing business with people all over the world. Knowing the language and culture of your client can make the difference between success or failure in business. You may not speak the language of your customers very well or know many details about their culture. However, showing genuine curiosity about their language and culture goes a long way to building trust, mutual respect, and a solid business relationship. It could lead eventually to friendship.

In today’s global economy, most every manager deals with people from other cultures, as well as with people whose first language is other than English. Whether managers work primarily in the United States or travel around the globe, most will encounter clients and colleagues who are comfortable in another culture, and who grew up speaking a language other than English.

Knowing even a little bit of their language or a few details about their culture can help you to develop a better understanding of the people, culture and country with whom you want to do business. Why is that? How does it work? It shows that you have put effort into learning about your clients and their point of view. It demonstrates that you care enough to work at building a relationship. It emphasizes your commitment to getting to know your partner better.

Cultural literacy is a conversation starter. Maybe you have a question about the favorite sports team of the city. You might wonder what sights to visit on the weekend. You have questions about the leading industry and biggest employer in the country. Your cultural literacy and curiosity can take you places you may not have imagined. Several of my Asian students at Thunderbird talked about a man who didn’t know a word of Japanese. But he was curious about the culture. He asked questions and wanted to learn. He followed along with their conversations. He genuinely was interested in Japanese culture and they could see that he liked it. It made all the difference in their wanting to get to know him better and do business with him.

A Mexican executive from Aeromexico once told me that if a business colleague he just met wanted to build a new relationship, s/he should show interest in his family, personal life and profession. However, there was one caveat. The person's interest had to be sincere. He said that Mexicans knew instantly if a person was faking that interest.

How is this Book Organized?

Choose the country, culture and language that you want to learn about. It does not matter where you are from. This book is intended for all global managers. Written in English, you can be from any country to benefit from *The Global Manager's Guide to Cultural Literacy*. You simply need to want to develop a basic knowledge of the country's language and culture. Our goal is to give you a baseline of knowledge to start your learning. Our hope is that once you have a baseline, you will continue to grow your knowledge and cultural literacy by using the digital template for continued study in the final chapter.

Three Kinds of Cultural Literacy

The Global Manager's Guide to Cultural Literacy highlights the language, culture, business and economy of seven countries in the Americas, Asia and Europe. These include Brazil, Mexico and the United States, China and South Korea, as well as France and Germany. The book includes these seven countries for their geographic distribution around the globe. They are chosen from the fifteen countries with the largest nominal GDP as ranked by the International Monetary Fund (2017).

GDP is defined here as the market value of a nation's goods and services produced in a given year. Financial and statistical institutions calculate the nominal GDP estimates based on market or official government exchange rates for the country's currency. Table 1 below indicates the countries covered in this guide, their official language, nominal GDP ranking, and GDP size.

Table 1: IMF Ranking, GDP Size & Language of Countries in *Guide*

IMF Ranking	Nominal GDP (US\$MM)	Language
1. United States	19,390,600	English
2. China	12,014,610	Chinese
3. Germany	3,684,816	German
7. France	2,583,560	French
8. Brazil	2,054,969	Portuguese
11. South Korea	1,538,030	Korean
15. Mexico	1,149,236	Spanish

Audience

The intended audience for the book is global managers working in their home country or overseas, as well as undergraduate and graduate business students at universities around the world.

Purpose

The key purpose of this book is to help the reader to develop a baseline of knowledge about a country's language, culture and business environment. In terms of language, the reader can learn some elements of basic language consisting of key words and phrases. It is hoped that the reader can apply the newly acquired words and phrases as soon as possible in the office and local community. With frequent practice, the reader can internalize and build on the basics. If the reader listens to the language in popular music, on the internet, tv, or radio, s/he can internalize its sounds. It's important not to worry about understanding every word or making mistakes. Try to puzzle out the meaning, but don't get hung up on an unfamiliar word.

Need for this Book

Why do global managers need cultural literacy? Knowledge of a country's language, culture and business environment can help establish common ground, build relationships, and establish rapport with clients and colleagues. If you show interest in how the world operates, you can make a positive impact. Follow your curiosity and develop cultural literacy as you ask questions and learn about things that you are genuinely interested in.

