SPICE ROADS
CYCLING

ROAD

ROAD CYCLING COLOMBIA: CALI TO COFFEE PARADISE

Tour Code
COL-RBC

9 DAYS
8 NIGHTS

Destinations	Colombia
Tour Meets	Cali
Tour Ends	Calarcá
Fly in to	Alfonso Bonilla Aragon International Airport (CLO)
Fly out of	El Eden International Airport (AXM) OR Aeropuerto Internacional Matecaña (PEI)
Group Size	4-12 riders
Minimum Age	18 (on scheduled departures)

ACTIVITY PROFILE

6 Cycling days	**425** km Total cycling distance
71 km Avg distance / day	**1112** m Avg climbing / day

PRICING

Price	US$ 4,750
Bike Hire (Carbon Road Bike)	US$ 405
Single Supplement	US$ 850

DEPARTURES

30 Jan - 07 Feb 2027
20 Feb - 28 Feb 2027
06 Mar - 14 Mar 2027
24 Jul - 01 Aug 2027
28 Aug - 05 Sep 2027
25 Sep - 03 Oct 2027

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Airport drop off
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks
- ✓ Entrance fees
- ✓ Trekking

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

TRIP PROFILE

We ride a total of 425 km over 6 cycling days. The tour is divided into four main cycling stages: i) day 2's ride in the Andean foothills towards Calima Lake ii) days 3 and 4 which take place primarily in the plains of the Cauca Valley iii) day 5's transition from the valley into the Coffee Region and iv) day 6 and 8's routes in the highlands of the Cordillera Central. Day 7 is a hiking day in the Cocora Valley, so while our bikes get a day off, our legs certainly don't! We have a transfer on days 2 and 3 to the cycling start points and on day 8 from the cycling end point to the hotel. All of the other rides are point-to-point. This region of Colombia has some of the country's finest roads for road cycling, enabling a mix of fast-paced gliding on the flats, uphill grinds, and thrilling descents.

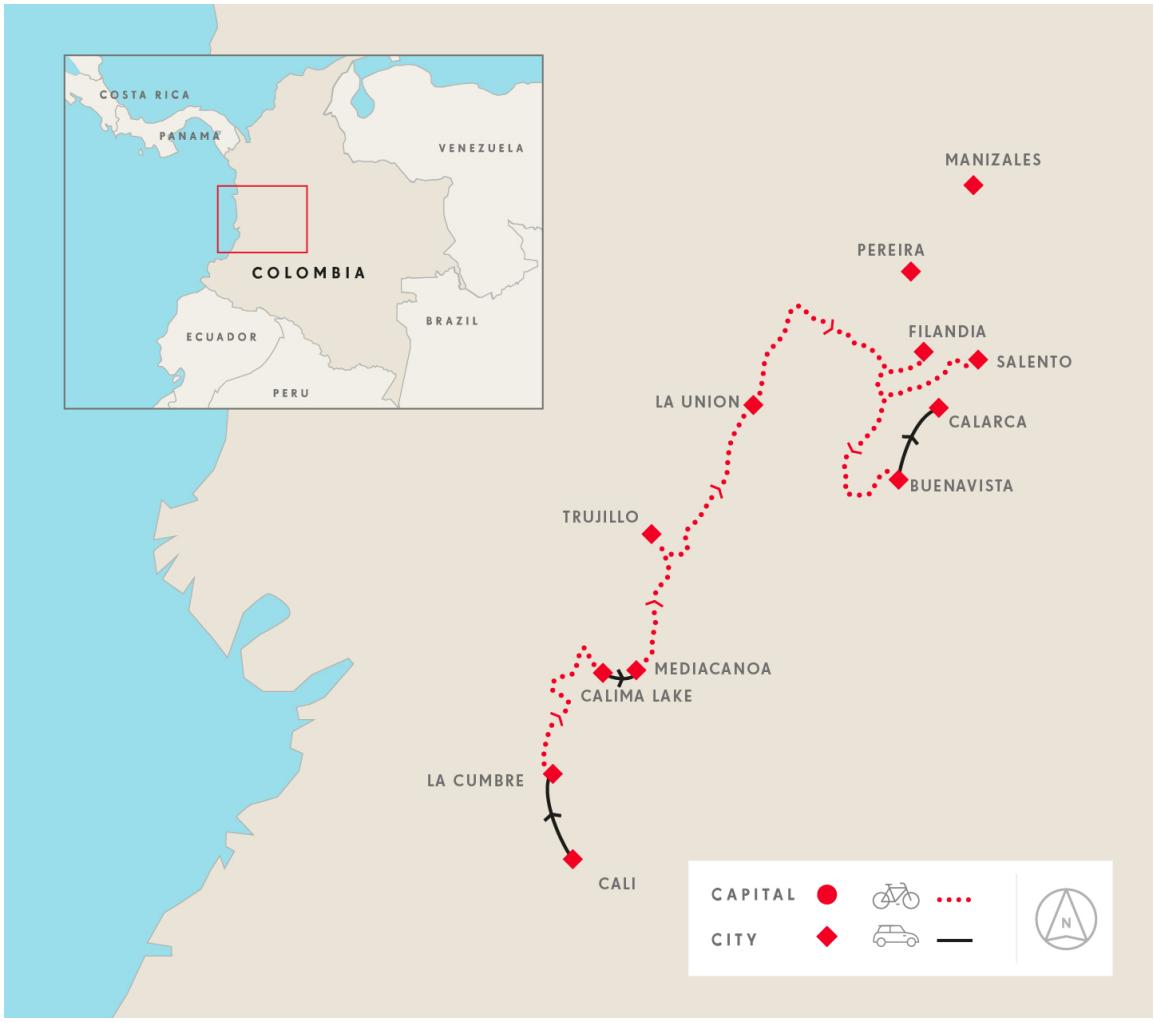
Besides enjoyable cycling routes, you can also look forward to immersing yourself in the rich traditions of the Cauca Valley and the Coffee Cultural Landscape. It goes without saying that coffee lovers are in for a real treat on this tour!

