

A publication by

BLUEDORS
Apartment Boutique Hotels



THE BUSINESS
TRIP GUIDE
TO BOGOTA

Finding the balance between
work and pleasure.





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This e-book, written by [Bluedoors Apartment Boutique Hotels](#), is a guide for those who travel to Bogotá for work. Here, you'll find out the best places to eat, cultural advice and where to buy gifts for family and friends back home. All the courtesy information provided is help you make the most of your trip, both when at work and when discovering the city.

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A word from the CEO.



When I meet over dinner with business people, I am often asked “why are Colombian people so friendly?” It’s a question that I still haven’t managed to answer, however it’s undeniable that the smiling faces leave a lasting impression. Call this friendliness our national speciality that, when combined with the luxury services provided by Bluedoors, creates an atmosphere like no other you’ll find in Bogotá.

Since signing the peace deal, Colombia has been rapidly changing and is opening up to the world in terms of tourism and business. Over the last five years there’s been a sharp increase in the arrival in foreign companies with newcomers including Facebook and Ikea. It’s a tipping point that’s allowing the world to see a different side to the city where I was born, have raised a family and run a business.

Notwithstanding, it’s understandable that guests still arrive with security concerns. My response to ease the anxious mind is that Bogotá is a now safe city, when the right precautions are taken into consideration. Taxis remain a problem area, so our English-speaking reception can book transportation for you with our professional and safe drivers. Your safety and well-being is of utmost concern to us, for this reason we have been security approved by the US embassy and will always be there to offer advice.

We aim to provide guests with ‘wow’ experiences in a destination packed with many other amazing things to discover. There has never been a more exciting time to visit Colombia and, from the comfort of Bluedoors, you will quickly discover why Bogotá is an exciting place to be. One of the best-kept secrets are the city’s 23 golf pitches that can be used all year round and guests can make use of the exclusive Club Campestre de Los Lagartos. As a keen golf player, for me, this is reason alone to consider Bogotá to have one of the best climates in the world and to be a wonderful place to live and call home.



Fernando Sanchez
CEO
Bluedoors Apartment Boutique Hotels



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What is Bluedoors?



Bluedoors [Apartment Boutique Hotels](#) is a chain of five luxury apartment boutique hotels located in Bogota's key commercial districts. Designed for long-stay guests, who may be travelling for business or moving permanently, each hotel is equipped with all the amenities you'll need to feel as at home as possible during your stay in Colombia's exciting capital.

If you travel a lot for work then the idea of staying in yet another hotel might bore you. This is why Bluedoors offers something more special to the seasoned traveller. With 24h room service, an on-site restaurant, gym and spa facilities, you can enjoy all the luxury of a hotel but have the home comfort of a fully equipped kitchen and living space. This unique combination allows you do exactly what you want, when you want. On one evening you can stock the fridge with beer and watch a football game like you do at home, and on next make use of the spa facilities and order room service.

After having traveled the world, CEO Fernando Sanchez Paredes wanted to harness the human connection often found in youth hostels, with the uncompromised luxury of an excellent hotel so as to create the perfect stay. This is why the Hotel Continental, Jazz Apartments, Celebrities Suites, 93 Luxury Suites and 100 Luxury Suites were all created upon the company's central philosophy - *the art of living*. Today, it's something that continues to evolve and inspire the hotel's mission to deliver service with a passion to all guests.



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Staying at Bluedoors



When you stay in a new city for business, be that for a weekend or even a couple of months, you need to get the job done and take full advantage of the perks of travelling for work. Offering hotel-served luxury apartments, Bluedoors is the ideal atmosphere for those coming to Bogotá for work who are looking to feel at home during their stay.

Want more information? We would love to answer any questions you have. Please visit our [website](#) or contact us via the information you provided at the end of this guide.




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Welcome to Colombia



Blessed with both a caribbean and Pacific coastline and structured by three mountain ranges, Colombia is a country of staggering natural diversity. As the landscape changes from coastline to dry desert; tropical rainforests to Andean mountain, the people and customs change too. The faces of Colombian people reflect the country's history and creation, from the indigenous pre-Columbian societies to the arrival of the Spanish and other influences. This unique collage has inspired explorers, smugglers, writers, musicians and now, a new wave of commerce that is taking advantage of a country shaking off its past and moving towards the future.



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Facts

**COLOMBIAN
POPULATION** { 47,698,524 }



ROMAN CATHOLIC + { 79% }

TOTAL POPULATION AGE: { 75.9
YEARS }

 **MALE:** { 72.8 YEARS }  **FEMALE:** { 79.3 YEARS }

2017 est.





What's Bogotá like?

When you think of Bogotá, or Colombia in general, your mind will probably wonder to the tropics, meaning warm weather and flip flops. However, this couldn't be further from the truth. Nestled up in the Andés mountains, Bogotá is often romantically referred to as being 2,640 meters closer to the stars. Whilst this makes for a dramatic mountainous backdrop, it does cause some people to feel a little out of breath for a couple of days and means the weather is - surprisingly for the unaware foreigner - a little chilly.

In one day alone Bogotá can experience all the seasons, from dazzling sunshine to torrential rain. The trick for dressing for Bogotá is layering and keeping an umbrella handy at all times. Bogotá is known locally as the fridge, *la nevera*, for its low temperatures of around 64 °F and sudden dramatic down pours are common. Of course, this is a nickname given by a country that does not experience the plummeting temperatures of a North American or European winter however.. Expect a light chill that's never low enough to wear gloves, but is definitely not hot enough to wear your summer wardrobe.

Founded in 1538 by Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada, the busy city was once the center of the Muisca people's civilisation. Today, there is no evidence of its indigenous roots, however the colonial buildings of the city centre and a visit to the Gold Museum bring alive the city's history. Today, the city sprawls in all directions, with poorer working-class neighbourhoods to the south and the middle upper class neighbourhoods towards the north. The historic center *la Candelaria* remains the heart of the government and city council, however the north is where you'll find the best restaurants and shopping.

Bogotá can seem overwhelming at first, but once you grab the bull by the horns you'll discover that it's a very exciting place to be. If you'd like to find out more about what's going on locally, pick up a copy of [The Bogota Post](#) or [The City Paper](#).



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CHAPTER 1

Words of Wisdom - from one expat to another expat





Colombian Culture



When you arrive in a country for work, no matter how long your stay you will need to adapt quickly. Colombians are known for their warmth and friendliness which makes things a lot easier, however just in case we've provided 10 tips to give you an extra hand.