Always keep in mind that we are more alike than we are different and that we are all human. People are people everywhere.

Developing Cultural Literacy

Several years ago, a dozen faculty members from foreign language departments around the US gathered in a conference room to discuss the teaching of culture. They agreed unanimously that culture simply could not be taught in a short time. It took years for anyone to acquire true and deep knowledge of another culture. In their opinion, it was a waste of time for teachers to provide even a brief introduction or summary of cultural aspects. But what could be done to help learners who needed to acquire cultural knowledge in a short period of time?

Although it may take years to learn about a culture in depth, many business people simply don't have years to devote to its study. In addition, business people often need to learn about multiple cultures, as they frequently work with diverse groups of people domestically and abroad. Should they refrain from attempting to learn about a culture because they don't have years to devote to mastering it?

Clearly, global managers can benefit by developing basic cultural literacy about the people, countries and cultures with whom they work. In addition, many people who need a basic knowledge of language for business and travel, don't have time to become an intermediate or advanced level speaker of the language.

That being said, a little language and cultural knowledge is far superior to none at all. In fact, the amount and depth of your cultural knowledge may matter less than the effort you put into learning the basics, your openness to learning, and your curiosity to continue learning about a specific culture and language.

Given that language and culture are broad subjects that can take years, or a lifetime, to master, a key question is which aspects of language and culture should a global manager learn? No one has a definitive answer. Pinning down the true meaning of cultural literacy is difficult, because of its subjectivity. Some people will be very interested in certain aspects of culture, and not so interested in others. It is helpful to follow your interests, and develop your knowledge of those areas first.

Culture includes many factors such as human behavior, thought, values, attitudes, sports, the arts, history, sociology, religion, geography, politics, economics, pop stars, social media, leadership styles, and communication styles. This is not an exclusive list. Given the limits of time, space and personal interest, where do global managers begin to

develop their cultural literacy? This guide can help managers take the first steps to obtain a basic knowledge of language and culture for seven countries with some of the world's largest economies in the Americas, Asia and Europe.

The guide offers suggestions in the Template for Business Language Training section to help managers further develop their language skills using digital materials and e-learning. This section will be useful in designing a program that is tailored to individual interests. This template is provided to facilitate continued language and culture learning in either a self-guided or teacher led format. It offers a variety of activities to pursue at the learner's own pace over time or in an intensive program. The template can be adapted for the study of any language and culture using online materials and readily available resources.

The country chapters in this guide are divided into three parts: 1) basic business language; 2) basic cultural literacy; and 3) basic business & economics. Some readers may opt to cover all parts of each chapter. Others may choose to concentrate on one or two segments of a single chapter according to their needs or interests.

THE AMERICAS

BRAZIL

MEXICO

UNITED STATES

CHAPTER ONE

BRAZIL



Iguazu Falls

Source: The CIA World Factbook

Basic Business Portuguese

The words and phrases below will add to your knowledge of basic business Portuguese. You can hear how the words are pronounced on Google Translate, Siri or another AI assistant on your phone or computer. Repeat after the speaker and imitate the accent.

Practice speaking the phrases aloud on a daily basis until they come easily to you. Test yourself by looking at the English words and

translating them into Portuguese. Then practice in reverse. Say the Portuguese aloud, and think of the English translation.

(The original source of the Portuguese translation is Google Translate with subsequent revisions by Lucienne Faria Mayberry.)

1. Hi!
Oi!
2. Good morning!
Bom dia.
3. Good afternoon!
Boa tarde.
4. Good evening!
Boa noite.
5. Goodbye.
Adeus.
6. See you later.
Até logo.
7. How are you?
Como vai?
8. Fine, thanks.
Bem, obrigado. (spoken by a man)
Bem, obrigada. (spoken by a woman).
9. What's your name?
Qual é seu nome?
10. My name is Chris.
Meu nome é Chris.
11. Nice to meet you.
Prazer em conhecê-lo. (to a man)
Prazer em conhecê-la. (to a woman)
12. Thanks a lot.
Muito obrigado. (spoken by a man)
Muito obrigada. (spoken by a woman)
13. You're welcome.
Nada.
14. Where is the bathroom?
Onde fica o banheiro?
15. Can you recommend a good restaurant?
Pode recomendar um bom restaurante?
16. Where are you from?
De onde você é?