The trip is fully supported, and your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of water and refreshments along the way.

Suitability: This tour is best suited for experienced road cyclists capable of handling back-to-back riding days with an average distance of 70 km and average elevation gains of over 1,000 metres. The first half of the trip is, compared to the second, more mild, providing a good opportunity to get properly warmed up before tackling the serious climbs in the Coffee Region. For the most part, the ascents aren't overly aggressive with low gradients but there are some steep exceptions. Downhills are prominent as well, with some winding and steep sections requiring caution and braking control. Less experienced riders are welcome but should prepare themselves in advance to manage the longer distances and climbs at a reasonable pace. The support vehicle is always nearby to offer refuge to any weary cyclists.

Biking Conditions: This trip is on paved roads which are mostly in good condition, though broken asphalt, road debris, and potholes do present themselves. The route is on a mix of quiet, countryside roads and provincial main roads. Colombia is an economically fast-moving country and riding on paved surfaces means regularly sharing the road with trucks, buses, cars, and motorbikes. We have chosen the least busy roads possible but please be aware that traffic can be unpredictable and, especially near the cities and towns, unavoidable. On this journey, we transition from the warm Cauca Valley to the cooler mountains of the Coffee Region so be prepared for temperature swings, on some days happening in the span of a few hours! Rain is common in Colombia throughout the year. The mountains, in particular, can get foggy and rainy but heavy downpours are usually brief. We generally ride rain or shine, but depending on the guide's discretion or your comfort level, modifications to the planned route can be made. It's all part of the adventure!

Hotels: The accommodations on this tour are a highlight in and of themselves. In Cali, we stay at a well-regarded colonial-style 5-star hotel in a trendy neighborhood. At Calima Lake, we stay at a 4-star hotel with a sustainability focus. In Trujillo we stay at a more basic, but still very cozy, 3-star hotel in the main plaza. In La Unión we stay in one of the most beautiful destination hotels of the region, surrounded by vineyards. Our night spent in Filandia is the highlight for many: a cycling hotel, designed and built by cyclists for cyclists. Yes, there is a spa. Our hotel in Salento, where we spend two nights, is part of a working dairy farm, combining traditional architecture with modern comforts. And, for the last night of the tour in Calarcá we stay at a coffee estate turned boutique hotel. Throughout, you can expect clean rooms, hot showers, professional service and, depending on the particularities of each property, extras such as inviting pools, gorgeous views, and delectable cuisine. English is widely spoken in the Colombian service industry but cannot always be expected in more remote regions.



