

REGIONAL NARRATIVES

OF TOURISM

Capurganá, Acandí, Chocó, THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.

CHOCÓ

• ALTHOUGH WE ARE DIFFERENT WE FEEL THE SAME •

COLOMBIA 

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**MINISTRY OF COMMERCE,
INDUSTRY AND TOURISM**

VICE MINISTRY OF TOURISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

**WHERE THE JUNGLE
MERGES WITH WATER**

PAGE 3

**INDIGENOUS AND AFRICAN
HERITAGE**

PAGE 5

**THE JOY
OF LIFE**

PAGE 7

**KEY WORDS
AND CONCEPTS**

PAGE 9



Humpback whales, Nuquí, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**

WELCOME TO A NEW WAY OF NARRATING COLOMBIA

We are delighted to take this step forwards with you during this stage of promoting the tourism of our country and, first of all, we would like to thank you for being part of this strategy geared towards the growth and strengthening of the sector. It is people like you who make it possible for increasingly more Colombians and foreigners to explore Colombia.

The Government's goal was to find innovative content associated with cultural expressions and natural attractions in our country, to enable the stakeholders of the tourism sector to publicise destinations and experiences to promote Colombia in the best possible way.

Following in-depth research into our 32 departments plus Bogotá, needs and perspectives were identified with a

view to promoting the country.

This is what led to the creation of the regional narratives of tourism, which are a tool for anyone who wants to generate attractive content and benefit from this department-based research, which featured the participation of researchers, composers, writers, journalists, entrepreneurs, artisans, artists, cultural advisers, social leaders, singers, traditional cooks, indigenous communities, natural parks' representatives, tourists, chefs and other experts from all regions of the country.

So, together, we are going to take advantage of these opportunities for communication and we are going to show that Colombia is the most welcoming country in the world.

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

As a result of a tourism promotion initiative, we have created the regional tourism narratives and their accompanying magazine—a tool to convey them to local tourism operators. Both the toolkit and this publication are designed to complement each other and offer an outstanding opportunity to attract tourism from all corners of the world.

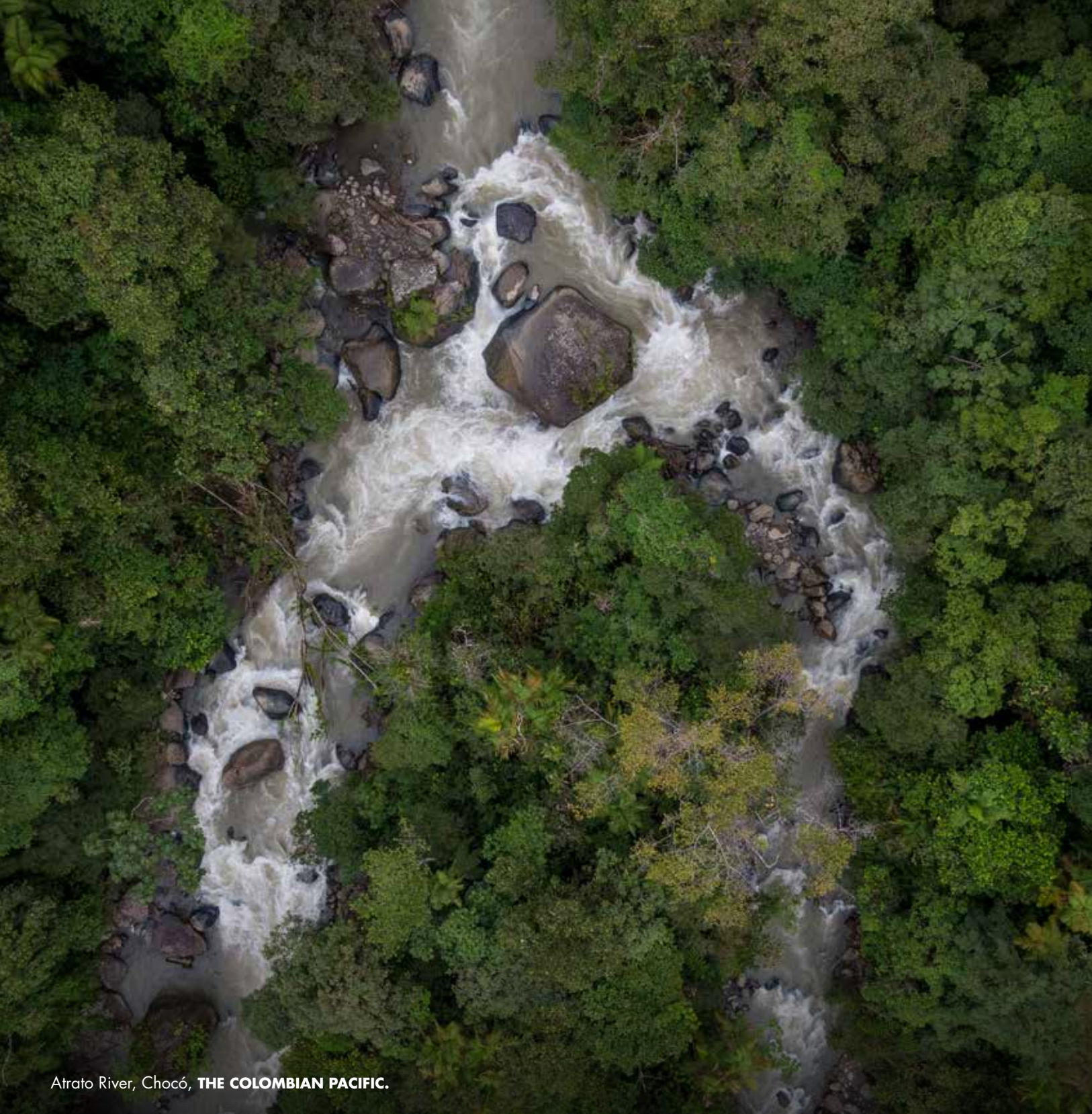
As a reader, you will have at your disposal **33 research modules**, broken down by region and department. Additionally, a content manual is available, a guide teaching you how to best wield this information and create content for different media that efficiently communicates destinations' offers and aligns itself with their needs. The initiative also includes the podcast series "**Sounds from the Heart of Colombia**", 33 stories that reconstruct environments, voices, songs of nature, and the cultural identities of each of our departments, as well as a series of photographs and illustrations of the main destinations.