DOS AND DON'TS



1. DON'T TALK ABOUT PABLO ESCOBAR

Yes, he is a very famous character who is often romanticized in popular culture, however don't forget you are in the country where his damage was felt. For most Colombians he represents the epitome of evil and they are keen to leave him far behind. Unless voluntarily brought up, it's best to avoid the topic. If you'd like to find out more about the country's history then there're are plenty of museums and tours, or alternatively grab a copy of [Tom Feiling's Short Walks from Bogota: Journeys in the New Colombia](#).





2. DO ALWAYS SAY HELLO

Colombians, especially local bogotanos, are very polite and you will always be greeted in accordance with the time of day (*buenos días, buenas tarde, buenas noches*). In office situations this can be a particularly timely process as it's accompanied by one kiss on the cheek for women and a handshake between men. The same goes for saying goodbye - no slipping out the back-door in this country.



3. DO TRY YOUR BEST ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Colombians are big on dancing with the salsa capital being [Cali](#). If you head out for the night or get invited to a family party, expect dancing to happen at some point in the evening. Don't be shy and definitely give it your best shot. In a helpful attempt to teach you Colombians will often say "just feel the rhythm," but if this isn't doing wonders for you then there're plenty of dance schools. [La Suculenta](#), located near the calle 85, is an english-speaking school with experience in teaching foreigners.



4. DON'T TALK ABOUT POLITICS

This isn't a definite no-go, but it can be a risky area for a foreigner, especially if you don't know much about Colombia. Politically, the country is very polarised and people's leanings often belong tribally to left or right. The same goes for the Peace deal. Unless you know what your doing, it's best to skirt around the topic. If you'd like to do some research, [these documentaries](#) have been picked as the best to begin understand the country's history.



5. DO GET OVER PERSONAL SPACE

In the US and in Europe personal space is very important. In Colombia the concept is a little looser. Expect people to walk or stand really close behind you in the street or grocery store. Colombians are often quite curious about foreigners so don't be surprised if you get asked some rather personal questions. Until fairly recently a foreigner was a rare sight, so don't take it personally as it comes from a good place.





6. DON'T BELIEVE IN STEREOTYPES

Like any other country in the world, Colombia conjures up certain stereotypes. While certain ones have some grip on reality, for example a more relaxed attitude to punctuality, in general it's best not to arrive with prejudices.

On the subject of punctuality, locals are always late for social events. However the work place is a different story, unlike on the coast Bogotanos tend to be nearly on time. Do expect meetings to be canceled at the very last minute.



7. DO DRESS SMART

Personal grooming is very important in Colombia so, while you shouldn't feel like you need to cramp your personal style, it's good to know what to expect. You'll see women tottering in impractical heels and manicured nails on men, all in the name of fashion. If your heading out for the night, unless going somewhere casual, trainers are generally not accepted.

If you need to scrub up for a special event or just need a routine haircut, talk to reception at [Bluedoors](#) and they can help you book an appointment or order someone to come to your room.



8. DON'T SKIP LUNCH

Lunch is the nation's favourite meal of the day and office workers will often stop for two hours. On a busy day this can be too long, but at least give yourself the full hour. The most typical Colombian lunch option is a *corrientazo* restaurant that aims to fill stomachs at a low cost. For a couple of dollars you can get a basic two course meal that mostly consists of carbs and protein. This isn't the best option for a business meeting but definitely worth the experience at least once during your stay.





[Crepes and Waffles](#) is a reasonably priced very popular lunch choice. Here, you'll find crepes with a variety of toppings, salads and soups, as well as a good cause as the restaurant's policy is to only employ single mothers.

If you fancy something a little more exotic, [WOK](#) is a fusion restaurant that attracts a large office crowd at lunch time. It might not be the same as your local Asian restaurant, but it's always a crowd pleaser offering South Asian curries and sushi. If you like your food spicy make sure to ask for extra heat, Colombians are very reserved when it comes to hot food.

If your looking for somewhere appropriate and convenient for a business lunch or breakfast, every [Bluedoors hotel](#) has a restaurant serving Colombian and international food. While there's no dress code, the interior is elegant and there're conference rooms available if needed.



9. DO GET USED TO WHATSAPP

Colombians love WhatsApp and will often use it instead of email for work purposes. The barrage can be very overwhelming at first, especially if you find yourself in a company group. Saying hello is very important so, even in a work setting, your Colombian co-workers will likely start every conversation with "Hola, ¿Cómo estás?" before getting to the point.



10. DO WAKE UP EARLY.

Bogotanos love getting up early and office hours can start from 7.30am. While this makes most people from other countries wince, as it gets dark early all year round (6pm), getting an early start helps to make the most of the day.





Getting around

Bogotá is a sprawling city and at times can feel chaotic, however orienting yourself is actually surprisingly easy. The city's streets are built around a numbered grid system of *calle*s that run east-west and *carrer*as that run north-south. To avoid having to pull a compass out, the mountains located to the east provide more than just stunning

scenery as a helpful orientation tool. Once you familiarize yourself with the system, addresses are easy to read. Take calle 74 #14-09 for example. The place you are looking for is located on the 74th calle on the intersection with carrera 14. The last number refers to the building, and usually odd and even numbers run on different sides of the street.

Some well-known *carrer*as have names like Avenida Jimenez and Avenida Caracas.



Everyone loves to complain about the Transmilenio, Bogotá's rather original response for a much needed metro, however it's the cheapest and most effective way of moving around the city. You can purchase a *tullave* travel card at the various stations and there are plenty of police officers who are happy to help you on your way. Download the app [Moovit](#) to plan your journey before you arrive at the station.





During rush hour it's to be avoided if possible, as thousands of commuters pile in with little or no room to breathe and some rather aggressive elbow barging. You'll never get on if you wait for someone to step aside.

Safety:

Be very wary of your personal items when riding the transmilenio. It's best to adopt the front backpack fashion.



Once a chaotic system of *collectivos*, mini buses that could be hailed down at any point in the street, Bogotá's city council has made a considerable effort to incorporate them into a more regulated system of SITP buses. They are often painted blue, or have the SITP sign stuck on their colourful side. It's good to know your route before you step onto a bus, as they are often packed and it can be hard for the driver to let you know where to get off. If they bus is marked SITP you can use your tullave transmilenio card, if not you'll pay a small cash fee to the driver.