17. I am from New York.
Eu sou de Nova York.
18. Can you help me please?
Pode me ajudar faz favor?
19. What's your phone number?
Qual é o seu número de telefone?
20. What's your email?
Qual é o seu email?
21. Yes.
Sim.
22. No.
Não.
23. Maybe.
Talvez.
24. Excuse me.
Com licença.
25. I don't speak Portuguese.
Eu não falo português.

Next Steps

Make a list of other words and phrases that you would like to know how to say in Portuguese. For example, learn how to count in Portuguese. You may translate the numbers with Siri, Alexa or Google Translate. It is a good idea to check the translation with a native speaker to be sure that it is accurate. Practice the numbers, or other words and phrases you want to learn often until you know them well. Use them with colleagues at work or in the community until you feel comfortable with the language.

Brazilian Cultural Literacy

This chapter will introduce you to various aspects of Brazilian culture in order to broaden your knowledge base. We encourage you to discover more about the culture through research or conversations with Brazilians. The more you know about the Brazilian culture, the more you will want to know. Follow your curiosity to learn more about specific cultural aspects that interest you. Develop your cultural literacy by showing your interest in the culture, asking questions about things that interest you, and using your new knowledge to make a positive impression on Brazilian friends and colleagues in the office, at home and abroad. Let's get started!



Map of Brazil

Source: The CIA World Factbook

Get Your Bearings: Geography

The sixth largest country in terms of area, Brazil is slightly smaller in size than the United States. Its area covers four time zones. With a population of over 208 million, it is the sixth most populous country. Brazil's federation is divided into 26 states, a federal district for the capital Brasilia, and municipalities which are governed by mayors. It is one of the world's most multicultural and diverse nations, with immigration from many parts of the globe.

Located in eastern South America, Brazil is bordered on the east coast by the Atlantic Ocean. It shares a border with every South American country except Ecuador and Chile. The 10 neighboring countries along its borders are Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

All of Brazil's rivers drain into the Atlantic Ocean. They include the Amazon, which is the second longest river in the world taking into consideration that it has the world's greatest volume of water. Other important rivers are the Parana, the Iguacu, Negro, Sao Francisco, Xingu and Tapajos. The Amazon River basin is home to a large tropical forest. The Pantanal is the world's largest tropical wetland, located mostly in the west central part of Brazil. In addition, Brazil and Argentina share Iguazu Falls, the largest waterfall system on earth, which consists of 275 falls along the Iguazu River.

For geographical purposes, the country can be divided into five regions: Northern, Northeast, Central-West, Southeast and Southern. The Northern region is the largest, with 45% of the territory, and the smallest population. Amazonas is one of the states in this region. The Northeast (*Nordeste*) was the first region to be discovered and settled by the Portuguese. It has a rich and distinctive culture, with its own folklore, cuisine, music and literature. Bahia is one of the states in the Northeast.

The Central-West region of Brazil is one of the least populated. It contains the capital Brasilia and its federal district. The region's economy depends on cattle, manganese, government and tourism. The Southeast region of Brazil is responsible for about 60% of the nation's GDP. It contains the three richest states of Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais. The Southern region is the smallest in area, and includes the state of Rio Grande do Sul. It has a relatively high unemployment rate. German settlers began to come to the region as small farmers in 1822, after independence from Portugal. To attract the settlers, the government promised them tracts of land. From 1875 -1914, Italian immigrants who came primarily from northern Italy settled in southern Brazil as small farmers. Like the Germans, they received tracts of land in return for their settlement of the land.

On the Road Again: Travel and Tourism

"I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move."

Robert Louis Stevenson

Brazil received about 6 million visitors in 2015 and was ranked the most popular destination in South America, and the second most popular tourist destination in Latin America after Mexico. The main attractions for tourists are ecotourism, sun and beaches, adventure travel, and cultural tourism. The most popular destinations include the Amazon River rainforest, beaches in the northeast region, the Pantanal (tropical wetland) in the center-west, beaches in Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina, cultural tourism in Minas Gerais, and Sao Paulo.