The following pages contain articles showcasing the highlights of each department in keeping with the aforementioned narratives, as well as information providing a general summary of the research. If you were to require more in-depth information, we recommend reviewing the 33 modules comprising the regional tourism narratives.

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Sapzurro, Nuquí, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**



Atrato River, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**

— **WHERE THE JUNGLE MERGES WITH WATER**

The department of Chocó emerged from the encounter between the oceans, the jungle and the river. It is a breathtaking region that evokes freedom from its wild, uncharted and impregnable nature, with very little human intervention and which is the gateway to the imposing Colombian Pacific.

Chocó is a spectacular region with great natural and mineral riches, with an aroma of humid earth due to its constant rain, of exotic vegetation thanks to the black orchid and the Chocoan fern, of rivers, sea and seafood. Chocó is fertile land, it is the meeting point of the magical encounter between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, the jungle and the Atrato, Baudó and San Juan rivers, a perfect blend of ingredients of a territory that has had very little human intervention, an ideal setting to get in touch with nature.

This department is an ideal destination for ecotourism and water sports due to its blend of ebullient nature with beaches on two seas, some of them dark sands on the Pacific, and others light sands on the Caribbean coast; an immense jungle and three main rivers.

Settlements in Chocó are found along the riverbanks and most of the population lives from alluvial mining, banana, cassava, maize and rice farming, self-sufficiency from hunting, fishing and gathering, and independent trade in cities.

The most symbolic places to visit feature parks, waterfalls, mangroves and nature reserves where you can see whales, turtles and exotic birds, besides other species. The must-sees are Bahía Solano with its jungle and trails, waterfalls such as Nabugá, Chocolatal, El Tigre and Chadó; corals, mangroves and vast beaches such as El Valle, which hosts turtle and humpback whale watching and where you can enjoy an unmatched display: the passage of migratory birds.

The Ensenada de Utría National Natural Park, deemed

unique in its kind for containing a whole host of eco-systems, ranging from marine to jungle, is home to 125 species of mammals, upwards of 400 species of birds, 1000 species of reptiles and 35,000 species of plants. It is a must for those who enjoy connecting with nature, exploring and discovering unique species.

