

# Cartagena, Colombia!

## Afro-Beats and Caribbean Style

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**C**artagena!! It's the city with the Afro-beats, colorful street art, culture, and a soulful way of life around each corner. Located in the Caribbean Coastal region of Colombia, the attraction to this city is all about Afro-Colombian history and longstanding traditions. From ladies dressed in colorful attire carrying fruit baskets on their heads to cuisines with a distinct African influence, Cartagena offers an opportunity to immerse yourself in Black experiences.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site with more than 500 years of history, Cartagena has been called the Venice of Colombia. With romantic vibes and pumping Afro-tunes, history comes alive along the sandy shores. Inside the Walled City, street scenes are picture-perfect. Cobblestone streets, two-story homes with vibrant flower-covered balconies, and brightly painted doors invite you to stroll for hours. The Colonial Charm which still occupies the city and gives it a throw-back feeling of times gone by.

The tropical climate in this port city welcomes cruise lines throughout the year. Enjoying time on the beach or taking a boat tour around the city are great for time on the water. A day-trip to Isla Rosario, is excellent for snorkeling along the coral reef.

Walking tours through the city include visiting the Castillo de San Felipe which was once a fortress protecting the area from invaders. Take an uphill walk for a spectacular city view. You'll find the perfect spot for photos that capture your memories from top-of-the-city.

Do not miss the Barrio Getsemani, the city's historic neighborhood. The area is famous for street murals showing the vibrant lifestyle of the nation's people. Allow enough time to take in each mural and experience the feelings and messages expressed by the artist.





Check out the Plaza Santo Domingo, where vendors sell crafts, and Afro-Colombian women in traditional multi-color dresses of yellow, red, and blue greet you. Stop for photos, but here's a traveler's tip - have cash to pay the ladies. That's the only way to get a picture.

Stroll along the lively historic Plaza de Los Coches, initially named the Plaza del Esclavo (Slave Square). The plaza was the primary slave market in the 1500s, where Africans were bought and sold during the colonial period. It was later renamed the Square of the Carriages because of its popularity for carriages to pick up and drop off passengers. Today this vibrant place is one of the city's most popular tourist spots. Visitors love the lively atmosphere, charming colonial architecture, craft vendors, and restaurants offering local cuisine. Travelers to the square will also find an 18th-century Clock Tower and the Governor's Palace, which now houses the Museum of History of Cartagena. Located in the center of the square is the statue of Pedro de Heredia, the Spanish conquistador who founded the city in 1533.

Colombian crafts make excellent souvenirs to take home to family and friends. And a few for you too. Near Cartagena's old port entrance, you'll find a mix of vendors selling high-quality items. Support the indigenous crafters and artists selling their hand-made virgin wool shoulder bags, known as mochilas along with other handcrafted items.

One of the joys of visiting Cartagena is tasting the local cuisine. There are many delicious traditional choices, and cafes, restaurants, and coffee shops are easy to find. Three restaurants stand out in the crowd. Di Silvio Trattoria Cafe in Getsemani is a tasty stop for pasta and flatbread pizzas topped with tasty local cheeses. For a light eating day, check out El Burlador Gastrobar and try their tasting menu for Acorn-fed Iberian ham, craft cocktails, and chilled wine. Perfect for holding you over for a late lunch or dinner at La Mulata or Cuzco. Both favorite local restaurants comes highly recommended for authentic Caribbean cuisine. Fresh ingredients, expert preparations, and beautiful presentations combine for a lovely meal. The decor helps create a feeling of "finding the perfect spot" to try fish soup, sautéed garlic shrimp, grilled lobster, and tasty coconut rice. Try the Limonada de Coco, a popular local drink.

The Afro-beats are calling your name. Cartagena brings the vibe of Afro-Caribbean experiences. It's time to move it to the top of your list.

To start planning a trip to Colombia, visit the website - [www.Colombia.travel](http://www.Colombia.travel)