

# British dancer to lead parade at Rio Carnival



Samba skills: expat Samantha Flores

## **Benedict Moore-Bridger**

A PROPERTY consultant from Kentish Town is to make history by becoming the first non-Brazilian lead dancer at the Rio Carnival.

Samantha Flores, 41, was chosen to lead the main float, run by the Império da Tijuca samba school, for the first time in its 78-year history.

The former public relations executive moved from London to Rio de Janeiro in 2006 after falling in love with the country on holiday. Of the

relocation, Ms Flores told The Times: "It was literally love at first sight."

She added that her role at the "world's biggest party", which starts on Friday, was "a privilege and a responsibility", adding: "I do sometimes think, 'What's a nice Jewish girl who used to just love a dance, nothing more, doing here?'"

Ms Flores has no professional dance training and first paraded in Rio in 2011, dressed as a canary. The week-long festival draws five million people, including 1.5 million tourists.