

EXPLORE!

Book with confidence



Why book this trip?

Colombia is the country where 'magical realism' comes to life. Rich in culture, with an enormous biodiversity and a notoriously friendly and welcoming population, a journey through this eclectic country is packed with standout moments. Not only do we visit the Caribbean coast and the lush, green coffee region, but we contrast the modern city of Medellin with the more traditional Andean culture found in Bogota.

- **Bogota** - Visit its superb pre-Colombian Gold Museum and the historic streets of La Candelaria
- **Salento** - The cobbled streets of this quaint town are found in the beautiful Andean foothills, where hummingbirds fly between giant wax palms
- **Medellin** - Discover how this diverse modern city has transformed its reputation through innovative



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 12
Lunch: 3
Dinner: 1



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Boat
Flight



ACCOMMODATION



TRIP PACE:
Moderate



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

Trip information

Climate and country information

Colombia

Climate

The dry season in Colombia roughly runs from December to March/April and also a slightly 'drier' period from July to September. These are among the best times to travel, although visits outside of these months are very manageable. The Caribbean coast is very hot and humid all year round (always around or above 30°C), although the offshore breeze between December and March makes this a more popular time to visit. Due to the high altitude locations of places like Bogota, Manizales and Armenia temperatures here can be quite cool during 'winter' months (Nov to Mar/ Apr) and the nights are cool to cold at anytime of the year. The coffee harvest seasons are March to May and September to November; it is during these periods that it is possible to see the red coffee beans and watch the whole process of coffee production.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-5	2 Pin Flat	Roman Catholic.	Spanish.

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Medellin - Half Day Flower Experience in Santa Elena - US\$115 (depending on numbers); Half Day Street Art Experience: US\$40-\$86 (depending on numbers).

Cartagena - Half day National Aviary US\$56-\$166 (depending on numbers); Boquilla Canoe Ride US\$ 70 (min 3 pers); Salsa classes: US\$37 (Plus cost of translator between group US\$50)

All tours include a local guide aside from the salsa class.

Clothing

For this trip you will need to pack for all weathers, as you travel through several different climatic zones. In the Andes (Bogota and Salento), warm clothing is useful, particularly in the evenings when the temperature can drop sharply at night. Lightweight clothing is necessary for the Caribbean coast with long sleeve shirts and trousers ideal to provide protection from the sun and insect bites. A waterproof is essential as it can rain at any time of year, particularly in Tayrona National Park. The boat on Lake Guatapé has hot tubs, so you may wish to take your swimwear (this is not applicable to the Flower Festival departure).

Footwear

Comfortable hiking boots/trekking shoes, shoes and/or sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

A torch, water bottle, good quality sunglasses, sun hat, insect repellent and high factor sunscreen are all essential. Don't forget your swimming things.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 40, approx. 134'000 Pesos for group tipping

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion. In restaurants and hotels a 'voluntary' 10% tax for service is included on bills. On top of this, it is common to leave no more than a further 5% for good service

International Departure Taxes

None for UK citizens, Canadian citizens have an entry tax of 68US\$.

Colombia

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£5	£10	£1.6	£0.4

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Colombian Peso (COP).

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport. Here you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change. The exchange rate with the COP is approximately COP 4'200 to the British Pound. We recommend you take some emergency cash in USD as the GBP exchange isn't very good. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they may not be accepted. Please check on line for up to date information

Where To Exchange

Your tour leader can also advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

ATMs can be found in the major towns and cities for cash withdrawals in COP. Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card are widely accepted in many shops and restaurants but some may be subject to a service charge

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Flight

Accommodation notes

We aim to stay in perfectly located properties that allow us to make the most of our time in these diverse areas of Colombia. In Bogota we're located near the La Candelaria area, near the Gold Museum and the other attractions of this district. In Cartagena we stay within the walled city, and in Armenia our hotel is located in the countryside, away from any towns or cities, to best appreciate the rolling landscape of the Andean foothills.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information.[Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Colombia: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit)

For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and

Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Colombia

Vaccinations

We recommend protection against malaria, Tetanus, Infectious Hepatitis, Typhoid and Polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

In Colombia, we work with a supplier who's belief in the importance of sustainable and responsible travel really aligns with Explore's. Every booking made with them includes a contribution to a reforestation project taking place in various different parts of Colombia. For Explore's customers, this equates to approximately one tree per person per day of the trip. This project is done in partnership with a Colombian company called C02Cero, who work together with businesses and communities to develop innovative and sustainable solutions to climate change in Colombia. All trees are native and are being planted strategically in particular eco systems of Andean forest or paramo, with the aim of regenerating the soil, creating new habitats for animal species and, of course, removing carbon from the atmosphere.

Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS