

## BRAZIL CUSTOMS

### Greetings:

Brazilians greet each other with a handshake.

Common verbal greetings include *Olá. Tudo bem?* (Hello. Is everything fine?) and *Como vai?* (How are you?). Young friends greet each other with a simple *Oi* (Hi).

Common parting terms include *Tchau* (Good-bye) and *Até logo* (See you soon). When one joins or leaves a small group, it is polite to shake hands with everyone.

Superiors and authorities may be addressed formally with the titles *Senhor* (Mr.) or *Senhora* (Mrs.), followed by their surnames.

### Gestures:

The “okay” sign used in the United States, with the thumb and index finger forming a circle, is an offensive gesture.

One beckons by closing the fingers of the hand into the palm facing up.

Pulling down the lower eyelid with an index finger signifies disbelief or caution.

One may tap the fingers horizontally under the chin to indicate that another person does not know what he or she is talking about or is exaggerating.

**Holidays:** *Carnaval* is a five-day festival preceding Ash Wednesday; it is the most famous holiday in Brazil. It is marked by street parades, samba and *bloco* (group) dancing, parties, drinking, costumes, conga drums, and music.

Tiradentes Day (21 Apr.) celebrates the death of Joaquim José da Silva Xavier (known as Tiradentes); he was a dentist and nationalist who died in the struggle for independence.

The *Festas Juninas* (June Festivals) coincide with the feasts of St. John and St. Peter and are celebrated with local fair-type activities.

Other holidays include Easter, Labor Day (1 May), Independence Day (7 Sept.), Memorial Day (2 Nov.), and Republic Day (15 Nov.).