



Craig
travel

COLOMBIA

COFFEE & CULTURE

BOOK BY SEP 28
SAVE \$200 PP

JOURNEY LEADER: JANET WILLIAMS

FEB 19-MAR 3, 2024 | 14 DAYS | 26 MEALS

Meet Palenqueras, Cartagena's legendary female entrepreneurs balancing immense fruit-laden baskets

Combining the indigenous population with Spanish influences dating from the 16th century colonization, the mixture of African cultures brought by slavery and the more recent influx of immigrants, Colombia has become a melting pot of cultures and ethnicities. Over the past two decades, Colombia has gone through dramatic changes, becoming one of South America's most desired destinations. Today it enjoys a relaxed and safe environment, making it a delightful destination for us to explore.

With historic cities, the magnificent Andes, verdant countryside, and the picturesque coffee region at its heart, Colombia provides a truly diverse landscape. Starting in the Andean capital city of Bogota, we visit the famous Gold Museum and the spectacular views from Monserrate Mountain. In the coffee region, we will delve into the coffee process and experience rural life. Medellin offers a perfect climate, a revived culture, and spectacular mountain scenery. Finally, Cartagena is filled with the sounds, the life, and the colours of the Caribbean.

On this leisurely journey, we stay 3 nights in all centres visited, using comfortable boutique hotels and inns throughout, combined with short flights between the centres for ease of travel and comfort. We have selected a variety of unique and highly rated restaurants to sample Colombia's cuisine. Join us as we discover Colombia: its history, culture, sites, people, and so much more.

Tour Highlights

- 3 nights in Bogota, Colombia's vibrant capital
- Visit the world-famous Gold Museum in Bogota
- Take in stunning cable car vistas of Medellin and Monserrate Mountain.
- Discover the impressive cathedral of Zipaquirá, carved into the earth inside a salt mine
- 3 nights in Colombia's picturesque coffee region
- Delve into Colombia's coffee culture firsthand during a coffee tour
- Explore Cocora Valley (Valley of the Palms) and the colourful town of Salento
- 3 nights in Medellin, the "City of Eternal Spring"
- 3 nights in the historic UNESCO colonial city of Cartagena

Journey Leader

Janet Williams, a retired educator with 35 years of teaching experience, including being a Vice Principal, will be leading this thrilling Colombian journey. According to her, being a tour guide is the perfect retirement activity! It combines her passion for travel and love of new experiences and cultures with the enjoyment of sharing all of this with passengers from all across Canada. She has done extensive personal travelling and has also lead successful trips on our behalf to many parts of the world. This includes Myanmar, China, Russia, Australia and New Zealand, Egypt, Tunisia, Madagascar, South America as well as many parts of Europe. She is looking forward to sharing this wonderful travel experience with you!



Inclusive Features

- Return economy airfare plus internal domestic flights
- Accommodations in first class and best available hotels as indicated or similar
- 26 meals included as noted in the itinerary (B - 13 breakfasts, L - 10 lunches, D - 3 dinners)
- All sightseeing and entrances fees as described
- Transportation in comfortable air-conditioned coaches
- Gratuities for all included services
- Services of your Canadian journey leader plus English-speaking national and local guides in Colombia
- All current taxes, surcharges and fees
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

Book With Confidence

For peace of mind, your deposit for this journey is fully refundable until:

November 14, 2023

FEB 19, Monday

Tour members gather in Toronto for the evening direct flight to Bogota.

Depart Canada

FEB 20, Tuesday

Upon arrival, we are met and transferred to our centrally located hotel for an early check-in. The remainder of the day is at leisure to unwind and acclimatize to our new Andean setting until we gather in the evening for our Welcome Dinner. **Bioxury Hotel** (3 nights) BD

Bogota

FEB 21, Wednesday

Zipaquirá, a small town just outside of Bogota is home to the Salt Cathedral. This remarkable underground structure was built 180m deep in a salt mine that has been utilized since Pre-Columbian times. Featuring intricate salt and marble sculptures, it is considered one of the seven wonders of Colombia. Back in Bogota we enjoy an afternoon at leisure. BL

