



## Colonial Period

The proposal to get to know the palaces, house museums and historic houses in Brazil, considers three thematic itineraries based on the construction dates of these buildings within the periods of national history: Colony, Empire and Republic.

We begin our journey with the house museums and historic houses whose constructions start in the colonial period and run on until the beginning of the 19th century. These houses had their functions changed over time; they were residences, public buildings, rural and urban constructions – examples of the colonizers' European architecture that were integrated with the tropical climate and with the materials found here.

The houses that survived time, economic activities and the cities' urbanization are important records that help us to understand the colonial period. When visiting them, we have the opportunity to get in touch with the history of the national territory expansion reflected in the 'bandeiristas'[1] houses, as well as with the economic history that goes through the cycles of extraction of Brazilwood, sugar cane, gold, cotton, and also through the villages, 'quilombos'[2], farms and townhouses, considering those who already lived here, such as the indigenous population, and the contribution of European, Asian and African immigrants. Most of those houses today are museums or cultural institutions open to the public. Some of them keep their original features or part of them and share them with researchers and people interested in knowing a little bit more about Brazilian history.

Knowing those buildings and their historical, artistic or bibliographic collections instigates us to reflect on economic, social, cultural, religious and political activities; therefore, it invites us to understand our current context through contact with our cultural heritage.

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[1] Translator's Note (TN): type of rural colonial architecture from the beginning of São Paulo State's occupation – 17th and 18th centuries.

[2] TN: communities organized by the fugitives escaped from slavery.