



Bogotá

1 / POP 7.4 MILLION / ELEV 2625M / AREA 1587 SQ KM

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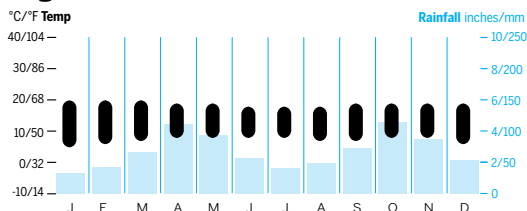
Why Go?

Bogotá is Colombia's beating heart, an engaging and vibrant capital cradled by chilly Andean peaks and steeped in sophisticated urban cool. The city's cultural epicenter is La Candelaria, the cobbled historic downtown to which most travelers gravitate. Here, preciously preserved colonial buildings house museums, restaurants, hotels and bars peppered amid 300-year-old homes, churches and convents. Nearly all of Bogotá's traditional attractions are here – radiating out from Plaza de Bolívar – and gorgeous Cerro de Monserrate is just east.

The city's grittier sides sit south and southwest, where the working-class barrios continue to battle well-earned reputations for drugs and crime. In the ritzier north, you'll find boutique hotels and well-heeled locals piling into chic entertainment districts such as the Zona Rosa and Zona G. Here, rust-tinted sunsets dramatically bounce off the bricks of upper-class Bogotá's Andes-hugging residential buildings – a cinematic ceremony that begins the city's uproarious evenings.

When to Go

Bogotá



Jun & Jul Temperatures aren't as high as May, but rainfall drops dramatically in the capital.

Aug Fiesta free-for-all: Salsa al Parque and the Festival de Verano get the city's hips shaking.

Dec *Bogotanos* fall hard for Christmas, when the city sparkles in a festival of lights.



Bogotá Highlights

1 Ponder Colombia's El Dorado myths among glittering displays at one of the continent's top museums, **Museo del Oro** (p49).

2 Step through the looking-glass into the surreal nightlife world of **Andrés Carne de Res** (p67) in Chía.

3 Trek up the towering **Cerro de Monserrate** (p48), with the Sunday pilgrims for sweeping capital views.

4 Appreciate the beauty of heft at the free **Museo Botero** (p45).

5 Genuflect at the striking interiors of **Iglesia Museo de Santa Clara**

(p45) and **Iglesia de San Francisco** (p52).

6 Soak up the village colonial feel of food-centric **Usaquén** (p67).

7 Attack Bogotá by bike on a fascinating two-wheel tour with **Bogotá Bike Tours** (p55).