



Tour:

BIOLOGY IN COLOMBIA

Destination:

Bogotá & Cartagena

Specialization:

Biology, General Sciences, History & Culture

Itinerary:

8-days / 7-nights

BIOLOGY IN COLOMBIA						
Day	Morning		Afternoon		Evening	
1	Fly to Bogotá, Colombia, South America; clear customs and transfer to Hotel				Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting	Local Dinner
2	Bogotá Walking Tour	The Gold Museum - Curator Tour	Paloquemao Market & Fruit Tasting	Fruit Dehydration Laboratory	Local Dinner	Salsa Dance Class
3	Matarredonda Ecological Park Hike with a Biologist	Chapinero Walking Tour	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Campus Visit (National University / STEM Focus)		Colombian Cooking Class & Dinner	
4	La Palma y el Tucán Coffee Farm Visit - Growing, Fermentation, Processing, Distribution, Science & Lab				Local Dinner & Free Time	
5	Fly from Bogotá to Cartagena		Drumming Master Class	Coconut Workshop	Local Dinner	Free Time
6	Mangrove Forest Canoe Tour & Tree Planting with a Marine Biologist		Fish Farm Laboratory Tour		Local Dinner	Latin Dancing
7	Finca Camelias Hike with a Biologist - Birds, Butterflies, Mammals, Agriculture & Medicinal Plants		San Basilio de Palenque - UNESCO Historical Tour		Local Dinner	Catamaran Sunset Cruise
8	Transfer to Cartagena International Airport; travel home					



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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Colombia...

Colombia gives students an unforgettable blend of biodiversity, culture, and scientific discovery. Bogotá introduces them to a high-altitude capital where Andean ecosystems, world-class museums, and vibrant neighborhoods sit side by side. It's a place where students can trace the story of ancient civilizations through gold artifacts, walk through cloud forests with biologists, and see how modern universities are shaping the future of STEM in Latin America. Cartagena adds a completely different dimension—tropical coastlines, Afro-Caribbean heritage, and marine environments that make biology come alive. From mangrove forests to coral ecosystems, students experience firsthand how science, conservation, and community intersect in one of the most ecologically rich regions on Earth.



For school groups, this itinerary is designed to spark curiosity, build confidence, and deepen global awareness. Every day blends hands-on biology with cultural immersion: hiking with field biologists, participating in labs, exploring sustainable agriculture, and engaging with local experts who show students how STEM careers impact real communities. The program also prioritizes safety, structure, and meaningful learning—ideal for educators who want a turnkey experience that still feels adventurous and transformative. By the time students return home, they've not only explored two iconic Colombian cities but also gained practical scientific skills, cultural understanding,

and a clearer sense of the pathways available to them in environmental science, marine biology, agriculture, and global sustainability.

Biodiversity & Nature

- Colombia is one of the most biodiverse countries on Earth, home to about 10% of the world's flora and fauna species - a dream setting for biology students.
- One-third of the entire country is Amazon rainforest, giving students a window into one of the planet's most important ecosystems.
- Colombia offers incredible wildlife experiences, from humpback whale migrations to snorkeling among vibrant coral reefs and exploring Amazonian habitats.

History, Culture & Heritage

- The legend of El Dorado began in Colombia, inspired by a real Muisca ritual involving a gold-covered chief on Lake Guatavita.
- Bogotá's Gold Museum houses over 55,000 gold artifacts, making it one of the world's most important collections of pre-Hispanic metallurgy.
- Ciudad Perdida ("The Lost City") predates Machu Picchu by 650 years, offering a glimpse into ancient civilizations that shaped the region.

Unique Wonders

- Colombia is famous for its emeralds, producing some of the highest-quality gems in the world.
- The country is known as "Tierra de Sabor" (Land of Flavor) thanks to its incredible variety of fruits, coffees, and regional cuisines.



