



Pacific Coast

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Best Places to Stay

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Best Places to Spot Whales

- ➔ Parque Nacional Natural (PNN) Ensenada de Utría (p261)
- ➔ Juanchaco & Ladrilleros
- ➔ El Valle

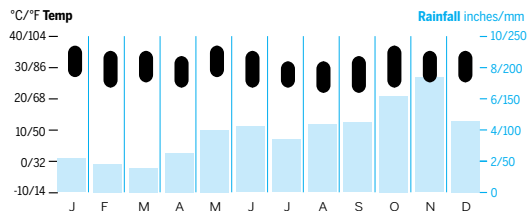
Why Go?

There are few destinations as ruggedly spectacular as the Pacific region of Colombia. This is where the jungle not so much meets the sea as comes crashing headlong into it. It is a place where waterfalls pour out of forest-covered bluffs onto spectacular gray-sand beaches, thermal pools lie hidden in dense jungle and tiny indigenous villages cling to the edge of wild rivers; where whales and dolphins frolic so close to shore you can admire them from your hammock and majestic sea turtles come even closer. There are plenty of comfortable ecoresorts throughout the region and you will find budget guesthouses in the many friendly Afro-descendant communities whose residents eke out a living from fishing and agriculture.

Difficult access and a lack of infrastructure has kept the crowds at bay, but this can't last. Make sure you visit before package tourism takes hold.

When to Go

Buenaventura



Jan–Mar Lighter rains make for better hiking and other outdoor activities.

Jul–Oct Humpback whales arrive in the region after an epic journey from Antarctica.

Sep–Dec Watch giant marine turtles scramble up beaches where they were born to lay their eggs.

Pacific Coast Highlights

- 1 Linger amid tropical gardens on the gray-sand beaches of **Guachalito** (p264).
- 2 Spot humpback whales at **Parque Nacional Natural (PNN) Ensenada de Utría** (p261).
- 3 Surf the Pacific's 2m waves near **El Valle** (p260).
- 4 Dive with hundreds of hammerhead sharks at **Isla Malpelo** (p268), Colombia's most remote scuba destination.
- 5 Relax in piping-hot thermal pools deep in the jungle near **Jurubidá** (p263).
- 6 Travel up the **Río Joví** (p264) in dugout canoes to remote waterfalls.
- 7 Hike from **Bahía Solano** (p257) to swimming holes cloaked in virgin forest.
- 8 Fly through the jungle on a motorcycle-powered rail trolley at **San Cipriano** (p268).
- 9 Paddle through the maze of mangroves around **Ladrillos** (p266).