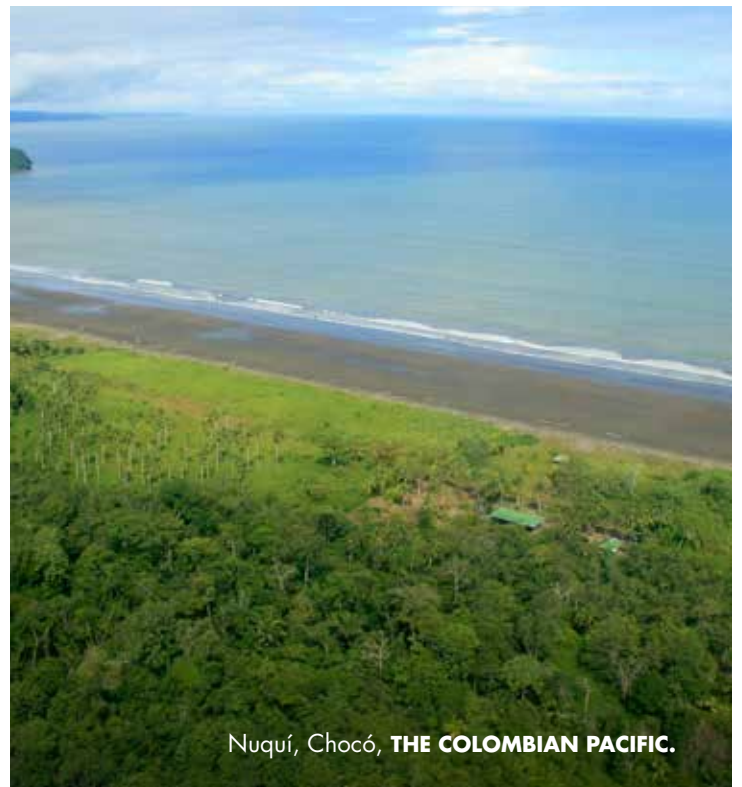
One of the most recognised municipalities by tourists, Nuquí, is a paradise for ecotourism. It boasts a rich variety of natural landscapes and green treasures that breathe life among thermal springs, ecological trails and beaches for surfing, diving and kayaking, including Terco, Pico de Loro, Terquito, El Chorro, Playa Brava, Río Termales, Pela Pela and Juan Tornil.

Capurganá is a remote village on the Caribbean coast that is renowned for its quiet bays with breathtaking beaches for relaxing and snorkelling, nature reserves and waterfalls.

"I believe that Chocó is a department of contrasts and nuances. There are areas where the climate is colder and others where it is warmer, there are also differences between our seas, there are different customs among the people of Chocó themselves, areas of thick forests and others where there is excess light, and there are even foods that are the basis of our diet, but which in each place are prepared in a different manner."



Humpback whales, Nuquí, Chocó,
THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.



Nuquí, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**



INDIGENOUS AND AFRICAN HERITAGE

Chocó is a highly diverse department that boasts a past steeped in history, with its mixture of cultures, the vindication of its African and indigenous heritage, and its attachment to the land of Chocó.

Afro-Chocó struggles to uphold the memory of an unjust past marked by slavery and mining, giving it the strength to chart new paths. Its Afro-descendant heritage is more alive than ever and has contributed to characterise the territory as it is today, an explosion of cultures, joy and history.

"This is a big and sovereign department because it is the only one in Colombia that has two seas. It started out fairly vast, because Panama was part of the province of Chocó, but the inhabitants were originally the Emberá indigenous peoples with their five families, until the enslavement of the African continent took place, and then the slave ships arrived in the port of Cartagena and they were sold in the estates. Many of them fled and came here on their journey taking up the palenques. They stayed because this land resembled their continent in climate, humidity, its abundance of water and jungle. Subsequently, the black population began to grow, even displacing the indigenous population, and to this day it is the largest population in the department of Chocó, although there are also mestizo inhabitants."

These peoples' history is alive and present in almost all daily activities, in the places that define them, their people and their customs, the gastronomy and the flavours of their cuisine, which are open to tourism for people to visit and understand a little of their past and their context that is so full of emotion.

The region's history is woven between museums and places of symbolic value. The Muntú Bantú Centre for African Remembrance Museum in Quibdó, Colombia's largest, is focused on rescuing Afro-descendant culture, by connecting historical roots with Africa through knowledge and pride. There is strong mining heritage in places such as Guayabal, the village from which most gold was extract-

ed, and Andagoya and Andagoyita, territories that recall the department's mining grandeur, as well as the social differences between foreigners and natives.

"Andagoya was the site of the Chocó Pacífico mining company with the gringos who ran the company, and Andagoyita was where the workers and miners lived, who were essentially slaves because they could not go to Andagoya without permission from their masters."

Indigenous peoples also seek to defend their heritage and their riverside, jungle and mountain territory, spaces to which they were confined after the settlement of African freedmen and the expansion of the Paisas.