Some of the deterrents to tourism in Brazil include the high cost of airfare from the US, Europe and Asia, high taxes and airport charges, visa requirement for US tourists, safety and security issues, an underdeveloped ground transportation infrastructure, and the poor quality of some roads.

Many tourists come to Rio to participate in Carnival, which features parades of samba dancers and musicians. Other tourists visit Rio's

Copacabana Beach which is known for its wide sidewalks with curving black and white mosaic designs.

The Amazon rainforest draws people to Manaus, a major city on the Amazon River. One of the major attractions in Manaus is the *Teatro Amazonas*, an opera house that was considered one of the greatest cultural centers in South America of its time.

Brasilia is justly famous for its modern architecture. World-renowned Brazilian architects Lucio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer designed many of the government buildings in the ultramodern capital. The government plaza called Praca dos Tres Poderes features the presidential palace, supreme court, and two congressional buildings.

Salvador, which draws many tourists, once served as Brazil's colonial capital. Tourists come to see Pelourinho, the old quarter in the upper part of town which has many seventeenth and eighteenth century colonial buildings, churches and monasteries. The eighteenth century church of Sao Francisco is considered the town's most beautiful. It has carvings covered in gold, and is richly decorated with *azulejos* (Portuguese tiles) in the choir and cloister.

Ouro Preto is one of the most picturesque towns in Brazil. It is known for steep streets, colonial mansions, and Baroque and Rococo churches that date back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Several of the churches feature interiors that were decorated with gold and diamonds from nearby mines. Ouro Preto's most famous churches include Sao Francisco de Assis and Matriz de Nossa Senhora do Pilar.

Sao Paulo, the largest city in Brazil, has some of the best art collections in Latin America. Its Museu de Arte displays art from the Renaissance to modern masters. It holds in its collection several Degas sculptures as well as paintings by the European artists Manet, Matisse, Miro, Renoir, and Van Gogh. The Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer designed the Museu de Arte Contemporanea in the Pavilhao da Bienal de Artes. This museum houses one of Latin America's largest collection of western art, as well as major Brazilian artists.

Iguazu Falls

Iguazu Falls is one of the top tourist sites in Brazil. The word *Iguazu* originally comes from the Tupi-Guarani language and means "big water." In 1541, Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, a Spanish conquistador, was the first European to write about the existence of the falls. It is located on a 1.7 mile stretch of the Iguazu River that follows along the Argentine and Brazilian border. The Iguazu River begins in the Serra do Mar mountain

range near Curitiba, Parana. From there it runs almost 820 miles before it empties into the Parana River at the spot where Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay meet.

The falls of Iguazu form where the river drops off a plateau. Most of the falls are located on the Argentine side. Only about twenty percent of the falls are in Brazil. On both sides the falls are located in national parks that were established by Argentina and Brazil. Each country has its own international airport located near the falls in order to facilitate tourism.

Trindade Beach, Paraty, Rio de Janeiro State

Beautiful, unspoiled Trindade Beach lies about 18 miles south of Paraty in the state of Rio de Janeiro. It takes about forty-five minutes by bus or private van to get there from Paraty. Natural rainforest vegetation surrounds the beach, where visitors can sometimes spot butterflies and small mammals.



Christ the Redeemer Statue

Source: The CIA World Factbook

Christ the Redeemer Statue

One of Brazil's top touristic sights is the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio. It stands on top of Corcovado Mountain in Tijuca National Park. The statue, called *O Cristo Redentor* in Portuguese, overlooks Rio de Janeiro and its bay. It was built in the Art Deco style between 1922 and 1931 by Brazilian engineer Heitor da Silva Costa and French engineer Albert Caquot. They were assisted by Paul Landowski, a French sculptor and Gheorghe Leonida, a Romanian sculptor, who worked on the design of the statue. The 98-foot high statue stands on a 26-foot high pedestal. The statue's arms stretch out 92-feet wide. Given its location on top of Corcovado, the statue is subject to lightning strikes and strong winds.

