

# French couple hospitalized in Brazil over virus test negative

February 29 2020

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A French couple traveling in Brazil suspected of being infected with coronavirus and hospitalized against their will were released after they tested negative, local authorities said.

The tourists in their 50s were hospitalized when they showed flu symptoms in the small coastal town of Paraty, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, on Thursday.

The Rio de Janeiro state court had ruled that the [local authorities](#) had the right to hold them.

"We are relieved to leave," one of the tourists told O Globo newspaper after being discharged, following negative test results Friday.

The couple arrived in Rio de Janeiro from Barcelona on February 20, and then traveled Monday to Paraty, news site G1 reported, citing [city officials](#).

In Brazil, which confirmed its first coronavirus case on Wednesday, the [health ministry](#)'s current protocol makes hospitalization optional in suspected cases, depending on the patient's condition.

Local officials had argued they should remain in hospital for at least 48 hours while awaiting conclusive laboratory results.

The French consulate in Rio de Janeiro did not respond to AFP's

requests for comment.

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