Safety:

Be very wary of your personal items when on the bus. As when on the Transmilenio, it's best to adopt the front backpack.

UBER



Many of you coming from abroad will be familiar with how Uber works. In Bogotá, it can be a very comfortable of getting around the city as the cars are cleaner and the drivers can offer more of a service. However, many of the services that Uber offers are illegal here, and taxi drivers have been known to react aggressively towards drivers.

Safety:

If taking Uber X, be sure that someone sits in the front seat and avoid taking an Uber next to a yellow taxi rank.





DRIVING

Locals say if you can drive in Bogotá you can drive anywhere, meaning if you are a nervous driver then this might not be the place for you. In an attempt to reduce the city's traffic problems, the council introduced *Pico y Placa*, whereby odd and even number plates rotate on being able to drive during rush hour or not. On a day-to-day basis driving may not be the most convenient way to get around, but for escaping the city it's the best option.

While you are a tourist you can drive on your foreign licence, however legally after 90 days you must get a Colombian licence. The process often changes so it's best to check at your nearest transit office.

Safety:

Ensure to park in parking lots that offer to look after your car for a small fee. Drive with your windows rolled up and doors locked.



BICYCLE



Cycling is becoming an increasingly popular way of getting around and designated lanes have been expanding throughout the city. Cycling in Bogotá, much like driving, is not for the faint of heart and you must always have your wits about you. It's best not to head out in rush hour unless you know your route. A good time to start to venture out on your bike and familiarise yourself with the city is on the Sunday *ciclovia* as the main roads shut to allow cyclist to rule the roads.

Safety:

helmet, lights and visible clothing are essential. Invest in a good lock and use official parking lots.

Want to get more familiar with the city?
Take a peep at our map of Bogotá on p.25





Staying Safe

During the 80s and 90s Bogotá was a dangerous place. The murder rate was high and there was the constant threat of bombings from various armed actors. Fortunately today, the city has turned itself around, and residence and tourists alike can experience a new found sense of security. However, this does not mean that risk isn't there. Colombia remains a very unequal country and Bogotá is a capital city, so pick-pocketing and mugging are still a relatively common occurrence. By staying at [Bluedoors Hotels](#) you know you are

staying in a safe area of the city, but it's always best to exercise caution or not *dar papaya* as locals say, meaning to not put yourself in the position where something might happen to you.

Bogotá is a fun place that many expats enjoy calling home, so by following the advice given below and consulting our Bluedoor staff around any safety doubts, it is unlikely that you will have any bad experiences during your stay in Bogotá.





Do's and Don'ts



<p>Do take an official taxi from the airport or arrange a pickup with Bluedoors before arrival.</p>	<p>Don't walk around at night.</p>
<p>When you land at Bogotá's El Dorado airport you might be approached by some people offering you taxi services. Ignore them and head straight out the doors to the official yellow taxi line. There will be people there to assist you with your baggage.</p>	<p>During the day in many touristy areas there is a strong police presence, and as long as you are paying attention and not flashing your valuables, you will be able to discover the city risk-free. However, at night the darkness provides fresh opportunity for thieves. In the well lit up-market Zona T, packed with restaurants and nightclubs you will see people walking around in the early evening, but if you don't know where you are going it's best to call a cab or an Uber. While visiting La Candelaria, the historic centre, you should not walk around at night as robberies are a common occurrence. If you don't have data on your mobile phone, restaurants will happily call a taxi for you.</p>
<p>Do keep your valuables hidden.</p>	
<p>Especially when leaving the airport as you might have a large amount of cash on you. To avoid drawing attention to yourself by drawing out a large wad, divide it up on your person. When you are sightseeing around the city, avoid wearing expensive jewelry or sunglasses.</p>	
<p>Do learn Spanish</p>	
<p>The more you can understand your surroundings the safer you will feel. Get your hands on a phrase book beforehand and take Spanish lessons on arrival.</p>	<p>Don't use your cellphone on the street.</p>
<p>Do watch your drink</p>	<p>You will see people using theirs on the street during the day in busy business districts, however the general advice is to not take the risk. Many people are robbed when chatting away and not paying attention. If you need to get your cellphone out in the street to receive/ make a call or check directions, it is advised you step into nearby shop or restaurant and/or use headphones.</p>
<p>Bogota has a fun and diverse nightlife which is definitely worth exploring. Generally speaking, provided you are not walking around drunk late at night and call a cab, you'll have a great night out. However, while dancing the night away be aware of your drink. Spiking drinks with scopolamine, a drug that renders you nearly unconscious, is not uncommon in order to rob you.</p>	





Areas to avoid

During the day, the areas in which the Bluedoors hotels are situated are safe, but depending on where you're staying there is some area-specific advice.

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If you're staying in the city centre at **Hotel Continental**, don't walk around late at night and especially by yourself as robberies are common. Although the tourist areas are well-policed, jogging around the city center is not a good idea. The areas surrounding the city centre are some of the cities poorest and it is easy to find yourself somewhere you wouldn't want to be. If you want to run, the best place is down the septima on a Sunday morning when the road is closed for leisure activity. Under no circumstance go to either Parque de La Independencia or Parque Nacional

when it's dark as they both become very dangerous.

Celebrities Suites, Jazz Apartments, 93 Luxury and 100 Luxury are all located in wealthy business districts. Here, it is safe to run early in the morning and throughout the day as there are no dangerous surrounding neighbourhoods. It's not recommend you walk along the carrera 14, known as the Avenida Caracas, at anytime of day. In some parts it's safe, however it can quickly turn ugly. It's best to walk one below on the carrera 13.

Wherever you are in the city, whether that is eating out or visiting a cultural attraction, it's not recommended that you walk around at night. The city's streets become very empty after 9pm and risk increases especially if you are by yourself. Always call a taxi from any of the recommended apps.



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Emergency Numbers:

24/7  **EMERGENCY SERVICES (POLICE, MEDICAL, FIRE):** { **123** }



Tourist Police
(1) 337 4413



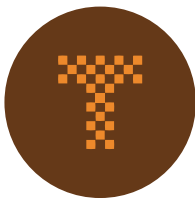
Traffic Police:
127



Metropolitan police:
112

21

TAXI APPS



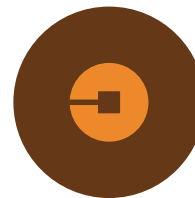
Tappsi



Cabify



Easy Taxi



Uber



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Essential Spanish

HOLA = Hello

BUENOS DÍAS = Good Morning

BUENAS TARDES = Good Afternoon

¿CÓMO ESTÁS? = how are you?

