



# Colombia

Colombia is gaining increasing recognition as one of the world's alluring and emerging destinations. Following decades of conflict, it is enjoying a new-found stability. The terrain varies from humid and hot tropical Caribbean shorelines to high, glacier-encrusted mountain peaks. Seekers of urban culture will find satisfaction walking the ancient ramparts of Cartagena or visiting Bogota's fine museums. The country beats to the sound of its own intoxicating drum.



## At a glance

- Colombia has an equatorial climate - it is more a question of altitude than time of year
- December to March is the high season and there also tends to be less rain
- Rich diversity in geography, wildlife and culture
- Short internal flights will maximise your time
- Home to colonial treasures such as Cartagena and Villa de Leyva
- Safety in the country in most regions is now as good as any other South American country
- Colombia is one of the world's 17 mega-diverse countries, boasting 55,000 plant species (second only to Brazil), 1,885 bird species, 524 reptiles and 754 amphibian species

## Getting there

There are direct flights from London Heathrow to Bogota with Avianca. European airlines flying from London airports to Bogota include Air Europa (via Madrid) and Air France (via Paris). In addition, Iberia fly via Madrid to Bogota, Cali and Medellin, and KLM fly via Amsterdam to Bogota and Cali. Regional departures include Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Newcastle and Birmingham.

Prices from **£2,650 per person** (2 sharing) for a 10 night trip

## Combinations

Colombia combines well with Panama, Ecuador and Peru. Cartagena can be easily added as a bolt-on to most neighbouring countries due to the excellent flight links.



Salt cathedral in Zipaquirá

## Bogotá

This is a sprawling, vibrant capital of almost 8 million inhabitants set on an enormous Andean plateau surrounded by high peaks. There are upmarket restaurants in Zona G, Zona T and Parque 93 districts. La Candelaria in the historical centre is a well-preserved colonial neighbourhood notable for its churches, old houses and the Gold museum which holds an impressive collection of pre-Columbian art. The narrow cobbled streets lead to leafy squares adorned with cafes and bars. The amazing cathedral in Zipaquirá is carved inside an ancient salt mine - within striking distance of the city centre.

### OUR TOP TIPS

There is an excellent view of the city from Monserrate hill. It is reached by a funicular railway and a cable car • Visit the scenic Guatavita lake approximately 90 minutes from Bogotá



### NH Bogota Pavillon Royal

Bogota **BB**

This modern four star hotel is located in an up-market, residential area of Bogotá known as Parque 93. There is an attractive park nearby and it is just a few minutes walk from a great selection of restaurants and bars. The hotel has 72 rooms ranging from superior rooms to suites - all en suite rooms have free wifi, mini bar, safe deposit box, TV and desk. Bathrooms are with shower only. The Pavillon has a terrace restaurant, bar, small gym and swimming pool, massage treatments, sauna and beauty salon. A very conveniently located and good value hotel.



### The Artisan D.C. hotel

Bogota **BB**

A stylish property in the financial district, just a short walk from Zona G where some of the city's finest restaurants are found. The hotel is spread across two buildings - exposed brick walls and vintage items give the hotel an urban chic feel. The 64 smart en suite rooms are divided into 6 categories. Rooms are light and airy and include mini-bar, wifi, hairdryer, TV and a coffee maker. Along with a restaurant, it has a gym, bar/lounge and a cafe. The hotel has a smoke free policy.

## Villa de Leyva

At 2,144m above sea level, this charming colonial town is a four hour drive north of Bogotá. The town was founded in 1572 in the early days of Spanish rule. Villa de Leyva is perfectly preserved - it has never been modernised and never will be as it has been declared a National Monument. It deserves at least a two night stay as exploring this relaxed town by foot with its beautiful buildings, museums and churches is a real delight. All the houses are white-washed and all have terracotta tiled roofs with bottle green painted doors and balconies. Colourful geraniums feature prominently on balconies and the whole town is a blaze of colour.

### OUR TOP TIPS

The Salt cathedral at Zipaquirá is an interesting stop en route to Villa de Leyva  
• Just outside Villa de Leyva the scenery is beautiful which can be enjoyed on horseback or on a number of walking trails



### La Posada de San Antonio

Villa de Leyva **BB**

Situated on a quiet square just a short stroll from the historic centre of Villa de Leyva, the Posada de San Antonio is set in a charming colonial style house that dates back to 1860. Terra-cotta floors, beamed ceilings, aged leather couches and various art pieces give a homely feel. It boasts a lovely central courtyard with a fountain and colourful plant displays. The 23 rustic and uniquely decorated rooms are warm and cozy. They feature single or king size beds and come with fully equipped bathroom, cable TV, Wifi, phone and mini bar (some have balconies). The restaurant 'La Cocina de San Antonio' serves local and simple cuisine.