Zipaquirá / Bogota

FEB 22, Thursday**Bogota**

Our exploration begins with the colourful Paloquemao Market where you will find delicious exotic fruits. Become acquainted with the historic epicentre of La Candelaria which is lined with a vibrant display of colonial buildings, housing trendy cafés and bars echoing with live music. Explore the Plaza de Bolivar, encircled by four of Bogota's architectural highlights: the City Hall, the Congress of Colombia, and the venerable Primada Cathedral. The Gold Museum offers one of the finest collections of pre-Hispanic gold in the world with more than 35,000 pieces on display. At Museo Botero, discover the paintings and sculptures of Colombia's most renowned artist, Fernando Botero. Following lunch, ascend the majestic Monserrate Mountain via a cable car and visit the 17th century monastery devoted to El Señor Caído (Fallen Lord) for spectacular views over the city and surrounding area. BL



Wander through Cartagena's vibrant colonial Old Town

FEB 23, Friday**Bogota / Coffee Country**

Fly to Armenia, a prominent city in Colombia's renowned coffee region. Our first stop is the Quindio Botanical Gardens, an oasis of natural beauty and home to a butterfly farm. Paths meander throughout the garden unveiling a diverse range of flora. Admire the stunning mountain vistas as we continue to the charming village of Pereira. Casa San Carlos Lodge (3 nights) BL



Savour Colombia's world-renowned coffee during a coffee tour

FEB 24, Saturday**Cocora Valley / Salento**

Hop aboard a Willys Jeep as we wind our way through the Cocora Valley, known as the "Valley of the Palms," one of the country's greatest natural wonders. Nestled amidst towering mountains, the valley is dotted with hundreds of giant wax palm trees, which is Colombia's national tree. Enjoy a short walk followed by free time to explore before heading back to the quaint village of Salento. Walk along Calle Real, where you can explore a plethora of handicraft stalls and indulge in the diverse culinary offerings of its abundant restaurants. At the end of Calle Real is a staircase that takes you up to the Alto de La Cruz, a hill adorned with a cross. From this elevated vantage point you can take in fantastic views of the Cocora Valley and the majestic cordillera of the Andean mountains that encircle it. BL



Did you know the Cocora Valley is home to the world's tallest palm trees?

FEB 25, Sunday**Finca Romelia Orchids / Coffee Experience**

In the heart of Manizales lies Finca Romelia, a sanctuary of biodiversity and natural wonders. With 6,000 orchid plants, 160 bird species, and a fascinating variety of carnivorous plants, this destination offers a mesmerizing experience. Surrounded by temperate rainforests, delightful streams, and rivers that crisscross through the mountains, the area also boasts avocado, yuca, and citrus plantations. Continue to Hacienda Venecia, a local coffee farm and plantation, where we will learn about the process used to turn the humble coffee bean into one of the world's most beloved drinks. Take a walk through the undulating grounds of the farm with its winding rows of plants. Learn how the beans are cleaned and roasted before they are finally brewed and tasted. BL

FEB 26, Monday**Pereira / Medellin**

Fly to Medellin, often referred to as the "City of Eternal Spring". Despite having a checkered past, the city has been reborn over the past decade, growing into one of the liveliest and friendliest cities in the world. Stroll through the bustling downtown streets to the famous Botero Plaza featuring 23 sculptures of Botero that have become landmarks of his hometown. Our city tour will bring its dynamic character to life and provide insights into its significant role in both commerce and culture. Take a cable car ride to revel in the incredible panoramic views of the city. Click Clack Hotel (3 nights) BLD



Palenqueras share the bounty of Colombia through fresh produce and warm smiles

FEB 27, Tuesday **Santa Fe de Antioquia / Medellin**
 Santa Fe de Antioquia is a little village located west of Medellin and was the former capital of Antioquia until 1826. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its beautiful colonial architecture, with buildings dating back to the 17th century. Notably, the Church of Saint Barbara stands as a remarkable architectural gem. During our stay in Antioquia, we will visit the famous Bridge of the West across the Cauca River, which is one of the longest and oldest suspension bridges in Latin America. Return to Medellin this afternoon for some free time to explore or just relax.

