

COLOMBIA

Complete Name: República de Colombia.

Capital City: Bogotá D.C

Location:

Colombia occupies the northwestern end of South America, bordering the Caribbean Sea, between Panama and Venezuela, and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Ecuador and Panama.

It's the only country in South America with coast-lines on both the Pacific and the Atlantic.

Climate:

Tropical along coast and eastern plains; cooler and cold in highlands. Elevation is the decisive climatic factor. Nowadays Bogotá has become a rainy city. The actual weather in the Capital is 52°F

Terrain:

Flat coastal lowlands, central highlands, high Andes Mountains, eastern lowland plains (a huge open savannah on the north, and the amazon in the south).

Mountains:

Three Andean ranges run north and south through the western half of the country. They dominate the western two-fifths of the country.

Standard Time Zone: UTC/GMT -5 hours

Colombia Currency: \$1.00 dolar is the same as \$1.839 Colombian pesos.

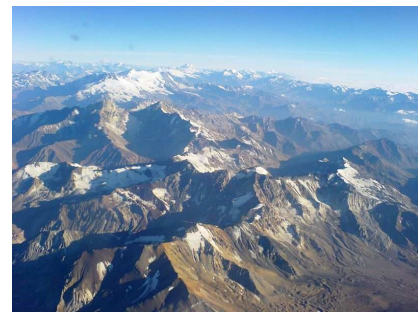
Electricity: Electricity in Colombia is 110 Volts, alternating at 60 cycles per second

Major rivers:

The major rivers, the Cauca and Magdalena, run through the valleys on either side of the central Andean range (Cordillera Central).

Islands:

Archipelago of San Andres and Providencia in the Caribbean Sea, the Islas del Rosario and San Bernardo along the Caribbean coast, and Gorgona and Malpelo in the Pacific Ocean.



Language: Castilian Spanish, plus over 200 indigenous languages.

Religion: Catholic 95%, with the remainder a mixture of traditional, Episcopal and Jewish faiths

Government: Democracy

National Flower: Orchid *Cattleya Trianae*



National Tree: Palm *Ceroxylon Quindiuense*

National Bird: Condor from Los Andes

Major industries: Textiles, coffee, oil, sugar cane, food processing, and flowers.

Dress Code: We recommend wearing cold weather cloth. Such as coats, jackets, sweaters, jeans or pants.

A brief history of Colombia:

The modern Bogotá is believed to be inhabited by communities of hunters as early as 10,000 BC. At the start of first millennium BC, groups of Amerindians have built up the so-called “cacicazgos”. These are political systems headed by caciques in which the two most complex are the Tayronas and Muiscas. In the late 1490’s, Spain begun its discovery of the Caribbean and Pacific Ocean. Its first permanent settlement was established at Santa Marta in 1525. The Viceroyalty of New Granada was finally restored in 1739 which includes several northwestern provinces of South America such as Venezuela, Panama and Ecuador. Consequently, Colombia became one of the main administrative centers of Spain in the western hemisphere. After a long battle for sovereignty, the country’s independence was ultimately declared in July 20, 1810 through the leadership of Simon Bolivar and Francisco de Paula Santander. These 2 heroes became the first president and vice-president of Colombia in 1819.

After Colombia gained its independence from Spain, internal issues regarding politics and territorial divisions continue to take place. Probably the most historic civil in the history of Colombia is the “Thousand Days Civil War” that led to the establishment of Panama as a nation in 1903. A period of public violence known as La Violencia overwhelmed the capital city of Bogotá between 1940 and 1950, mainly because of the assassination of the Liberal presidential contender Jorge Bogotazo. In the late 1980s, the economic and political arenas of Colombia were particularly influenced by powerful and aggressive drug cartels. In 1991, the new Colombian Constitution was ratified with key provisions on the nation’s human, gender, ethnic and political rights. The past government of President Álvaro Uribe, initiated significant improvements to ensure the public security.

Culture:



Colombia lies at the crossroads of Latin America and the broader American continent, and as such has been hit by a wide range of cultural influences. Native American, Spanish and other European, African, American, Caribbean, and Middle Eastern influences, as well as other Latin American cultural influences, are all present in Colombia's modern culture. Urban migration, industrialization, globalization, and other political, social and economic changes have also left an impression.

Historically, the country's imposing landscape left its various regions largely isolated from one another, resulting in the development of very strong regional identities, in many cases stronger than the national. Modern transport links and means of communication have mitigated this and done much to foster a sense of nationhood, but social and political instability, and in particular fears of armed groups and bandits on intercity highways, have contributed to the maintenance of very clear regional differences. Accent, dress, music, food, politics and general attitude vary greatly between the Bogotanos and other residents of the central highlands, the *paisas* of Antioquia and the coffee region, the *costeños* of the Caribbean coast, the *llaneros* of the eastern plains, and the inhabitants of the Pacific coast and the vast Amazon region to the south east.

