PARTICIPANT GUIDE

Welcome to Natal

A Practical Guide for ICHEP 2026 Participants

43rd International Conference on High Energy Physics

30 July–5 August 2026
Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil

Practical information on venues, transportation,
safety, payments, electricity, health, local customs, and Brazilian Portuguese.

Bem-vindos a Natal!

Welcome to Brazil's northeastern Atlantic coast.

Natal is known for its beaches, dunes, warm climate, and steady ocean breeze. This guide contains practical information to help you travel comfortably, safely, and confidently during ICHEP 2026.

Important

ICHEP 2026 uses **two different venues**. Please check the programme carefully each day before leaving your hotel.

★ Quick reference

Emergency numbers

Police: 190
Ambulance: 192
Fire and rescue: 193

Essential practical information

Currency: Brazilian real (BRL / R$)
Voltage: 220 V, 60 Hz
Outlet: Type N
Time zone: UTC–3

Parallel sessions

30 July–1 August
Praiamar Natal Hotel & Convention
Rua Francisco Gurgel, 33
Ponta Negra, Natal – RN

Plenary sessions

3–5 August
Centro de Convenções de Natal
Via Costeira Senador Dinarte Medeiros Mariz, 6664–6704
Ponta Negra, Natal – RN

1 Conference venues

Please note that ICHEP 2026 will use two different venues.

Parallel sessions · 30 July–1 August

Praiamar Natal Hotel & Convention
Rua Francisco Gurgel, 33
Ponta Negra, Natal – RN
CEP 59090-050

Plenary sessions · 3–5 August

Centro de Convenções de Natal
Via Costeira Senador Dinarte Medeiros Mariz, 6664–6704
Ponta Negra, Natal – RN
CEP 59090-002

Conference email: ichep2026@cbpf.br

Check the conference programme carefully each day to confirm where your session will take place.

2 Arriving in Natal

Natal International Airport – Governador Aluízio Alves

Airport code: **NAT**

The airport is located in São Gonçalo do Amarante, outside central Natal. Journey times depend strongly on traffic, so allow generous time when travelling between the airport and Ponta Negra.

The simplest options are:

- a transfer arranged by your hotel or travel agency;
- an official airport taxi;
- a ride-hailing service such as Uber or 99.

> **Before entering a ride-hailing vehicle**
>
> Verify the driver's name, photograph, vehicle model, and licence plate. Share your trip details through the app when travelling alone.

Avoid accepting unsolicited transportation offers inside or outside the terminal.

3 Getting around Natal

Ride-hailing apps are generally the most convenient option for conference participants. Official taxis are also available.

- Use the exact destination address rather than only the venue name.
- Wait for your car inside the hotel or venue whenever possible.
- Confirm the licence plate before entering.
- Avoid displaying your phone while waiting near the street.
- Allow extra travel time during morning and evening traffic periods.

Public buses exist, but routes and payment procedures may be unfamiliar to visitors. For short conference stays, registered taxis, organised transfers, and ride-hailing apps are usually easier.

> **Useful phrase**
>
> **Pode me deixar na entrada principal, por favor?**
> Could you leave me at the main entrance, please?

4 Currency and payments

Brazil's currency is the **Brazilian real**.

Symbol	Currency code	Plural
R$	BRL	reais

Brazil uses a comma as the decimal separator. Therefore, **R$ 20,50** means R$20.50, not R$2,050.

Credit and debit cards

International Visa and Mastercard cards are widely accepted at hotels, restaurants, supermarkets, pharmacies, shopping centres, and most established businesses. Contactless payment is common.

- Carry a small amount of cash for minor purchases.
- Inform your bank that you will be travelling to Brazil.
- Check international transaction and currency-conversion fees.
- Confirm the amount displayed before entering your PIN.
- Choose to pay in **Brazilian reais**, not in your home currency, when offered.

American Express may be accepted less consistently than Visa or Mastercard.

Pix

You will frequently see signs saying **Aceitamos Pix**. Pix is Brazil's instant bank-transfer system and is extremely popular among residents. Most foreign visitors do not need Pix, as cards are widely accepted.

Cash and ATMs

Use ATMs inside airports, banks, hotels, or shopping centres rather than machines on the street. Avoid withdrawing large sums and handling cash publicly.

