



San Andrés & Providencia

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

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Why Go?

The archipelago of San Andrés and Providencia is geographically located near to Nicaragua, historically tied to England and politically part of Colombia. While these pristine islands may lack an untainted pedigree, their diverse history and picture-postcard setting make them Colombia's most interesting paradise.

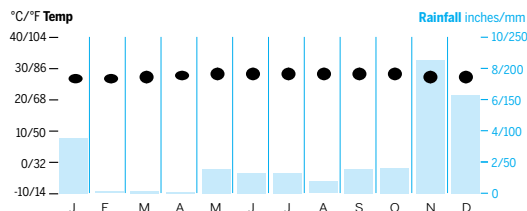
Here you'll find isolated beaches, unspoiled coral reefs and an alluring island flavor; and with just a little digging the 300-year-old English-Creole-speaking Raizal culture emerges.

San Andrés, the largest island in the archipelago, and its commercial and administrative hub, attracts many tourists seeking duty-free shopping sprees. The crowds, however, are not difficult to escape.

Providencia offers the same turquoise sea and extensive coral reefs, but it's much less commercialized and its colonial heritage is still thriving in small hamlets of colorful wooden homes peppered about the island.

When to Go

San Andrés



Jan–Jun During the dry season you can avoid the Caribbean's hurricanes.

Apr–Jul Crab migration season – roads in Providencia can be closed to protect them!

Jun–Dec Prices are much lower outside the Christmas peak on both islands.



San Andrés & Providencia Highlights

- 1 **Scuba dive** (p178) into Providencia's blue waters, gawking at Colombia's prettiest coral reefs and marine life.
- 2 Groove to reggae rhythms over Old Milwaukee's at **Roland Roots Bar** (p184).
- 3 Dig your toes into the pristine sands of beautiful **Johnny Cay** (p173), part of the 4-hectare Johnny Cay Natural Regional Park.
- 4 Trek through iguana country to **El Pico** (p181) for stunning views of Providencia.
- 5 Swim with the stingrays at sunset off **Haynes Cay** (p175).
- 6 Marvel at the **Coconut House** (p177) and nature garden at West View.
- 7 Explore the thick mangrove swamps of Providencia's beautiful **Parque Nacional Natural Old Providence McBean Lagoon** (p180) by boat.