¿DÓNDE ESTÁ..? = Where is the ...?

¿ESTÁ CERCA? = is it near?

¿ESTÁ LEJOS? = is it far?

¿PUEDES LLEVARME AL AEROPUERTO?
please can you take me to the airport.

POR FAVOR = please

GRACIAS = Thank you

TINTO = Colombia black coffee

CAFÉ = Coffee served with milk

BARRIO = Neighbourhood

ME REGALA/ME REGALAS = can you give me

TRANCÓN = traffic jam

CHEVERE = cool

ME REGALA UNA CERVEZA
Could I please have a beer

ME REGALA LA CUENTA POR FAVOR
Could I get the bill, please?

¿A QUÉ HORAS ES LA REUNIÓN?
At what time is the meeting?

¿POR DÓNDE QUEDA LA REUNIÓN?
Where is the meeting?





Expressions

It won't take you long to realise that Colombians are big talkers and dichos (expressions) are very important to the national art of conversation. There's a never ending list, so here are just a few to get you started.

NO DAR PAPAYA

Literally translated as don't give papaya, this is a very common expression to describe not putting yourself in a situation where you can be taken advantage of. For example talking on your cell phone in the street is considered to be giving papaya to potential thieves.

HABLA HASTA POR LOS CODOS

As mentioned Colombians are big on chit-chat, however those who talk more than others do it until their elbows.

DIOS LE DA PAN AL QUE NO TIENE DIENTES

Literally translated as 'god gives bread to those without teeth,' this expression refers to a person who doesn't appreciate what they have.

SON COMO UÑA Y MUGRE

If someone says you and your friend are like nail and dirt, it means you're joined at the hip.

LE CUENTA EL MILAGRO PERO NO EL SANTO

When you've got some great gossip but you can't mention who told you, you're talking about the miracle but not the saint.

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CHAPTER 2

Maps

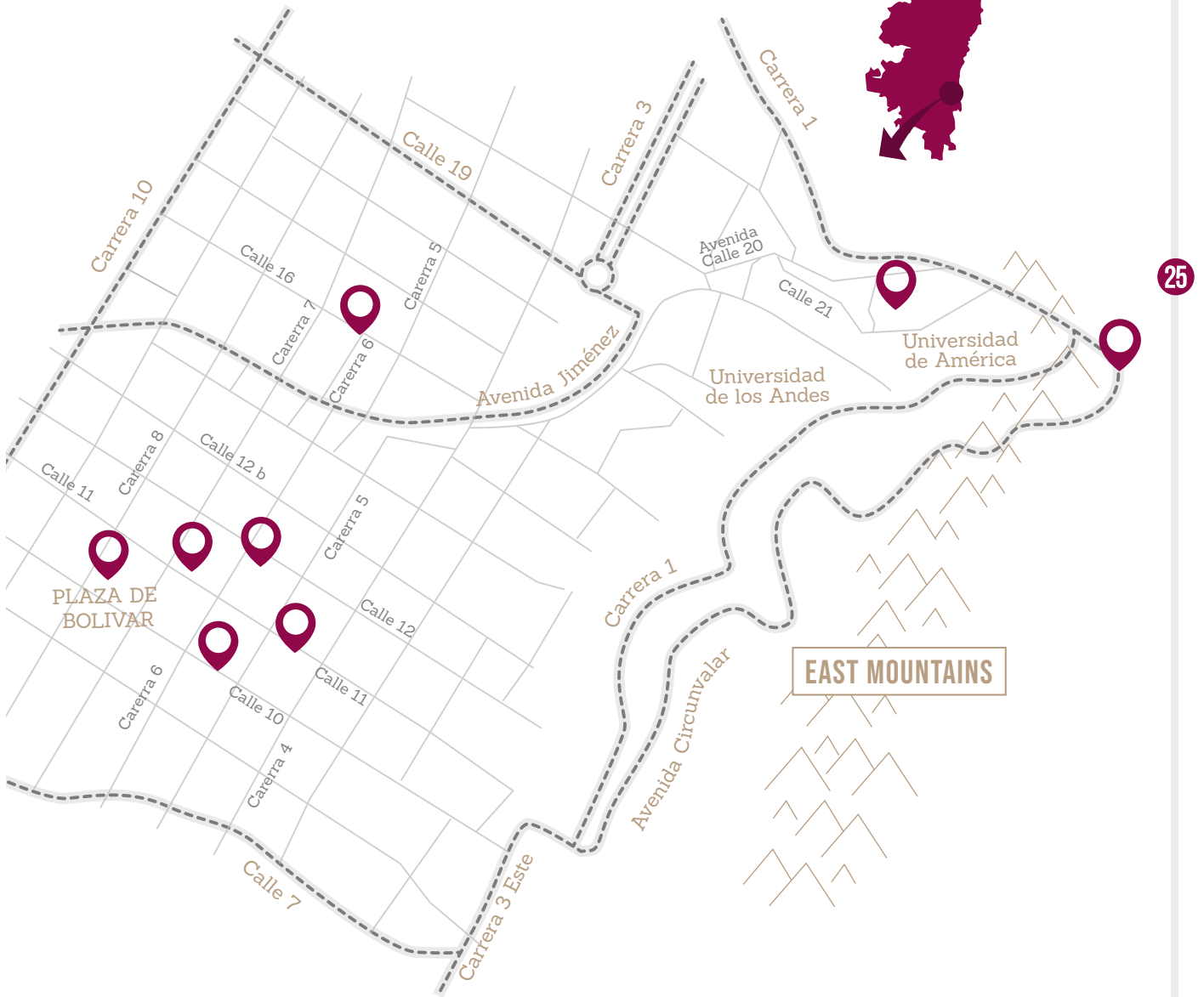




Tourist attraction



Click on  for more information



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Others Tourist attraction



USAQUEN

Once a village that was absorbed into Bogotá's urban sprawl, Usaquen is great for shopping and eating. This upmarket part of town has the same colonial charm as La Candelaria but with a bit more peace and quiet. This is a great place to come for lunch on the weekend and you'll find boutique souvenir shops in the Hacienda Santa Barbara shopping center. There's also an artisan market on Sundays.



ZONA ROSA

Very popular for Friday after work drinks, La Zona Rosa is packed with restaurants, bars and designer shops. Here you'll find the Hard Rock Café, a lively Irish pub and [Andrés DC](#), an up-market local treasure. The pedestrian area illuminated by fairy lights is known as La Zona T and is good place to stroll if you want to soak up the atmosphere.