BL

FEB 28, Wednesday **Guatapé / Medellin**
 Today, we will have the chance to explore Medellin's rural surroundings, where we can take in the mesmerizing views of undulating hills and lush greenery. Nearby is the remarkable Peñol Boulder, standing at an impressive height of 656 feet. For the truly energetic, there may be an opportunity to climb the 740 steps that lead to the top. Continue east to the village of Guatapé known for its gorgeous white and red church and vibrantly painted homes.

BL

FEB 29, Thursday **Medellin / Cartagena**
 Late this morning we fly directly to the beautiful Caribbean coast and the historic city of Cartagena. On arrival, following lunch, our guide will take us on a walking excursion through the old town, visiting the convent and church of Saint Peter Claver and the Afro-Caribbean Museum. In the historic centre of Cartagena, colour splashes every corner, balconies overflow with blossoming flowers, and history seeps beneath the ancient wooden doors of colonial buildings. Our boutique colonial hotel is located in the heart of the old quarter, surrounded by wonderful plazas and historic buildings.

Hotel Casa Don Luis (3 nights)

BL

MAR 1, Friday **Barú / Cartagena**
 Get ready to marvel at Colombia's avian wonders at the National Aviary, a must-see for any bird enthusiast. This remarkable sanctuary gives us front-row seats to the country's world-renowned avian biodiversity. Colombia boasts an unrivalled 1,900+ recorded bird species within its borders. Learn all about the importance of conservation and animal welfare practices. On Cholon Bay, after a pleasant lunch, we cruise among the tiny islands that dot this coast. Enjoy the sparkling white beaches, the turquoise waters and the mangroves along the coast, before returning to Cartagena later this afternoon.

BL

MAR 2, Saturday **Cartagena**
 The final day is free at leisure to explore on your own. The city's most iconic landmark is the Castillo San Felipe, the massive fort that dominates the old town and the harbour. Perched atop the highest point overlooking the city, the Convent of Santa Cruz de la Popa offers fantastic views of the sweeping cityscape, the bustling harbour, and the azure Caribbean Sea spreading to the horizon beyond. This evening, we gather for our special Farewell Dinner.

BD

MAR 3, Sunday **Cartagena / Canada**
 All too soon, our Colombian adventure comes to a close - this morning we catch our flights via Bogotá to Toronto with connections to our homes across Canada.

B

**Book and deposit by September 28, 2023
 and save \$200 per person**



CT Rating 3.5/5 - Challenging: Visitors must be aware that local conditions vary throughout the country. Hotels in major centres are comfortable and modern while many rural hotels, roads, and other services may be relatively simple and relatively basic. There are some extensive walks over rough terrain. Several areas visited are in the Andes (high altitude) where some may experience discomfort from the altitude. This tour is best suited for people who are active, physically fit and who enjoy walking and hiking.

Cost in Canadian Dollars per person

Land Only* (Join / Leave at hotel).....	\$5,995
Toronto	\$7,225
Ottawa / Montreal	\$7,325
Halifax / Winnipeg.....	\$7,465
St John's	\$7,525
Regina / Saskatoon	\$7,565
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver	\$7,525
Victoria.....	\$7,565
Single Supplement	\$2,295

Airfares from other gateways—available on request. Airfares and airlines are subject to change due to factors beyond the control of Craig Travel. Refer to inclusive features for details. *Land only excludes flights and airport transfers. Prices are based on a minimum of 20 members and on rates, taxes, and fees effective May 2023. Prices are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted with a minimum of 20 travellers. Note: in Colombia, lunch is a large meal. We have included most lunches, allowing you to have a choice for dinner – try some of the excellent local restaurants or have a lighter meal at your hotel.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment will be due November 15, 2023

Deposit will be \$600 per person

To reserve your spot on this tour, complete the enclosed enrollment form, indicating the tour you wish to join and your home city, and forward it with your deposit to:



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