

Kat's Great Adventures

Colombia - Colombia's Caribbean Coast Culture and Nature Tour 2022

Guided Tour

14 Days / 13 Nights



Colombia's Caribbean coastline is more than 1800 km long and it's not only home to the country's best beaches, but also to three different Indian tribes, a vast desert, the highest coast mountain range in the world, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Caribbean Bounty Islands and to some of the most important colonial cities in the continent, Santa Marta, Cartagena and Mompox. All that and much more will be visited during this complete Caribbean journey.

Kat's Great Adventures 1233 Tintern Drive, Greely, Ontario K4P 1R6 – Direct: 613-241-0111 Extension 6

katsgreatadventures@gmail.com Website: **www.katsgreatadventures.com**

TICO # 50022092

Itinerary Day to Day

Day 1: Arrival in Bogotá

Reception at the airport and transfer to the hotel. The hotel is located in the tourist area of Parque 93 known for its great restaurants and great atmosphere. At arrival you will receive a welcome call from one of the team members.



Day 2: Flight to Riohacha – Punta Gallina

Morning flight to Riohacha. Meeting with the guide and start of the journey in a 4x4 towards Uribia. From here the journey through the desert begins. During this trip you will appreciate the vast desert landscape, interrupted only by small Wayuu settlements. Lunch in a local rancho. Arrival to Punta Gallina and check in to the hostel. In the afternoon, visit the beach Medano de Taroa and the most northern lighthouse of South America in Punta Gallina. Back to the hostel where dinner is served. Depending on the local fishing, you may have the option of lobster (has to be ordered earlier in the day) which is highly recommended.

Day 3: Cabo la Vela

Morning visit to enjoy the beautiful beach of “Punta Aguja”, there is the optional boat ride to Hondita Bay to spot pink flamingos (this tour is not included, but can be ordered the night before). After lunch, departure from Punta Gallina crossing once again La Alta Guajira’s deserts, until the Cerrejon Railroad (Cerrejon is the biggest open sky coal mine in the country), from where the road to Cabo la Vela starts. The last section, is more inhabited than the desert up north, and here lies one of the only windmill parks in the country. A two to three hour desert road trip from Punta Gallinas is what it takes to get down to El Cabo de la Vela, located on the western coast of the Guajira peninsula, south from Punta Gallinas. It has some of the best beaches, hardly visited, and only crowded during the Colombian holidays. Otherwise, an idyllic spot to relax and enjoy the nature. The place is great to get lost in the many bays, desert trails and also to explore the local cuisine and traditions. The place is inhabited by the Wayuu indigenous group and it is possible to see the traditional fishermen work, bringing the sea harvest ashore in the early mornings. El Cabo is also very popular for those into kite surfing, its permanent wind currents make it ideal for this sport. For those who are interested, it is possible to take a short course or rent the gear (not included). Again taking a walk up to “El Cabo” lighthouse to enjoy the sunset, it is a must. Night in rustic lodge.



Day 4: Cabo la Vela and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta

After breakfast in Cabo la Vela, a visit to Manaure. This place is famous for its salt flats and salt production and it's an interesting visit. Afterwards, we will leave the desert and head southwest through the Caribbean coastline. Check in to a charming and authentic ecolodge located in the outskirts of the Tayrona National Park.

Day 5: Tayrona National Park

Full day to explore the beaches on your own within the Natural Park. The park has well-marked paths which makes it very easy to explore and enjoy the iconic Caribbean beaches such as "Arrecife", "La Piscina" and "El Cabo San Juan" and the nature of the place. Lunch and dinner can be held at the restaurants within the park or at the hotel.



Day 6: Visit to Indian Community

Today we will get to know some of the native Indian tribes that live in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. About the tour: The indigenous Kogui, who are said to be the direct descendants of the ancient Tayrona civilization, inhabit the valleys of the Palomino, Don Diego, San Miguel and Ancho rivers. Their population is estimated to be more than 10,000 members and all of them are living at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. Our so-called "Elder Brothers" take care of the natural treasure of the Sierra, a mountain that in their culture represents the center of the world and source of all life. Even today they naturally take the role of guardians of cosmic balance and are considered one of the most valuable ancestral cultures on the planet.

Pick up at the lodge and drive along the beautiful and colourful coastal road to the town of Rio Ancho. Here we are welcomed by a community guide and after a short introduction we start our trek (nine kilometers, approximately two hours) through the tropical rainforest, bordering parts of the Ancho River, until we reach the village of Tungueka. After a tour through the village, where we get to know the way of life of this ethnic group, we have a brief cultural exchange with the leaders of the village. We continue to the river, where we enjoy a delicious picnic on a beautiful rock. There is time for a delightful swim in the river before starting our trek back to Rio Ancho. After the tour we continue to Santa Marta and check in to the hotel.

Day 7: Santa Marta and City Tour

In the morning hours there will be a three hour city tour in Santa Marta, actually the first established town in Colombia by the Spanish in 1534. The tour will visit the most iconic places in the city like: The cathedral where Simon Bolivar was buried before he was moved to his birth place and last resting place in the city of Caracas. A walk through the colonial streets of the city's crowded downtown. The gold museum, even though a much small collection in comparison with Bogota's, it offer a great insight into the native culture inhabiting there surrounding areas. The seaside promenade and the pier and the Plaza Bolivar are also visited. The tours ends around noon. Free afternoon.