Day 1: Meet in Cali

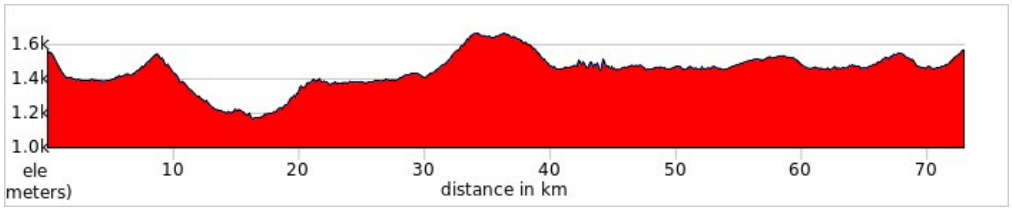
Welcome to Cali, Colombia's third-largest city! Located in the southwest of the country, Cali is nestled in the Cauca Valley and surrounded by the Colombian Andes. We suggest arriving a day or two before the tour begins to get settled into the Colombian pace of life and explore Cali which, known as the salsa capital of the world, comes alive at night with bars thumping to hip-swinging rhythms. You can also check out Cali's most iconic landmark – the Cristo Rey – a large statue of Christ overlooking the city from a hill and dive into the flavors of the distinctive Valluno cuisine. On arrival day, we'll meet at our tour hotel in the late afternoon for a trip briefing and welcome dinner. Our boutique, colonial-style tour hotel is located in the buzzing Granada neighborhood, filled with chic boutiques, restaurants, cafés & bars. Please let us know if you require assistance with airport transfers or pre-tour hotel bookings.

Hotel Movich Casa del Alferez Dinner

Day 2: Cali - La Cumbre - Calima Lake

Our adventure begins with a 1.5-hour transfer from Cali to La Cumbre, a small town nestled in the foothills of the Western Colombian Andes. After saddling up in La Cumbre, our route takes us along a quiet secondary road that winds through cloud forests, highland farms, livestock pastures, and dense patches of native vegetation. The road undulates with gentle climbs and exhilarating descents, allowing us to find our rhythm while soaking in our first taste of the rural Andean landscape. By around 28 km we reach the town of Restrepo, from where we tackle a 7 km / 5-6% climb elevating us to over 1,600 metres ASL. The subsequent downhill brings us to the southwestern tip of Calima Lake, a vast reservoir with sparkling waters surrounded by lush hillslopes. We skirt around the lake on a peaceful road for around 30 km. Our ride ends with a short, punchy climb (2 km / 5%) to an elegant hilltop hotel with magnificent views and farm-to-table dining.

La Huerta Hotel Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

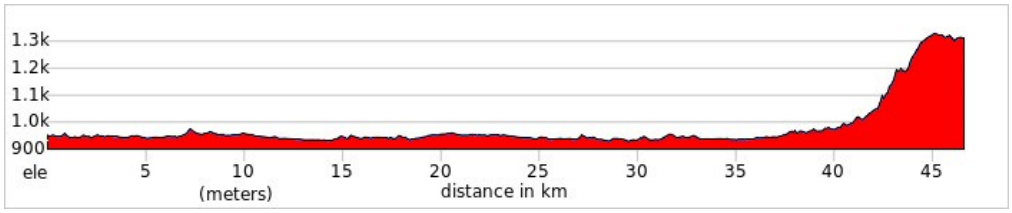


Ride 73km +1350m -1341m

Day 3: Calima Lake - Mediacanoa - Trujillo

The day starts with a 30-minute transfer to avoid riding downhill on a steep and busy national road. We get on our bikes near a junction back in the valley and dart off along a flat secondary road which follows the Cauca River north. The plains are covered in expansive sugarcane plantations with a sea of densely packed emerald green stalks swaying in the breeze. The smooth road surface and flat terrain allow for a fast-paced ride for the majority of today's short stage, but once we reach the 40 km point, a fairly steep hilltop finish awaits! Rising back into the lower slopes of the Andes, we cycle along a narrow road snaking its way through waves of fresh foliage, including coffee plants, for around 7 km with gradients that can creep into the double digits. As we climb higher, the contrast becomes stark: the flat, sugarcane-draped Cauca valley stretches below, while the towering, mist-shrouded ridgelines of the Western Cordillera loom above. Once the road begins to level again, we roll into the small town of Trujillo where we end our ride and unwind with a cup of coffee in the quiet, central plaza.