### Casa Terra

Villa de Leyva **BB**

Situated in a 16th century house in a residential street. This rustic small hotel is just a short walk from the main square. Each of the 7 comfortable and spacious en suite rooms are filled with local art and textiles. The rooms have free wifi, TV and safe deposit box. Breakfast is normally served in the lovely garden which has a water feature and lots of places to sit and relax (no lunch or dinner service). Some of the doors and windows around the property were rescued from a nearby convent which add to the ambience. You are assured a warm welcome and it represents good value for money.



For additional lodges, itineraries and general information on Colombia please visit [www.sunvil.co.uk](http://www.sunvil.co.uk)



## Coffee region

It is a one hour flight from Bogotá to either Manizales, Pereira or Armenia, the three cities which form the axis of one of the most beautiful and fertile regions in Colombia. Such is the importance of this region that it has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The landscape of dark green coffee plantations, lush valleys and towering snow capped mountain peaks is where age old fincas cultivate the famous Arabica coffee beans. Colombia is synonymous with coffee - arguably the best coffee in the world. Orchids flourish in the area and hummingbirds abound - a veritable paradise. The area is classed as a tropical Andean forest and is at a height of between 1,300 and 1,700 metres.



### Sazagua Hotel

Nr Pereira **BB**

This charming contemporary style boutique hotel is located in an upmarket residential area. The interior of the house evokes the rustic mood of an old coffee plantation home. It is decorated in an eclectic style with furniture, ornaments, books, art and photographs dotted around the property. It is set in delightful gardens which are a peaceful haven full of birds. There is a lovely heated pool, jacuzzi and small spa. The restaurant serves excellent international food. The comfortable 15 rooms are decorated in a tasteful style and some rooms have either a little outdoor patio with a table or balcony. Rooms also include safe deposit box, mini-bar, TV and air-conditioning. Please note some of the showers have a small open air gap between the top of the wall and the roof. From here it is approximately 45 minutes by car to the scenic Valle de Cocora.



### Casa San Carlos hotel

Nr Pereira **BB**

This comfortable lodge overlooks its scenic gardens and surrounding farmland. The 22 spacious rooms are individually decorated - there are 14 superior rooms, 6 junior suites with a private terrace and good views and 2 suites with air-conditioning, a terrace and private hot-tub. This unique property has been primarily built with bamboo and showcases works of art by local artists. There is a lovely swimming pool, hot-tub, bar and restaurant. The property has several walking trails.

## Cartagena

Cartagena is one of the most romantic, vibrant, colourful and beautiful cities in South America. Founded in 1533 by the Spanish, Cartagena enjoys a prime position on the Caribbean coast. The walled city has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. A rich historical legacy, excellent boutique hotels and restaurants and an electric mix of Spanish, African and Caribbean cultures - make it the crown jewel of Colombia. You will never tire of wandering around the colourful squares, labyrinthine, flower- bedecked streets, quaint corners, the pastel coloured houses of the colonial nobility and the beautiful churches. It must also be the world's capital of beautiful doors and antique brass door knockers. Cartagena was immortalised by Gabriel Garcia Marquez in his novel *Love in the Time of Cholera*.



### Alfiz

Cartagena **BB**

A charming three star, boutique hotel located in the heart of the historic centre. The building was a 'Casa Alta' (High House) built by nobility in the late 17th Century. In 1824 it was the residence of a British Consul. The Alfiz has eight rooms, 4 standard, 2 junior suites, one suite and one small two roomed apartment with two private bathrooms. All rooms are with mini-bar, air-conditioning, ceiling fan, bathroom with shower and bath, safe deposit box, hairdryer, satellite TV, telephone and free Wifi. There is a small plunge pool in the inner courtyard, a library, bar and reading room, sun-deck and Jacuzzi. Only breakfast is served. A comfortable and very welcoming hotel.



### Ananda

Cartagena **BB**

This boutique chic hotel is set in a 16th century colonial building within Cartagena's walled city. The majority of the comfortable 23 rooms are set around inner courtyards and are all slightly different. Some of the luxury suites have balconies overlooking the street. Rooms are equipped with air-conditioning, mini-bar, hairdryer, TV and a DVD player. There are a good choice of facilities including restaurant, bar, 3 patios, swimming pool, jacuzzi, rooftop plunge pool and a lookout point with good views of the old town.

### OUR TOP TIPS

Explore the stunning Valle de Cocora which is part of the Los Nevados National Park - an ideal place to marvel at the size of the Quindian wax palm which can grow up to 60m high

### OUR TOP TIPS

The ramparts of the city walls make an interesting walk and an excellent way to visit many of the city attractions • The beaches in Cartagena tend to be crowded and are not especially attractive. Instead fly from Cartagena to San Andres and visit the lovely island of Providencia with pristine white sand beaches and good diving and snorkelling



Medellin flower festival



## Suggested itineraries

Please find some suggested itineraries which can be tailored to suit individual requirements. They are simply examples of what is feasible within different timeframes. There are additional itineraries on our website or please speak to us for further guidance. They are aimed at individual travellers (NOT group escorted tours). Tours include an English speaking guide. Prices are a guideline only please contact us for an exact quote. Please note that we are able to quote for land only arrangements (no flights) but we require a minimum of 7 nights.

