



# Amazon Basin

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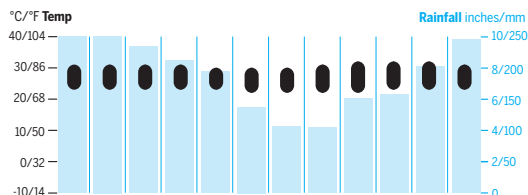
## Why Go?

Amazon. The very word evokes images of pristine jungle, incredible wildlife and one famous river. The Amazon basin, which Colombians call Amazonia, is a 643,000-sq-km region accounting for a third of Colombia's total area – about the size of California. Visitors can never quite account for the strange exhilaration they feel when they come face to face with the rainforest for the first time.

With transportation limited to rivers that crisscross the jungle, indigenous groups deep in the jungle have managed to keep their cultures intact. But in the cities, many indigenous and mestizo (mixed race) people now live modern lifestyles, driving Yamahas and only breaking out their traditional garb and customs for the benefit of tourists. A visit here remains a transcendent experience, from thrilling rainforest treks to simple hammock siestas soundtracked by the otherworldly sounds of the jungle.

## When to Go

### Leticia



**Sep-Nov** Lower water levels afford excellent hiking and reveal white-sand beaches on the Río Yavarí.

**Mar-May** Get closer to the canopy in wet season, the climax of bird-watching and wildlife season.

**Jul & Aug** Loathe mosquitoes? The *terra firme* forest sees most retreat to the canopy.

