



Colombia

Hike, Bike and Raft Colombia

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



DO SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY...

ITINERARY

Hike, Bike and Raft Colombia

11 DAYS • 10 NIGHTS

Bogota – Villa de Leyva – San Gil – Barichara – Los Santos – Santa Marta – Palomino –Cartagena

HIGHLIGHTS

- Bike and explore Bogota and Villa de Leyva
- Hike through Páramo in the Colombian Andean mountains
- Raft the Chicamocha river along the second biggest canyon in the world
- Ride top quality dual suspension bikes
- Hike the amazing Colombian jungle forest
- Learn about different indigenous cultures
- Visit beautiful colonial villages

TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Multisport (Hiking, Biking and Rafting)
Tour Start	Bogota
Tour End	Cartagena
Accommodation	Hotels
Included Meals	10 Breakfasts, 9 Lunches & 9 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium

MULTISPORT IN COLOMBIA



The Hike, Bike and Raft Colombia trip allows us to discover adventure sport in the Colombian Andean Mountains as well as take in the vibrant Colombian culture and the country's fascinating history. We'll get the chance to hike and bike through world-renowned Andean Páramo, raft the famous Chicamocha river, hike and bike into the second biggest canyon in the world, hike within a stunning piece of Colombian jungle forest, discover the Caribbean coast, visit beautiful colonial villages as well as explore the cities of Bogota and Cartagena.



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COLOMBIA, *an overview*

Colombia is in the midst of a new era in its history. It has one of the top regional economies and is one of the most politically stable countries in Latin America. The significant improvement in the country's safety has positioned Colombia as a **top travel destination** that people from all around the globe are eager to discover. Colombia boasts the stunning **Andes mountain region** and is the second most **bio-diverse** country in the world. Furthermore, booming cosmopolitan cities like Bogotá and Cartagena can impress anyone with their magnificent views, innovative architecture, rich culture, exceptional restaurants, and enthralling ambience. A much-loved destination for bird watchers, Colombia is **home to over 1,900 species of birds** (more than the amount of bird species found in North America and Europe combined). Additionally, **450 mammal species** live in Colombia with approximately 22% considered either endangered or critically endangered. Colombia has it all: city life, stunning coastlines, diverse landscape and wildlife as well as being the **perfect destination for adventure sport**. Due to Colombia's ideal location, just north of the equator, you can take part in adventure activities any time of year. There is an ever changing weather in Colombia that complements anyone's adventurous spirit when riding mountain bikes through the Andes, walking over unique paths and rafting challenging rivers.

WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

Pioneer Expeditions are one of the few specialists that really *do* off the beaten track and unique adventures. The team have a real passion for wildlife and adventure travel which we love to share with our clients. We delight in searching the world for new destinations, new experiences and creating the most incredible adventures.

We like to introduce our clients to unique, the different, and the incredible. Whether it is through wildlife tracking, sea kayaking, snorkelling, trekking, rafting, cycling or observing wildlife in its natural environment, we want to give you the real Pioneer experience.

From the moment you choose to travel with Pioneer Expeditions until you return back home, you are supported by our dedicated team. We listen to what you want and can create an itinerary around your specific needs, working with your budget and with a commitment to responsible travel.

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DAY 1: Arrive in BOGOTÁ

Upon your arrival to Bogotá we'll transfer you to your hotel. Bogota is one of the most important cities in South America, settled in an Andean savanna and connected to the Caribbean by the great Magdalena River. Bogota was once the main trade centre between South America and Europe - Visit the colonial quarters to learn about its Spanish and pre- Columbian heritage. We can look forward to learning a lot more about Bogota during tomorrow's excursion around the city!



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
Nil



Distance:
Approx. 30min transfer



Activity:
Travel

DAY 2: BOGOTÁ CITY EXCURSION, SALT MINES and transfer to VILLA DE LEYVA



We'll start our day by walking along the Carrera Séptima, which passes through many of Bogotá's main points of interest; our guides who we'll be walking alongside, will provide us with interesting facts about Bogotá, as well as Colombia's history and culture. During the tour we'll visit the gold museum of Bogotá which is a top attraction in the city where we can see more than 34,000 pieces of pre-Columbian gold as well as learn about the heritage of the ancient civilizations. We'll also have time to admire the renowned beautiful graffiti art of the city.



