



Boyacá, Santander & Norte de Santander

Includes »

Tunja.....	81
Villa de Leyva.....	83
Santuario de Iguaque.....	91
La Candelaria.....	91
El Cocuy.....	94
Güicán.....	95
Parque Nacional Natural (PNN) El Cocuy.....	96
Santander.....	99
San Gil.....	99
Barichara.....	102
Parque Nacional del Chicamocha.....	106
Bucaramanga.....	106
Norte de Santander.....	111
Pamplona.....	111
Villa del Rosario.....	114

Best Places to Eat

- » Greengoes Pizzeria (p105)
- » La Bonita (p88)
- » Color de Hormiga (p105)
- » Gringo Mike's (p101)

Best Places to Stay

- » Greengoes Guesthouse (p103)
- » Renacer Guesthouse (p87)
- » Finca San Pedro (see the boxed text, p84)

Why Go?

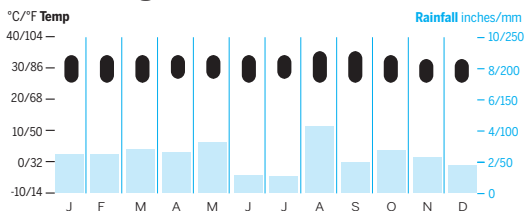
Boyacá, Santander and Norte de Santander together form one of the first areas settled by Spanish conquistadores, many of whose colonial towns still stand today, and its calling as Colombia's heartland cannot be understated. It's here that the seeds of revolution were sowed, culminating in victory at Puente de Boyacá that ultimately led to Colombia's independence.

Amid its deep gorges, fast-flowing rivers and soaring, snowcapped mountains, adventurers can choose between white-water rafting and paragliding in San Gil, mountain biking and horseback riding in Villa de Leyva, or trekking through the glacial peaks of Parque Nacional Natural (PNN) El Cocuy. Those less audacious can bliss out around Lago de Tota, Colombia's largest lake, shop for pottery in Ráquira or hit the fashionable clubs of Bucaramanga.

It all culminates in the perfectly preserved town of Barichara, a cinematic, cobblestoned village of stone churches and uniform architecture that evokes life inside a painting.

When to Go

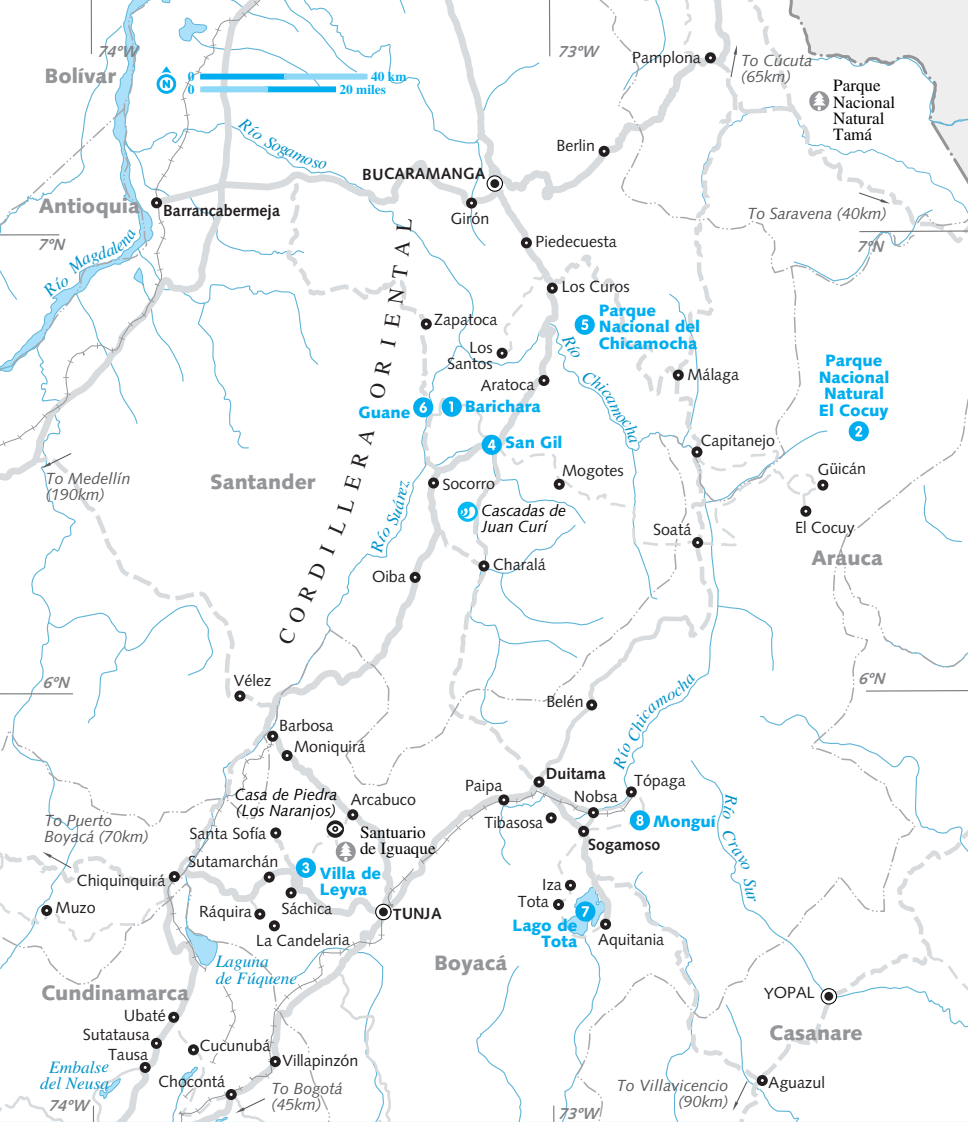
Bucaramanga



Jan The driest, clearest days on El Cocuy, one of Colombia's coveted trekking peaks.

Feb & Mar The pre-Semana Santa (Holy Week) season has less crowds and full-bloom parks.

Dec Like elsewhere in Colombia, a festival of lights illuminates the region's charming villages.



Boyacá, Santander & Norte de Santander Highlights

- 1** Wander a living museum in the cobbled colonial village of **Barichara** (p102)
- 2** Ogle all of Los Llanos during one of South America's most spectacular treks in **Parque Nacional Natural (PNN) El Cocuy** (p96)
- 3** Tour the lovely countryside surrounding the charming

colonial village of **Villa de Leyva** (p83) on bicycle or horseback

- 4** Rappel, paddle, mountain bike or spelunk your way around **San Gil** (p99)
- 5** Ride the wind in a 2000m-high paragliding flight over **Parque Nacional del Chicamocha** (p106)

- 6** Hike along the ancient road from Barichara to the tiny hamlet of **Guane** (p104)
- 7** Catch some Andean rays at the 3015m-high white-sand Playa Blanca on **Lago de Tota** (p84)
- 8** Mosey the color-coordinated, stuck-in-time village of **Monguí** (p84)