PARQUE EL VIRREY

A popular jogging spot by la calle 82, El Virrey is near plenty of cafés, restaurants and shops. Right by [Jazz Apartments](#) it's safe to run in the early evening by the police station.





LA CANDELARIA

Bogota's historic centre, La Candelaria bubbles to the brim with museums, restaurants and government officials. On Sundays you'll find weird and wonderful street performers along the carrera septima and throughout the week various events, right by [Hotel Continental](#). Be aware of pickpocketing and don't walk around at night.



PARQUE DE LA 93

A pleasant grassy square lined with restaurants and cafés, Parque del 93 is popular during the day with office workers and dog owners, then comes alive at night with partygoers. Parque de la 93 is a good option for a working lunch or coffee, and it's right by [93 Luxury Suites](#).

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ZONA G

If you're looking for somewhere delicious to eat, La Zona G is Bogota's foodie district. Home to upmarket international cuisine and fancy hotels, here is a great place to come if your looking for a variety of choices for every meal of the day. Great for brunch and only a few Blocks away from [Celebrities Suites](#).



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1. Jazz Apartments

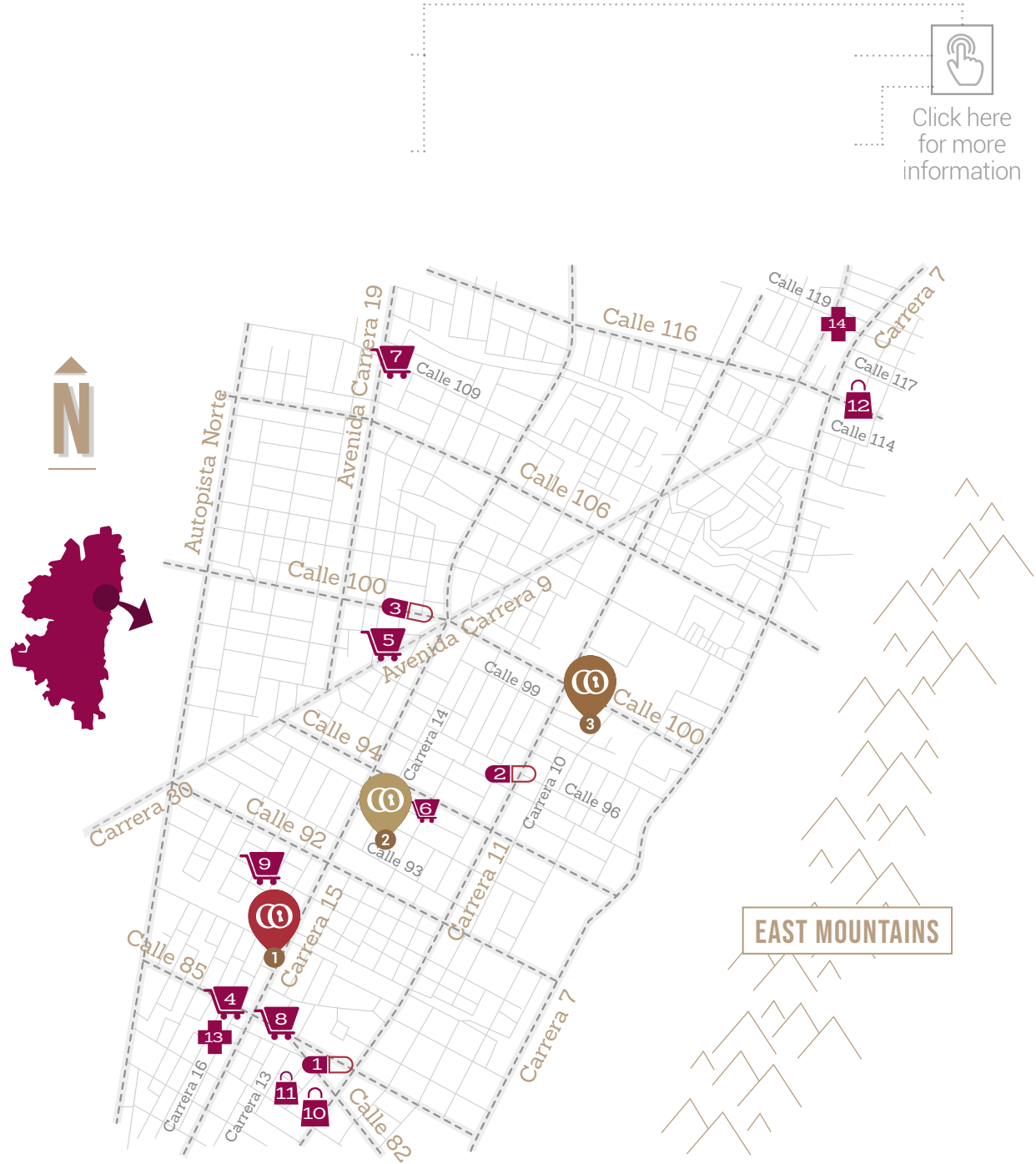
Callle 87 #15-35

2. 93 Luxury

Carrera 13A #93-51

3. 100 Luxury

Cra. 9a #98-3



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Celebrities Suites

Callle 74 #10-33



Click here for more information



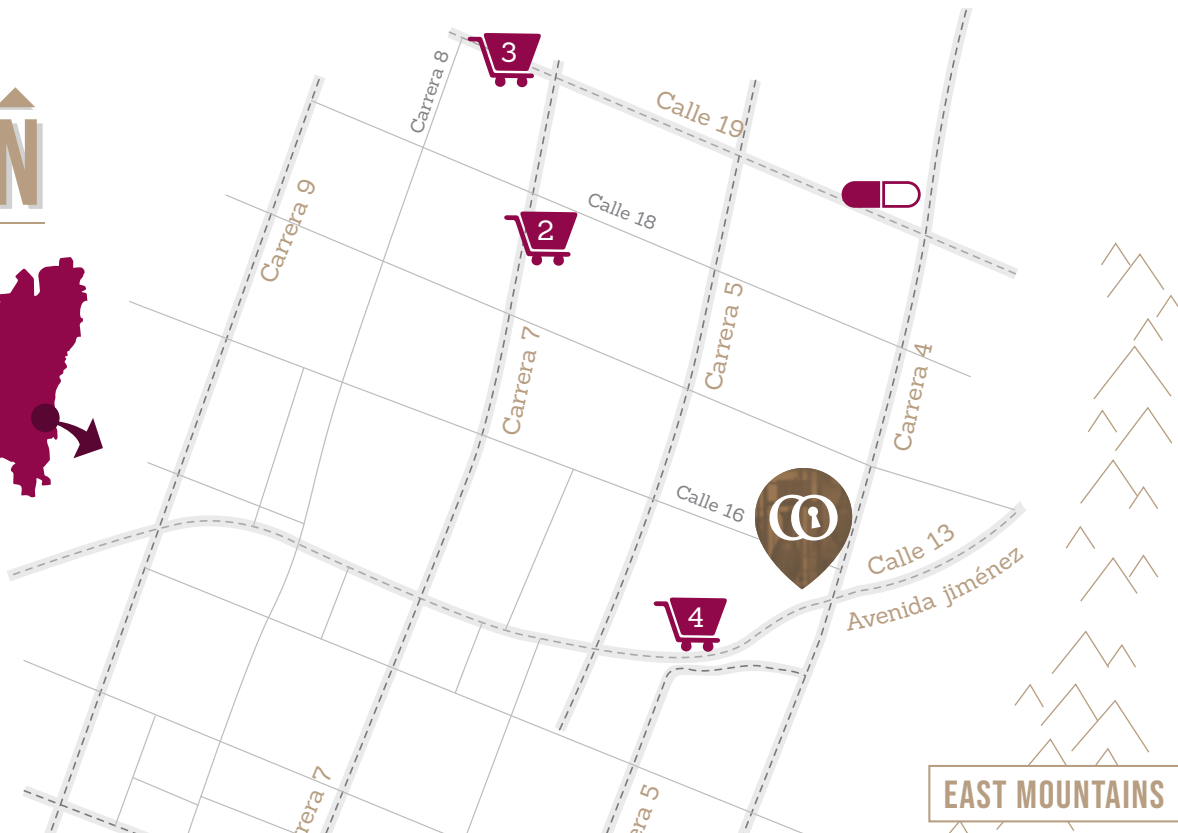


Continental

Avenida Jimenez #4-16



Click here for more information



SUPERMARKETS



A mid-range priced supermarket, you'll see many Exito Express' around the city that have all the basics as well as liqueur. The bigger stores located on calle 52 #13 and carrera 7 #32 have an extensive clothing and homeware section.

1. Éxito Cra. 7 #17-75
2. Éxito Carrera 7 # 11 - 30
3. Olimpica Cl 19 # 7 - 38
4. Olimpica Cl. 15 #4-74

EAST MOUNTAINS



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Other places of interest

MEDICAL CENTRES WITH A&E FACILITIES

▶ [Clinica del Country.](#)

T. 530 0470/530 1720, www.clinicadel-country.com, *Carrera 16 No. 82-57*

▶ [Clinica Marly.](#)

T. 343 6600, www.marly.com.co.
Calle 50 No. 9-67

▶ [Fundación Santa Fé de Bogotá.](#)

T 6030303, www.fsfb.org.co.
Calle 119 No- 7-75

SWIMMING POOLS

▶ [Simon Bolivar Aquatic Complex](#)

Carrera 60 #67b - 63

▶ [Colsubsidio](#)

Colsubsidio is a chain of health centres throughout the city. You can either sign up as a member or pay a one off fee to use the swimming facilities. The biggest centre can be found on *Carrera 30 #52 - 77*

▶ [Compensar Centro Urbano Recreativo](#)

Two olympic sized swimming pools that you can make use of, however make sure to check when there are classes going on.
