



## **Colombia - Exploring the Colombian Caribbean Culture and Light Trekking Tour 2022**

**Guided Tour**

**11 Days / 10 Nights**



During this trip, we will take you into the cultural and natural diversity of Colombia's Caribbean coast. Even though the geographical distances are relatively short, the way of life and landscapes differ greatly from the arid and harsh conditions in the Guajira Peninsula, passing by the tropical forests of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, to the idyllic beaches of the Tayrona National Park. The trip's highlights include a three day trip to the northernmost point in South America: Punta Gallinas located in the Guajira peninsula, where the amazing sand dune beaches meet the sea. As well, the cultural experience to see the Wayuu indigenous group's way of life. Also a four day trek to La Ciudad Perdida of the Tayronas, known as "The Lost City", one of the best restored and preserved archeological sites in the country. It is located in the Buritaca Valley in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the highest costal range in the world. Lastly Tayrona National Park and Caribbean beach lodge. Visit to the famous Tayrona Park with an easy gentle walk to enjoy some of Colombia's best beaches in the country.

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

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TICO # 50022092

## Itinerary Day to Day

### **Day 1: Arrival in Riohacha, La Guajira**

Arrival in Riohacha and transfer to the hotel in Riohacha. In the afternoon, a nice walk by the seaside promenade in Riohacha, where there will be plenty of Wayuu Indians working on their handcrafts while enjoying the sunset of the Caribbean. On the early evening, briefing and preparations for the trip to the "Alta Guajira". Night in the hotel.



### **Day 2: Punta Gallinas – The Northernmost Point of South America**

With a name that does relate much to the place (Chicken Point), it is definitely one of the most unique spots in the country. Located in the upper most point of Colombia and the South American continent, Punta Gallinas offer some of the most amazing beaches to be found along the Caribbean coast. Punta Gallinas, originally a lighthouse, now in ruins, is three to four hour drive from Riohacha. To get there, first we take a good road "Cuatro Caminos", a four way intersection in the middle of nowhere and then north by the main road, passing in the distance Uribia, the Wayuu capital and also named the Indigenous capital of Colombia. After about a one and a half hour drive, the tour goes into the Colombian "outback" driving over a desert where only 4 wheel drive tracks can be followed. The landscapes get wilder and the

indigenous families living out there have a hard daily life. Over the next two days we will see the Bahia Ondita and Bahia Onda, with amazing landscapes, open skies and colorful sand beaches. After two hours of driving in this remote land, the sand dunes of Taroa will be reached. This is the highlight of this area, just like a place just out of a story... the yellow sands falling down the hill into the roaring sea. Sunset here is a must and an experience of a lifetime. Punta Gallinas, where the ruins are, has a nice beach with an incredible turquoise sea and the view into an endless ocean! By the way....you are not very likely to be surrounded by many people, if any at all! The night will be spend in a local home stay built and run by the local Wayuus, also part of the trip's experience.

### **Day 3: Cabo la Vela**

A 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 Desert, 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



**Day 3 Con't:** visited, 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 exploring 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 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.



#### **Day 4: Cabo de la Vela – Santa Marta**

After breakfast, a short trip to visit the beautiful and famous beaches "Pilon de Azucar" or "Ojo del Agua". There will be time to enjoy the water and landscapes, before starting the trip back down to Riohacha after a nice local lunch. The road trip follows the desert, if dry, over a salt flat and then close to the railroad until Cuatro Caminos, from there a short one and a half to two hours to Riohacha and then "La troncal del Caribe" highway will cross the Southern Guajira and down to Magdalena State. Final destination is Santa Marta city, about two hours from the state border. Afternoon free to enjoy the city.