Following our tour of Bogotá excursion we will leave the city and make our way to the Salt Mines of Nemocón, a place off the beaten path where we will experience the mining process used in order to extract this mineral from the mountains. The mines are very well preserved and are made up of a unique assortment of tunnels and chambers. Afterwards, we will continue to make our way to the quaint Villa de Leyva, one of the enchanting patrimonial villages of Colombia and our last destination for today.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D

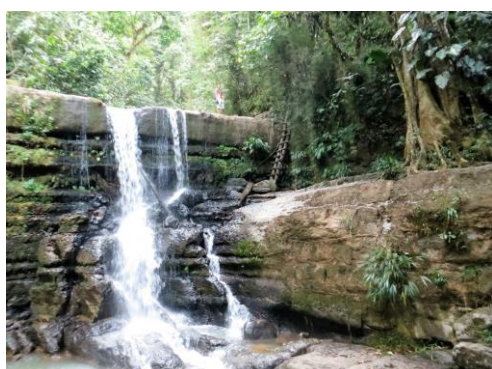


Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Culture and heritage

DAY 3: Hike in IGUAQUE NATIONAL PARK & bike in VILLA DE LEYVA



This morning we will visit Iguaque National Park, a 6,750 hectare flora and fauna sanctuary. Iguaque was a sacred site to the Muisca indigenous people, according to their legends mankind originated in the Iguaque Lake. We will explore a section of the cloud forest reserve on the lookout for some of the hundreds of species of orchids, bromeliads, lichens and ferns, many of them endemic. We will also be searching for many of the rare tropical birds which we will be hearing during our walk.



In the afternoon, we will prepare our mountain bikes and explore the area around Villa de Leyva. We will be riding through the beautiful countryside along dirt trails and lazy paved roads. Eventually we will reach the Paleontological Museum which displays the most important assortment of fossils in South America and the most complete Kronosaurus fossil known to date. Our ride ends at El Monasterio, a Dominican historic building with a collection of religious and colonial art.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Hiking and biking

DAY 4: Transfer to BARICHARA and visit the WATERFALL of JUAN CURÍ

Barichara awaits us, but not before we stop at the town of Socorro. Socorro is a well preserved colonial settlement, where we'll enjoy a typical breakfast of Arepas Santandereanas – to further immerse ourselves in the local culture.



Our journey today will continue to the waterfall of Juan Curí surrounded by a stunning cloud forest, where you can either walk around the area and enjoy the nature or even practice some thrilling waterfall rappelling – a must-do for adrenalin junkies. This remarkable waterfall stands at 180m high and at its base lies a natural pool, perfect for a swim.

After our Juan Curí adventure we will then make our way to the colonial town of Barichara where adventure meets tranquility, in the early evening we will be walking along the streets of this colonial village. This perfectly preserved and charming colonial town is famed for its unique cobbled streets, colonial architecture, and picturesque chapels.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Hiking

DAY 5: Mountain biking and rafting at the CHICAMOCHA CANYON



Today is guaranteed to be a real action-packed Colombian adventure. Our spectacular mountain bike ride starts at 6,000 feet (2,000 meters) and dives down into the second largest canyon in the world, the Chicamocha Canyon “The Grand Canyon of South America”. Passing waterfalls, coffee and tobacco farms, we will be riding to Jordan, a historic pueblo (town) 1000 feet above sea level. This is one place most tourists don't have an opportunity to see! Here we stop at a refreshing natural pool to cool off, have a swim and enjoy a fantastic lunch.



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After our lunch, we will experience one of the top activities in Santander – Whitewater Rafting. We'll be leaving our bikes behind in order to conquer the Chicamocha River. Here we will experience the thrilling rapids and huge waves, starting with some Class III's and getting increasingly larger until the last section of Class IV's. Rafters have been known to experience huge waves, depending on the weather and the water levels. However, this is nothing to be afraid of; as in the case of wipe-outs, there are pools at the end of each rapid which makes this river a safe, commercial-grade run.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Biking and rafting

DAY 6: Hike to GUANE and enjoy the COFFEE TOUR EXPERIENCE



Our morning will be spent hiking through some of the area's most incredible scenery and exploring one of the region's historical and architectural gems. We'll hike along the famous Royal Road (Main Andean Road), a historic trail that was originally built by the Guane Indigenous people. During the colonial period, the trail was rebuilt in stone by the Spanish Crown to gain access to the Atlantic for the export of gold and exotic South American products. This scenic trail has been declared a National Monument and has preserved its authentic feel. This easy walking hike will be framed by old stone walls and a classic farmland backdrop. Along the walk we will encounter great views and good birding opportunities, as a high concentration of species feed and inhabit this area.

Arriving in Guane is like stepping back in time and into a dreamlike atmosphere. Although the original inhabitants are nowhere to be found, the remains of their culture indicate a truly majestic past and uniquely leave the town suspended in time. We will learn a lot more about the extinct Guane culture at the anthropology museum as well as marvelling at the evolution of the town from pre-hispanic, to colonial, to modern times.

Continuing on we will make our way to the charming Hacienda el Roble. Here we will gain an insight into how Colombia's famous coffee is produced, starting from the seed; along with a fascinating walk around its beautiful grounds and plantation. A coffee-lover's paradise, this coffee hacienda is home to some of Colombia's greatest coffee!