Carrera 69 #49A-73

▶ [The Gimnasio Moderno](#)

Calle 76 #10 -35

▶ [Club de Comercio Bogotá](#)

Cl. 62 #5-88

PARKS

▶ [Parque de la Independencia.](#)

On the slope above the septima in the city center, Parque de la Independencia is one of Bogotá's oldest and most scenic parks. Designed to imitate a 19th century French style the attractive landscaping, that offers views on the Torre Colpatria and Bogotá's planetarium, is a pleasant spot to stroll after eating in one of the many excellent restaurants in La Macarena.

▶ [Parque Simon Bolivar.](#)

Located in the West of the city, Parque Simon Bolivar is the city's largest green space with a lake to rent small boats on. It's also great for a bike ride.

CHURCHES

▶ [United Church of Bogotá](#)

An non-denominational language church that has been serving the english speaking in Bogotá since community since 1867.
Cra. 4 #69-06

▶ [Jewish](#)

[Casa Lubavitch](#)
Calle 94 #9-52

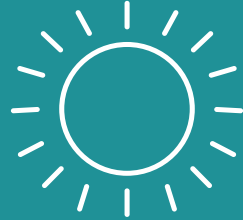
▶ [Mosque](#)

[MASJID ISTANBUL](#)
Calle 45A N°. 14-81

▶ [Johovah's Witness](#)

[Kingdom Hall](#)
Cl. 71a #19 - 63





CHAPTER 3

How to Bogota by day





Sightseeing

► La Calendaria



► Ciclovía



► Museo del Oro



To be blunt, Bogotá is no Venice or Cartagena and apart from La Candelaria or a trip out to surrounding villages, there aren't many tick-off-the-box wonders to see. However, he who writes Bogotá off is missing out the city's eccentricity that is unlike anywhere else. If you're lucky enough to be in Bogotá for more than just a weekend, you'll have plenty of time to discover the hidden corners of La Candelaria and peruse the various markets. Keep an eye on [The Culture Trip](#) for exciting things to explore.



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La Candelaria

Narrow cobbled streets and a top selection of museums means that a visit to La Candelaria is the best way to get a feel and understanding for the country's history. The impressive Plaza Bolivar is where you'll find Colombia's Palace of Justice and Congress as well as plenty of pigeons. On a walk heading towards the mountains you'll find international renowned graffiti and the [Chorro de Quevedo](#), the cobbled square where Bogotá was founded.

For pre-Columbian history head to [The Gold Museum](#), and for art go to [Banco de la Republica](#) and [The Botero Museum](#). There are numerous tours the around the city centre and one of the

most popular is [the graffiti tour](#) that explains the motives and inspirations behind the urban art scene. Make sure to book in advance.

As mentioned before, lunch is a very important meal in Colombia. The most important local dish is Ajiaco, a thick potato and chicken soup served with corn and avocado. Head to [La Puerta Falsa](#), or any of the surrounding restaurants for a traditional experience.

