

#BritsInColombia

A little local knowledge
goes a long way



British Embassy
Colombia

If you need help from the British Embassy in Colombia, reach us on **(57) (1) 326 8300** choosing the consular option.

The local emergency number is **123** (available in Spanish only).

For more detailed Travel Advice visit:

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BOGOTA



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

La Candelaria, Monserrate, numerous restaurants and parks, shops, cinemas and theatres, as well as museums, art galleries, curious old bookstores and colourful street art.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



On weekends, many Bogotanos enjoy outdoor activities like running, cycling on the 'ciclovía'. **Always dress in layers:** Bogota's weather is extremely changeable!



When getting to know the city: **Try to blend in with the locals** by not having expensive cameras or phones on display.



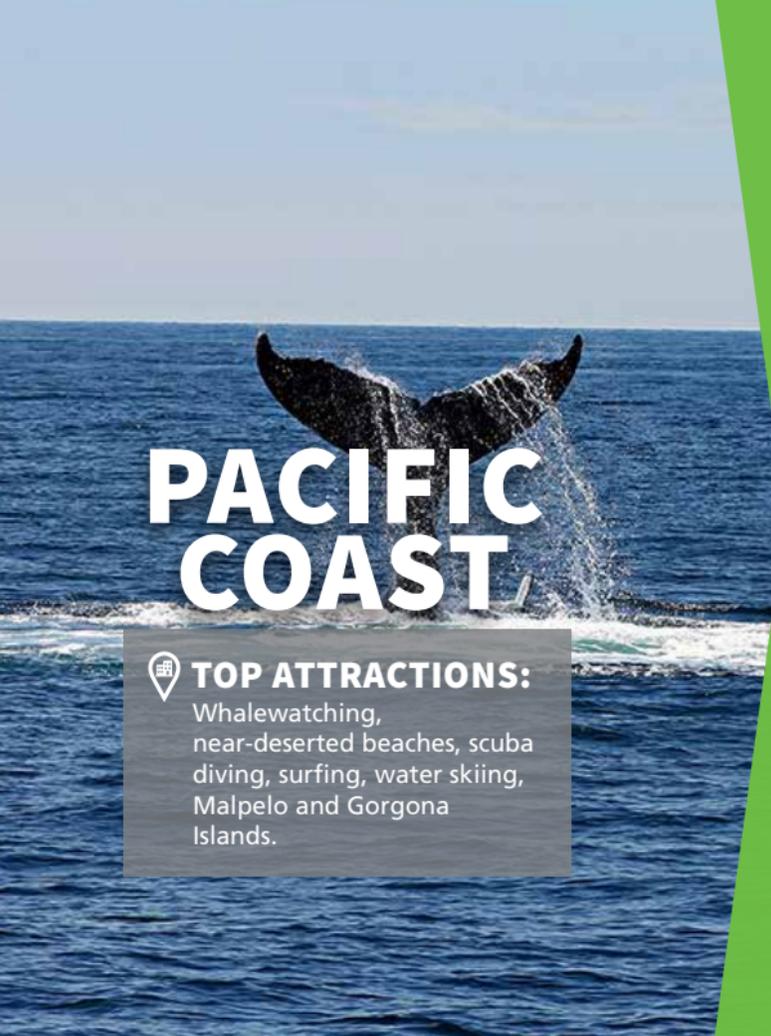
Keep an eye on your belongings: As in most big cities, pickpocketing and bag snatching are common. Take care especially at La Candelaria, Monserrate, Chapinero and on public transport.



At night, **enjoy the capital city's restaurants and nightlife responsibly**, respecting local laws and customs. Do not leave your drink unattended. Also, Colombians never walk home at night, always call a taxi!



When using taxis, order them at reception or with a registered company or app and make sure they turn the taximeter on.



PACIFIC COAST



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

Whalewatching, near-deserted beaches, scuba diving, surfing, water skiing, Malpelo and Gorgona Islands.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



Whale watching is an unmissable experience: witness this in the coastal towns of Nuquí, Gorgona, Bahía Solano and La Barra from August to October.



