

MARKETING

Luxury brands head to Brazil as high-end market heats up

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Brazil is getting all kinds of attention across industries, from fashion to automotive. Image credit: Carolina Herrera

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

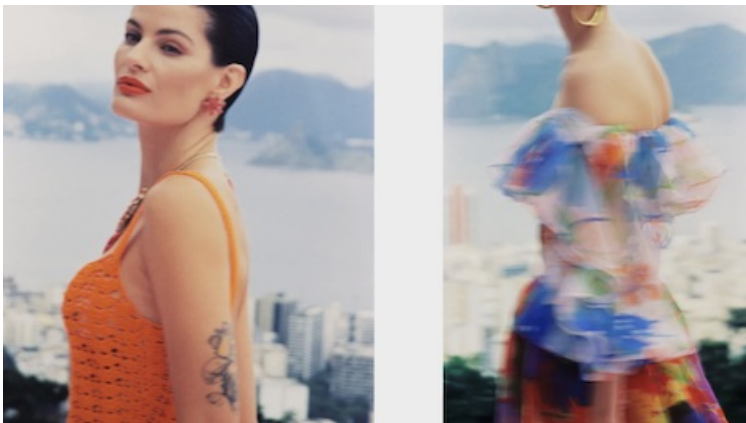
This season, marketers are lending much attention to South America.

Brands are increasingly turning to the tropical country as inspiration for their collections, settings for their campaigns, destinations for their traveling clients and, among other things, places to find exceptional designers. As Brazilians' disposable income grows and audiences abroad take notice of the treasures found in the nation, the land of "ordem e progresso" could perhaps be one of the high-end hotspots of the future.

Brazil's luxury boost

Though it is famous for its recreational offerings, Brazil has long flown under the radar when it comes to luxury.

On the global stage, it has generally been known as a place to vacation and celebrate in. While nations such as France, Italy and more recently, Nordic nations ([see story](#)) have managed to carve out multifaceted reputations for themselves, Brazil has fallen victim to what so many countries in the Global South deal with every year: it is underestimated.



The jade-hued rainforests and peaceful beaches of the country are seldom spotlighted in the way that European locations are in campaigns. Image credit: Carolina Herrera

Scenes of Tuscany and Paris are often seen in many prestige campaigns. Inspiration is often drawn by designers from Mediterranean islands, Old World villages and cities such as London.

As a result, consumers are very familiar with Parisian streets and Greek waters, even if they have never even been to Europe.

But as for imagery of rainforests, black-and-white wavy sidewalks, sand art and sugar cane juice stands? Those seldom even have a home in the background of product photography, let alone as core pieces of content.

However, things seem to be changing course ([see story](#)).

According to Brazil's government statistics institute, the economy of the country grew by nearly 3 percent in 2023. [PBS](#) reports that this is far higher than what many economists predicted, having forecasted only 0.8 percent growth for the year.



Lamborghini recently picked Brazil's biggest city as the locale for a new showroom. Image credit: Lamborghini

With Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva as president, largely considered to be a far more stable pick than those in office who served recent terms, Brazil's economy ranks as the ninth largest in the world now. Bringing in \$2.17 trillion GDP last year, this puts the South American spot ahead of both Russia and Canada.

As Brazilian citizens amass more resources and steadier incomes, the country now has a stronger population of core luxury consumers and aspirational customers are multiplying at exponential rates.

The 2023 study, "[The New Era of Growth in the Luxury Market](#)," published by consulting firm Bain & Company, stated that over the last five years, the luxury market in the country spiked 18 percent. The research pointed to the trend continuing, with an expansion forecast of between 6 and 8 percent annually, doubling the size of the sector by 2030.



Brazil's art scene and creatives are finally having their moment in the sun as international investment boosts. Image credit: Audemars Piguet

With foreign investment and exposure increasing due to the country gaining traction economically, it seems that many brands now view Brazil as an opportunity.

Branding Brazil

One of the ways that Brazil is blossoming as a luxury hotspot is the success of its celebrities.

Those such as model Gisele Bündchen ([see story](#)) and singer-songwriter Iza ([see story](#)) have become staples for some of the biggest brands in the world. Meanwhile, a new generation of famous faces from the country is offering some of the most recognizable young people in the world, and luxury seems to want in.



Stars such as Ms. Bndchen are increasingly given a spotlight on the global stage in ads and luxury marketing. Image credit: Louis Vuitton

Brazilian actress Bruna Marquezine is one of these hot-ticket success stories, sought after by a range of labels wanting to sign her on as a brand representative or character in campaign videos.

This year, she has agreed to be a makeup ambassador for France's YSL Beauty, which lauds her "characteristic style and advocacy," in the announcement. She is said to embody a brave femininity and "effortless edge" in the midst of a "gloss-obsessed" wave of consumers.

Ms. Marquezine has over 30 movie and television credits, including her appearance in *Blue Beetle*, the 2023 superhero movie that made her the first Brazilian main character in all of DC's history.

The 212 crew in Brazil: it was a house party in the heart of So Paulo, with Carolina Herrera, 212 brand ambassadors Bruna Marquezine and Rauw Alejandro, and our closest friends and family. [#212CarolinaHerrera pic.twitter.com/VVjCcSQ94R](https://pic.twitter.com/VVjCcSQ94R)

Carolina Herrera (@HouseofHerrera) April 8, 2024

With a following of 45.2 million followers on Instagram, the 28-year-old has a captured audience, particularly with Gen Zers and fellow millennials. U.S. apparel and accessories label Carolina Herrera seems clued into this appeal, tapping the star for the revival of the signature [212 VIP Ros Elixir](#) scent this spring.

