
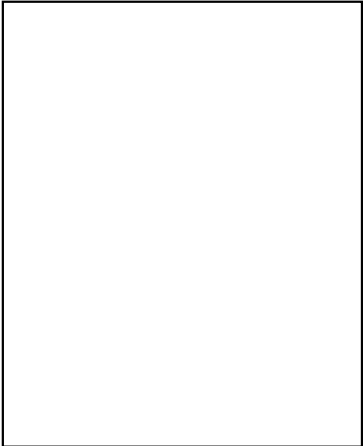


Rio de Janeiro



Over 500 years ago the only people who lived in the area around Rio were small groups of Brazilian Indian people. They lived in the tropical forests

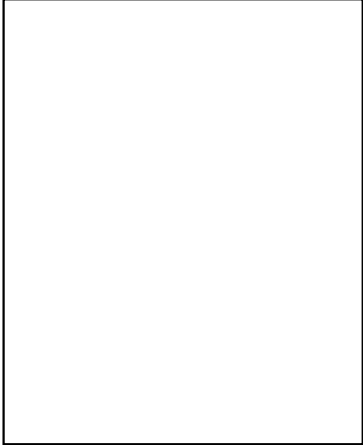


The explorers sailed across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe. The bays around Rio provided natural harbours for their ships. The Europeans wanted the wood from the forests. They started to trade with the Indians.

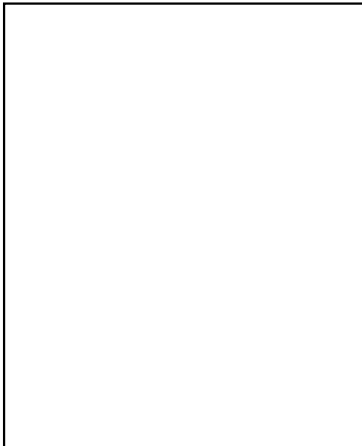


Sugar was another product that people from Europe wanted. The climate and hilly mountain slopes near Rio were good for farming sugar cane. Thousands of slaves were bought from Africa to work on the sugar farms.

Then, about 300 years ago, gold and diamonds were discovered inland from Rio. More settlers came to the area and the port of Rio became an even busier centre of trade.



Next people around the world wanted to drink coffee. Coffee grows well in the hot, wet Brazilian climate. More people moved to the area to grow and sell coffee.



Today, Rio is still a busy trade centre. It also has more tourists than any other city in the southern hemisphere. People enjoy the beaches, natural beauty, sport, music and festivals.