Plan ahead: it is a remote area and internet access can be scarce, so book and save your itinerary information in advance. Also, tell family and friends where you are going, as you may be out of contact.



While exploring, **make sure to stay hydrated, use insect repellent and sunscreen,** wear comfortable clothes and carry a torch – it can get dark fast!



Always use recognised tour companies and diving schools. Spend the night in official hotels and hostels within tourist areas.



Get travel insurance and do not take risks that could invalidate it – check the small print!



CALI



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

The sounds of salsa in all bars, nightclubs, fairs and parties all year round; the Cali River; and the San Antonio neighbourhood, the oldest in Cali.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



During the day, take a relaxing stroll along the Cali River or explore the quaint San Antonio neighbourhood. **Try to blend in with the locals** by not having expensive cameras or phones on display.



Keep an eye on your belongings: As in most big cities, pickpocketing and bag snatching can be common. Take care especially in restaurants and bars, as well as around the bus station.



At night, **enjoy Cali's bars, salsa clubs and parties responsibly, in respect of local laws and customs.** Do not leave your drink unattended. Don't worry if you've never danced before!



When using taxis, bear in mind Colombians never walk home at night, **always call a registered taxi at the end of a night out.**



Get travel insurance and do not take risks that could invalidate it – check the small print!

COFFEE REGION

TOP ATTRACTIONS:

Rolling hills and devoted coffee farmers. The region has varying altitudes and towns such as Salento preserve the region's traditions and architecture. It is the home of the Colombian national tree, the wax palm, which can be found in Cocora Valley.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



Experience Colombia's agro-tourism offer: the best way is to visit an Hacienda, one of the traditional farmhouses that have overseen the production of coffee beans for centuries.



Always use recognised tour companies and stay in official hotels/hostels.



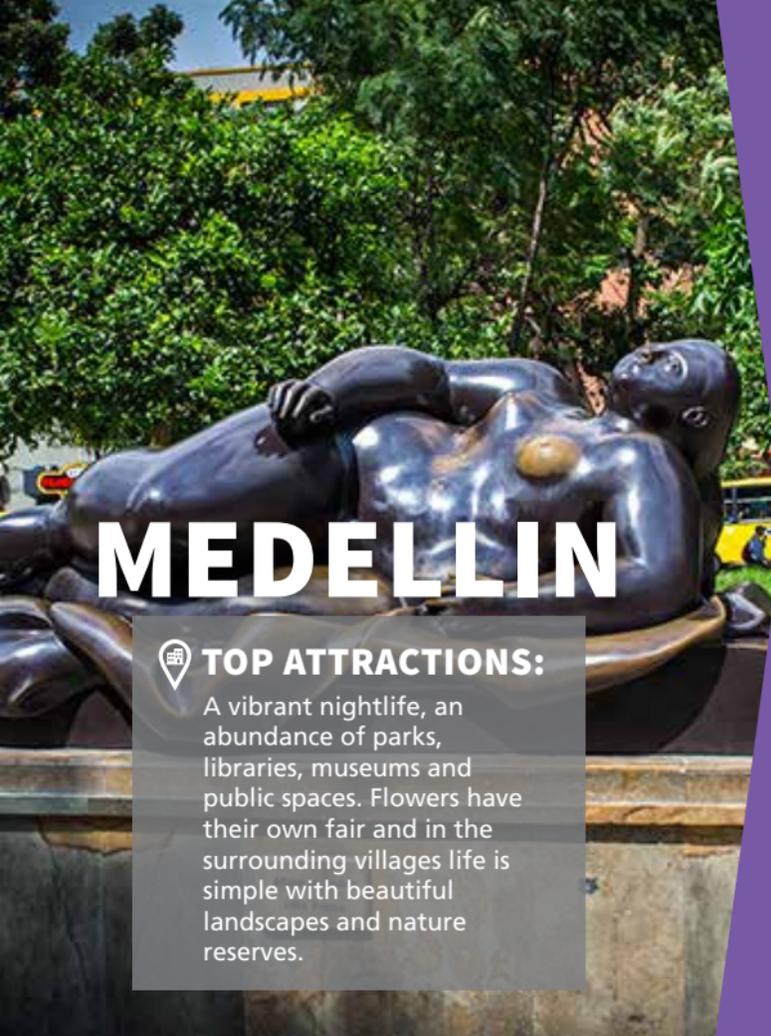
Plan your itinerary: it is a large area, so plan ahead and consider how you will move around. If using public transport, check information on routes and use reputable companies.