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- Colombia's landscapes are astonishingly diverse, stretching from Caribbean beaches to Andean peaks to Amazonian jungles—often within a single day's travel.

Coffee Facts That Students Will Love

- Colombia is one of the world's top producers of high-quality Arabica coffee, known for its smooth, well-balanced flavor profile thanks to ideal high-altitude growing conditions and meticulous hand-picking practices. Its volcanic soil and mountain microclimates create distinct regional flavor notes, ranging from chocolatey and nutty to fruity and floral.
- The Coffee Triangle (Eje Cafetero) is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognized for its unique cultural landscape shaped by generations of coffee growers.
- Nearly all Colombian coffee is hand-picked, a labor-intensive method that ensures only the ripest cherries are harvested - a perfect real-world example of precision agriculture.

Day 1

Meals en route on own; dinner included

Travel to *Bogotá*, transfer to your hotel, get unpacked, and get ready for a week of brilliance! Once settled in, we'll have our **Welcome, Safety & Orientation** Meeting. If you arrive early and have free time, we're happy to help you with entertainment options. Dinner will be served either at the hotel or a nearby local restaurant.



Sample Hotel – Four Points Hotel by Sheraton

Day 2

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Bogotá! Today will be an awesome day of exploration. We'll start with a walking tour, then get to check out the fascinating Gold Museum, visit the Paloquemao Market and try some fruit tasting, and then visit a fruit dehydration lab. To cap it off, we'll try our hand at Salsa! It's a full day of fun in Bogotá!

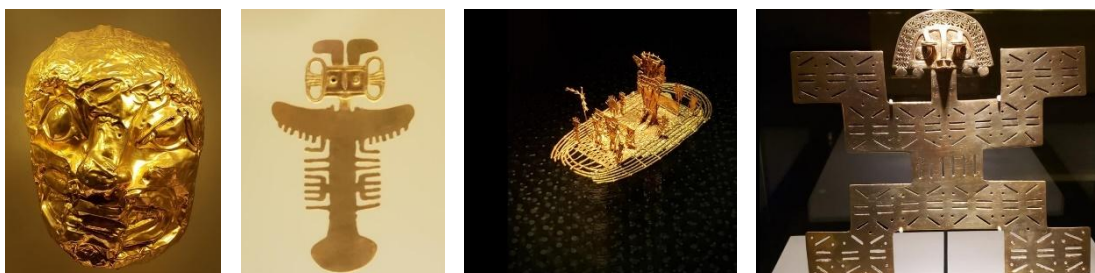


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Bogotá Walking Tour – Our local guide will meet us in the hotel lobby to discover Colombia's vibrant capital city. We'll learn all the important facts about Bogotá, and get to know the most important places and listen to the great stories. We'll stroll through the streets of the historic old town La Candelaria area and visit Plaza Bolívar with its church and government buildings. You'll be amazed by the sites, the colors, and the people.

The Gold Museum – We'll visit the world-famous Gold Museum, hosting one of the largest and most amazing collections in the world. An expert will accompany us, giving insight behind the scenes and background about gold – where it comes from, how it is mined and used throughout time.



Paloquemao Market & Fruit Tasting – Get ready to enjoy some exotic tropical fruits as you discover the wonders of Bogotá's Paloquemao Market. Mingle with the locals, wander between the colorful stalls, learn about regional produce, and taste a selection of exotic fruits and juices as well as traditional snacks.

Fruit Dehydration Laboratory - Profruit is an agro-industrial company dedicated to the dehydration of fruits, vegetables and raw materials. They work together with farmers throughout the country, seeking to dignify their work by delivering a fair value for products so that they can improve their quality of life. In this session, students will get an opportunity not only to see the dehydration process and lab, but to learn how and why this company affects local produce farmers to support the economy.



Salsa Dance Class – After dinner, get ready to get your groove on as we try our hand at Salsa Dancing! In Colombia, the land of flavor, start moving to the beat of the music with this fun class that will guide you to the dance floor and on the street like a Latino, even if you've never danced before. The atmosphere of the dance studio gives you everything you need to have fun and feel the music.

Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner (in cooking class) included

Good morning Colombia! After breakfast at our hotel, we're off to discover Matarredonda Ecological Park, Afterwards we'll take a walking tour of the Chapinero area and then check out the Universidad Pedagógica

Nacional (National University) with a campus tour to see how student education stands in Colombia. This evening we're in for a real treat as we cook our own dinner. Don't worry, we'll have help!

Matarredonda Ecological Park with a Biologist - As a nature lover, you can't miss a visit to one of the beautiful national parks near Bogotá. Here you can admire the unique landscape of the Frailejones plants, which can only be found in the Andean region of South America. Join with a local biologist who will explain and educate us about the flora, fauna and unique landscapes on a beautiful hike in Matarredonda. Don't forget to bring walking shoes and rain gear.



Chapinero Walking Tour - Join in for a walking tour in the most vibrant and trendy district in the Capital, Chapinero! We'll travel through the recent history of the country, the English and republican architecture, the westernized side of the city, the financial district, the most expensive neighborhood in the whole country, the influence of coffee in our culture, the party area, the FARC terrorist attacks against the civil population, the indigenous culture and much more. The idea is you get involved in the Bogota-style of life and the social and economic dynamic of the city. This is the classic walking tour with a new perspective: to know Colombia.

Universidad Pedagogica Nacional Campus Tour – Get a feel for Colombian students and education. The National Pedagogic University is a public university under the Ministry of National Education of Colombia. It offers 20 undergraduate academic programs and 19 graduate, within which is the only doctorate in education offered in the country. The University has the principal goal of “teacher training” through an educational plan based on the principles of teaching excellence, quality, equity, academic rigor in training programs and processes in teaching, research and extension. Their slogan is "Educating Educators". The university received the high-quality institutional accreditation by the Ministry of Education in 2016.



UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA
NACIONAL
Educadora de educadores

Colombian Cooking Class & Dinner - Colombia is the second most biodiverse country in the world and this diversity is expressed in their cuisine - thousands of varieties of vegetables, tubers, meats and flavors. Tonight you will cook a typical dish under the instruction of your chef. Students will be divided into groups so that some will prepare the empanadas starter, others take care of the main dish that includes patacon, coconut rice and meat in a sauce. The final group will prepare rice pudding for dessert and soursop juice. Of course, we will all enjoy the delicious meal afterwards!



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Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Bogotá! Today we're in for a real treat as we discover Colombian coffee!

La Palma y el Tucán Coffee Farm – This is not only a breathtakingly beautiful place to develop a deep understanding of coffee, but it is also a community-driven social project. By selling their coffee, called neighbors & crops, they support smaller, neighboring coffee farmers. Often smaller coffee producers struggle to create a sustainable business around commercializing their product. La Palma y el Tucán offers a solution to this problem by taking over the logistics of distributing and processing the coffee so that farmers can focus on the quality of their product.



Only interrupted by delicious coffee-tasting breaks, students will learn about the process of planting, growing, fermentation, and processing coffee and even the perfect preparation method. The local guides do an exceptional job in explaining the lifestyle and daily business of Colombian coffee farmers, which gives the experience a very personal touch. Guests will also be able to experience the daily routine of coffee farmers first-hand by helping to plant coffee trees, picking the ripe, violet beans, and observing the fermenting and drying processes. A special stop on this immersive coffee plantation tour is the tasting lab where the students will be able to discover taste nuances from earthy to spicy and sugary.

It's about a 2-hour drive from Bogotá to get to the coffee growing region of Colombia. It will be a magnificent day with lunch on-site and guests will also be able to learn and play the throwing sport game "Tejo", a lot like the game cornhole. This 500-year old game is considered a national sport that is played throughout Colombia.