It's About Time: History of Brazil

Abbreviated Timeline of Brazilian History

c. 9000 BC	Earliest human remains (Luzia) found in Minas Gerais
c. 6000 BC	Earliest pottery found in Amazon Basin near Santarem.
Before 1500 AD	Around 7 million semi-nomadic indigenous people living in Brazil
1500 AD	Arrival of Portuguese explorer Pedro Alvares Cabral
1532	First Portuguese settlement in Brazil.
1500 – 1808	Portuguese colonial administration of Brazil
1822	Independence from Portugal; Empire of Brazil began
1888	Abolition of slavery in Brazil
1889-1930	Military coup overthrew monarchy. First Republic was formed.
1930-1945	Getulio Vargas was President and dictator
1945-1964	Democratic regime of Juscelino Kubitschek & Janio Quadro
1964-1985	Rule by military junta after a coup
1985 –present	Civilian government resumed with President Jose Sarney
2003-2011	Term of President Lula da Silva
2011-2016	Term of President Dilma Rousseff ended in impeachment

Government

Today Brazil's government is a democracy. However in the past, Portugal ruled Brazil for 300 years as part of the Portuguese empire. Although Brazil won its independence in 1822, the country still maintained a monarchy to govern. Only in 1888, one year after slavery was abolished, did the military declare Brazil to be a republic. In reality, Brazilian coffee growers ruled the country until Getulio Vargas came to power in 1930. Populist and military governments took turns running the country until 1985, when the military turned over power peacefully to a civilian government.

Due to a political scandal, President Dilma Rousseff was impeached and removed from office in 2016. Michel Temer, Rousseff's former vice president, served as president until Jan. 1, 2019 in order to complete Dilma Rousseff's second term.

Brazil has four principal political parties: the Workers' Party (PT), Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), and Democrats Party (DEM). Smaller parties exist as well in the political system. Recently fifteen political parties have elected members who serve in Congress.

The President of Brazil is elected to serve a four-year term and appoints the Ministers of State who help govern. The legislative branch of the government is the National Congress, which consists of a Chamber of Deputies and Federal Senate.

Brazil has one of the highest homicide rates in the world, with high levels of violent crime and gun violence. Brazil incarcerates the third largest prison population in the world, after China and the United States.

Sports and Pastimes

By far the most popular sport in Brazil is soccer. Brazilians love soccer and practice the sport widely. When Brazil plays in the World Cup, businesses in Rio de Janeiro, and elsewhere in Brazil, shut down so that people can concentrate on watching the game. The Brazilian men's national team ranks among the best in the FIFA World Rankings. They hold the record for the most World Cup championships. Brazil has won the World Cup a record five times: in 1958, 1962, 1970, 1994, and 2002. The Brazilian national soccer team is the only one that has qualified to play in every FIFA World Cup.

One of Brazil's most famous soccer stars is Pele, otherwise known as Edson Arantes do Nascimento. For a period of time when Pele played professional soccer, he was the highest paid athlete in the world.

In terms of international competitions, Brazil held the 2014 FIFA World Cup in soccer. Also, Rio de Janeiro hosted the 2016 Summer Olympics games, which was the first Olympics to be held in South America.

Other popular sports in Brazil include volleyball, basketball, Formula One auto racing and *capoeira*, a martial art. In volleyball, Brazil's second most popular sport, Brazilians have experienced great success on the world stage. The men's national team is the champion in three international competitions.

Brazil's third most popular sport is basketball. The most famous Brazilian male basketball player is Oscar Schmidt, while Hortencia Marcari is the most famous female player. In the US, nine Brazilians played on NBA teams in the 2015-16 season.

Formula One racing is also very popular in Brazil. Three Brazilians have won the world championship several times each. They are Emerson Fittipaldi (1972 and 1974), Nelson Piquet (1981, 1983 and 1987), and Ayrton Senna (1988, 1990 and 1991).

Another sport that many Brazilians enjoy is *capoeira*, a martial art founded on Afro-Brazilian tradition. *Capoeira* blends music and dance and has a strong acrobatic component. It was developed by enslaved people during the colonial period. Today its popularity is celebrated in Brazilian culture, movies and video games.

The Arts

Music, the Universal Language

"I was a beach boy, and I believe I learned my songs from the birds of the Brazilian forest."

Antonio Carlos Jobim, composer and singer

The music of Brazil blends elements from African and European music. Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) was a prolific Brazilian composer, cellist, pianist, and guitarist. At the time of his death, he had composed over 2,000 pieces. Some of his well-known pieces are *Bachianas Brasileiras* (1930-45) and *5 Preludes* (1940).