#### **Day 5: 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. The tours ends around noon. Free afternoon.



#### **Day 6: Lost City – Trekking: "Donde Adan" lodge (480 m) 8.9 km + 490 m - 160 m Highest altitude: 640 m**

Morning pick up at hotel and transfer, in 4WD cars, driving northeastwards along the Caribbean coast. After one to one and a half hours, we leave the paved road and here the adventure begins! After about a one hour drive on a dirt road, through a beautiful landscape, the village of "El Mamey" (150 m) also called "Machete Pelado" appears. Lunch will be served upon arrival and then the hike to "Ciudad Perdida" starts. This day's hike is exposed to the sun or the rain, therefore it is important to have a good amount of water and sunscreen. Tropical fruit will be offered along the trek. The group will take the river trail, which is a more pleasant walk than the main road.

This trail follows the "Quebrada del Alto Mamey" river valley for about one hour and then ascends steeply (one and a half hours) to "El Mirador" pass (640 m) that has a great view down to the Mamey town and the Buritaca River. From this point, a constant descent (one and a half hours) to the "Quebrada Honduras" River, where the "Donde Adan's" lodge is located. It is possible to take a swim in a beautiful natural river pool at the lodge. Dinner will be served in this rustic lodge.



**Day 7: Trekking: "El Paraiso" lodge (870 m) 13.6 km To Mumake pass:**

**+ 200 m - 250 m Highest altitude: 680 m**

**To Koskunguena pass: + 394 m To Buritaca River: -77 m To "El Paraiso"**

**Lodge: + 127 m Highest altitude: 824 m**

This is a longest day on the program. After an early breakfast, the ascent begins right away taking a well-marked trail that gently gains altitude up to "Mumake" pass (680 m). Before the pass, there is the invisible border between "Colonos" lands (Peasants not originally from the area) and the "Kogi's" Indigenous territory. From now on, the trek will be done in an area protected and ruled by this tribe. There are also "Wiwa's" Indians, originally from another sector of the Sierra, who had settled in these valleys and now are running some of the lodges. It is also noticeably the



change from extensive farmland into a better preserved and much less explored area. From the mountain pass, there is a relative quick descent to the "Buritaca" River Valley (430 m), where the only Kogi settlement on the trek is placed. This settlement is called: "Montangi" and is a perfect spot to get a glimpse into the local lifestyle and traditions. After about one hour, a river crossing over a hanging bridge leads to a second ascent (two hours) up to "Koskunguena" pass (824 m) and then back down to the "Buritaca" River (743 m) for a last crossing. The last part of the day is an almost flat area up to "El Paraiso" rustic lodge (870 m), the place for the night. This lodge is just by the shores of the "Buritaca" River, a fantastic place to relax and swim.



**Day 8: Trekking: Lost City (1175 m) 1.9 km one way To Lost City: + 305 - 305 m / Highest altitude: 1175 m Activity duration: 5 including a 3 hours visit.**

**7.5 km one way To Koskunguena pass: + 77 m To "Mumake" lodge: - 48: m / Highest altitude: 870 m**

Very early departure taking the trail on the right margin of the Buritaca River for about 25 minutes up to a crossing, once on the other margin, the archaeological stairway begins ascending rather steeply all the way to the first terraces of the Lost City (1175 m). From here begins a journey through time, to one of the most interesting archaeological sites of Colombia's pre-Hispanic period. The Lost City of the Tayrona is known worldwide. Its original Indigenous name is "Teyuna" and is one of the

three large citadels of vanished Tayrona civilization. Teyuna is the only city that has been discovered until now and thus partially restored. Tayrona's cities were connected by a complex network of trails, from the Caribbean coastal area to the high mountain in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. The Tayrona had a well-developed social organization and an effective system of products and goods exchange between the different settlements. Although there is no precise information of the role of Teyuna in the Tayrona culture, it is believed that it was a place for religious worship and center of political power. During the course of a four hour visit to the archaeological complex, the group will learn about the different types of terraces and how the city was divided into areas according to hierarchy and types of work. During the visit, it is possible to see the home of a Kogi Mamo (shaman wise person) who lives in the same traditional way, as it is thought the inhabitants did. It is also believed that the Kogis are descendants from the Tayronas, pushed to the higher lands during the Spanish conquest. After the visit, hike down to "El Paraiso" lodge to have some lunch and then continue (4.5 hours), back on the same trail as the day before, but this time a bit further out, crossing the hanging bridge and down the Buritaca River Valley, passing once again the "Montangi" Kogi settlement to "Mumake" lodge (389 m), just at the foot of the "Mumake" pass.

