

Architectural Guide Brazil

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DOM
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Edifício Copan «

Av. Ipiranga, 200
 Oscar Niemeyer
 1951–1966

028 E



Edifício Copan is a symbol, or even more the icon of São Paulo's urban growth in the 1950s. It is 140 metres tall, 32 floors high, and is so big it's got its own postal code. The sinuous form of the building is also a resumé of Niemeyer's baroque style. He wrote: "It is not the right angle that attracts me, nor the straight line, hard and inflexible... what attracts me is a free and sensual curve..." (Niemeyer, 1998). The graphical solar shades serve as sunscreens, and emphasise the undulating façade. The original project by the Companhia Pan Americana de Hotéis included this residential building of 30 floors and a hotel. Only the residential building has been built. Both buildings had to be connected by a canopy with garages, cinema, theatre and shops. The ground floor is today a network of galleries with shops, restaurants, a nice coffee shop, and a cinema that was

once a church, the Renascer em Cristo. It's a rare example of a public space on the ground floor of a residential building that works. It's like a microcosm in the middle of the quite poor centre of the city. From these corridors, you can reach one of the 20 elevators of the different blocks (*bloco*) of the building. The design of the entrances is original. Today, the Copan building has 1,160 apartments distributed in six blocks, and has more than 2,000 residents. You can visit empty apartments. Just ask at one of the *blocos* in the evening.

IAB SP ↵

R. Bento Freitas, 306
 Various architects
 1947–1951

029 E



This building for the IAB, the Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil is important in the history of Brazilian architecture, and is also the incarnation of the voice of the country's architects. The headquarters of the IAB for the section of São Paulo was conceived by a team of architects. The name of Rino Levi remains as lead architect of the building. His rationalist buildings have simple volumes and an evident structure. He followed the development of the Instituto de Arquitetos do Brasil, of which he was an active member throughout his life. The team of architects — which included Rino Levi, Abelardo de Souza, Helio Duarte, Jacob Rutchi, Zenon Lotufo and Galiano Ciampaglia — conceived a mix of traditional building with party walls (that are still waiting for neighbouring buildings) and an array of platters on columns, following Le Corbusier's principles of modern architecture. The upper part presents a rationalist series of platters, closed by rigorous squared glass façades. The lower part, that is in fact the pilotis area, can receive free forms and volumes, like the oblique wall, the protruding mezzanine and the round-shaped floors. The whole respects a traditional tripartition of the façade as base, main part and attic. Nowadays, it also houses Paulo Mendes da Rocha's office, and the best architecture bookshop of São Paulo on the ground floor.

