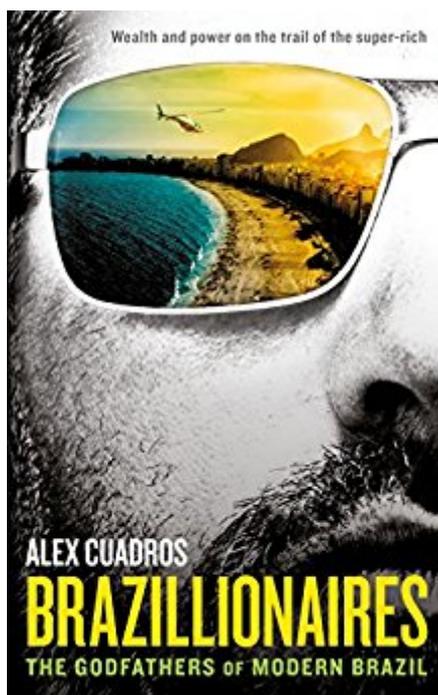


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Brazillionaires: The Godfathers Of Modern Brazil



Synopsis

Longlisted for the Financial Times Business Book of the Year Award Wealth and power on the trail of the super-rich In 2012, Brazilian tycoon Eike Batista was the eighth richest man in the world, his \$30bn fortune built on Brazil's incredible natural resources. By the middle of 2013 he had lost it all, engulfed in scandal. Brazillionaires is a fast-paced account of Batista's rise and fall: a story of helicopter flights, beach-front penthouses and high-speed car crashes. Along the way, it tells the parallel story of Brazil itself, a country caught in the cycle of boom and bust, renewed hope and dashed promise; a country where the hyper-rich are at the heart of the economy - and where their wealth can buy immense political power. Stefan Zweig said in 1941 that Brazil was the country of the future; Brazilians joke that it always will be. Today, rampant corruption and endemic inequality threaten to derail the new Brazilian Dream. The brazillionaires are the key to understanding that dream; through them Brazillionaires tells the story of their country's past, present and future.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you want to read one book on what Brazil is like today and how it has evolved to the level of acute disparity between the super wealthy and the poor, Brazillionaires is the one! Its author, Alex

Cuadros, not only learned Portuguese, but also immersed himself into the intricacies of this complex culture, living in Brazil for six years. As a former Peace Corps volunteer who served in Brazil many years ago, I would have much preferred a book like *Brazillionaires* as required reading in addition to being exposed to the romance of this remarkable country during my Peace Corps training. The picture of the super wealthy using helicopters for a 12-minute flight that saves three hours in traffic is powerful. Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city has more helicopters than any other city in the world including New York! One billionaire and his family are a major theme illustrating the power of privilege and decadence, and what happens when that wealth disappears. Cuadros accurately describes the social cost of the less fortunate, those living in favelas (slums). There were tens of thousands displaced for construction of venues for both the World Cup in 2014 as well as the recent Olympics. What is evident in his writing is that Cuadros, like this reviewer, fell in love with Brazil and its inhabitants. He won the hearts and trust of many along the way.

A great starting point for those interested in Brazil. The writing was intelligent and visual but still accessible and engaging. He provides sometimes sobering insight on Brazilian culture and inequality from personal observations, but also goes all the way back to its Portuguese roots. The author doesn't hide his own beliefs or political inklings, but they aren't central to the writing or imposed on his research. My only gripe might be that the author is inconsistent in a few spots on his assumptions of the reader's knowledge of finance terms and Brazilian history, sometimes explaining things, and sometimes not. A browsing of Brazilian history may help a bit beforehand. The interesting revelations and conclusions in this book all pretty much occur in the middle chapters, and the ending is a bit stunted. If you are still interested afterwards, I'd also recommend checking out the book the author references several times, *Roots of Brazil*.

Alex Cuadro's narrative gives a wide and deep spectrum on Brazilian culture, society and history. He explains so many things that are omnipresent in Brazilian society but that are difficult for an outsider to grasp and understand. It is by far the best book about Brazil that I have read by a contemporary writer. Having lived several years in the country myself, I can confirm that Mr Cuadro has a very sensitive and accurate way of describing the society and its people. The book gave me numerous insights into the Brazilian society and culture. Many things I had not previously understood about Brazil, became clear when reading the book. It is a very personal narrative with true insights into the Brazilian soul and culture. For anyone having lived, visited or just having an interest in Brazil, this is a must read. Yours sincerely, Joakim Olofsson, M.Sc. Economics Stockholm

School of Economics. Programa de Mestrado de Fundaç o Getulio Vargas, S o Paulo.

I was cautiously prepared for a demonization of the rich and a tale of inequality on steroids. I was wrong. A perfect narrative draws intriguing parallels and exploits every angle. It's great reporting. I thought I would learn a thing or two, as I am Brazilian, but i've learned a lot. It helps that Alex isn't Brazilian and is able to perceive things we are just too used to, to the point of apathy. I sincerely wish this book was longer, that more people were profiled, and the relationship of wealth, rent-seekers, and government were exposed even further. I couldn't get enough of this book and looking forward to re-reading it.

This was a very interesting book and I recommend it to anyone who wishes to have a better understanding of Brazil and Brazilian [business] culture. You'll also have a chance to pickup some Portuguese vocabulary (Glossary included! A very nice touch) and learn about many cultural intricacies. All told, I came away with a better picture of Brazil's very wealthy, learned some interesting stories, and, most importantly, had my knowledge of current affairs in Brazil brought up to speed (to roughly Spring 2016). Another reviewer mentioned that the book "meanders" and, while this is true for a part of it, I felt that this subject is a difficult one to organize and Alex did a pretty great job -- such that anyone could pickup this book and learn something new about Brazil.

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