While exploring coffee farms and natural parks, **make sure to stay hydrated, use insect repellent and sunscreen, wear comfortable clothes** and carry a torch – it can get dark fast!



Keep an eye on your belongings and get travel insurance - do not take risks that could invalidate it and check the small print!



MEDELLIN



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

A vibrant nightlife, an abundance of parks, libraries, museums and public spaces. Flowers have their own fair and in the surrounding villages life is simple with beautiful landscapes and nature reserves.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



When enjoying Medellín's pleasant climate and modern transport systems, **try to blend in with the locals** by not having expensive cameras or phones on display.



Always use official hotels and/or hostels, as well as reputable tour companies to get the most out of the city and surrounding villages.



Keep an eye on your belongings: as in most big cities, pickpocketing and bag snatching are common. Take care around the city centre, stadium, Laureles and El Poblado, especially after a night out and on public transport.



At night, **enjoy Medellín's restaurants and nightlife responsibly, respecting local laws and customs.** Stay with your group, never leave drinks unattended and stick to busier areas. Also, Colombians never walk home at night, always call a taxi!



When using taxis, order them at reception or with a registered company or app and make sure they turn the taximeter on.

CARTAGENA DE INDIAS



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

Magical sunsets, colourful colonial architecture and mouth-watering cuisine, as well as sandy beaches and the Rosario Islands.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



When exploring the walled city, **make sure to stay hydrated, use insect repellent and sunscreen.**



If visiting the Rosario Islands, **always use reputable tour companies** or take a boat from the official port. After 3 pm, the tide changes and the sea can get choppy! Beware of riptides.



Keep an eye on your belongings - pickpocketing and bag snatching can be common. Take care especially outside the city walls and on beaches.



Beware of hagglers: if interested in buying something, always agree on a price first. And remember, there is no such thing as a free trial!



At night, **enjoy Cartagena's restaurants and nightlife responsibly**, respecting local laws and customs. Do not leave drinks unattended. Also, Colombians never walk home at night, so always call a registered taxi, especially if going from the old city to a hotel in Bocagrande.

SANTA MARTA



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

The imposing Sierra Nevada, the world's highest coastal mountain range; Tayrona National Park; Minca, the Lost City, Taganga and Palomino are all on its doorstep.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



On day trips, **use recognised tour companies and diving schools.** Make sure you stay hydrated, use insect repellent and sunscreen and wear comfortable clothes.



Be wary of jumping off rocks and waterfalls, currents and depth vary and can be dangerous!



Beware of hagglers on the beaches: if interested in buying something, always agree on a price first. There is no such thing as a free trial!



At night, **enjoy Santa Marta's vibrant nightlife responsibly,** respecting local laws and customs. Stay in your group and choose popular, well-lit streets to get to your destination. Keep an eye on your belongings - pickpocketing and bag snatching can be common.



Be wary of using moto-taxis: use registered drivers, always agree the price in advance, and get off the bike on your left side to avoid burns.

SAN ANDRES & PROVIDENCIA



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

White sandy beaches, beautiful sunsets, crystalline waters and colourful corals surrounded by tropical fish.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



On day trips, **stay hydrated and use sun protection.** Always use recognised tour companies and diving schools: the sea and tides can get choppy!