The community councils of the indigenous peoples Wounaan, Emberá Dóbida, Eyabida and Kuna Tule are present in the department of Chocó, but not all of them are in contact with tourists, although they are in contact with settlers and Afro-Colombians. With regard to tourism, there is the Etnoaldea Kipara Te, an Emberá Dóbida community centre, where you can find typical dishes of the region, bird and frog watching trails, body painting and crafts such as chaquira or necklace weaving, werrengue basketry and wood carvings.

Chocoan cuisine blends Afro, mestizo and indigenous elements, which bestows upon it great variety. Fish, cheese, coriander, basil, pennyroyal, oregano, garlic, cassava, plantain and corn are some of the must-have ingredients in the cuisine and its flavours tend to be somewhat aromatic due to the abundant herbs grown in gardens and on rooftops. Its most renowned dishes include sancocho de cuatro carnes (a stew of game, dried and smoked meat, and chicken) and sancocho of smoked tripe and wild coriander, rice with longaniza sausage, tapao de corvina (sea bass stew), encocados de pescado (white fish stew), patacones con queso (fried plantain and cheese) and of course chontaduro con sal (peach palm fruit with salt). The traditional drink includes wine based on sugar cane, spices (cinnamon, cloves and aniseed), herbs and roots.

You can savour some of these delicacies and learn how to cook them through several initiatives, which have led to the creation of traditional workshops, where Afro-Chocó women teach young people and tourists about meat preservation processes and how to prepare game and fish dishes.

Ancestral knowledge about the use of plants, liquors and animal parts (which are included in healing rituals) is a core part of the traditional healing and medicine that is ever so prevalent in Afro and Emberá-Wounaan-Tule customs. Many of their home remedies are still in use and easily found today in the markets and people's homes. These include borojó for the kidneys; llantén for high

blood pressure; bonche for soft hair; botoncillo for the liver; celandine in juice with castor oil to expel worms and intestinal parasites; Santa María Boba for headaches, and churco to cure rashes of the tongue and palate.



THE JOY OF LIFE

The people who inhabit this region are generally happy, open and pre-disposed. They are joyful people who celebrate life to the sound of dances and rhythms with the music of chirimía and bunde and good times.

Chocó's indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities are resilient, warm and proud of their customs and roots. This joy is in their blood with colours, songs and dances, and the region's harsh past is no impediment to celebrate life as it comes (with its joys and sorrows) and perpetuate their heritage of resistance, joy and solidarity.

It is a culture that celebrates nature, life and death with rhythms, chirimía and bunde music, and good times. Their joy is perceptible and contagious. Music and festivities are ongoing expressions in the department of Chocó, as they sing and dance to prevent their soul from being left in sorrow. The major festivities include the Fiesta de San Francisco de Asís "San Pacho", a UNESCO-declared intangible cultural heritage of humanity, which exorcises the evils experienced during the year by means of floats, burning of dolls and bundes (community dances) to the sound of traditional chirimía and modern music. Chocóan music includes the alabaos, funeral songs (responsorial chants) which today unite the religious and the mundane; and arrullos, lullabies, which are also used at wakes and at Christmas. Both of these are part of everyday life.