Day 8: Cartagena and City Walk

Morning transfer to Cartagena. In the late afternoon or early evening, enjoy a city walk in the old town of Cartagena with a private guide. During this walk you will familiarize with the architecture and the history of the old town and you will visit the main squares and buildings. There will be plenty of photo opportunities and you will also appreciate the beautiful evening illumination of this romantic city.



Day 9: Cartagena and City Tour 4 hours

In the morning, meeting with the guide and continue exploring historic Cartagena. Start the tour by visiting the San Felipe Fortress, the most technically advanced military building during Spanish colonial times, then visit the old "Popa" Monastery where you will have a wonderful view of the city. Between these two places, visit the popular marketplace of Bazurto where fruits, vegetables and fish are traded by the locals, most of them descendants of the slaves of the colonial times. Cartagena is perhaps Colombia's most beautiful and interesting town. It was founded in 1533 and was, during the colonial period, the main Spanish port on the Caribbean coast and primary gateway to South America to receive slaves and to send treasures to Europe. In the evening there will be free time for shopping, and perhaps to enjoy a drink on the old fortress walls, overlooking the sunset on the Caribbean.

Day 10: Mompox

Today we will visit another cultural and historical jewel, Mompox, which is declared Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO. Mompox was very important during the colonial times, as it was a river port used by influential families that ran away from Cartagena during pirate attacks. It is located in the Magdalena River delta, and it is still used as a waterway connection to Cartagena through the Dique Canal. Big amounts of gold and precious gems were stored here, which lead to the development of a superb gold craftsmanship that remains nowadays. The remote location of Mompox makes it far less frequented than Cartagena and the city has conserved its interesting colonial history. Departure time from Cartagena at 8:30 a.m. We drive south crossing the Dique canal and making a first stop at San Jacinto, the town of hammock



weavers. We continue to Mompox via Santa Ana, where we hop on a ferry to cross the Magdalena River. Check-in at the hotel. At about 4 p.m. we start a walking tour visiting some tourist sites of the city (Santa Bárbara Church, Concepción Church, San Agustín Church, San Carlos Palace and Albarrada Street).

Day 11: Mompox

The morning starts with a boat tour (three to four hours) to the Pijiño Swamp, where we can watch some exotic birds like the Raven Duck, the Morena Heron (*Ardea cocoi*), the Hachero Parakeet (*Forpus conspicillatus*), Martinfisher (*Ceryle torcuata*) and the Pecho de Tigre or Juna Bobo (*Hipneus ruficollis*). In the afternoon a walking city tour (part two) visiting the House of Culture, Pinillos National School and the Municipal Cemetery. Later on we will visit a filigree studio to learn first-hand this centenary method to work with gold.

Day 12: Golfo de Morosquillo

Departure from Mompox and drive to Golfo de Morosquillo. Here you will find some of the most beautiful and remote beaches of the country. Arrival to the Natural Reserve, Sanguare, and check in to a very nice beach lodge. Afternoon free to enjoy the nature and beach.

Day 13: Optional Tour to the Archipelago of San Bernardo

We recommend a boat trip to the Archipelago of San Bernardo. The tour can be organized directly at the hotel according to availability. It's a much recommended experience with great snorkeling possibilities and some visits to very interesting Caribbean islands. Amongst visits you will visit Santa Cruz del Islote. It's significant



population compared with its small size results in its being the most densely populated island on Earth. Return to the beach lodge in the afternoon.

Day 14: Departure

Pick up and transfer to Cartagena's Airport. Flight to Bogota for international connection or extra night in Bogota. End of services.



Route



Technical Characteristics:

Route Profile: Easy. Sightseeing and cultural activities designed for people who are generally fit and are comfortable walking up to 6 hours per day.

Travel Season: Any date on request from January 2 to December 31, 2022

Tayrona National Park Closure: Due to new local indigenous communities' regulations, the Tayrona National Park will close three times a year in the following periods: February 1 -15; June 1 - 15 and October 19 - November 2



Price per Person

Double Occupancy	\$ 3995.00 USD
Single Supplement	\$ 455.00 USD
Domestic Flight Tickets**	\$ 200.00 USD

*Group rates available for this tour. As this is a guided tour, the pricing improves with more people participating. Please ask us for details

**Approximate price per person for all the needed domestic flights in the program. Please note that the final price of the tickets will be confirmed upon reservation.

Accommodation:

3* hotels and Ecolodges

Included:

- Local English speaking guides during tours
- Private transportation throughout the entire program
- 1 night in shared double rooms in Bogota
- 2 nights in rustic lodges in La Guajira
- 2 night in shared double rooms in Tayrona
- 2 nights in shared double rooms in Santa Marta
- 2 nights in shared double rooms in Cartagena
- 2 nights in shared double rooms in Mompox
- 2 nights in shared double room in Beach lodge
- Meals as specified in the itinerary (13 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 4 dinners)
- All entrance fees
- Mentioned activities/tours in private services

Not Included:

- Domestic and international flights
- Meals not mentioned in the program
- Alcoholic and soft drinks
- Personal expenses
- Tips
- Everything not mentioned in the "Included" list