BRAZIL

HISTORY

Native peoples lived in Brazil for thousands of years. Portugal ruled it for about 300 years. Then Brazil became an empire, and later a republic.

The First Peoples

People have lived in Brazil for more than 10,000 years. Hundreds of Native peoples made homes in the forests and along the rivers and coast. Tupi peoples held much of the coast, and Guarani peoples lived in the south. Many villages grew cassava, corn and beans, and hunted and fished. On Marajó Island, at the mouth of the Amazon, people made big clay pots painted with bold designs.

Portugal Claims Brazil

In 1500, a Portuguese fleet led by Pedro Álvares Cabral (kah-BRAHL) landed on the coast. Cabral claimed the land for Portugal. Traders soon came for brazilwood, a tree with red wood used to make dye. Tupi people cut the trees and traded them for metal tools. The country is named after this tree. Portugal made Brazil a **colony**, and in 1549, Salvador became its capital.



Sugar and Slavery

Settlers built sugar **plantations** in the northeast to sell sugar in Europe. The Portuguese made many Native people work in the fields. They also brought millions of enslaved Africans to work on plantations, and later in mines and cities. Some enslaved people escaped and built free villages called quilombos (kee-LOHM-boos). The largest, Palmares, lasted for most of the 1600s. A Portuguese army destroyed it in 1694.

Gold and a Royal Move

Explorers from São Paulo pushed far inland to look for gold and to capture Native people as workers. In the 1690s, they found gold in Minas Gerais (MEE-nahs zheh-RICE). Towns such as Ouro Preto grew rich. In 1763, Rio de Janeiro became the capital. In 1808, a French army invaded Portugal. The Portuguese royal family sailed to Brazil and ruled from Rio for 13 years.

An Empire of Its Own

When the king went home to Portugal, his son Pedro stayed. On September 7, 1822, Pedro declared Brazil's independence. He became its first **emperor**, Pedro I. His son, Pedro II, ruled for almost 50 years. Coffee farms spread, and railroads carried the beans to the ports. On May 13, 1888, Princess Isabel signed the law that ended slavery. In 1889, the army ended the empire, and Brazil became a **republic**.



Modern Brazil

Millions of immigrants came from Italy, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Japan and other countries. Many worked on coffee farms or in new factories in São Paulo. In 1960, Brazil moved its capital to Brasília, a new city built in the middle of the country. Hundreds of Native peoples still live in Brazil, and many still speak their own languages.

BRAZIL THROUGH TIME

1500	1549	1690s	1763	1808	1822	1888	1889	1960
Cabral claims Brazil for Portugal	Salvador becomes the capital	Gold is found in Minas Gerais	Rio becomes the capital	The royal family moves to Rio	Brazil becomes independent	Slavery ends	Brazil becomes a republic	Brasília becomes the capital

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Zumbi	Last leader of Palmares
Pedro I	First emperor of Brazil
Princess Isabel	Signed the law that ended slavery
Alberto Santos-Dumont	Pioneer of early airplanes
Pelé	Football star, won three World Cups

WORDS TO KNOW

colony	land ruled by a faraway country
plantation	a large farm where one main crop is grown
emperor	the ruler of an empire
republic	a country whose leaders are chosen, not born to rule