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**Day 9: Trekking: El Mamey (150 m) – Santa Marta 14.2 km To Mumake pass: + 291 m To “Donde Adan” lodge: - 200 m To El Mirador pass: + 160 m - 490 m / Highest altitude: 680 m**

Last trekking day! From “Mumake” lodge (389 m), the ascent being right from the front step, leading up to “Mumake” pass (680 m) and after descending to “Quebrada Honduras” River to ascent (1.5 hours) to the last pass: “El Mirador” (640 m) and then to the final destination “El Mamey” town (150 m). Upon arrival there will be lunch and then a transfer to hotel in Santa Marta (2-2.5 hours). Night in a hotel.

## **Day 10: Tayrona National Park**

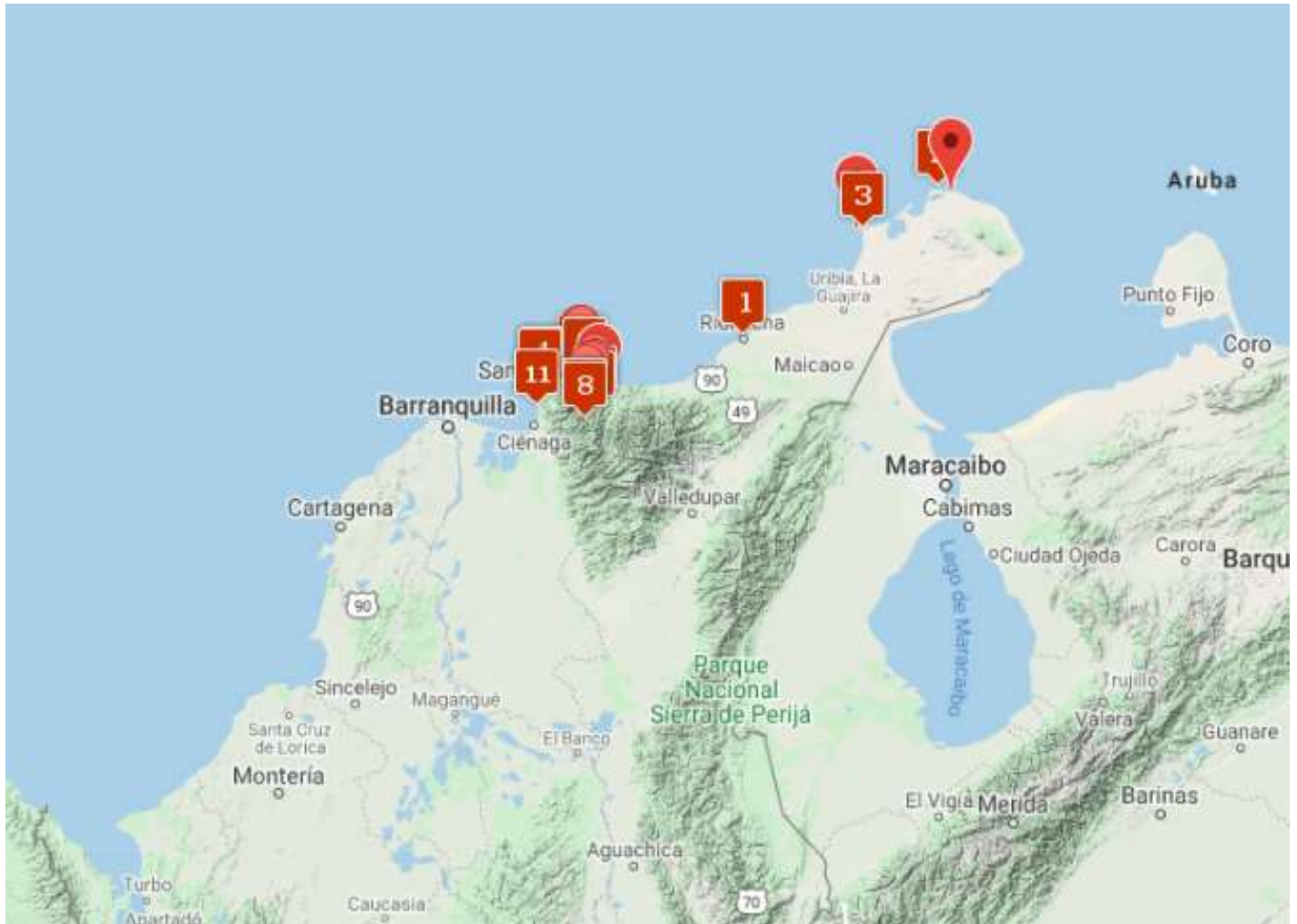
Full day tour to the Tayrona National Park. This is one of the most famous natural parks in Colombia with some of the most beautiful beaches of the Colombian Caribbean coast, right at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the world’s highest coastal mountain range. The park has a protected area of 150 km<sup>2</sup> of land and 30 km<sup>2</sup> of sea, being the second most visited park in the country. Due to its privileged location, there is a huge biodiversity and also archeological ruins like “Pueblito”. From the park’s main parking lot there is a light hike by the beach line to the Arrecife’s area (one hour), an iconic place within the park. From there, another 25 minutes to La Piscina beach and 20 minutes more to El Cabo San Juan. There will be good time to enjoy these idyllic Caribbean beaches and the nature of the place. Lunch will be held at a local place, where they prepare traditional fish. On the afternoon, return back to lodge. Night at a beach lodge.