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Trekking and culture



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DAY 7: Transfer to SANTA MARTA and arrive to the BEACH HOTEL

Today we will be leaving this region and making our way to Santa Marta on the stunning Caribbean coast of Colombia. Upon arrival we will transfer to our beach hotel which will take around an hour and a half, as it's located in the region of Tayrona. The rest of our day can be spent on the beach taking in the dramatic Caribbean coastline, at our leisure.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Short flight



Activity:
Travel

DAY 8: Hike to CABO SAN JUAN in TAYRONA NATIONAL PARK

Today finds us at Tayrona National Park, a paradise Caribbean jungle which stretches along the coastline. We will be walking along several steep and rough trails through the tropical rainforest before arriving at the beach area of Arrecifes, which offers outstanding coastal scenery. Our hike will be continuing towards the area of Arenilla Beaches and the natural swimming pool, then onto Cabo San Juan where we'll be able to enjoy a refreshing swim in the sea with white sandy beaches.



Overnight – Hotel



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Trekking

DAY 9: Transfer to CARTAGENA and enjoy lunch in LA CUEVA IN BARRANQUILLA

Today we'll be leaving the region of the Tayrona National Park and be making our way to the city of Cartagena, further along the Caribbean coastline. Before reaching Cartagena we'll make a stop for lunch at the restaurant La Cueva in the city of Barranquilla, a place of which has encountered much fame as it is where the Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez started his novel "Hundred years of solitude".

Upon reaching our new destination of Cartagena, we will get to explore the city by bike and discover the undiscovered gems of Cartagena. We'll get to know the area of Getsemani very well during our stay in the city – It's Cartagena's new up-and-coming neighbourhood with its narrow streets featuring bright Caribbean colours, people welcoming us to their city on every corner and the best places to eat, drink and dance. Getsemani is certainly a best place to soak up the vibrant Colombian culture.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Culture

DAY 10: The CARTAGENA HIGHLIGHTS and STREET FOOD TOUR

We'll start our day with a visit to the fortress of San Felipe de Barajas, a masterpiece of Spanish architecture built to defend the city. We'll then visit the Monastery of "La Popa", a church located in the highest place of the city where we can experience a 360° view of Cartagena. They'll be many other places to admire and sight-see during our exploration of the city.

Afterwards, we will make our way back to the walled city and walk the streets to find the very best street food Cartagena has to offer. Amongst



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the food on offer will be the famous “arepas” which can’t be missed, along with the taste of the Colombian sweets - el “Portal de los dulces”, among many other specialties of the Caribbean region.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:



Activity:
Culture

DAY 11: Depart from CARTAGENA

Day 11 means that it’s sadly time to end our Colombian Hike, Bike and Rafting adventure. We will be transferred to the airport and assisted with our onward journey. For those returning to the UK, we can arrange an extension for a domestic flight to Bogota.



Overnight:
N/A



Meals:
B



Distance:

Activity:

NOTE: This itinerary is subject to change without notice due to seasonal changes and inclement weather

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INCLUDED

- Accommodation in mentioned hotels as per program, subject to availability
- Local English speaking guide/trip leader
- Entrance fees
- All mentioned meals (B= Breakfast, L= Lunch, D= Dinner)
- Ground transportation in all destinations

NOT INCLUDED

- Any internal flights
- Entrance Fees to National Parks or Reserves (\$30 approx.)
- Tips

WHEN TO GO

- Due to Colombia being on the equator, temperatures are fairly stable at 24°C throughout the year, getting cooler if you move higher inland.
- Colombia wet seasons vary depending on where you are in the country. In the North, there are 2 rainy seasons, between April and June, and between September and November. However in the South the rain is more constant but the showers never last that long.
- As for when to avoid the tourists! The busy tourism season tend to be between December to February and Easter Week (the week before Easter weekend).



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITY DURATION	3 – 7 hours per day
SEASON	All Year
BEST TIME TO GO	November – February
GROUP SIZE	Tailor-made
RESPONSIBILITY	As part of our commitment to responsible travel, we propose activities that are respectful of the environment and communities working at the same time exclusively with local partners.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL	Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has an Easy to Moderate level as it includes easy hikes and activities suitable to most physical conditions.

THE PIONEER BOOKING PROCESS

Where do you go from here? Well, you can feel free to email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com if you're interested in this trip, or any of our other expeditions from around the world. Visit our website www.pioneerexpeditions.com to unearth all of our other equally amazing trips and destinations.

1. Contact us -

We will be happy to answer any questions or enquiries you may have. From here we will begin to plan and put together your dream adventure holiday! Alternatively, on our website you will find our booking and enquiry forms; once filled in, we will be notified of your enquiry and will get back to you ASAP.

2. Leave everything to us -

Everything will be arranged and booked by us, but we will make sure to keep you updated every step of the way. In addition, we can arrange your international flights if needed, as we have access to competitive airfares. We can also arrange any additional tours or additional night's accommodation.

3. Wait for your adventure to begin -

Sit back and count down the days until your trip of a lifetime with Pioneer Expeditions. We'll handle all of the last minute preparations and provide you with everything you need. All practical information will be sent out to you, prior to your trip.

If you feel like altering this itinerary to suit your personal preferences, we can arrange all of that and more – just get in contact with us and let us know your requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