### Guide prices include

- International economy return flights from the UK (see the itinerary for specific airline details)
- Accommodation - standard room unless stated otherwise
- Private transfers and tours (unless indicated otherwise)
- Internal flights (as featured in the itinerary)
- Meals (as outlined in the itinerary)

### Board basis key

- BB** Bed and Breakfast
- HB** Half-Board
- FB** Full Board
- AI** All inclusive

### Complete Colombia - 13 nights

Based on Avianca direct flight  
Guide price per person (2 sharing) £3,253

- Bogota 2 nights **BB**
- Villa de Leyva 2 nights **BB**
- Coffee region 3 nights **BB**
- Medellín 3 nights **BB**
- Cartagena 3 nights **BB**

**Day 1** Upon arrival in Bogota transfer to hotel. NH Pavillon Royal for 2 nights. **BB**

**Day 2** Guided half day visit to La Candelaria (old quarter).

**Day 3** Transfer to Zipaquirá. Guided tour of the underground Salt cathedral. Onward transfer to Villa de Leyva. Posada de San Antonio for 2 nights. **BB**

**Day 4** Guided half day tour of Villa de Leyva.

**Day 5** Transfer to Bogota. Fly to Pereira and transfer to Sazagua for 3 nights. **BB**

**Day 6** Guided full day tour of Valle del Cocora, Filandia and Salento.

**Day 7** Guided half day coffee plantation tour at Hacienda San Alberto.

**Day 8** Transfer to Medellín. Patio del Mundo 3 nights. **BB**

**Day 9** Guided half day Medellín social transformation tour.

**Day 10** Guided full day tour of Piedra de el Penol and Guatapé.

**Day 11** Transfer to Medellín airport. Fly to Bogota and connect with an onward flight to Cartagena. Transfer to Alfiz hotel for 3 nights. **BB**

**Day 12** Guided half day panoramic tour of Cartagena.

**Day 13** Day at leisure.

**Day 14** Transfer to Cartagena airport. Fly to Bogota. Return flight to the UK.

### Colombia culture and unwind - 10 nights

Based on Avianca direct flight  
Guide price per person (2 sharing) £2,650

- Bogota 2 nights **BB**
- Villa de Leyva 2 nights **BB**
- Cartagena 3 nights **BB**
- Santa Marta 1 night **BB**
- Tayrona National Park 2 nights **BB**

**Day 1** Upon arrival in Bogota transfer to hotel. NH Pavillon Royal for 2 nights. **BB**

**Day 2** Guided half day visit to La Candelaria (old quarter).

**Day 3** Transfer to Zipaquirá. Guided tour of the underground Salt cathedral. Onward transfer to Villa de Leyva. Casa Terra for 2 nights. **BB**

**Day 4** Guided half day tour of Villa de Leyva.

**Day 5** Transfer to Bogota. Fly to Cartagena. Transfer to Ananda hotel for 3 nights. **BB**

**Day 6** Guided half day panoramic tour of Cartagena.

**Day 7** Day at leisure.

**Day 8** Transfer to Santa Marta. Guided half day city tour. Casa Carolina for 1 night. **BB**

**Day 9** Transfer to Tayrona National Park. Ecohabs 2 nights. **BB**

**Day 10** Day at leisure.

**Day 11** Transfer to Santa Marta airport. Fly to Bogota. Return flight to the UK.

## Medellín

Medellín is Colombia's second largest city, it is dynamic and sophisticated, with stunning architecture and a wealth of attractions. It is located at 1,495m and wedged in the narrow Aburrá valley surrounded by the high mountain barriers of the Cordillera Central in nearly all directions. Once synonymous with the notorious drug trafficker Pablo Escobar who headed the Medellín cartel. Medellín has since shaken off its bad reputation and transformed itself into a vibrant city and an industrial giant. In the centre, the new business districts have driven out much of the old and only a few colonial buildings remain. However, its plazas and parks, monuments, avantgarde museums and sculptures make it an interesting city to explore by foot. It has an efficient and easily navigated metro system which links most major sites of interest. There is also an excellent cable car system the Metrocable which boasts wonderful views and is integrated into the transport system. The flower festival in August is a stunning parade.



### La Campana

Medellin **BB**

This hotel is located in the leafy El Poblado district one of the most exclusive areas in Medellín. It is within walking distance of a good choice of restaurants and bars. The property has 13 rooms with hairdryer, safe deposit box, TV, desk, wifi and mini-bar. Their restaurant is located on an outdoor terrace. The hotel celebrates Colombian art and functions as a de facto gallery.

### OUR TOP TIPS

We recommend a day trip to the beautiful countryside of Antioquia and to the giant monolith rock of El Penol



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