If you decide to rent a golf cart to move around the island, **drive safely.** They are faster than you think!



Be aware that **you will need to pay a tourism tax** prior to boarding your flight.



Weather conditions on the island can cause flights and boats to be delayed. **Plan for all eventualities in your travel itinerary.**



Keep an eye on your belongings and get travel insurance - do not take risks that could invalidate it and check the small print!

THE AMAZON



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

Enormous trees that tower over jungles, rivers that flow through forests, and the biodiversity of the birds and the beasts, including pink dolphins, sloths and monkeys.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



Plan ahead: it is a remote area and internet access can be scarce, so book and save your itinerary information in advance. Also, tell your family and friends where you are going, as you may be out of contact.



Only use official hostels and hotels and go on recognised tours to get the most out of the Amazon.



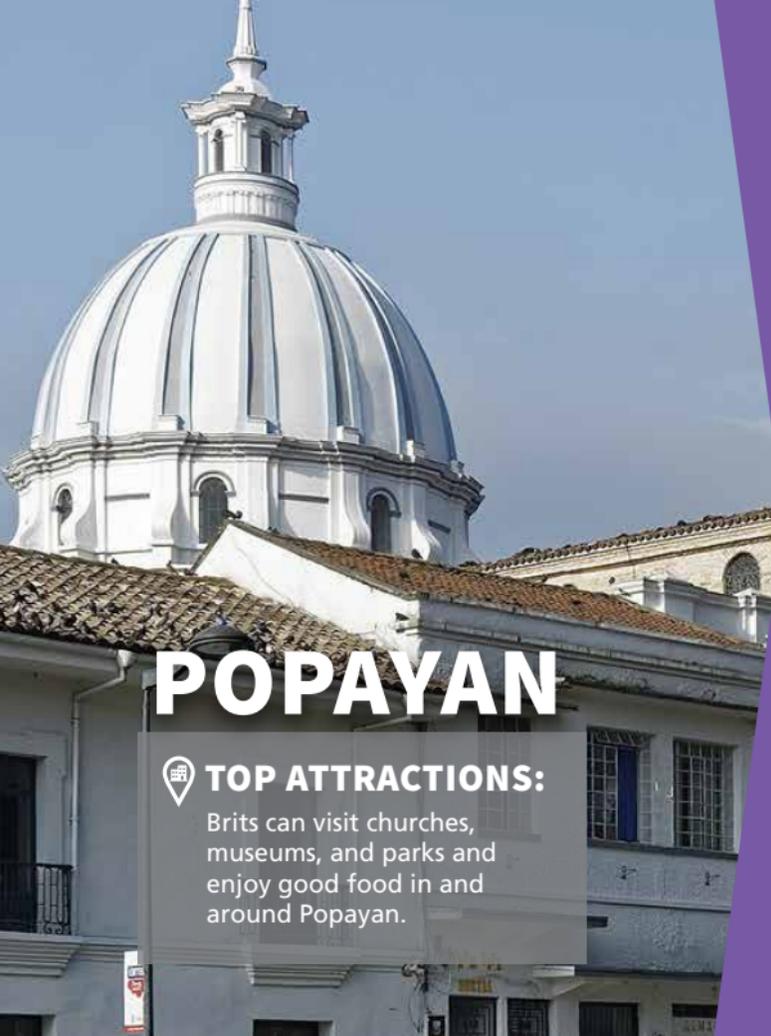
While exploring, **make sure to stay hydrated, use repellent and sunscreen, wear comfortable clothes and carry a torch** – it can get dark fast!



If you are invited to take part in a Yage/Ayahuasca ceremony, please be aware that consumption of this brew is not regulated and its interaction with existing medical conditions is not well understood. People have suffered serious illnesses and in some cases death after participating in these ceremonies.



Get travel insurance and do not take risks that could invalidate it – check the small print!