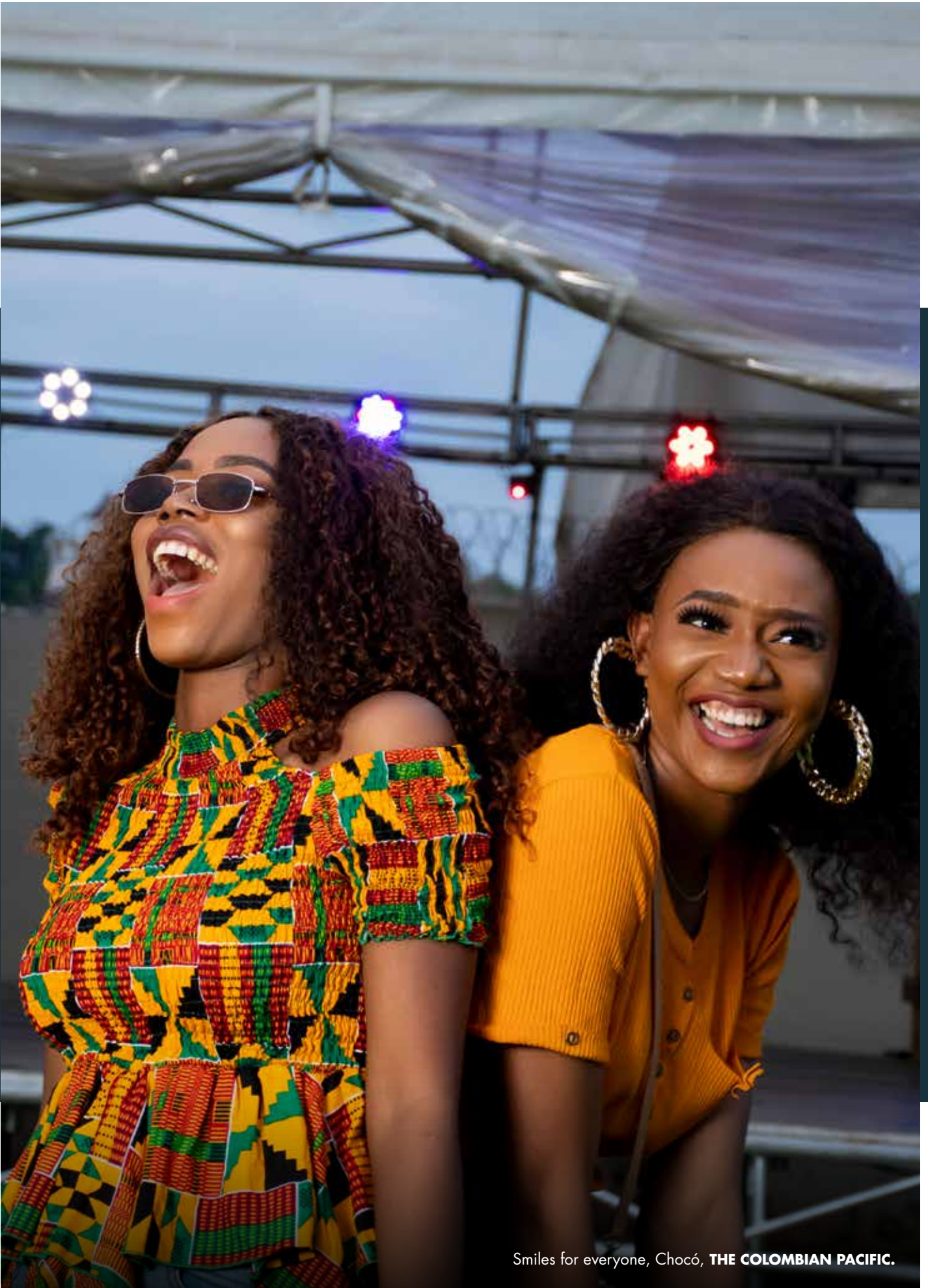
The history of the department features figures dedicated to the arts, literature, music and dance,

who from their trades have contributed to society, strengthening the idea of courage, attachment to ethnicity and the desire for their worth to be recognised.

"What sets Chocó apart is the joy that characterises us, that rootedness to the land (for us the land is very important), the fact that we celebrate everything, even in times of tragedy. But in the midst of this scarcity, which for many would be synonymous with sadness or self-pity, here you can find happy, generous, friendly people, positively marked by a past of pain, death and enslavement that has made us strong, and it is this strength that we show through joy."



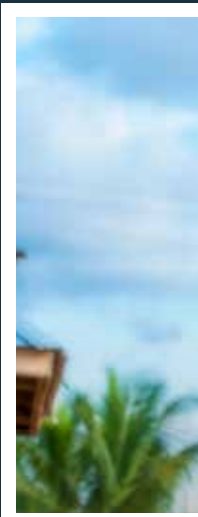
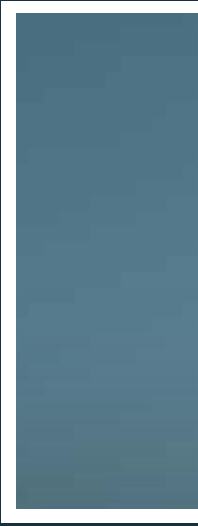
Workshop, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**



