



COLOMBIA

May 28-June 3, 2011

Colombia is one of the few countries in Latin America that has not yet been overrun with tourists. It is in need of a new publicist to tell the world that it has moved on from the days of cocaine wars and internal strife. In Colombia you still have the feeling you are discovering something new, something everyone hasn't already done. For most travelers, Colombia is a land of myths, of emeralds and the mysterious El Dorado. And it's the land that bears the name of Columbus, who never got as far as Colombia. Colombia's geography is among the most varied in South America. It is a country of amazing natural and cultural diversity and contrasts. It's as if Colombia were several countries rolled up into one. Colombia is one of the world's most exotic, sensual, wild, complex and fascinating destinations. Come discover it with us. Day

Day 1 – Sat May 28, 2011 – Fly USA to Bogotá

Arrive in Bogotá where you are greeted by our representative and transferred to hotel. This evening you may wish to go out in Bogota and discover the city's gay nightlife.

Hotel Cite

Standard Room

Meals Dinner

Day 2 – Sun May 29 -- Bogotá City Tour

Breakfast in the hotel. Bogota, founded as a European settlement in 1538, is nestled high in the Andes Mountains (8,646 elev.), and is the capital and largest city in Colombia. Today's tour starts in the colonial area of Bogotá, "La Candelaria ", the historical center and oldest section of the city, with its distinctive architecture, homes and museums. Visit Bolivar Square, located in the heart of the city - a unique blending of past and present - the Cathedral, the Chapel of El Sagrario, the Cardinal's Palace, the Capitol Building, and Nariño Palace. Next is the "Quinta de Bolivar", a colonial mansion/museum honoring Colombia's national hero, Simon Bolívar, followed by a rail visit to the Hill of Monserrate, with its monastery, sanctuary and stunning panoramic views of the city. Lunch is at "Casa Vieja", a local restaurant noted for its authentic cuisine. After lunch visit the Gold Museum, a collection of more than 25,000 pieces of pre-Columbian art. Continue on to Usaquén, an upper class neighborhood noted for its distinctive homes and churches. Late afternoon, return to the hotel to relax. This evening we will have a Welcome Dinner at the hotel.

Hotel Cite

Standard Room.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Day 3 – Mon May 30 – Bogotá to Zipaquirá & Villa de Leyva

Breakfast in the hotel. Early departure to visit Zipaquirá, a charming town known for its vast salt mines and the intriguing Salt Cathedral, built entirely underground. View its rich art collection of crosses and statuary – many carved from salt. Lunch at a local restaurant, specializing in local dishes. Continue on to picturesque Villa de Leyva, proclaimed a national monument and considered to be the best preserved colonial village in Colombia. Notable are its cobblestone streets, quaint homes and the Plaza Mayor where many handcraft shops are located. Upon arrival, check in to Hotel La Posada de San Antonio. The evening is at leisure. For a dinner choice, many fine restaurants are on the Plaza Mayor.

Hotel La Posada de San Antonio

Standard Room

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 4 – Tue May 31 -- Villa de Leyva to Bogotá & fly to Cartagena

Breakfast in the hotel. The colonial town of Villa de Leyva, founded in 1752, is a charming enclave of many centuries of Colombian and Spanish architecture. Explore the pre-historic fossils in the Museum of Natural Sciences before continuing to La Candelaria, a tiny village set among arid hills, and noted for the Monasterio de La Candelaria. The monastery was founded in 1597 by Augustine monks and completed in 1600. Visit the chapel where the 16th-century painting of the Virgen de La Candelaria hangs the altar. Also see the small museum, library and courtyard, flanked by the cloister with 17th-century canvases on the walls. Some of these were allegedly painted by Gregorio Vasquez de Arce y Ceballos and the Figueroa Brothers. Lunch at the Monastery la Candelaria. After lunch stop at the village of Ráquira. This artisan shops are very famous for its ceramics and pottery, it has also a very colorful offer of hammocks and is a great place for shopping and finding fun souvenirs. Afternoon transfer back to Bogotá to the airport to catch a flight to Cartagena. (AV 8550 departure Bogotá at 18h55 arrival in Cartagena at 20h25. Not included in land cost.) Upon arrival in Cartagena, transfer to the hotel. Dinner is at leisure.

