

REGIONAL NARRATIVES

OF TOURISM

NORTH SANTANDER

• **LAND OF MOUNTAINS, NATURE AND WARRIOR HERITAGE** •

COLOMBIA 

VISIT **COLOMBIA.TRAVEL**

Historic Temple of Villa del Rosario, North Santander, EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.



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Calle 28 # 13A - 15. Floors 35 and 36
Bogotá, Colombia
+57 601 5600100.
info@procolombia.co

**MINISTRY OF COMMERCE,
INDUSTRY AND TOURISM**

VICE MINISTRY OF TOURISM

Created by:
**FEEDBACK PROVOKERS
AND PROCOLOMBIA**

**DESIGN AND
RESEARCH TEAM:**

Claudia Medina
Account manager

Project leaders
María Alejandra Gutiérrez
Natalia Bonilla

Juliana Quecán
Analysis manager

Carol Retavisca
Project coordinator

**FIELD EXECUTION AND
ANALYSIS TEAM:**

Semiotic director
Marcia Pinzón

Anthropologists
Alejandra Ramírez
Eliana Cepeda
Julián Numpaque

Psychologists
Natalia Pastrán
Ana María Rebellón

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Playa de Belén, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

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.

PROCOLOMBIA



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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Pamplonita, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

ALL KINDS OF LANDSCAPES

A mountainous, rocky territory with some plains. In this breathtaking department you can find moorlands, highlands, plateaus, plains, hills and every possible shape nature has bequeathed upon the earth.

North Santander boasts a wide-ranging geography, with countless shapes and forms that delimit striking landscapes that will leave you speechless. As a result of this, it is host to major water sources and also distinct climates, thanks to the thermal-floor phenomenon.

"We have imposing landscapes that cross the department's rugged geography, places that even surprise those of us who hail from here."

This area is found in the north-eastern region, bordering on Venezuela to the north and east, and is home to the Santurbán Massif, which has moorlands and a water supply that flows into the Catatumbo and Orinoco rivers. It is a region that is demanding to access, as its geography implies major challenges. You are encouraged to experience the risk of its landscape, and facing challenges to access various places make this stunning department a constant adventure.

"Our moorlands are unique and crucial, as we nourish a large part of the Colombian territory with the Santurbán Moorlands. Wherever you go you can see towering mountains, you feel adrenaline, sometimes fear, fear of passing and seeing those sheer drops."

North Santander has municipalities located at contrasting altitudes above sea level, resulting in a region that is immensely rich in landscapes and climates. Its natural resources and geographical location mean it is an economic and commercial hub for the country, particularly for the agricultural sector, producing the likes of rice, sugar cane, cassava, plantain, cotton, coffee, peaches, pineapples and bananas.





“

“We have immense landscapes such as mountains, we enjoy that natural wealth of rivers that bathe the region, with the diversity of its thermal floors, lagoons, waterfalls, national parks and unique spaces.”

— WARRIOR LEGACY

Its ancestral heritage of indigenous Motilones and Chitareros, known for being warriors, strong and fighters, now forms part of the region's cultural and gastronomic legacy.

North Santander boasts ancestral heritage of indigenous Motilones and Chitareros, the focal point of historical events that sealed independence and freedom. It is the place where it all began.

"North Santander forms part of the cradle of Colombian history, starting with aspects such as the Convention of Ocaña and Villa del Rosario. It can all be summarised as follows: it is the north of history."

Thanks to the plucky and temperate personality of its inhabitants, the department established a broad diversity of industries, and became trailblazers and great traders in areas such as footwear and clothing. It was its people who developed the first loom, and also made the role of women visible in different areas. The region is known to this day for its entrepreneurial ability.

"Cúcuta was the country's capital. Business was focused



here, the first loom came to Colombia, electricity and telephones arrived here. Everything came through Cúcuta, the Constitution was signed, it was the authority where the country was governed, then everything moved to Bogotá."

Having a border with Venezuela, it became a commercial intersection that enabled and fostered industrial and business development in the department, contributing to the development and drive of the regional and national economy.

"We are a territory made of history, and the constructor of the homeland and freedom. We firmly believe in family, progress and human development, a land built



Sancocho, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

through the drive of thriving and enterprising people.”

The people of North Santander are the result of that hostile relief that surrounds their region and which is steeped in the indigenous legacy of their ancestors, highlighting the brusqueness, frankness and temperance in their interactions, through their accent, a strong tone of voice, their expressions and their way of speaking with their hands, which enables us to see their relationship with their environment.

“Because people who don’t know us see that we talk loudly and use hand gestures, sometimes they think we are fighting, but that’s part of who we are.

The department is home to diverse and varied gastronomy, which not only takes on elements that highlight the ruggedness of the terrain and the adaptation of its inhabitants, but also the interaction and cultural blend experienced in the region. For instance, pastel de garbanzo

(chickpea patty), is made from a grain that is associated with being “hard, rough and is the result of the blend of cultures that gathered in the region.”

“Pastel de garbanzo is a tradition inherited from the Cúcuta and Arab cultures, and a process that evolved to even include African roots.

The rampuchada, a dish made from the rampuche, a fish that can only be found in the rivers of the region, originates from the indigenous cultural legacy and is attributed to eternal youth. The arepa ocañera (corn patty) reflects the union of Spanish and indigenous cultures, based on corn and cheese, on a banana leaf.

“The arepa ocañera... let’s say that the arepa is something very representative of Colombia, but the arepa as it is made in Ocaña is unique, even having a special pot.”



Pozo Azul, Cúcuta, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

CONNECT WITH NATURE

This is a rugged department, with a rough, broken geography that challenges visitors. But it also encourages you to connect with the deepest part of your being, to have the courage to walk through it and enjoy it.