Smiles for everyone, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**



KEY WORDS
AND CONCEPTS





Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**

HISTORY OF BLACKNESS

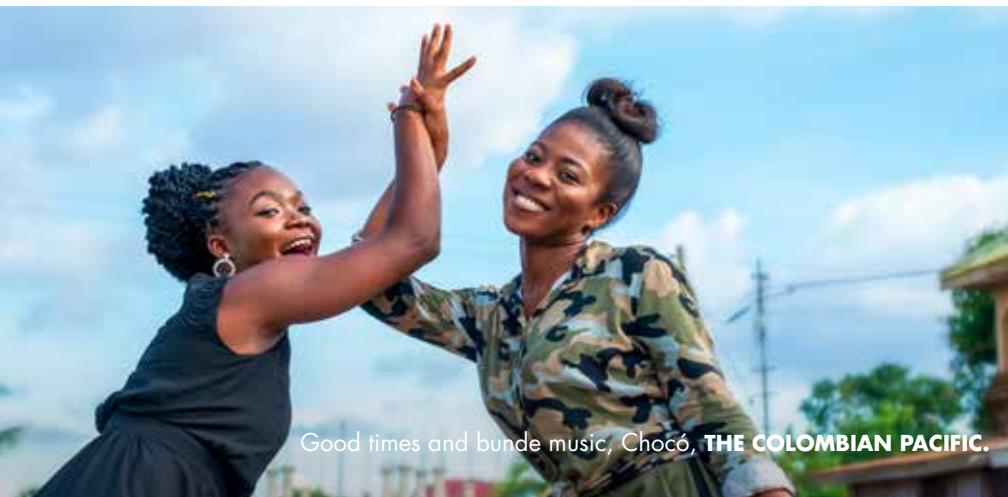
This struggle for freedom from slavery and foreign mining companies, as well as the recognition of their territories and rights.



Humpback whales, Nuquí, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**

WHALES

Against a backdrop of the jungle, they represent virgin nature, tranquillity, birth and marine wealth.



Good times and bunde music, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**

GOOD TIMES AND BUNDE MUSIC

The trance into which the community enters to the sound of chirimía music, revealing the joy and the need for expression of the people of Chocó.

KEY CONCEPTS



GEOGRAPHY

- Pacific Ocean
- Caribbean Sea
- The rivers San Juan, Atrato and Baudó
- Rainforest
- Thermal springs
- Marshes
- Serranía del Baudó mountain range among others.



SOME MUNICIPALITIES, TOWNS AND ACTIVITIES

- Quibdó Market
- Muntú Bantú Museum
- Houses of Andagoya and Andagoyita
- Guayabal village
- Sal De Frutas Waterfall in Tutunendo
- Nuquí and Bahía Solano
- Ensenada de Utria National Natural Park
- Capurganá
- Los Katíos National Natural Park
- Morromico
- El Cantil
- Cabo Corrientes
- Punta Diego
- El Almejal
- El Valle
- Guachalito
- Playa Blanca
- Tadó Beach
- El Aguacate Bay
- Kipara Te Ethnovillage
- Los Katíos National Natural Park (UNESCO World Heritage)
- Tumaradó and Marriaga Marshes
- Santa María de La Antigua del Darién Archaeological and Historical Park among others.



GASTRONOMY

- Sancocho de cuatro carnes (a stew of game, dried and smoked meat, and chicken)
- Arroz con longaniza (rice with longaniza sausage)
- Chontaduro con sal (peach palm fruit with salt)
- Patacón con queso (fried plantain and cheese)
- Sancocho of smoked tripe and wild coriander
- Tapao de corvina (sea bass stew)
- Encocados de pescado (white fish stew)
- Fish: dentex, wrasse, mayupas, quícharos and bocachicos
- Viche drink with a base of sugar cane, spices, herbs and roots, cinnamon, cloves and aniseed among others.



CRAFTS

- Wooden pans for artisanal mining
- Chocó creations with fishing nets, canoes and drums
- Typical chirimía music instruments
- Chaquira or necklace weaving
- Basketry in werrengue palm fibre (Wounaan people)
- Oquendo and peach palm wood carving (pans, walking sticks, animals) among others.



REPRESENTATIVE

- Sergio Mosquera
- Saturio Valencia
- Madolia de Diego
- Mianco (Miguel Angel Mosquera Conto)
- Chocquibtown
- Diego Luis Córdoba
- Rivas Lara
- Rogelio Velázquez
- Arnolde Palacios among others.



FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND FESTIVITIES

- Patron saint festivals of the municipalities
- Festivities of San Antonio de Padua
- Festivities of the Virgen del Carmen among others.



Peach palm fruit, Chocó, **THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.**

THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC

We sincerely hope that all these tools will serve as a point of departure to offer better services, optimise promotion and strengthen our tourism industry, which will be prepared for the golden future that awaits it.



Scan this code and view the 33 modules of the regional narratives of tourism.

Sumptuous beaches, Nuquí, Chocó, THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC.

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