Like YSL, the brand highlights Ms. Marquezine's "it girl" status, style and "liberated femininity," pairing these values with the identity of the product she helps promote in this case, her "Latin spirit" is likewise tied to the sparkling fragrance's strong yet sensual nature.

In a 20-second campaign, the actress dances in the streets of New York to a famous beat that has been remixed with Spanish lyrics [a playlist](#) has been published to support this. Although her native tongue and Brazil's national language is Portuguese, the country's famous love of music and celebration is apparent here ([see story](#)).

Carolina Herrera New York presents 212 VIP Ros Elixir

This homage to the nation did not stop here, as the maison set its 2024 Resort collection in none other than Rio de Janeiro.

First showcased in the city last year, an all-Brazilian cast modeled the outfits, walking to the soundtrack of nationally beloved singer Gal Costa. The line now invites shoppers to partake in the "joy and sensuality" of Rio's colors, music, exuberance and modernist architecture.

All of this is referenced in the fashion looks, which are said to also nod to Carolina Herrera's Latin roots.

Rainbow-hued colors, playful patterns and easy-to-wear styles come together in [the collection](#). Breezy fabrics and colors that reflect Brazilians' favorite fruits and flowers paint a distinct picture.



An all-Brazilian cast sported the looks at the show for the collection. Image credit: Carolina Herrera

U.S. luxury brand Tom Ford is another that has found a fashion muse in Rio, filming its spring/summer 2024 campaign on-site. Available in-store and [online](#), the collection is showcased in black-and-white in an over one-minute-long video on YouTube.

With the sound of waves crashing in the background, the camera pans over the famed Sugarloaf Mountain towering over the city, lens flares granting the scenes an ethereal touch. A choir comes in as female models appear in outfits from the collection, each donning 1970's inspired looks and haircuts on luxurious balconies, in empty pools and from the air in helicopters.

The locale's night scene is given the spotlight, with shots of dancing and mingling turned to color before the video's end.

"Calada Portuguesa" and the recognizable Copacabana promenade are heavily featured in both the campaign and the stills posted on Tom Ford's other social media channels.

Tom Ford presents spring/summer 2024

Belmond's [Copacabana Palace](#) continues to be a highlight property for the brand, attracting guests with a celebratory atmosphere, rich history and diverse dining scene. The hotel was one of the sites picked to participate in this year's Mitico initiative ([see story](#)).

Brazil's photography ([see story](#)) and design masters often ground visuals, with the hospitality company turning to them for on-site collaborations.

It is becoming more common knowledge that the country has such a rich tapestry of artistic talent, leading to many such as LVMH-owned champagne house Ruinart to involve Brazilian creatives in their annual programming ([see story](#)).



Belmond often shines a light on its Rio location, celebrating its history, resort offerings and cultural programming. Image credit: Belmond

Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet has also taken notice, turning to Sallisa Rosa, an artist from the nation, to craft a large-scale ceramic installation. Hailing from the lush region of Goinia, her work explores humankind's connection to the earth her use of clay furthers this, honoring traditional knowledge and non-industrial crafts.

Ms. Rosa's 100-piece installation for the watchmaker delves into collective ways of remembering, drawing a line between the planet's erosion and that of memories.

The ecologically-themed space is on view at [Pinacoteca de So Paulo](#) through July 28, 2024. It is the first exhibition in Brazil of an Audemars Piguet Contemporary commissioned work.



The Brazilian installation ties the erosion of ecosystems to the degradation of memory. Image credit: Audemars Piguet

Fellow Swiss watchmaker Rolex has joined in turning its sights on the country. However, instead of closing in on its artistic identity, the maison is looking to conservation.

As part of its Perpetual Planet effort with National Geographic ([see story](#)), the horological house is in the midst of an Amazon expedition. Explorers Fernando Trujillo and Mara Jimena Valderrama are tracking the vital river's dolphins across several tributaries, charting their health, movements and population statistics.

True to Rolex's sustainability emphasis, by studying the dolphins, scientists can receive deeper insights into what is happening to the rest of the critical ecosystem.

The explorers' findings are detailed on a dedicated [landing page](#) on the watchmaker's website, providing audiences with an inside look at not only the state of affairs in the rainforest but of the brand's commitment to environmentalism in the Global South.

Rolex and National Geographic Perpetual Planet Amazon Expedition: Through the Tributaries

This idea of preservation is prominent in Brazil. Italian fashion label Missoni is taking a biophilic approach ([see story](#)), championing urban green spaces in So Paulo.

The brand recently announced a residential project in the business hub, revealing imagery of an exclusive complex studded with plant life and architecture that reflects its surroundings. [The project](#) is being completed in collaboration with Brazilian developer Gafisa.

Both parties aim to promote functionality in the financial district and harmony with the larger community.



The biophilic real estate project brings greenery to industrial urban landscapes. Image credit: Missoni

So Paulo specifically is turning out to be a magnet for the few luxury automakers that are joining in on this slew of Brazilian engagements. Lamborghini of Italy for example recently unveiled a fresh showroom in the city BMW is in turn hosting in-person diversity workshops at its own sites locally.

It appears that from fashion to real estate to fragrance, luxury businesses cannot get enough of the coastal country in South America.

As the Global South keeps climbing the wealth ranks ([see story](#)), other neighboring nations are sure to follow suit in Brazil's

newfound limelight. For now, the palm-filled, juice-drinking, wildlife-flooded republic stands out in its emergence as one of the future's hottest hubs for the industry.

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