The relief of the department evokes and transmits roughness, it encourages adventure. In fact, the very relief of the department has become one of the region's primary tourist attractions. This is precisely because it boasts natural sites and phenomena that are an adventure merely to behold. One of the most clear-cut examples is the scenery offered by the Catatumbo Lightning, a thunderstorm that kindles admiration and surprise.

"What we see is the reflection of the image of a thunderstorm that takes place in Venezuela on the Catatumbo River, an ideal place for sighting meteorological phenomena. It could become a world-famous event for us."

The spectacular department's natural wealth and ecological significance means visitors can behold rock formations, caves, lagoons, waterfalls and undertake activities that position the region as an adventure destination, which in turn reflects part of the country's history.

"When we talk about North Santander we have to formulate it in two potential offers: nature and adventure, in other words, everything that revolves around Santurbán, because it is our greatest natural attraction, because it is regional, and in terms of culture and history, the Bicentenary of the Constitution."

In line with its history, its indigenous legacy and its relief, North Santander offers a wide array of sites that

offer these elements in their tourist attractions. Cúcuta is the department's capital and contains part of the country's history; Ocaña offers major historical and cultural wealth; Chitagá provides ecological and cultural tourism, boasting a broad array of lagoons; Villa del Rosario is related to the history and consolidation of the Republic, given that it was the capital of Gran Colombia; Playa de Belén was declared a site of national cultural interest and a national monument of Colombia, and visitors can enter the area of Los Estoraques, Tavolandia tourist vantage point and Yaragua Natural Park; Bochalema is the reservoir and producer of oxygen known as "The Paradise of North Santander," as a result of its privileged climate; Chinacota is known for being where the Chitarero Indians lived and where the treaty ending the Thousand Days' War in Colombia was signed; Pamplona is chiefly renowned for its religious tourism and its Holy Week processions, and lastly Cúcuta is a major water source in the region and is part of the Santurbán Moorlands.

"We have historical places, in Ocaña, in Villa del Rosario. In Pamplona we have natural phenomena, lagoons, waterfalls, trails, the architecture of our villages, all in one



region, and you can easily move from one climate to another.”

On the other hand, the department is the centre of major production of various crops, which showcase the region where they are harvested and have become an attraction for visitors to carry out activities. For instance, as for peaches, there is an activity known as the Peach and Water Route, which includes three major municipalities: Pamplona, Cácuta and Chitagá. Pineapples are known as “the gold of North Santander,” and the municipality of Teorama is noteworthy for production of this fruit and for the dance that its inhabitants perform in its honour.

The department also offers festivals, cultural events and historical tours, which commemorate and celebrate the identity of its inhabitants, safeguarding and showcasing their traditions. These include the Desfile de los Genitores (Parade of the Conceivers), in Ocaña, which gathers artistic and cultural collectives in honour of local and regional historical landmarks; the Fairs of San Nicolás, in Chinacota, which highlight and celebrate its landscapes’ diversity and beauty; the Holy Week processions, in Pamplona, renowned for its religious celebrations, and the historical commemoration of the Battle of Cúcuta, known as the greatest national holiday, paying tribute to Simón Bolívar.

“We are a land of festivities, of cultural wealth, of cultural manifestations as colourful as the landscapes and as big as its mountains, a land of natural richness with its moorlands, with its rivers that bathe it, with the diversity of its thermal floors, lagoons, waterfalls, national parks and unique areas where everything is celebrated.”



KEY WORDS
AND CONCEPTS





Historic Temple of Villa del Rosario, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

HISTORY

A land of historical importance, and the site of event that consolidated the nation.



Monument to Christ the King, Ocaña, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

UNIQUE PERSONALITY

Characteristic features of the local accent, a strong voice and hand gestures when speaking form part of the DNA of the region's inhabitants.



Yellow corn arepa, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

UNIQUE GASTRONOMY

Its cuisine manages to express elements such as its geography and its indigenous heritage.



Los Estoraques Unique Natural Area, North Santander, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



SOME MUNICIPALITIES

- Cúcuta
- Ocaña
- La Playa de Belén
- El Carmen
- Villa del Rosario
- Pamplona
- Pamplonita
- Cúcota
- Duranío
- Bochalema
- Toledo
- Chinacota
- Ábrego
- Chitagá
- among others.



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

- Catatumbo Lightning
- Holy Week processions
- Desfile de los Genitores (Parade of the Conceivers)
- Fairs of San Nicolás
- Holy Week processions
- Historical commemoration of the Battle of Cúcuta
- Peach and Water Route among others.



GASTRONOMY

- Kid
- Pepitoria (bird stew)
- Rampuche fish
- Pastel de garbanzo (chickpea pasty)
- Hallacas (Venezuelan influence — meat and vegetables in ground corn wrapped in a banana leaf)
- Arepa ocañera (corn patty)
- Suckermouth catfish
- Cortado de leche de cabra (typical sweet) among others.



NATIONAL PARKS AND LAGOONS

- Los Estoraques Unique Natural Area
- Catatumbo Barí
- National Natural Park
- Tamá National Natural Park
- Sisavita Natural Park
- Yaragua Natural Park
- Cúcota Lagoon
- La Barca Lagoon
- La Quelpa Lagoon among others.

KEY CONCEPTS



MUSICAL GENRES

- Bambuco
- Pasillo
- Guabina
among others.



REPRESENTATIVE FIGURES

- Motilones indigenous community
- Chitareros indigenous community
- Francisco de Paula Santander
- Juan Rangel de Cuéllar
among others.



MOORLANDS

- Santurbán
among others.



CRAFTS

- Basketry (Barí indigenous community)
among others.



EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES

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.

Santibán Moorlands, North Santander, EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.

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