In the evening, once back in Bogotá, we'll enjoy a tasty dinner at the Andres Carne de Res DC!



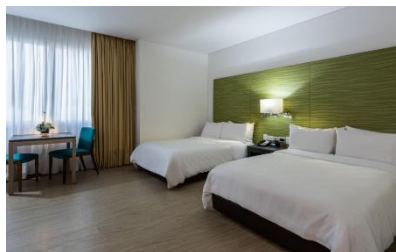
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Day 5

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Colombia! This morning we'll head off to the airport to catch our **domestic flight to Cartagena**. On arrival, we'll dive into some cultural activities that will be fun for everyone and a great way to learn about the local culture.



Sample Hotel: Holiday Inn Express Bocagrande

Drumming Master Class – The town of La Boquilla is an afro-descendant fishermen village where for more than 200 years, drums have played a leading role as the people continue to preserve their ancestral traditions. Today you will get to participate in a tour to observe and play these Afro-Colombian wild drums in the local habitat. The La Boquilla motto is ***“Play it even if you don’t play, dance even if you don’t dance, sing even if you don’t sing. Together we can!”***



The 1-hour Drum Master Class is a truly unique opportunity to connect yourself to the rhythms of Afro-Colombian folk music such as Cumbia, Mapalé and Champeta, through drumming immersion. While working with the team at the Batambora Drum School, we'll first be introduced to theory, then a presentation and interaction. BATAMBORA is a project led by a community group in La Boquilla who are committed to human and economic development that is aimed at rescuing and preserving the cultural traditions of African heritage.

Coconut Workshop - Craft your own coconut souvenir and support a good cause! Coconuts are not only used for drinks but also to create accessories and decorations. The project DAMARTES (Damas y Madres del Arte – ‘Women and Mothers of Art’) is an association composed of seven women. In 2008, they took part in a craft class sponsored by the ProBoquilla foundation. Nowadays, they produce jewelry, containers, vases, belts and accessories and are the first women of La Boquilla that provide their own income. We'll be able to hear their stories and learn about their lives. Producing an object out of a coconut, requires enthusiasm and patience! Every student and staff member will be able to make their own souvenir out of a coconut, crafting bracelets,



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keychains, earrings or necklaces. The workshop takes place in a rustic restaurant right on the beach of La Boquilla.

Day 6

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Cartagena! Today's focus will be on marine biology!

Mangrove Forest Canoe Tour & Tree Planting - This tour leads us back to the small fishermen village of La Boquilla. After arriving we'll meet our Marine Biologist and get geared up and settled on our canoes. We'll cross the mangrove forest and go through natural mangrove tunnels. The perfect word for describing this gorgeous scenario is peace. The mangrove forest offers great flora and fauna and your Marine Biologist will provide education along the way. We'll be able to spot bird species and if lucky, see coots and parrots on the riverbanks. We will also be able to plant a mangrove tree. After the water tour, we'll grab a cold coconut and then walk through the village and along the beach where our guide will tell us more about the daily life of the people that live here in the fishing village. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant, where we can try a typical local dish: fried fish with coconut rice, plantain and salad.



Fish Farm Laboratory Tour – This afternoon we'll get to know and learn about laboratory fish farming. Visiting the Educational Institution of La Boquilla (INETEB) who offer this as a technical specialty, we'll learn about the ways of producing fish for the community, while supporting local culture and improvement of life quality.



In 2016, the Fish Farming Laboratory became a nationally recognized distribution center. The center produces three species of ornamental fish (dancers, telescopes and scalars) and nine additional species (bettas, guppies, zebras, platys, guramis, paradise, molinesias, swords and colisas) for research. The farm trains students to produce fish for both consumption as well as ornamental purposes. The academic-productive space is also open to the community members interested in learning how to produce fish. The production of commercial fish is done academically due to space, but it gives the opportunity to show the community an alternative in terms of productive species.



