

SOUTH AMERICA - CLASSIC COLOMBIA



TRIP CODE

CMTSCLA

DEPARTURE

Daily

DURATION

10 Days

LOCATIONS

Colombia



INTRODUCTION

Colombia has something for everyone so join us on an adventure through Colombia's highlights. Enjoy the country's natural and urban wonders, including pristine coastlines, dense and wild Amazonian forests, beautiful architecture and a rich and fascinating colonial history.

You will begin your adventure in Bogota, soaking up Colombian cultural life and learning about colonial history as you marvel at the architectural wonders. Visit the original Plaza Mayor, central Cathedral and Palacio de Justicia as you take a journey back in time to the era of Spanish rule and conquer. In Cartagena, be awed by the artesian centre of the city and visit the famous Monasterio before driving through more beautiful landscapes to Tayrona National Park

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Bogotá

Arrival into El Dorado airport in Bogotá on an intercontinental flight. Reception and transfer to the hotel.




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DAY 1: Arrival in Bogota

Colombia’s capital Bogotá is a vibrant and cosmopolitan city located in central Colombia on a vast plain 2,600m above sea level, cradled by the Andean mountains. The “Old City” of La Candelaria is the historic cultural centre of the city. Its cobbled streets are lined with colonial buildings housing museums, libraries, restaurants, hotels and bars set amongst convents, churches and homes that date back 300 years. Bogotá's most famous museum is the Gold Museum with over 55,000 pieces of gold, bone, ceramic and textiles from the Pre-Hispanic cultures such as the Tayrona, San Agustin, Chocó, Quimbaya, Muisca and Tierradentro.




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DAY 2: Half Day Tour Bogotá (4 hours) Private Guide

After breakfast, half day visit to the historic centre known as La Candelaria. This antiquated barrio is of great architectural and cultural heritage and is made up of old “stately homes” or large Spanish colonial buildings with iron windows, thick and sturdy wooden doors, balconies and internal patios with beautiful yet hidden gardens. Visit the Plaza de Bolivar, where a statue of the great liberator Simon Bolivar is located. This Plaza, originally called the Plaza Mayor, was used for civil and military purposes, as a marketplace, a bullring and a gallows. The Cathedral, on the eastern side of the plaza, is constructed on the remains of the first church built in Bogotá in 1539 and houses an important collection of religious artefacts such as textiles and artwork that has built over four centuries. The Capitol, built between 1847 and 1926, shows its renaissance and neoclassical influences with its carved stonework and tall columns and, it is the first republican piece of civil architecture. Around the Plaza de Bolivar are the Palacio de Justicia, the Mayor of Bogotá’s offices called the Edificio Liévano, the oldest school in the county called San Bartolome and the Casa de los Comuneros who participated towards the end of the XVII Century in some of the first movements towards independence from Spain and the formation of the Republic. The visit continues with the Museo Botero, a colonial house filled with works of art done by and donated by Fernando Botero in addition to artwork from his own personal collection that includes pieces by Picasso, Renoir, Dalí Matisse, Monet and Giacometti. Next is the Museo del Oro which has a permanent exhibition of some 32,000 pieces of gold, 20,000 stones, ceramics and textiles all precious to the Quimbaya, Calima, Tayrona, Sinu, Muisca, Tolima, Tumaco and Magdalena cultures. The Museo del Oro is considered as one of the most important museums of its type internationally and it has been functioning since 1939. In 2007 it underwent a complete overhaul to make this an interactive museum that would awake senses to the objects on display. Free afternoon for individual activities (we recommend visiting the city’s various museums).




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DAY 3: Bogotá - Zipaquirá - Villa de Leyva

After breakfast, departure from Bogotá, north towards Zipaquirá. Travelling through the Sabana de Bogotá you pass scenery full of greenhouses used for the cultivation of carnations and roses. Flower production is an important industry for the hundreds of horticulturalists that live in this region. After a journey of roughly 1.15 hours, reach the impressive Salt Cathedral, a true feat of engineering. The name Zipaquirá refers to Zipa, the leader of the Muisca tribe and the overlord of these rich salt mines. The trip will begin in a tunnel that passes the fourteen Stations of the Cross and continues on to a dome. This dome is lit in such a way that it allows one to contemplate the universe and the relationship between man and nature. Later, reach an enormous cross carved into the rock and finally the three naves of the Cathedral that represent the birth, life and death of Christ. In the central nave is the main altar, above which is a cross measuring 16m in height and 10m in breadth, made by the Colombian artist Carlos Enrique Rodriguez, the largest cross made from salt in the world. Next visit the mine where there is an excellent auditorium that can seat two hundred people and host film screenings and more diverse events such as fashion shows. The trip ends at a mirror of water where you will experience the amazing visual effects of water on carved saline rock. Continue on a 2 hour trip to Villa de Leyva in the afternoon. Arrival and hotel check-in. Villa de Leyva, one of the area’s most beautiful towns, was founded in 1572 by Hernàn Suárez de Villalobos who named it after Andrès Días Venero de Leyva, the first president of Nueva Granada. In colonial times, Villa de Leyva played a central role and the Viceroy and his entourage spent much time here. Today, the city is a well-preserved colonial jewel with an enormous plaza of 14,000 sq. metres surrounded by Spanish style houses, small alleys, cobblestone streets and the XVII century parochial church. Visit Museo El Fósil, founded in 1977 and located 5.5 km away from Villa de Leyva. The museum was built exactly where a kronosaurus was found, a marine reptile more than 120 million years old and 20m in length. Return to the hotel and overnight stay.