5 Tipping and service charges

Restaurants often add a **10% service charge**, usually shown as **Serviço: 10%**. Additional tipping is not expected.

Tipping taxi and ride-hailing drivers is optional. Rounding up the fare or adding a small amount through the app is appreciated but not required.

6 Emergency numbers

Police – Polícia Militar	**190**
Ambulance – SAMU	**192**
Fire and rescue – Bombeiros	**193**

These numbers can normally be called free of charge.

When calling, provide your name, the nature of the emergency, the exact address or a nearby landmark, your telephone number, and whether anyone is injured or in immediate danger.

Essential emergency phrases

Preciso de ajuda. — I need help.
É uma emergência. — It is an emergency.
Chame a polícia, por favor. — Call the police, please.
Chame uma ambulância, por favor. — Call an ambulance, please.
Meu endereço é… — My address is…

Save the address of your hotel on your phone and keep a written copy with you.

Conference assistance

For non-life-threatening conference-related assistance:

ICHEP 2026: ichep2026@cbpf.br
Conference assistance telephone/WhatsApp: +55 84 98873 2423 (Farinaldo) or +55 51 9871 4374 (Gabi)

For a lost passport, contact the police and your country's nearest embassy or consulate as soon as possible.

7 Personal safety

Natal welcomes many Brazilian and international visitors. As in other major tourist destinations, ordinary urban precautions are important.

- Carry only what you need for the day.
- Leave your passport, spare cards, and excess cash in the hotel safe.
- Carry a copy or secure digital image of your passport identification page.
- Avoid openly displaying expensive jewellery, cameras, or large amounts of cash.
- Avoid walking alone on quiet streets or beaches after dark.
- Use registered taxis or ride-hailing services at night.
- Keep bags closed and in front of you in crowded places.
- Be discreet when using your phone near streets or open vehicle windows.
- Do not enter unfamiliar neighbourhoods without a reputable local guide.
- At an ATM, protect your PIN and decline assistance from strangers.

- At restaurants, keep your phone and bag away from the edge of the table.

In the unlikely event of a theft

Stay calm, avoid confrontation, and follow the person's instructions. Do not take unnecessary risks to protect personal belongings. Once you are in a safe place, contact the police and inform the conference team or your hotel if you need assistance.

Beaches and the ocean

Natal's beaches are beautiful, but Atlantic currents can be strong.

- Prefer beaches with lifeguards.
- Pay attention to warning flags and local instructions.
- Do not swim alone or after drinking alcohol.
- Ask hotel staff where swimming conditions are safest that day.
- Do not leave belongings unattended on the beach.

8 Health and medical care

Travel insurance that covers medical treatment in Brazil is strongly recommended.

Bring your regular medication in its original packaging, a copy of your prescription, sufficient medication for your complete journey, and your travel-insurance details.

Pharmacies are called **farmácias** and are widely available. Some operate 24 hours.

Useful health phrases

Onde fica a farmácia mais próxima? — Where is the nearest pharmacy?
Preciso falar com um médico. — I need to speak to a doctor.
Tenho alergia a... — I am allergic to...
Você fala inglês? — Do you speak English?

Tap water quality can vary by building. Bottled or properly filtered water is the safest choice for drinking.

Água sem gás means still water.
Água com gás means sparkling water.

9 Weather and what to wear

Natal has a warm, humid tropical climate. Around the conference period, daytime temperatures are commonly in the upper twenties Celsius, with warm evenings, strong sunshine, and coastal winds. Rain showers are still possible.

Bring:

- light, breathable clothing;
- comfortable walking shoes;
- a light layer for strongly air-conditioned rooms;
- sunscreen with a high protection factor;
- sunglasses and a hat;
- a compact umbrella or light rain jacket;
- insect repellent.

Sun protection

Natal's tropical sun can be strong even on cloudy or windy days. Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen before going outdoors and reapply it regularly, especially after swimming or sweating. A hat, sunglasses, and shade provide useful additional protection.

10 Electricity, voltage, and outlets

Voltage	Frequency	Outlet
220 V	60 Hz	Type N

Brazil's standard outlet has three round pins. Many Type N sockets also accept the slimmer two-pin European Type C plug.

Devices marked **Input: 100–240 V, 50/60 Hz** normally require only a plug adapter.

> **Important**
>
> Devices designed exclusively for 110–120 V may be damaged if connected directly to a 220 V outlet. Hairdryers, curling irons, electric shavers, and other heating appliances require particular care.

11 Mobile phones, SIM cards, and eSIMs

Wi-Fi is available at the conference venues and at most hotels, restaurants, cafés, and shopping centres. Nevertheless, mobile data is useful for ride-hailing apps, maps, WhatsApp, and communication while travelling around Natal.

Using your existing mobile plan

Before travelling, check whether your mobile provider offers roaming in Brazil and what charges apply. International roaming is usually the simplest option, but it may be considerably more expensive than a local SIM or travel eSIM.

To avoid unexpected charges:

- Confirm your roaming package before departure.
- Check whether calls, SMS messages, and mobile data are included.
- Disable data roaming until your package is active.
- Turn off automatic application updates and cloud backups over mobile data.
- Use hotel and conference Wi-Fi for large downloads.

Keep access to your usual telephone number when possible, since banks and other services may send authentication codes by SMS.

Travel eSIMs

A travel eSIM is often the easiest option for visitors whose phones support the technology. It can usually be purchased before departure and activated after arrival in Brazil.

> **Important**
>
> Many travel eSIMs provide mobile data only. They may not include a Brazilian telephone number, conventional voice calls, or SMS messages. WhatsApp and other internet-based services will still work normally.

Installing a new eSIM does not normally change the telephone number associated with your existing WhatsApp account.

Before purchasing an eSIM:

- Confirm that your phone supports eSIM.
- Check that the phone is not locked to your home operator.
- Confirm that Brazil is included in the plan.
- Check the plan duration, data allowance, and activation rules.
- Install the eSIM while you still have reliable Wi-Fi.
- Save the QR code or installation details in a secure place.

Some phones allow the usual SIM to remain active for calls and SMS while the eSIM is used for mobile data. Check the settings carefully to ensure that international data roaming is disabled on the home SIM.

Brazilian SIM cards and local eSIMs

Brazil's main mobile operators include Claro, TIM, and Vivo. Prepaid service is widely available, but activation procedures vary between operators.

International visitors may be asked to present:

- a valid passport;
- the address of their hotel or accommodation in Brazil;
- an unlocked and compatible telephone.

Because registration and payment procedures can vary, purchase SIM cards or eSIMs from an official operator shop rather than from an informal street vendor.

> **Practical recommendation**
>
> For most short-term visitors, an international roaming package or a travel eSIM purchased before departure is likely to be the simplest option.

Recommended phone settings

After activating a new SIM or eSIM:

1. Select the new line for **mobile data**.
2. Disable automatic mobile-data switching unless you understand how your phone handles roaming.
3. Keep data roaming **off** for your home SIM.
4. Turn data roaming **on only for the travel or Brazilian eSIM** if required by its provider.
5. Test maps, WhatsApp, and your ride-hailing app before leaving the airport or hotel.

Calling Brazilian numbers

Brazil's international country code is **+55**. Natal and most of Rio Grande do Norte use the area code **84**.

A Natal mobile number may be written as:

+55 84 9XXXX-XXXX

When saving Brazilian contacts, use the complete international format beginning with **+55**.

Public Wi-Fi and phone safety

- Confirm the correct Wi-Fi network name with hotel or conference staff.
- Avoid banking or other sensitive transactions on unsecured networks.
- Do not install certificates or applications offered by unexpected pop-ups.
- Use mobile data for sensitive services when possible.
- Avoid standing near the street while looking at your phone.
- Wait for ride-hailing vehicles inside the hotel or venue whenever possible.
- Verify the vehicle and driver before stepping outside.

Download offline maps of Natal before travelling and save both conference venue addresses in your preferred map application.

12 Time zone

Natal follows **Brasília Time: UTC−3**. Brazil does not currently observe seasonal daylight-saving time.

Conference times are given in local Natal time.

13 Food and restaurants

Natal is known for seafood, tropical fruit, cassava-based dishes, grilled meats, and regional northeastern Brazilian cuisine.