Hotel Trujillo Plaza Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

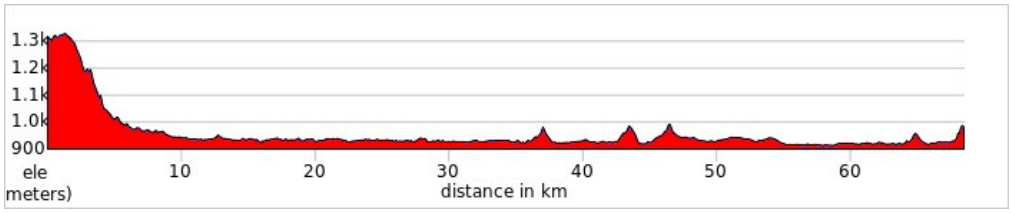


Ride 46km +675m -313m

Day 4: Trujillo - La Unión

We head back into the Cauca Valley, tracing our way down the same road we battled our way up the day before! By the 10 km point we're back in the lowlands and, for the remainder of the day's distance, follow the meandering course of the Cauca River north through the heart of Colombia's agricultural basin. We continue to see vast sugarcane plantations, but also pass by mango orchards, wide canopied rain trees, and roadside market villages. Other than a few mild, 1-2 km climbs, today's route is primarily flat, enabling us to make good time to reach our final destination, the municipality of La Unión, for lunch. This area is one of the key centre of Colombia's emerging wine industry with boutique vineyards radiating across the landscape. The afternoon is free to relax at our countryside retreat perched on a small hill with admirable views, or to head out for a vineyard tour & wine tasting nearby (at additional cost).

Hotel Los Viñedos Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

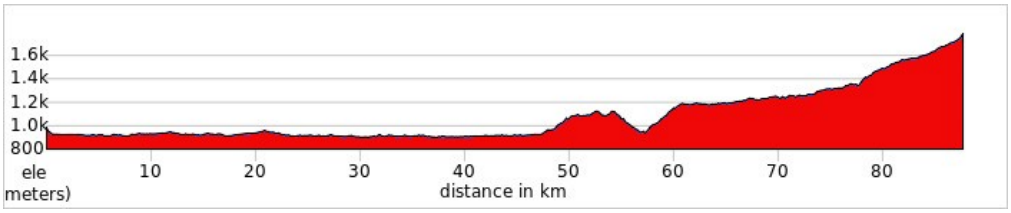


Ride 69km +512m -842m

Day 5: La Unión - Filandia

Today we take things up a couple of notches, transitioning from the plains of the Cauca Valley into the coffee-studded highlands of the Central Andes. We make quick work of the first 45 km as we weave across the valley floor to reach the city of Cartago where, after a bit of urban riding, we begin our ascent into "Eje Cafetero", the UNESCO World Heritage inscribed Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia. The transformation of the terrain is gradual and accompanied by two initial climbs of 3-5 km (4-7%) separated by a swift downhill. By around 60 km we begin to find ourselves deep within the hilly homeland of the smooth Arabica beans that have shaped Colombia's economy, culture, and global identity for over 150 years. The ride's final 20 km are a steady climb into the municipality of Filandia, with mild gradients (3-4%), accompanied by a photoreel of hillsides covered in rows of coffee plants and the villages of the proud farmers tending to them. Tonight's accommodation is a real treat: a modern hotel in the heart of the coffee region built by cyclists for cyclists!