If you really want to inundate your senses with Colombian sights and smell, head early in the morning to [Paloquemao](#), a crowded lively food market just outside the Candelaria.



LOOK OUT FOR YOUR PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND ALWAYS TAKE A TAXI THERE AND BACK.



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CERRO MONSERRATE



To get a bird's-eye view of Bogotá head up to [Monserrate](#), the hilltop cathedral that dominates Bogotá's skyline in the city center. If you're feeling fit you can head up by foot early in the morning, or alternatively take the Teleférico (cable car) or the Funicular (a small train). Up top you'll find a great view, place of worship and a large tourist market.



CICLOVÍA ON A SUNDAY



Renting a bike or jogging down la Ciclovía is the best way to feel like a local in no time. People of all ages shapes and sizes headout on the 76 miles of closed streets (122km) between 7am-2pm to get some exercise or hangout with friends and family. The most popular area is the *carrera septima* that stretches from the north of the city until la Candelaria. The people-watching opportunities are as brilliant as the chance to exercise. Expect plenty of dogs wearing t-shirts.





Shopping



When away for business it's always nice to keep your eyes peeled for gifts you can bring back home. Colombia, thanks to its fertile lands and diverse cultural influences has plenty to offer in terms of souvenirs to suite all types of tastes and budgets.



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EMERALDS

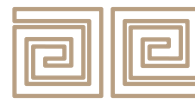


Famous for their enchanting colour, Colombian emeralds are famous all over the world and account for between 70% - 90% of the world's emerald market. The Colombian emerald business is historic and very traditional, in the streets of the city centre you'll often see smartly dressed men gathered around to exchange them. As with any precious stone industry, you need to do your research to avoid falling victim to a scam. It's essential you do your research and an excellent place to start is by taking the [Colombian Emerald tour](#) which will guide you through the process.

If you know what you're doing and your Spanish is up to scratch, then head to the Emerald district on the *Avenida Jimenez* between 6th and 7th street. Here you'll find local men who've been in the industry for years selling among themselves. Be extremely wary of scams, although this is a good place to get a good deal, people have known to have quality emeralds swapped for fakes when the money has already been exchanged.



SOUVENIRS



Whether you find souvenir shopping in a new destination fun or you only do it ahead of a birthday, you'll find plenty of trinkets in many stores around the city.

Artesanías de Colombia

For over 50 years [Artesanías de Colombia](#) has been supporting and protecting Colombia's diverse traditional craft scene. Here, you'll find beautifully designed bags, hats and other decorations from all over the country, at a higher price than in market, but with guaranteed quality.

{ Calle 18 A # 1 - 06 - Calle 86A # 13A-10 }



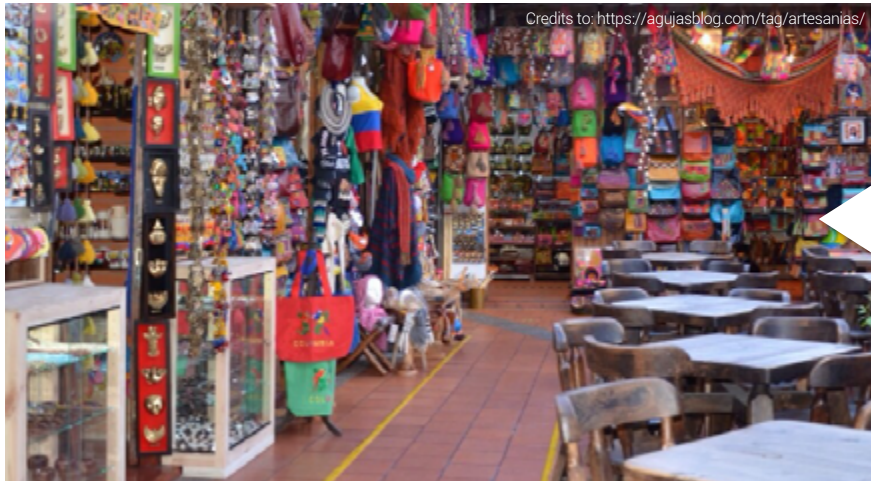


Markets

Perusing a market is an excellent way to get a feel for local cultural and interact with people.

MERCADO DE LA PULGAS USAQUEN

Held up on the carrera 5 in Usaquen, the Sunday market is known for finely crafted artisanal products. You won't find any second-hand barbie dolls here, but beautiful tradition handbags, shoes and jewelry. A few blocks down is the Hacienda Santa Barbara, an upmarket shopping mall set in a Colonial building packed with jewelry stores.



Credits to: <https://agujasblog.com/tag/artesania/>

GALERIA ARTESANAL

An intimate space that aims to promote local business, Galeria Artesanal is much more relaxed than other markets you might find in the city centre. You won't be shouted at and there are even a couple of prettily decorated cafes found inside. Here you'll find some tourist tat but also plenty of beautiful artisanal products.

PASAJE RIVAS CRAFT MARKET

Tucked away behind La Plaza Bolivar, Pasaje Rivas is surprisingly off the tourist track. Charming in size, here you'll find arestanal products from all over Colombia as well as coffee and chocolate.



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Hikes



▶ Laguna de Guatavita



A SHORT DRIVE AWAY ARE [LA GALERA](#), [CHOACHI](#) AND [SUESCA](#) THAT OFFER WHOLESOME ACTIVITIES LIKE ROCK CLIMBING AND LONG WALKS TO WATERFALLS.

As Bogota is nestled high in the Andes mountains it's easy to get your legs working on good hike. Make sure to leave early in the morning and to only follow designated routes. The most popular are [Quebrada de Las Delicias](#) and [Quebrada la Vieja](#). Always check if they are open before heading up.

Never cold enough for snow, but definitely chilly enough a times for a hat and scarf, heading further afield into the mountains will give you the chance to breathe some fresh air and take in scenery as green as the ring of Kerry. Head up to the [Parque Chingaza](#), to try spot a spectacled bear on the paramos, Colombia's most unique ecosystem, or enter the world of pre-Hispanic mysticism in the lagoons in places like [Guatavita](#).



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CHAPTER 4

How to Bogota by night





After work drinks



Colombians, love to party so this inherently implies drinking, but surprisingly the local liquor scene is a little disappointing at first. Aguardiente, an aniseed spirit,

is the liquor of choice and then there are local beers that have to be served freezing cold in order to be palatable.

