

São Paulo Turismo (SPTuris) Launches “São Paulo Health – A guide to Medical, Well-being and Quality of Life Tourism”

Aimed at tourism professionals and consumers, this new manual shows the excellence of the capital in these sectors, highlighting facilities for travelers, and giving many reasons to visit or stay in the city for health-related reasons

Various types of check-up to suit a range of publics, expectations and needs; treatments and diagnoses in various languages; procedures focusing on specific ethnic characteristics; assistance in the process of extending visas; areas where patients can hold business meetings while undergoing treatment; and second opinion services during the procedures, by means of videoconferencing. All this and much more can be found in São Paulo, the largest metropolitan area in Latin America, synonymous with excellence in areas ranging from culture to knowledge, and taking in fashion, gastronomy, art, and of course, health.

The capital is also seeing the expansion of the “Day-Hospital” concept, with sectors or branches of large hospitals or laboratories specializing in procedures lasting not more than one day, tailor-made for travelers. At the same time, tour operations and travel agencies are creating health-related itineraries - whether aimed at tourists, to take care of their health, or for professionals in the area to specialize. Hotels offer special rates for patients and their companions, in partnership with medical institutions. And hospitals have their own helipads, broadband Internet in the rooms, convenience stores, libraries and restaurants.

Often, they seem more like hotels than hospitals. The concept of hotel infrastructure is present in every aspect of the city’s large medical establishments, which seek to create a special, humane atmosphere, which is quite different from the traditional concept of a hospital. The medical tourism sector has matured, and São Paulo is increasingly becoming an international benchmark in important areas of medicine, health and well-being.

As a result, the number of people visiting the city, to benefit from the centers of medical excellence, is also growing. Many are taking advantage of business trips to have a check-up, put their health in order, or take care of their appearance. The number of foreign languages, and the various Brazilian accents heard in the major establishments, is also increasing, whether for one-day interventions or highly complex aesthetic procedures.

For these reasons and more, São Paulo Turismo (SPTuris), a company which promotes tourism and events in the city of São Paulo, decided to gather all this information in a single publication, in order to highlight the excellence and potential of this sector in the city, stimulate and inform tourism professionals to create products related to the sector, and offer guidance to consumers.

This 64-page pocket-sized manual (14cm x 20cm), “**São Paulo Health – Guide to Medical, Well-being and Quality of Life Tourism**” shows the wide range of services available in the city. It has 10 chapters, addressing themes such as check-ups, hospitals, clinics, plastic surgery and aesthetics, laboratories, diagnostic medicine, dental spas, urban spas and massage clinics, parks and open-air health, and tips for outings and services for tourists.

With an initial 10 thousand copies published – in Portuguese, Spanish and English – the guide “**São Paulo Health**” gives details of institutions and their areas of specialization, important information for tourism professionals wanting to put together products related to the sector, and guidance for consumers interested in carrying out medical procedures, extending their stay, or caring for their health, as their motives for visiting São Paulo.

It also lists medical tourism products, agencies who work with this type of tourism, and tour operators specializing in package tours in the city. All with first world quality and prices in Brazilian reals – the cost of treatments (fees, doctors, dental treatments and hospital rates) are significantly lower than those in the USA and Europe.

The sector in numbers

According to the Ministry of Tourism, the number of tourists who visit São Paulo to care for their health or carry out aesthetic procedures is more than doubling with each passing year. These tourists include Brazilians from every State, and foreigners from every continent. The combination of renowned doctors, state-of-the-art equipment and low costs, and the natural warmth of the Brazilian people, are considered strong stimuli for the growth of the sector. In the city, you can also find clinics and dental spas, where the services most sought after by visitors are implants and aesthetic treatments.

“It’s not just the cultural diversity, the infinity of museums, restaurants, shopping centers, universities, theaters, theaters, cultural centers, nightclubs, infrastructure, and first class services that seduce inhabitants and visitors alike”, said Caio Luiz de Carvalho, president of SPTuris (SPTuris), the company responsible for publishing the guide.

“For many visitors, São Paulo affords an ideal combination of travel, linking business, entertainment, health and well-being,” said the executive, adding that at least 2% of all visitors to the city come for health-related reasons. In the rest of Brazil, according to Embratur, this figure is 0.5%. “Today, there are those who say that the best hospital in Brazil is a trip to São Paulo”, he said.

He also said that countries such as India have already transformed health travel – or a combination of business travel with a check-up or surgical procedure - into a reality which generates benefits for all concerned, and wealth for the country. Medical tourism now accounts for a turnover of around US\$ 350 million in that country, but the Indian forecast for 2012 is that this figure will pass US\$ 2 billion.