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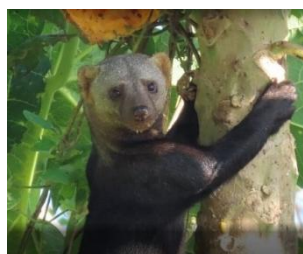
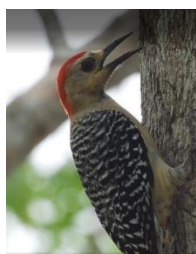
Latin Dancing - Music is one of the most important element of Colombian culture. People live and love music. In Cartagena you will hear Salsa, Merengue, Vallenato and Champeta in every corner. We invite you to learn some basic steps of traditional dances this evening. A young team of dancers and dancing teachers will be waiting for you.

Day 7

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Colombia! Today is our last full day so we're going to have an amazing time!

Finca Camelias Biologist Hike: Birds, Butterflies, Mammals, Agriculture & Medicinal Plants - Today we'll visit with a biologist to learn more about local species, agricultural products and medicinal plants. Agricola Camelias is home to more than 200 confirmed bird species, spread over 40 hectares of tropical dry forest. The project was founded on the Sabaneta farm by the zootechnician Rafael Camacho and his family. The effort resulted in a family business that integrated innovative ideas and effective action plans to achieve a sustainable agricultural economic model slowing for conservation and production of organic foods.



San Basilio de Palenque: UNESCO Historical Tour - A corner of Africa in Colombia! Benkos Bioho, a runaway slave who, accompanied by 36 other male and female slaves, hid in the area that is now known as San Basilio de Palenque, the first slavery-free town in Colombia. Their Palenquera language, traditions and rituals remained intact since they had no connection with the main road and the city remained isolated until the seventies when boxer "Kid Pambelé" placed the settlement on the map and brought road access to the village.



Located about an hour's drive from Cartagena by road, this African corner, declared by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage of humanity, offers visitors a window on Afro-descendant history in Colombia and America. In San Basilio de Palenque, a local guide will meet us and teach is a bit of the Palenquera dialect, history and culture. Through craft arts such as the work of the Spinners, who with their strong movement prepare the corn to feed their families, and the beautiful art of the weavers who tell stories through their handicraft, we get even closer to the culture. After exploring the village and its surroundings we'll enjoy a delicious typical lunch in the Palenquera way.



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Catamaran Sunset Cruise – Enjoy a wonderful sunset-sailing catamaran cruise in the bay of Cartagena. During this 2-hour cruise we'll enjoy some typical snacks and a delicious drink while remembering all our great experiences through beautiful Colombia. Enjoy!

Day 8

Breakfast included at hotel; all other meals on own

After our incredible week, we'll start to say 'goodbye' to Colombia as we prepare to travel home. If you have a later flight and we can assist you with booking extra activities, please let us know how we may best serve you!

Adios Colombia! Until we meet again!



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Practical Information

Currency - The Colombian peso is the country's legal tender. It is generally identified with the abbreviation COP, and you'll find that the official peso symbol (\$) is used locally. A wide selection of banknotes and coins are used. You will find 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000 peso coins and 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 and 100,000 peso banknotes, highlighting Colombia's wealth and diversity.

In the country's main tourist destinations, such as Bogotá, Santa Marta, Barranquilla, Cali, Medellín, Cartagena, San Andrés, Pereira or Bucaramanga, as well as in other cities, you can pay for your purchases in cash, or with debit or credit cards. Credit cards can be used in all department stores and in some smaller stores also. The most widely accepted cards are Visa and MasterCard first and foremost, but also American Express and Diners Club.

Health & Vaccines - Currently, no vaccines are required to gain entry to Colombia. However, if you wish to visit tourist sites such as the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta National Park, the Tayrona National Park or the different Amazon reserves, the Colombia authorities will require that you are properly vaccinated against yellow fever. Remember that this vaccine must be administered at least 10 days prior to traveling to these destinations. Other recommended vaccines, but not mandatory, include immunization against Hepatitis A and Typhoid fever. The same applies to Malaria pills, which are advisable if visiting the rainforest regions, where we would also recommend the use of insect repellent and mosquito nets.