If you're into beers then head to [BBC](#), a craft ale chain, however if you'd like something more sophisticated here are some snazzy places to grab a cocktail.



CENTRICO

Located on the 41st floor of a hotel, enjoy sipping on a cocktail in a lounge vibe bar with an excellent view. It gets very popular after working hours, so best to book a table. Also serves food.

Céntrico at the Hilton Hotel, Carrera 7 #32-16



APACHE

With a DJ Wednesday to Saturday and a panoramic view, Apache is definitely one of Bogota's most trendy destinations. Excellent cocktails at european prices (except much bigger) makes this a popular spot of dates. Also serves food.

Cra. 11 #93-92



BAR ENANO

Tucked away behind the El Bandido restaurant, Bar Enano is ranked one of Bogota's best cocktail bars. With a soundtrack hailing from the 50s and 60s and the decor to match, this is a great place for an after dinner night cap.

Zona Rosa, Calle 79B No. 7-12





Dancing

It's hard to stay in Colombia without giving dancing a go. Salsa and merengue are the most popular rhythms, however there are many more to discover. If

you headout on the town you'll find all ages showing off their moves. Heading out on the [official Salsa tour](#) is a great way to check out the local scene.



EL BEMBÉ

Quirky salsa bar with a Havana feel, [El Bembé](#) has a live band every weekend.

Calle 27B # 6-73



ANDRÉS CARNE DE RES

Known for it's delicious hunks of juicy steaks and un-comparable atmosphere, Andrés is the place to go if you want the whole package. Start with cocktails , followed by dinner and then move onto the dance floor. Expect bright colours, musicians and an ecstatic Colombian party. The best experience is found in Chia, approx a 40 minute taxi ride away, but if you decide to stay in Bogota [Andrés DC](#) also does the trick.

Chía Calle 3 N° 11A - 56



GALERIA CAFE LIBRO

Popular with young and old, Galeria Cafe Libro hosts host world famous salsa acts like la 33 on a regular basis.

Cra. 11a #93-42





CHAPTER 5

When and where to eat





BREAKFAST

If you fancy venturing out the hotel one day there is a thriving brunch and traditional [breakfast scene](#) in Bogotá. So if you fancy mimosas and croissants, or something traditional like hot chocolate and cheese, there's something for all tastes.

▶ [Masa](#)

Croissants and muffins. Trendy.
Calle 70 # 4-83

▶ [Brot](#)

Excellent bread. Colombian meets France.
Cl. 81 #7 - 93 - Calle 97 #11a - 52

▶ [Pastelería Florida](#)

Traditional bakery. Colombian and some international options.
Cra. 7 #21-46

LUNCH

Lunch is the most important meal of the day in Colombia and can take a couple of hours. Most of the restaurants mentioned below are open for dinner, however they all make an excellent choice for a business lunch. Best to book in advance to avoid queuing.

▶ [Club Colombia](#)

Up-scale Colombian cuisine. Also does brunch. Beautiful big wooden dining space.
Calle 82 # 9-11

▶ [Leo, Cocina y Cava](#)

Unexpected ingredients and extensive wine list. One of the best restaurants in Latin America.
Calle 27B #6-75

▶ [Harry Sasón](#)

Up-scale Colombian cuisine.
Cra. 9 #75-70

▶ [Local by Rausch](#)

Run by two celebrity chef brothers. Sophisticated Colombian food.
Cl. 90 #11-13

▶ [Don Ostia](#)

Locally sourced Spanish meets Colombian tapas. In the Bohemian barrio la Macarena.
Cll 29 bis # 5 - 84

▶ [La Brasserie](#)

French food. Nice garden and very good steak. Not many vegetarian options.
Cra 13 #85 - 35

▶ [Pajares Salinas](#)

Traditional fine dining. Spanish tapas and à la carte options. Popular for business lunches.
Cra. 10 #96-08

DINNER

Although lunch tends to be the preferred choice, there is plenty of atmosphere and delicious food late into the evening. The options below are also open for lunch, however they really set the scene after work.

▶ [Patria](#)

Upscale Colombian cuisine. Great for an introduction into local food.
Av calle 26 # 69B-33





▶ **Criterión**

One of the 50 best restaurants in Latin America. Fine Colombian dining.
Calle 69 A # 5 – 75

▶ **Primi**

Italian inspired. Beautiful setting and great wine list.
Carrera 13 #85 - 85

▶ **El Bandido**

Live music, food and cocktails. Plenty of atmosphere. Secret bar Enano at the back.
Cl. 79b #7-12

▶ **Black Bear**

Australian owned fusion food. Pretty building. Good for a date.
Cl. 89 #11a- 10

▶ **Nueva**

Small and cosy. Tapas. Excellent wine selection.
Cl. 70a #10a-18

▶ **Casa**

Fusion Food. Atmospheric interior.
Carrera 13 #85 - 24

▶ **Rafael**

High End Peruvian food. Excellent wine list.
Calle 70 #4-63

▶ **Andres Carne de Res**

A Colombia must-do. Excellent food and quirky interior. Dancing after.
Calle 82 #12-21
Chía (just outside of Bogotá):
CALLE 3 #11A - 56





CHAPTER 6

Escaping the City





Sun Soaking

When you want a taste of the tropics but don't have the time to fly to the Caribbean, a weekend break in the tropics surrounding Bogotá is the perfect opportunity to relax by the pool and engage in recreational activities like golf. Many Bogotanos choose to have their holiday homes in **Peñalisa** or **El Peñon**, closed conjuntos that have club houses and golf courses.

Towards the Magdalena valley where Colombia's most important river flows are more charming *pueblos* like **Honda**, **La Vega** and **La Dorada**. These places are great to a taste of quaint, slow-paced Colombian life, but you'll likely want to be cooling off in the pool most of the time. Renting a finca, or private house more often than not includes a maid who can prepare food for you.





Cartagena



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Tips for flying

The most budget airlines are VivaColombia and Wingo, however be sure to expect lengthy delays. Avianca and LATAM are both very reliable, but make sure to search from the Colombian website as they have been known to double their prices for foreigners.

For more information about weekend destinations, please ask at your Bluedoors reception for some local advice.





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We hope that this guide has whet your appetite for life in Bogotá and, in turn, eased the natural sense of anxiety before an important move. If you have any queries or would like to make a reservation with Bluedoors, we warmly invite you to contact us via the information below.

|||||

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