With the support of Sindhosp

To guarantee the quality of the content in this guide, SPTuris, with the safety of visitors and tourism professionals in mind, has formed a partnership with the Union of Hospitals, Clinics, Laboratories and Other Health Service Establishments in the State of São Paulo (Sindhosp). This is the Union which assisted SPTuris in the creation of parameters for the establishments included in the publication. These parameters state, for example, that the organization must have accreditation or quality certification (such as ISO 9001 certification or higher, or Accreditation by the Joint Commission International – JCI or the National Accreditation Organization – ONA) and it must be under the technical responsibility of medical professionals. Also, due to the large number of aesthetic clinics and centers, the Sindhosp, in view of the impossibility of listing them all, suggested mentioning only specializations and the more sought-after services, as well as offering information and entities which seek to offer a holistic health service.

São Paulo Health – Guide to Medical, Well-being and Quality of Life Tourism

Edition: São Paulo Turismo (SPTuris), with the support of Sindhosp and the São Paulo City Hall

Date of publication: October/2007

Pages: 64

Format: Pocket-sized (14cm x 20cm)

Chapters: 10

1. *Check-up – Put your health in order in the largest medical center in the country*
2. *Hospitals– First class institutions are the norm.*
3. *Clinics – the ideal travel combination with more than 50 areas of specialization*
4. *Plastic Surgery and Aesthetics – a city which does wonders for you self-esteem.*
5. *Laboratories – State-of-the-art technology and highly qualified personnel in the search for the correct diagnosis*
6. *Dental clinics and spas – The most sought-after treatments are implants and aesthetic procedures*
7. *Spas and massage clinics – Oases of relaxation, to counteract the stresses of daily life*
8. *Health in the open air – the city has are a lot more green spaces than you think*
9. *Important information and services for tourism professionals and consumers*
10. *The city of São Paulo – tourism sights, outings, information and services for visitors*

Information: www.cidadedesapaulo.com

Distribution: for tourism professionals in Brazil and Abroad, trade fairs and events in the sector, coming soon in electronic format via the website.

Why Health Tourism in São Paulo?

- It is possible to combine business, well-being and health in the largest events and entertainment center in Latin America. The city is considered the region’s capital of culture, modernity, gastronomy and knowledge, and is its greatest trendsetter.

- Home to some of the best medical schools in Brazil, the city is also, naturally, home to many doctors, professors, researchers and professionals in the area of health - some of whom are among the most highly regarded and experienced in the country.
- There are 105 hospitals and 17 emergency units, with a total of 32 thousand beds – the largest offer in the country. And when it comes to clinics, there are 9 thousand establishments with 50 specializations.
- State-of-the-art technology, first class institutions, renowned professionals, and fees in Brazilian reals.
- São Paulo is considered an international benchmark in areas of medicine ranging from treatment of heart disease to plastic surgery, orthopedics to oncology, and other highly complex fields, with a first class hospital sector and extensive diagnosis network.
- A hospitable, welcoming environment. The kindness and hospitality of the people make the medical centers more humane and welcoming. All in a city which is considered the 5th most courteous in the world.
- The diversity of nationalities which make up São Paulo means its health professionals are experts in serving people of various cultures. This also promotes the existence of institutions which valorize different cultures, ethnicities and religions.
- The first hospital outside the United States to received the much-coveted JCI (Joint Commission International) accreditation is located in São Paulo – the Hospital Israelita Albert Einstein.
- The majority of hospitals in the capital have their own teaching and research institutions, to guarantee the quality of their medical and professional staff, and promote continuing professional development. They are also involved in community projects.
- The continual developments in the area of teaching and research puts the city on the international map for courses and studies in the area of health. São Paulo therefore hosts many international congresses in the area of medicine.
- Brazil is the second largest country in the world for plastic surgery procedures, second only to the USA. And São Paulo is the largest center for plastic surgery and aesthetics in the country – 34.4% of all plastic surgery carried out in Brazil takes place in the State, and 60% in the capital itself.
- There are institutions which can guide you though the bureaucracy, with international agreements, and even the process of obtaining visa extensions, for patients and their companions.
- Mega diagnostic centers enable you to carry out all types of exam in a single location.
- Almost all the large hospitals and clinics offer a "day hospital" service, focusing on medical procedures with low complexity, and tailor-made for travelers.
- Exam results can be obtained via the Internet, which makes things much easier. You can also obtain the results in various languages – from English to Japanese.
- In the city, hospitals are more reminiscent of hotels, and their apartments offer every comfort, from cable TV to broadband Internet. There are even areas where patients can hold meetings.
- Various institutions offer "second opinion" services. And this can take place during the procedures, by means of videoconferencing.
- Here you will find spas, which are true oases of tranquility in the heart of the city, as well as 53 nature parks for free, open-air activities.