



**COLOMBIA**  
**THE GATEWAY TO SOUTH AMERICA**

February 28 - March 12, 2025  
Led by STS Tour Manager

*Embark on an extraordinary expedition through the heart of Colombia, beginning in Nariño, where the city of Pasto serves as a vibrant tapestry of history, culture, and creativity. Delve into the intricate wonders crafted by local artisans, their work echoing the rich historical narrative of the region. From Pasto, venture across the mystical Laguna de la Cocha, a serene mirror reflecting the awe-inspiring beauty of nature, while bearing witness to the indelible marks left by Colombia's arduous peace process.*

*Travel along the storied "Dead Road" to Mocoa, the bustling capital of Putumayo, a gateway to the lush expanse of the Amazon jungle. Here, the rhythmic pulse of indigenous traditions beckons at Subundoy, intertwining with the allure of unique handcrafted mask workshops. As the journey continues deeper into Putumayo, the enigmatic Mandiyaco Canyon whispers ancient tales, shrouded in the timeless embrace of the jungle.*

*Moving northward, the expedition unfolds in Valledupar, a cultural haven nestled amidst fertile lands. Uncover the city's captivating history before venturing to Tierra Grata, perched among the mountains of the Perija Sierra. Here, immerse in the natural splendor and delve into the profound journey of ex-combatants of the FARC guerrilla as they reintegrate into Colombian society. Journey onward to Pueblo Bello, where the ancient stories of the Arhuaco people weave a captivating narrative, resonating with timeless wisdom and traditions. Stand at the crossroads of nations near the Venezuela border, where the weight of history is palpable, before descending into the pink paradise of Manaure's salt mines, a captivating facet of the Guajira desert in northern Colombia.*

*In Guajira visit Cabo de la Vela and encounter the feathered ambassadors of the Camarones Bay flamingo sanctuary, before indulging in the golden sands of Riohacha – a fitting conclusion to this extraordinary sojourn. This immersive expedition transcends the ordinary, beckoning explorers to unravel the intricate blend of Colombia's soul, interwoven with vibrant threads of nature, history, and resilience. Are you prepared to embark on this remarkable odyssey?*

**Ihab Zaki**  
Managing Director

**Tuesday, February 25**  
**Arrive in Bogotá (COLOMBIA)**



Upon arrival in **Bogotá**, the capital of and largest city in Colombia, meet and transfer to the *Movich Hotel or similar* for check-in, free rest of the day at leisure and overnight.

**Notes: Standard check-in time is 3:00 pm. If you arrive on February 24 or in the early morning of February 25, an extra Hotel night needs to be booked.**

**Wednesday, February 26**  
**Bogotá - Pasto**



After an early breakfast, transferred to the airport for our flight to **Pasto**. Upon arrival, meet and transfer to *V1501 Hotel or similar* for check-in. Pasto is a city, located at 8,290 feet above sea level, famous for its religious art, handcrafts, and the *Blacks and Whites Carnival* in January, which was declared by UNESCO as one of the masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Visit some of the famous architecture in **churches** and also visit the **carnival's museum**, located in the heart of Pasto, where it beautifully showcases the diverse traditions and folklore behind the country's many regional carnivals, offering an insightful look into the deep-rooted cultural significance of these annual festivities. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Thursday, February 27**  
**Pasto - La Cocha Lagoon**



After breakfast, begin the day with a visit to some of the famous **artists** of Pasto's handcrafts and learn about their unique and local art, including the Mopa-Mopa and Tamo

processes. Enjoy lunch and then in the afternoon, continue the drive to the east up the mountain to **La Cocha Lagoon**, located 8700 feet above sea level. It is a serene lagoon situated just 40 minutes outside of Pasto, in a colorful fishing village. After the visit, transfer to *Chalets Guamuez or similar* for check-in, dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Friday, February 28**  
**La Cocha Lagoon**



Spend the whole day visiting the lagoon and its surroundings. Begin the drive to **El Puerto**, a small local community of people who built their houses very close to the lake in a Swiss style but are local Colombians. We may take a boat trip on the lagoon (if weather permits) and may visit **Corota National Park** (an island) if open at the time. Enjoy lunch along with the El Puerto community and get the opportunity to meet a local Chef who has taken local cuisine to another level, with his family recipes of Nariño region food. Embark on a **boat ride** in the lagoon to visit **Las Torres de la Paz**, a place related to the old days of the FARC guerrilla in the area and enjoy a small tour of the area and learn about their story of the war then return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Saturday, March 01**  
**La Cocha Lagoon - Sibundoy (2 hrs.)**



Begin the day with a drive to **Sibundoy**. Pass through jungles, cloud forests, indigenous towns, waterfalls, and cliffs with spectacular views. Explore and visit **Sibundoy town**, home to two indigenous communities, the Kamsá and Inga, as well as a sizable population of non-Indian