Hotel Boutique Delirio

Standard Room

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 5 -- Wed Jun 1-- Cartagena City Tour

Breakfast in hotel. Morning at leisure. Lunch in at a local sea food restaurant. After lunch tour Bocagrande, a modern residential neighborhood that lines the shores of the Caribbean coast, where "people watching" is the favorite sport. Then it is on to the walled "Old Town of Cartagena" a secluded area that maintains all the charm of its colonial days. Enter through the "Clock Gate" into a labyrinth of narrow stone streets and brightly painted, balconied homes hiding behind intricately carved wooden doors. Within the "Old Town", visit the oldest church in Cartagena, San Pedro Claver Church, erected in 1603, and dedicated to Father Claver and his humanitarian acts. Visit the Castillo de San Felipe de Barajas Fortress, built in the 17th Century, the largest and most imposing stone structure built by the Spaniards in the Americas. Take a

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local "chiva" (taxi) to the highest point in the city and discover the Convent de La Popa, founded in 1607, offering stunning panoramic views of Cartagena and the bay. Dinner in at a popular restaurant this evening. Afterwards, enjoy the sights and sounds of Cartagena's nightlife.

Hotel Boutique Delirio

Standard Room

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6 – Thu Jun 02 -- Cartagena

Breakfast in the hotel. A walking tour begins with a visit to the church and monastery San Pedro Claver, which was built in the early 17th century by the Jesuits, San Pedro Claver was the defender and protector of slaves. He was known as "Esclavo de los esclavos" or the "Apóstol de los Negros" he lived in this monastery until his death.

Continue through the Palace of the Inquisition; in 1610 Cartagena was the courthouse for the Holy Inquisition, which created in this marvelous building the torture chambers and cells for those who attempted against the Christian faith.

The visit continues through the Cathedral also known as the Basilica menor, which construction started in 1575 to replace the Catedral Primitiva which was made in wood. This church is considered as one of the most antiques in Latin America. It suffered several attacks from the pirate Francis Drake, and it could only be finished in 1612. Its interior is decorated with gold and wood.

Finally the walk ends with a visit to the Gold Museum , which boasts a collection of golden and ceramics artifacts of the main pre-Colombian cultures. This museum was restored on 1984, transforming in a regional museum of the Zenú culture.

Optional tour to the Rosario Islands:

Early in the morning transfer to the dock to departure to the Islands on fast motor boats All day tour to the Rosario Islands, visit white sand beaches, and calm crystal water shores, enjoy the day at leisure. Experience total relaxation in a private Island, where you develop water sports activities such has snorkeling or kayaking. Later during the afternoon back to Cartagena. The trip is performed in high speed motor boats and it takes 40 minutes to arrive to the archipelago of the Rosario Islands. Lunch included at the Island. Return to Cartagena, transfer to the hotel.

The remainder of the day is at leisure. Enjoy a Farewell Dinner this evening in a popular restaurant.

Hotel Boutique Delirio

Standard Room

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7 -- Fri Jun 3– Fly Cartagena to USA

Breakfast in the hotel. Transfer to the airport for homeward bound flight.

Meals: Breakfast

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RATES

Double	\$2195
Single	\$2895

Intra-tour Flights: approx. \$200. It is best to include this in your international ticket. You must include the following flight: AV 8550 departure Bogota at 18h55 arrival in Cartagena at 20h25.

Single rates can be avoided if you are willing to share. We will be happy to match you with another single traveler who also wishes to share. If no share is available, the single rate will apply.

Special Note - Rates are based on current rates and currency exchange rates at the time of publishing the tour on-line. Rates are subject to change until final payment has been made.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

No visa is required for American or Canadian passport holders. Travelers of other nationalities should check with the appropriate Consulate or Embassy for requirements.

TRAVEL WARNING

The State Department maintains a travel warning for travel to Colombia. Please visit Travel.State.Gov to read this warning.

SHOTS

Center For Disease Control website.

INTERNATIONAL AIRFARE

Avianca, American Airlines, Delta Airlines are among airlines that can be used for this trip. We recommend booking at least 7 months in advance if you want to try to use Frequent Flyer Miles for free tickets or upgrades or the American Express Platinum Card 2-4-1 program.

MINIMUMS

All departures are guaranteed on a minimum of 10 participants.