Casa du Vélo-Cycling Hotel Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

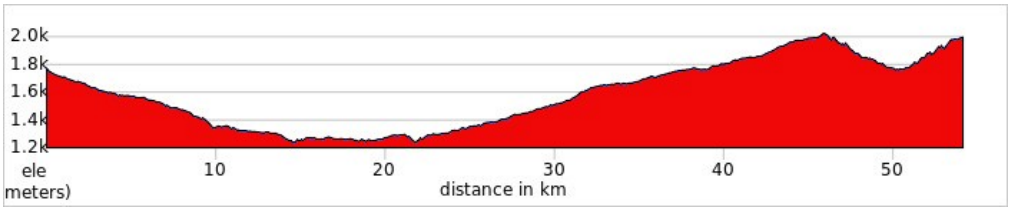


Ride 88km +1506m -695m

Day 6: Filandia - Salento

We backtrack around 12 km downhill through the green hills of Filandia often cloaked in morning mist. After passing through the town of Quimbaya, the terrain evens out as we follow a provincial road through farmlands growing tropical fruits like the Colombian staple, guava. After around 20 km we veer onto a narrower country road rising back into the coffee-growing highlands. Passing by pastures and fincas (agricultural estates) we climb steadily at low gradients for around 15 km to reach Circasia, a lively little town where we stop to power up with a fresh cup of coffee in the central square. The ascent then continues along the shoulder of a provincial throughway until, at around 48 km, we branch off onto a minor road for a refreshing downhill with stunning views of the Cordillera Central. After crossing the Quindio River, a winding 4 km / 6% lifts us to the colorful Andean town of Salento located at nearly 2,000 metres ASL. Salento is renowned for vibrantly painted buildings and being the gateway to the dreamy Cocora Valley. We stay at a cosy ecolodge just outside of town where we are based for two nights.

Eco Hotel La Cabaña Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 57km +1197m -1049m

Day 7: Cocora Valley Hiking & Coffee Making

Today we trade our cycling cleats for hiking shoes to explore one of Colombia's most iconic natural treasures: the Cocora Valley. Here, towering wax palms – the tallest palm species in the world — rise above montane meadows enveloped by lush cloud forests. Our roughly 10 km (+650 m / -650 m) hike takes us high up into this remarkable Andean landscape where, besides traversing lush trails and hanging bridges, we visit a secluded mountain retreat famous for its hummingbirds, and a farm perched at one of the highest accessible points in the valley. After returning to the trailhead, it's time for lunch. In the afternoon we head to a local coffee farm to learn about the entire production process from bean to cup. This hands-on experience reveals

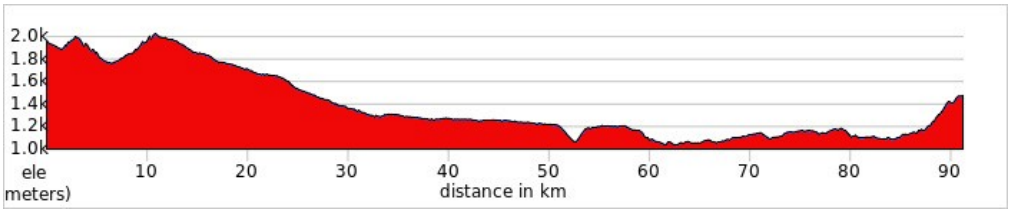
why this region is recognized as a UNESCO Coffee Cultural Landscape, and how generations of families have made their livelihood cultivating Colombia's most famous export.

Eco Hotel La Cabaña Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: Salento - Calarcá

From the heights of Salento we work our way back down the mountains, with the first 30 km feeling familiar as we return via the same roads we ascended on day 7. Once we've passed through the town of Montenegro we continue further south flanked by fields of sugarcane, coffee, and all kinds of tropical fruits. At around 47 km we take a detour through a beautiful tunnel of trees, where a dense canopy of intertwining foliage arches over a narrow side road. Then, a short section on some bumpy rural lanes gets us back onto asphalt for a fast-paced 20 km zip to the town of Caicedonia. Here we prepare for the tour's grand finale: the 7 km climb up to Buenavista, a village that lives up to its name - "good view"! The ascent includes some steep gradients, though the panoramas of the Cauca Valley and the coffee region are spectacular. At the top we load up our bikes and transfer around 30 minutes to our final night's hotel nestled amongst coffee plantations in the municipality of Calarcá. In the evening we gather for a celebratory farewell dinner - we can let the cervezas flow tonight!