Colombians. Enjoy the landscape of the lagoon and let's take the road to climb to 9,800 feet, where nature is famous for endemic and strange species of trees such as the Frailejon. Head for lunch at one of the local restaurants in Sibundoy, After lunch, head to visit the **Park of Interculturality**, our sacred space, and visit the **art museum** and **cafeteria** for a share with an artist from the community of multiculturally. Transfer to a *Basic local Hotel* around 5:00 pm for check-in, dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Sunday, March 02**

**Sibundoy**



After breakfast in Sibundoy, head outside the village to visit the **wood carving workshop** of the Kametsa community and share our knowledge with a family or a group of children from the School. Then, head to the neighboring town of **Santiago** and enjoy lunch. In the afternoon, spend some time with a family of the community there. Usually, they may have a parade of children that afternoon as well. Return to the *Hotel* at around 6:00 pm for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Monday, March 03**

**Sibundoy (Bëtscnate Carnival Day)**



This day marks the **Bëtscnate Carnival**, celebrated by the local **Kamentsá indigenous** community—a most significant annual event, "The Big Day," and a day of forgiveness. We will be participating in the celebrations ourselves.

The day will begin very early, and we will enjoy breakfast with the parade participants. We will also have the opportunity to engage with the community, lending a helping hand with various tasks to prepare for the parade. As we journey back to town, accompanied by the rhythmic beats of drums, flutes, and other traditional instruments, we'll join other communities converging on the town for the rest of the festivities.

Upon arrival in town, there will be a heartwarming exchange with other participants, followed by a unique Catholic mass infused with Kamentsá culture and language. Subsequently, hundreds of participants will gather at the communal city hall for lunch and a ritualistic animal sacrifice, symbolizing a shift in the calendar cycle. This ritual marks the commencement of lively festivities filled with music, dance, and the consumption of chicha, a fermented corn beverage.

Continue the participation with the afternoon festivities, where we can enjoy dancing and engage with the locals. In the late afternoon, enjoy free time to explore and shop for handcrafted souvenirs before returning to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight.

**(B,L,D)**

**Tuesday, March 04**

**Sibundoy - Mocoa**



Before leaving for Mocoa we will begin the day by driving to **Santiago** once more, but this time we will enjoy and

observe an event of Inga culture, the parade of the adults, and witness the carnival celebrations (if it occurs). Observe the Inga people's unique take on the carnival, which differs slightly from what we have experienced in Sibundoy. Learn from the Inga community and appreciate the distinctiveness of their festivities. After enjoying lunch, continue our journey to the lush Amazon jungle of **Mocoa**, and upon arrival, transfer to *Waira Hotel or similar* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

**Wednesday, March 05**

**Mocoa (Mandiyaco Canyon and Public Market )**



Now that we are in the gateway of the Amazon jungle of Colombia everything is different, we will arrive at a new and very different ecosystem, at Mocoa, the capital of this region, a very small city not very well developed, but close to beautiful nature sights, Start the day by visiting the **public market**, and learn about the local culture and see fruits and how the people live. After this visit, head to visit Suruma, a museum for Amazonic culture, fauna, and flora. Enjoy lunch and in the afternoon, continue the drive (30 min.) away from Mocoa to visit close to a big river like the **Caquetá River**, the canyon formed by the erosion of the water over the rocks, creating a unique area that we can go walk and enjoy. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

*Note: If we are fit enough, we can change one of these visits and hike to one of the local waterfalls, which is very beautiful, like Fin del Mundo or El Ojo de Dios.*

**Wednesday, March 06**

**Mocoa - Bogotá - Valledupar (2 hrs.)**



After breakfast, begin the drive to **Puerto Asis**. The Capuchin Missionaries, led by Father Estanislao de las Cortes and Brother Hidelfonso de Tulcán, founded it on May 3, 1912. Its name, derived from Saint Francis's birthplace, Assisi, signifies a connection to an esteemed spiritual heritage.

Upon arrival, transfer to the airport for our flight to **Valledupar**, connecting through Bogotá. Valledupar is located in the north of Colombia's Caribbean Region. It is known for its people's charm, the Guatapuri River, and being the Colombian capital of Vallenato music. Transfer to *Casa de los Santos Reyes Boutique Hotel or a similar hotel* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

*Note: Depending on the flight schedule and if time permits, we may include a city tour of Valledupar.*

**Thursday, March 07**

**Valledupar (Tierra Grata)**



After breakfast, begin the drive to visit the **Tierra Grata community**, an ETCR camp where ex-combatants from the FARC guerrilla have settled down as part of the peace process. Spend the day learning about their culture and nature in the Perija Sierra and listening to their stories from the old days of the war. Enjoy lunch onsite and in the late afternoon, return to **Valledupar** and back to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Friday, March 08

Valledupar (Pueblo Bello)



Begin the day with a drive to **Sierra Nevada** of Santa Marta Mountain massif to visit **Pueblo Bello**, which has a significant population of Arhuacos indigenous people. Spend the day learning about their culture and the area, enjoy dinner onsite, and in the late afternoon, drive back to **Valledupar** and return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Saturday, March 09

Valledupar - Riohacha (4 hrs.)