## **Day 11: Santa Marta – Departure**

Pick up and transfer to Santa Marta’s airport (one and a half to two hours).

## Route



### Technical Characteristics:

**Route Profile:** Medium. You will be hiking on a trail with continuous line and balanced ascent. The terrain is partially steep, fall hazard is possible. Some sure footedness and experience with hilly terrain would be of benefit.

**Total Distance:** 46 km

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

*The Lost City* trek closes once a year for a period of a month, usually around the beginning of September. This is due to Indigenous religious ceremonies.

*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





#### **Prices per Person**

Double Occupancy	\$ 2395.00 USD
Single Supplement	\$ 250.00 USD
Domestic Flight Tickets**	\$ 250.00 USD
Tour Leader (for groups up to 6 people)	\$ 1395.00 USD
English speaking guide for La Guajira tour (2 to 5 people)	\$ 160.00 USD
Translator during the Lost City Trek (2 to 5 people)	\$ 150.00 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\* hotel and oversized hammocks

#### **Included:**

- Local Spanish speaking cultural guide from day 2 to 5 for 2 – 5 people
- Local Spanish speaking trekking guide from day 6 to 9 for 2 – 5 people
- Local English speaking trekking/cultural guide from day 1 to 9 for groups larger than 6 people
- Private transport during the entire program
- National Park entrance fee and park's insurance
- City tour in Santa Marta and entrance fees
- 1 night in shared double room in Riohacha
- 1 night in shared double room in rustic lodge in Punta Gallinas
- 1 night in shared double room in rustic lodge in Cabo de la Vela
- 2 nights in shared double room in Santa Marta
- 2 nights in shared double room at Tayrona's Beach Lodge
- 3 nights in hammocks or mattresses for the Lost City trek (mattresses according to availability)
- Meals as specified in the itinerary (10 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 5 dinners)

#### **Not Included:**

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

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