

## Rio, Brazil, on the Run as One of World's Seven Wonders. You Can Vote.

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In July next year Swiss foundation New Seven Wonders is going to announce the list of the seven wonders of the contemporary world. Among them may be the city of Rio de Janeiro, the Ruins of Petra, in Jordan and the Pyramids of Giza, in Egypt, the only one of the original seven wonders that still exists.

The marvels will be chosen by popular vote in a process that has the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The vote is already open and votes may be placed on the site of the New Seven Wonders foundation up to January 2007. In total, 21 sites have been chosen as finalists, also through a vote that took place last year.

Apart from the Arab and Brazilian sites, other competitors include the Ruins of the Acropolis, in Greece; Alhambra, in Spain; Angkor, in Cambodia; the Basilica of Saint Sophia, Turkey; Castle Neuschwanstein Füssen, in Germany; Chichén Itzá, in Mexico; the Coliseum, in Rome and the Statue of Liberty, in the United States.

The list also includes the Statues of Easter Island, in Chile; the Great Wall of China; the Kremlin, in Moscow; the Ruins of Machu Picchu, in Peru; the Sydney Opera House, in Australia; Stonehenge - Amesbury, in the United Kingdom; the Taj Mahal in India, Temple Kiyomizu-dera-Kyoto, in Japan; Timbuktu, in Mali, and the Eiffel Tower, in France.

The objective of the competition is to attract world attention to preservation of historic icons. The Brazilian Tourism Institute (Embratur) is working on a campaign for the election of the city of Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilian Tourism Portal, for example, includes a banner explaining the competition and a step-by-step guide explaining how to vote.

According to a spokesperson for Embratur, the possibility of choosing Rio de Janeiro may also be an opportunity to promote tourism in the country. Rio de Janeiro, known as the Marvellous City, is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Brazil, especially among foreign tourists.

Apart from the famous beaches, like Ipanema and Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro has the statue of the Christ Redeemer, on top of Corcovado hill, and Tijuca National Park, the largest natural reservation in a city in the country. The city also still conserves part of the sumptuous and imposing architecture from the time when it was the Federal capital, up to 1960.

Rio de Janeiro also has other attractions like cultural centers, museums, churches, famous candy shops and trams, as well as an intensive cultural agenda. The city has a population of 5.9 million inhabitants and each year promotes a samba school parade at Carnaval, which has become one of the greatest spectacles of Brazilian popular culture.

The pyramids of Giza, which are also running for marvels of the contemporary world, are in the first place among the seven wonders of the ancient world. There are three pyramids, built to serve as tombs for the kings of Ancient Egypt.

The largest, which is 147 meters tall, was built by king Khufu, or Cheops, in around 2,550 b.C. The other two were built by his son, Khafre, and grandson, Menkaure. The story is that it took 100,000 men and 20 years to build the Great Pyramid.

The ruins of Petra, in Jordan, which are also running for election at the Swiss foundation, were the most important archaeological site in the country. Petra was controlled by the Edomites and Nabateans, before becoming a dominion of the Romans, in the year 106.

Considered a site protected by the Gods, Petra was a prosperous city due to being an important route to the Mediterranean and Red seas. Petra is currently famous for its monuments that still persist sculpted in the rock, most made by the Nabateans.

To vote and choose among the seven wonders of the modern world, enter site [www.new7wonders.com](http://www.new7wonders.com).

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