

Minkoff Where and What to Eat in Sao Jose dos Campos

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All American

Traveling in Brazil I hear clients refer to themselves as American and to the United States of America as “America”. Many US residents disregard the concept that there is a North, South, Latin and Central America. They think of themselves as uniquely “American”. The idea is forgivable but there are other Americas and we are all Americans.

Pizza is Everywhere

In the USA, pizza varies widely across regions. Traditional Philadelphia pizza is a thin crust pie covered with tomato sauce and mozzarella topped by pepperoni. I prefer [King of Pizza](#) in South Jersey and [Mac and Manco](#) on the boardwalk in Ocean City. In Chicago, it’s hard to ignore the ubiquitous [UNO](#) although I prefer [Lou Malnati’s Pizzeria](#) which also has a large following, but hasn’t been homogenized into hundreds of strip shopping centers. In Sao Jose, pizza has been elevated to a higher plateau and is quite recognizable to travelers seeking familiar comfort food.

Several local spots stand out, not only for their unique pizza offerings but also for their service and hospitality. Among the best is [Golden Grill and Pizza](#) which offers a fixed price pizza menu which includes appetizer pizzas as well as dessert pies. I prefer the open air of the bar where locals keep bottles of their favorite refreshments in distinctive wall lockers. Another is [Troina Pizza Gourmet](#) where the waiters insist on serving you every slice including their signature pizza with mussels and white asparagus.

Where’s the Beef?

Brazil is famous for its churrascarias. The all around best in Sao Jose is [Villa d’Aldeia](#). A welcoming piano player greets you in this somewhat décor-lacking expanse of a restaurant. However, don’t judge the present by the box. Here the salad bar alone is worth the price of admission, and principle offerings aren’t limited to beef, although they do the beef exceptionally well. This must-try experience doesn’t disappoint. A word of caution, turn the service disc to não, obrigado and save some room for the scrumptious sobremesas and the papaya crème topped with blackberry brandy.

Another must try is [Villa Velha](#). Family operated on the same corner for forty years, this local favorite has an updated menu, which should be ignored, in favor of their traditional dish, Pintado, the Brazilian fresh water Tiger Fish. Pintado is a truly Brazilian fish served churrascaria-style by an attentive staff that all seem to have been with the restaurant since inception. The US Navy recognizing the unique pintado has named two submarines after the fish, the latest being the [USS Pintado \(SSN-672\)](#) which saw extensive operations during three decades of the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

There are many more varieties of food in Sao Jose dos Campos and just as many restaurants serving them. I encourage you all to “branch out” and send me your favorites. Look for updates on www.jetquik.com