Medication and Healthcare Services - If you take medication, it is essential that you bring your prescription with you so that you can purchase it at a pharmacy if needed. Remember to always keep handy any related documentation regarding any special health condition you may have that would need to be considered in the event of an emergency. Another key tip for you to follow in any part of the country, no matter what the climate, is to use sunscreen and stay well hydrated at all times. Keep in mind that in certain regions it is recommendable that you only consume bottled mineral water. You'll have no problem finding bottled water at any local store.

Visas – USA citizens are not required to have a short-stay visa, however citizens of certain countries need to present a tourist visa to gain entry. These can be processed at the Colombian embassies and consulates abroad. Check countries requiring visas [HERE](#).

Measurements - Colombia uses the International System of Units (SI), the successor of the Decimal Metric System. This is very important for understanding sizing and distances, since instead of inches, feet or miles, you'll be using centimeters, meters and kilometers. Mass is measured in grams, kilograms and tons; speed is measured in kilometers per hour (km/h) and the temperature in degrees Celsius or centigrade (°C).

Electricity - In Colombia, the domestic power supply is 110 volts of alternating current or 60 hertz (110V AC, 60Hz). You will use a power socket that is a flat 2-prong socket or ones with a third, round prong.

Official language - The official language of Colombia is Spanish. According to the 2005 Census of Colombia, the country has 37 major languages. More than 99.5% of Colombians speak Spanish. English has official status in the San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina Islands. In addition to Spanish, there are several other languages spoken in Colombia. Sixty-five of these languages are Amerindian in nature within Indigenous languages of the Americas. The 65 Amerindian languages spoken in Colombia can be grouped into 12 language families, including Arawakan, Cariban, Tupian, and Quechuan.



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BIOLOGY IN COLOMBIA

Minimum Booking Numbers:

16 students

What's Included:

Roundtrip international flights into Bogotá and out of Cartagena
Domestic flight from Bogotá to Cartagena
Dedicated airport transfers and transportation throughout your tour
7-nights' accommodation: 4 nights Bogotá + 3-nights Cartagena
Breakfasts, lunches and dinners daily starting with dinner on arrival and ending with breakfast on departure (dependent upon travel time)
Bogotá Walking Tour
The Gold Museum – Curator Tour
Paloquemao Market Tour with Fruit Tasting
Fruit Dehydration Laboratory
Salsa Dance Class
Matarredonda Ecological Park Hike with a Biologist
Chapinero Walking Tour
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Campus Visit (National University)
Colombian Cooking Class & Dinner
La Palma y el Tucán Coffee Farm Visit - Growing, Fermentation, Processing, Distribution, Science & Lab
Drumming Master Class
Coconut Workshop
Mangrove Forest Canoe Tour & Tree Planting with a Marine Biologist
Fish Farm Laboratory Tour
Latin Dancing Evening
Finca Camelias Hike with a Biologist - Birds, Butterflies, Mammals, Agriculture & Medicinal Plants
San Basilio de Palenque - UNESCO Historical Tour
Catamaran Sunset Cruise
Tour Director services
24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

Fully comprehensive insurance (**mandatory**)
Transfers to/from home airport
Baggage costs, pay directly to airline if required
Baggage handling - everyone should be able to pull / load their own bag
Transportation for activities not shown in the itinerary
Snacks and beverages other than at included meal times
Meal selections other than ones provided for the entire group
Cost of personal passports, visas or visa waiver fees
Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
Sightseeing / Entertainment not shown in Itinerary
Hotel incidental deposits & bills – mini-bar, movies, etc.
Gratuities – drivers, hotel services, local guides, tour director
Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH
Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or fees levied by governments / suppliers

As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming.
If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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