

Five considerations for Rio 2016

Brazil is always an interesting country to focus on. In the mobility industry, it remains a critical assignee location for the Latin American (LATAM) region. Its size – in terms of landmass, population and middle class – continues to make it an important market for doing business. The cultural and geographic richness make it an amazing location for work or play. At the same time, an unreliable infrastructure, security concerns and social-political realities pose challenges in Brazil that are impossible to ignore.

It is hard to believe that four years have already passed since London 2012, which saw record-breaking coverage; more than 219 million people either tuned in to watch the games at home or watched in person. If you haven't already, mark your calendars between August 5 and September 18 for Rio 2016.

For those of us in mobility, it is common knowledge that big cultural and sports events have an impact on business travelers and assignee populations. Local prices will rise, affecting airfares, hotels and temporary housing. We're also likely to see a slowdown in productivity – especially at ports, for inbound and outbound shipments. Where possible, try to manage expectations and postpone moves until the event is over.

This article offers up a few topics we are thinking about as the Olympics start. They are good things to keep in mind – whether your employees are on assignment in Brazil or traveling to the games – as we get excited about this global competition. Let the games begin!

1. Brazilian visa requirements and currency

Citizens of Australia, Canada, Japan and the United States are not required to obtain travel visas from June 1 – September 18. If you are traveling alone with a child under the age of 16, you must obtain a “statement of consent,” signed by the other parent. If you have sole legal custody of your child, you will need a notarized copy of your custody decree.

Due to Brazil’s current economic recession and political instability, the local currency (Brazilian Real) is not as strong as it was during the World Cup. For visitors from countries with a strong currency, money will go further.

2. Alternative places to stay

Rio has some amazing hotels; however, many of the best ones have been fully booked for months – clear confirmation that the games will be popular.

Shortages of hotel rooms are likely and prices will be higher than normal. That being said, Airbnb happens to be one of the 2016 Olympic Games’ sponsors, and is promoting a lot of information around the 25,000 accommodations it has listed. There is also a home-share site called AllTheRooms.com, that provides information from a number of similar sites, including Flipkey, HomeAway and VRBO.



3. Zika virus concerns and travel health insurance

Only a handful of athletes have backed out of the games due to Zika-related health concerns. Other athletes not attending are blaming general physical fatigue, rather than any health scare.

The official message is that pregnant women and those considering pregnancy should avoid traveling to any countries with ongoing Zika virus outbreaks, including Brazil. That being said, the games are taking place in Brazil's winter months, reducing the risk of contracting the disease.

In terms of health coverage and general health safety, here are a few tips:

- Check your health insurance coverage before you go to make sure it covers healthcare expenses and medical evacuation. Travel medical insurance coverage might be the way to go
- Find out what medical facilities or services are available in more remote locations where you are attending certain events. Medical capacity and infrastructure in certain areas of Brazil are not prepared for high-volume emergencies
- Look into online services and apps that are available. For example, the International SOS service, Assistance App offers support for unexpected emergencies



4. An official Olympic playlist? Only in Brazil!

It is hard to mention Brazil without thinking about the rich musical traditions and the famous art scene. To get you into the spirit of the games, the Rio 2016 website provides a playlist of fabulous music.

If you are lucky enough to be going, a Rio Cultural Passport is available for 15 Reals. It provides discounts, and in some cases, free admission to more than 700 cultural attractions and events.

5. Get ready for the traditional Summer Olympic events – and a few new ones!

The Olympics has always been a symbol of international community. An opportunity for athletes from around the world to promote international cooperation, inclusion and relationship-building. While this year's games will see the return of golf, which has been absent for 112 years, one of the most exciting additions is a Refugee team.

The Olympic committee has selected ten top world-class athletes with refugee status, and no home team to represent. They will stand with the Olympic flag and compete among their peers – an example of a world-class event with community at its heart.

Hats off to Rio 2016 and an opportunity to see some great global competition!

This article was authored by Lisa Johnson of Crown World Mobility's Consulting Group. If you have any questions regarding this article, or would like to find out more about our other services, please contact Lisa Johnson at ljohnson@crowww.com.

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