After breakfast, begin the drive to **Riohacha**, the capital of the Guajira region, stopping along route for some photos and lunch. Guajira is the northern part of Colombia and has the country's only true desert area. It is known for its desert ecosystem and the Wayuu indigenous culture, which makes up more than 90% of the region's population. Upon arrival, transfer to *Nueva Luna Casa de Huespedes Hotel* or *Guajira Casa del Mar Hotel* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Sunday, March 10

Riohacha - Cabo de la Vela (3 hrs.)



Enjoy an early breakfast and then begin the drive to EL Cabo De La Vela, passing by the **Manaure Salt flats** to enjoy the incredible landscape and views. Then, continue the drive to **Uribia**, known as the Wayuu capital, which serves as a cultural and commercial hub for the indigenous Wayuu people. Experience the vibrant colors and craftsmanship of the Wayuu culture through their handwoven bags, hammocks, and crafts. Explore the nearby natural wonders. Once we arrive in **El Cabo de la Vela**, which means "cape of sail," Its name derives from the first view of the cape from the sea when the pale colors of the promontories and their curvilinear forms emerge from the flat desert. Hike to **El Pilón de Azucar**, a sacred place for the Wayuu people, and enjoy the nearby beaches until sunset. Transfer to *Rancheria Utta Hotel* (local accommodation) for check-in, dinner & overnight. **(B,L,D)**

*Note: The hike is a relatively short, yet steep sandy hill standing at less than 100 meters in height.*

Monday, March 11

Cabo de la Vela - Riohacha (2 hrs.)



Enjoy an early breakfast, then begin the journey at 7:00 am to **Camarones**, a community near a protected bay that serves as a bird sanctuary, including Pink Flamingos and the Guajira Cardinal. Learn about the **Wayuu culture** and enjoy a typical lunch with fried fish, plantains, and coconut rice. In the afternoon, drive back to **Riohacha** and transfer to *Nueva Luna Casa de Huespedes Hotel* or *Guajira Casa del Mar Hotel* for check-in, dinner, and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Tuesday, March 12

Riohacha - Bogotá



Enjoy breakfast and then transfer to the airport for our afternoon flight to **Bogotá**. Upon arrival, transfer to the *Hotel* for check-in, free afternoon at leisure. Head out for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant and then return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Wednesday, March 13

Bogotá - USA



Enjoy breakfast and then transfer to the airport for your flight back to the US. **(B)**

*"We reserve the right to change the order of activities/visits or sites due to unexpected events such as flight cancellations or changes of schedule, or any other reasons beyond our control. We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes when/if needed to meet the needs of our clients".*

**Special Tour Remarks:**

*For those arriving early on February 28, we are pleased to offer an optional opportunity to explore the historical center of the city with a specially curated 4-hour city tour "cost will be determined at the time of booking".*



## Tour Cost (Land Only):

6-8 travelers \$9,995.00

9-12 travelers \$8,995.00

*Per person sharing in double occupancy*

**Single Supplement: \$995.00**

*Price based on group size of minimum 6 participants and maximum 12 participants*

**Trip Grade: III Lodging Level: \*\*\***



### **Tour Includes:**

- Airport/Hotel/airport transfers.
- Accommodation in hotels as per the itinerary (based on 3-4-star categories or best available in all cities).
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Tour Manager (provided the minimum number of travelers is reached).
- Sightseeing in each city as per the itinerary.
- Services of English-speaking guides.
- All domestic flights within country.
- Entrance fees to all mentioned sites and museums.
- Bottled water on the bus during touring days.
- Gratuities to guide, drivers, and porters (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).

### **Tour does not include:**

- International Airfare USA- Bogotá -USA.
- Beverages and alcoholic drinks with or without meals and meals not mentioned.
- Items of a personal nature (laundry, emails, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on scheduled tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules or early arrival.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Travel protection insurance. (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)

### **Trip Grade**

**II Active** - Some hikes, slightly more demanding walks at or to sites, few elevations, comfortable but busy schedule, and some long rides.

### **Lodging Level:**

**\*\*\* Superior:** Lodges and hotels with additional amenities, refined service, and comfort level acceptable to the Western standards. (3 or 4 stars).