Hotel Hacienda Combia Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 91km +1430m -1906m

Day 9: Calarcá Departure

The tour ends with a transfer to either the city of Armenia, around 30 minutes away, or Pereira, around 1.5 hours away. Both cities have airports, though Pereira — which is the main transit hub of the Coffee Region — offers a greater number of flights. Shared transfers will be arranged based on the flight schedules within the group. Feel free to extend your stay and explore more of what Colombia has to offer!

Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we do not provide them as part of this tour. However, you can hire bikes locally for the price listed in the tour pricing section. We provide high quality Go Rigo Go, Specialized, Trek, or similar road bikes. The bike assigned will depend on the availability and size. If you bring your own bike, please make sure it is a road bike in good mechanical order.

Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

THE NITTY GRITTY

Passports and Visas

Travellers from Australia, the United Kingdom, US, Canada and the EU do not need a visa to enter Colombia for a visit of fewer than 90 days. You must be able to show an onward or return ticket valid within the 90-day period. Citizens of certain countries need to present a tourist visa to gain entry. These can be processed at the Colombian embassies and consulates abroad. You can check if you need a visa or not in the link **here**. If you require a visa, please contact the embassy/consulate nearest to you and do not leave it to the last minute.

All travelers must fill out a pre-registration form (called Checkmig) before departure to Colombia. Travelers must complete the form within 72 hours before departure. Travelers must show confirmation of registration before boarding. **Please fill out the Checkmig form here.** Please keep a copy of the Checkmig form on your phone, as this may be checked by Colombian immigration.

Update: The Colombian government is currently making technological improvements to the Check-Mig application and the website is down. Therefore, it is not necessary to fill it out at this time. We suggest checking the site again before heading to the airport and, if it is back online, fill it out just in case.

Health

Recommended vaccinations include typhoid, polio, tetanus and Hepatitis A. A certificate for Yellow Fever is required if arriving from an infected area. See here for more recommendations to help you prepare. Please speak to your doctor/physician for the most recent information.

Weather

One of the most surprising things about Colombia for foreign visitors is the relatively constant climate throughout the year. Located on the Equator, the country experiences consistent daylight hours, with the sun rising and setting at the same time every day. Unlike most other countries, Colombia doesn't have traditional seasons but instead has dry periods (from December to March and July to September) and rainy periods (from April to June and October to November). However, rain can occur at any time, so it's essential to bring a waterproof jacket and pants. In Bogotá and other high-altitude areas, temperatures can be chilly, especially in the mornings and evenings. A fleece and cold-weather cycling gear, such as arm warmers and a gilet, are recommended for these cooler days. Due to the strong UV rays near the Equator, sun cream and a head covering are also necessary for protection.

Food

Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Most meals are local and feature traditional Colombian highland dishes. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for. Please let us know at the time of booking. In remote areas, options may be limited, but we always do our best to accommodate your needs.

Drink

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Water, refreshments and soft drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and other beverages during meals are NOT included. Beer and other alcohol drinks are almost always available but are not included.

Solo Travelers

SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

Extra Expenses

We recommend that you tuck away a few extra US Dollars for possible incidentals that might arise. It is always wise to have some paper currency in case of ATM absence or credit card problems. This will save you a lot of unnecessary worries. It is also customary to tip local tour guides and drivers; however, the amount you give should be dependent on the level of service you receive.

Money

The Colombian peso (COP) is the legal currency of Colombia, denoted locally by the symbol $. Coins in circulation include denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 pesos, while banknotes come in values of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000, and 100,000 pesos. What works best for most people is exchanging some money as soon as you arrive at the airport and then you can top up as needed with ATM withdrawals in some of the bigger towns. Don't expect to find money exchange places outside of Bogotá on this tour. If you are exchanging USD (or any other currency), make sure that your bills are in good condition (no tears, crumpling, or scribbling) as they may not be accepted otherwise.

Be Aware

Colombia, like many countries, has areas where petty crime can occur, especially in larger cities and tourist hotspots. Common crimes include pickpocketing, bag snatching, and theft in crowded places. It's advisable to stay vigilant, particularly in busy areas, transportation hubs, or when using ATMs. Avoid displaying valuables such as expensive jewelry or large amounts of cash.

GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our Booking Conditions in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please email us or call our office.

TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please email us or call our office.

BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into Manage My Trip (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems please send us an email, or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our cancellation policy.

Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your travel insurance that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

CONTACT US

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