POPAYAN



TOP ATTRACTIONS:

Brits can visit churches, museums, and parks and enjoy good food in and around Popayan.

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



To get the most of Popayan, **use official hostels and hotels and go on recognised tours.** They can advise you on what the city has to offer!



Public transport is widely available, but **it is best to plan ahead.** Be aware that routes to the nearby archaeological sites involve journeys on unpaved and muddy roads which are susceptible to landslides. Journey times can be much longer than advertised.



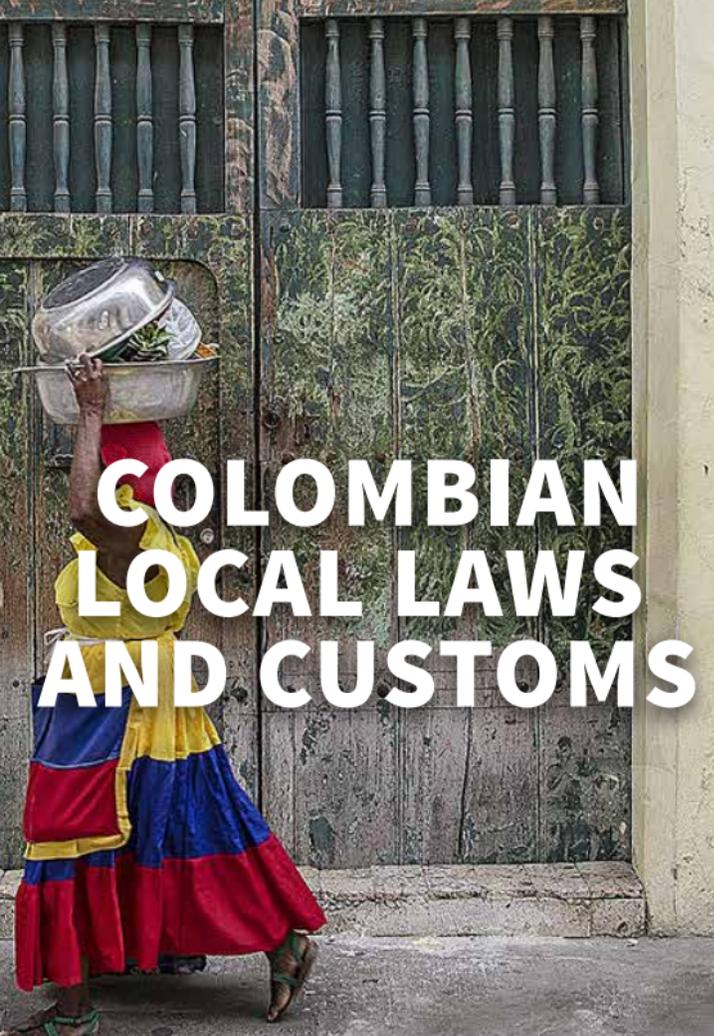
Look after your belongings while on buses.



If entering Colombia through the Ecuador land border crossing, make sure you get an entry stamp with Migracion Colombia to avoid any fines!



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A woman in a traditional Colombian dress, featuring a yellow top and a red and blue skirt, is walking past a large, weathered wooden door. She is carrying a large metal basket on her head, which contains some greenery. The door has a decorative metal grille at the top.

COLOMBIAN LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE LOCALS



Check your passport validity: you will need 6 months validity to enter Colombia.



Police have the right to request random identification checks. You will need to provide a copy of your passport and visa or entry stamp. Ask to see the Police Officer's identification number and badge if you have any concerns. It is common for police in Colombia to carry weapons so do not be alarmed. Also, tourism police in Colombia cannot take official police reports. These are done online or at a police station.



Alcohol consumption on the streets and beaches is prohibited and you can be fined.



Enjoy Colombia, but do not use drugs. Penalties for selling and using drugs in Colombia are severe, including jail time.



Colombian law protects boys, girls and adolescents against sexual exploitation. Engaging in these practices is a criminal offence.