Bossa nova began in the 1950's and gained popularity in the 60's as a blend of samba and jazz. Antonio Carlos Jobim was a singer-songwriter

who helped to popularize the genre. His 1965 song *Garota de Ipanema* (The Girl from Ipanema) won record of the year, and is one of the most recorded songs of all time. Chico Buarque de Hollanda, Nara Leao, Astrud Gilberto, Caetano Veloso, Maria Bethania, Gilberto Gil, Gal Costa, Elis Regina and Milton Nascimento are some of the most well-known Brazilian singers/musicians of modern Brazilian popular music.

Featured Musician: Antonio Carlos Jobim

Antonio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994), known as Tom Jobim, was a Brazilian singer-songwriter and pianist who popularized bossa nova around the world. In the 1960's, he created a new sound by blending bossa nova with jazz. He successfully collaborated with American saxophonist Stan Getz and singer Frank Sinatra. His *Getz/Gilberto* album won a Grammy Award for Album of the Year in 1965. Jobim wrote *A Garota de Ipanema* (The Girl from Ipanema) as a single for the album, which won Record of the Year. The song became one of the most recorded pieces in history.

In 1967 Antonio Carlos Jobim worked with Frank Sinatra on the album *Francis Albert Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim*. It was nominated for Album of the Year.

Jobim became one of the most influential songwriters of the 20th century. Many of his songs became jazz standards.

Brazilian Literature

Brazilian literature has a rich tradition. One of its most highly regarded authors is Machado de Assis, who is best known for his novels and short stories. He founded the Brazilian Academy of Letters in 1897, and became its first president. Among his works are *Dom Casmurro*, *Quincas Borba*, and *Memorias Postumas de Bras Cuba*.

Another famous Brazilian author is Carlos Drummond de Andrade (1902-1987), whose poem *Friendly Song* appeared briefly on Brazilian money, specifically the 50 *cruzado novo* bill. Author Jorge Amado (1912-2001) wrote passionately about Bahia and its region. He had several international bestsellers including *Dona Flor and her Two Husbands* and *Gabriela Clove and Cinnamon*. The writer Clarice Lispector (1920-1977) is known for her innovative short stories and novels. Among these are her works *The Passion According to G.H.* and *Agua Viva*. Author Joao Guimaraes Rosa (1908-1967) is known for his four volumes of short stories and one novel called *The Devil to Pay in the Backlands*. This novel

is considered by some to be among the 100 greatest books of all times. It has philosophical themes and uses the language of the Brazilian backlands.

Cuisine

Brazilian cuisine is known around the world. Although each region has distinctive dishes, *feijoada* is widely recognized as the signature national dish. It is a stew of black beans with pork and beef that is typically prepared in a clay pot over low heat. *Feijoada* is usually served with rice and selected sausages such as *chourico* and *morcela*.

Vatapa, another popular Brazilian dish, comes from the Salvador Bahia region. The food has Afro-Brazilian origins, and is made from bread, shrimp, coconut milk, palm oil and finely ground peanuts. The ingredients are mashed together into a paste.

Perhaps the most typical Brazilian meal is rice and beans accompanied with beef, salad, French fries and a fried egg. Brazilians often add *farofa* (cassava flour) on top.

Brazil's national cocktail, the *caipirinha*, has gained in popularity in the US and countries around the world. *Cachaca*, the main ingredient in the *caipirinha*, is made from sugar cane.

Culture with a Capital C

The National Museum of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro burned in a massive fire in September 2018. It was housed in a historic building that was 200 years old. Brazilian royalty had lived in the building, and the Brazilian constitution was written there. The museum had large collections of natural history and anthropology. It housed Greco-Roman artefacts, Egyptian mummies, dinosaur fossils as well as Luzia, the oldest human fossil in the region. Luzia was a human skull that dated back approximately 11,500 years. It was discovered in 1975 in a cave in Belo Horizonte.

Education

According to Brazil's federal constitution, the federal government, the states, federal district and municipalities are required to manage their own education systems. In 2014, the literacy rate in Brazil of people 15 and older was around 91%. Illiteracy was higher among the rural poor in the northeast (20%) and lower among the urban population in the southeast (9%).