Local foods worth trying include:

- **tapioca** — cassava-starch pancake with sweet or savoury fillings;
- **macaxeira** — cassava;

- **carne de sol** — salted and cured beef;
- **queijo coalho** — firm grilled cheese;
- **camarão** — shrimp;
- **peixe grelhado** — grilled fish;
- **cuscuz nordestino** — steamed corn couscous;
- **água de coco** — coconut water;
- **açaí** — chilled fruit preparation, often served with toppings.

Dietary requirements

Portuguese	English
Sou vegetariano / vegetariana.	I am vegetarian.
Sou vegano / vegana.	I am vegan.
Não como carne.	I do not eat meat.
Não como peixe nem frutos do mar.	I do not eat fish or seafood.
Tenho alergia a amendoim.	I am allergic to peanuts.
Tenho alergia a frutos do mar.	I am allergic to seafood.
Não posso comer glúten.	I cannot eat gluten.
Não posso consumir leite ou lactose.	I cannot consume milk or lactose.

For serious allergies, carry a translated allergy card and confirm that the kitchen understands the risk of cross-contamination.

14 Useful Brazilian Portuguese

English is spoken by some tourism and hotel professionals, but it is not universal. A few words of Portuguese are greatly appreciated.

Greetings and courtesy

Portuguese	English
Bom dia	Good morning
Boa tarde	Good afternoon
Boa noite	Good evening / good night
Por favor	Please
Obrigado / Obrigada	Thank you
Com licença	Excuse me
Desculpe	Sorry
Você fala inglês?	Do you speak English?
Pode falar mais devagar?	Could you speak more slowly?

A man normally says **obrigado**; a woman normally says **obrigada**.

Directions and transport

Portuguese	English
Onde fica…?	Where is…?
Como chego ao centro de convenções?	How do I get to the convention centre?
Quanto tempo demora?	How long does it take?

Portuguese	English
Pode me levar para este endereço?	Can you take me to this address?
Pode parar aqui, por favor?	Can you stop here, please?
É longe?	Is it far?
À direita	To the right
À esquerda	To the left
Entrada principal	Main entrance

Restaurants and shopping

Portuguese	English
Uma mesa para uma pessoa, por favor.	A table for one, please.
O cardápio, por favor.	The menu, please.
A conta, por favor.	The bill, please.
Aceita cartão?	Do you accept cards?
Crédito ou débito?	Credit or debit?
Sem gelo	Without ice
Sem açúcar	Without sugar
Quanto custa?	How much does it cost?
Preciso de uma nota fiscal.	I need a receipt or invoice.

When paying by card, staff may ask:

Crédito ou débito? — Credit or debit?
À vista ou parcelado? — One payment or instalments?

Visitors should normally answer: **Crédito, à vista.**

15 Brazilian customs and etiquette

Brazilian interactions are generally warm and informal.

- First names are commonly used, including in professional settings.
- “Professor” or “Professora” may be used respectfully for academics.
- A friendly greeting before asking a question is appreciated.
- Punctuality is expected for the scientific programme.
- Smoking is prohibited in enclosed public spaces.
- Do not photograph people closely without permission.

16 Exploring Natal

Participants with free time may wish to visit:

- Ponta Negra Beach and Morro do Careca;
- Parque das Dunas;
- Forte dos Reis Magos;
- Via Costeira;
- Genipabu dunes;
- Cajueiro de Pirangi;
- beaches and natural pools along the coast of Rio Grande do Norte.

Book excursions through established operators or your hotel. For dune-buggy tours and boat trips, use registered providers, confirm what is included, and follow all safety instructions.

Avoid attempting long-distance coastal or dune excursions without organised transportation.

17 Daily checklist

- Conference badge
- Phone and portable charger
- Hotel name and address
- Payment card and small amount of cash
- Sunscreen
- Water
- Light layer for air-conditioned rooms
- Compact umbrella
- Essential medication
- Correct conference venue

18 Before travelling to Brazil

- Check passport validity and entry requirements for your nationality.
- Arrange appropriate travel and health insurance.
- Save copies of passports, tickets, and insurance documents.
- Inform your bank about international travel.
- Verify that your cards will work in Brazil.
- Bring a Type N-compatible electrical adapter.
- Confirm airport transportation.
- Download offline maps.
- Save the conference and hotel addresses.
- Consult official health and travel advice issued by your home country.

Quick Reference

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We hope you enjoy ICHEP 2026 and your stay in Natal.

Bem-vindos a Natal!