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Ultratravel directory: what's new in the world of luxury travel



Pick of the Pousadas

Why a country that produces such beauties as Gisele Bundchen, and such delicious cocktails as the caipirinha, has attracted so few British visitors in the past is beyond us. However, things are changing. Last year, 182,000 of us packed our Havaianas and headed for Brazil with its 5,000 miles of coastline.

Alison McGowan, an expat Brit, has been instrumental in promoting the country. The former publisher fell in love with Brazil through its music, and in 2001 moved there. Today she runs Hidden Pousadas Brazil (www.hiddenpousadasbrazil.com): her selection of private hotels, from beach huts to elegant spas, all of which, she says, are "utterly Brazilian and quite lovely".

Our favourites are Artjungle Eco Lodge & Spa in Bahia, where the likes of Christy Turlington and Sean Penn hang out in treetop rooms filled with local art; Pousada Picinguaba (above), in a Unesco World Heritage area and boasting a gourmet restaurant; and Pousada Rancho do Peixe, conveniently situated near good kite-surfing beaches.

Those who don't fancy joining the throngs in their throngs will delight in the news that Poko Pano (www.poko-pano.com), Brazil's most famous swimsuit company, has designed some elegant but comfortable slouchy trousers to match its covetable bikinis. Available from the same company is the Paola Robba swimwear range, so beautiful it could be worn out for cocktails in the evening, straight from the beach. That's the sort of holidaywear of which we definitely approve. For further information on Brazil, see www.brazil.org.uk.

Picture: HIDDEN POUSADAS BRAZIL



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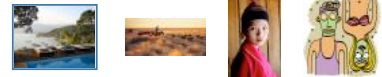
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