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DAY 4: Transfer Villa de Leyva - Bogota

After breakfast, return to Bogotá. On the way, take a break in the Convento del Santo Ecce Homo. Founded by the Dominicans in 1620, this was an important point of evangelization in a region populated by infidel Indigenous communities. Arrival at the hotel in Bogota. Overnight stay.



DAY 4: Transfer Airport / Hotel en Cartagena Private Car


On arrival in Cartagena, transfer to your hotel.



DAY 4: Arrival in Cartagena

The beautiful city of Cartagena lies within massive fortifications on Colombia’s northern coast. The walled city and fortress were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984. The old town is a maze of cobbled streets, plazas, churches and bougainvillea-covered balconies. Its rich architecture includes Spanish colonial buildings, the Palace of the Inquisition, the Clock Tower and the Castle of San Felipe de Barajas.



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DAY 5: Cartagena Half Day Panoramic City Tour

Start with a panoramic view of the city from the Monasterio and Iglesia de La Popa. Formerly known as the “Popa del Galeon”, it is famous for resembling the stern of a galleon. Constructed in 1606 the church and monastery are located at a height of 140masl from where one can enjoy 360o views of the city and the sea as well as the port zone, one of the most important in the Caribbean. Continue to the San Felipe Fortress, erected in honour of the poet from Cartagena, Don Luis Carlos López, made famous for his sonnet “A mi ciudad nativa”. It was built on San Lázaro hill to defend the city from pirate attacks. Walk around the fortress and learn how the castle was constructed, the engineering feats, the tunnels, underground galleries and passageways. Then continue on to the Ciudad Vieja (old city) to visit the Convent and Church of San Pedro Claver which was built in the middle of the XVII century and owes its name to the “apóstol de los esclavos”. Finally, continue to the handicrafts zone of the Bovedas, a collection of archways built into the city wall of Cartagena that were used until the end of the 1700s to house armaments and then later as a prison in the XIX century. Nowadays it’s an artisan centre where one can appreciate local handicrafts. Free afternoon for individual activities. Overnight stay.



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DAY 6: Cartagena

Free day for individual activities.



DAY 7: Cartagena - Tayrona National Park

After breakfast, five hour transfer to Tayrona National. Arrival and check-in.



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DAY 7: National Park Tayrona Entrance Fee

Tayrona National Park Entrance Fee included.



DAY 7: Arrival in Tayrona


Tayrona National Park on the Caribbean Coast, situated where the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta sinks into the Caribbean, has some of the most beautiful coastline of South America. The park covers 12,000 hectares of land and 3,000 hectares of sea, and the scenery varies from white sand beaches on the north coast to arid cactus strewn hills in the extreme west, changing to rainforest in the central, eastern and southern limits of the park. The rivers and rainforest teem with wildlife and the park’s beautiful beaches are set in deep bays and shaded by coconut palms. The area was once inhabited by the Tayrona people, and their ancient capital, Ciudad Perdida (Lost City), built between the 11th and 14th centuries, is a mysterious city set deep in the jungle.



DAY 8: Tayrona National Park - Days 8 & 9

Free day to relax, for beach activities or to organize excursions such as a walk to Pueblito, snorkeling or horseback riding. Bike rentals are also available.



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DAY 10: Tayrona National Park - Santa Marta

Morning transfer to Santa Marta airport after breakfast.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS	
Accommodation	Standard hotels with private facilities
Inclusions	<p>Accommodation with breakfast daily Internal flights as indicated on itinerary Private airport transfers Sightseeing with local English-speaking guide Other meals where stated</p> <p>Exclusions International flights Airprot Tax Visa and reciprocity fees (if applicable) Gratuities for guides/drivers Any items not mentioned as included</p>
Difficulty Rating	2 (average fitness required)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request, contact us for more details.
Notes	<p>All entrance fees are subject to change without prior notice.</p> <p>This is a Tailor-Made itinerary which can be customised to create your own unique journey. Contact us to discuss your travel plans.</p>
Price Dependent upon	Seasons and availability.

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SUSTAINABILITY

Being environmentally accountable is a crucial part of our organisation. Chimu is currently striving towards using less paper, taking several initiatives to do so and tracking our progress along the way. Our goal: A paperless organisation. For this reason, all information given to you will be sent electronically. We encourage those who choose to travel with us to support our aspirations and actions and ask that you reconsider

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printing out documentation. To view these documents, you can download them to your iPad or portable computer before and during your trip.

Chimu is passionate and dedicated to sustainability measures and understands the crucial part sustainability plays within the tourism industry.

We use local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprint. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting. Our guides are all highly qualified (most with university degrees) or equip with many years of experience and are paid above the standard wage. Whether it be our knowledgeable local guides, locally produced meals or the transport on tour, we do not use imported goods when local products are available. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment and give as much back as possible to the communities we work in.

While visiting the many national parks, heritage sites, museums and landmarks our travellers are encouraged to explore remain culturally aware and sensitive. We further encourage you to buy appropriate souvenirs and discourage the buying of anything wrongfully made or taken from the environment i.e. shells and endangered species products. Information on how you can be environmentally conscious, and travel responsibly will be made available in our Travellers Guides and provided during your travels by guides and staff.

For more information on our sustainability policies, including how we are striving towards being a paperless organisation, click [HERE](#)

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