

# REGIONAL NARRATIVES

OF TOURISM



Guatapé, Antioquia, WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.

## ANTIOQUIA

• GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS MEAN SHEER DROPS •

**COLOMBIA** 

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**MINISTRY OF COMMERCE,  
INDUSTRY AND TOURISM**

**VICE MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

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Arví, Park Antioquia, **WESTERN 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.

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**PROCOLOMBIA**

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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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*PROCOLOMBIA*

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Jardín, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

# AMONG MOUNTAINS, HILLS, PEAKS AND SUMMITS

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*The historic region of Antioquia has taken shape between the steep, green mountains in the midst of the Central and Western mountain ranges.*

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It boasts an extremely varied geography, given that it is enveloped by soaring mountains, plateaus, valleys, steep peaks, hills, peaks and summits that surround its relief. Even though Antioquia is often linked with mountains, they actually comprise two-thirds of its territory, while one-third accounts for plains that surround the mountains to the west, north and east.

*"We are in a privileged location, we share part of the country's mountain ranges, a geography that is packed with mountains and peaks, but which also has plains and valleys."*

Being located in two mountain ranges (Central and Western) means Antioquia is mountainous and, although it also has flat zones, what is most noteworthy in its discourse and identity is its mountainous relief: There is a reason Medellín is known as the Capital of the Mountains.

*"Antioquia is chock-full of high mountains, rivers, peaks, birds, animals that inhabit the region and it boasts a warm climate almost all year round. It is a mountainous department, we are surrounded on all sides, but we also have flatter coastal areas."*

Because of its geographical conditions, it is a thriving and lavish territory that produces numerous foods of the likes of plantain, cocoa, corn, cassava, coffee and sugar cane.

*"It is a beautiful territory that gives you coffee, cocoa, corn, wherever you walk you see people working the land and producing a great deal of food."*

A lot of the department's charms and representative elements are tied to it being the origin of green and sheer mountains.

*"We are encircled by high mountains, everywhere you go you are surrounded by a mountain, the green of the mountains is department-wide."*

Whether they are hills, peaks, mountains or summits, they all share that rocky, voluminous and sheer nature that makes them so appealing to tourists, and which is part of the quintessential Antioquian landscape. Noteworthy examples include El Peñol, Cerro Tusa, Páramo el Sol, Cerro el Picacho, Cerro Nutibara and Arví Park.

*"We have Cerro Tusa, which is the world's largest natural pyramid."*

In terms of gastronomy, the offer is as wide-ranging as the mountain crops that represent abundance. Typical dishes include the famous bandeja paisa (rice, beans, fried meat and plantain, arepa), fiambre (rice, meat and veg-



Silletero (flower porter), Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

etables wrapped in a banana leaf), frijoles con pezuña (beans with pork hoof), mazamorra paisa (bowl of cooked corn often served with milk and panela) and arepa (corn patty) with cheese, which are essential on the table of every family in Antioquia. There is a reason why it is customary in Antioquia to eat seven times a day.

*“Antioquia is one of the rare regions where people eat seven times a day because we start with drinks, then breakfast, a mid-morning snack, lunch, el algo (afternoon snack), dinner and before going to bed, supper.”*



Medellín, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## → CONQUERING THE MOUNTAINS

*Antioquia is a region that always encourages you to get up and transform yourself through what you have learned so as to be able to look back on the path you have travelled and feel proud of it, of the obstacles you have overcome, of your persistence. It is a tradition-based forward-looking region that transforms societies. It is the land of modern Medellín: the city of Botoero, silletera or flower-porter culture, gastronomy and Colombian fashion.*

For the people of Antioquia, mountains are synonymous with a challenge. Reaching the summit is a nod to the fact that “what you propose, you achieve.” This is the reason why they live with the objective of conquering and appropriating the mountains: to be able to inhabit them.

*“We get something into our heads and we see it through, that’s why we are stubborn, we don’t leave anything half done... we are like the Horizontes painting, what the muleteer points to is what he is going to conquer.”*

Thus, achievement is so important, because the mountains have taught them to achieve things, which gives rise to a need to make visible and showcase what they have achieved.

*“We Paisas have achieved major things... works and constructions in suburbs of the city that seemed impossible to do because of the mountains, perforating these mountains, the tunnels we have are extraordinary. We had to shatter the mountain to make habitable cities, we had to contend with the harshness of those peaks to be able to hang from their summits and build cities and municipalities.”*

All these achievements are established as a source of pride that reflects their high sense of belonging to the region and the goals achieved, a feature that perfectly defines the Antioquians.

*“We are proud of what we have done in the midst of the mountains. We have put up cities, built houses and developed many works.”*



It is therefore only logical that many of the department's emblems and main charms are related to this achievement. The following six attractions are noteworthy:

### CAPITAL OF THE MOUNTAINS

Medellín is a major achievement. "La tacita de plata" (the silver teacup), as it is called, alludes to the cleanliness and good care reflected in the city that the Paisas are proud of, something that is visible when walking through its streets, neighbourhoods and avenues.

### MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Trailblazers in the development of road infrastructure and means of transport. Its beloved metro, gondola lift system and tramway are a source of national pride and identification for all locals and Colombians alike.

### GUATAPÉ AND EL PEÑOL

The most visited inselberg that has amazing views of the reservoir. It represents pride and endeavour, as it is an unnatural landscape and highly appealing for tourism.

### QUAINT VILLAGES

They coined the term "pueblar", touring the most beautiful villages of Antioquia, nourishing the sense of belonging and pride in their region.

### CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC OFFERING

Stages and artists are a source of pride due to their national and international acknowledgement. These include the likes of Parque Explora, the Museum of Antioquia, and artists Fernando Botero and Pedro Nel Gómez.

### MULETEER AND FLOWER-PORTER CULTURE

They reflect the strength, endeavour, drive and temperance of the people to create opportunities in the face of adversity. Similarly, the silletera or flower-porter culture represents the strength of flower farmers to participate in and be a source of admiration and pride.



Metro, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

*"From the muleteers we still have their way of finding the path; if it is not there, you create it. You will always find a solution. It must not have been easy to create these roads between mountains, to make a trade route, to generate interaction with other cultures, while doing so in the midst of the mountains. I believe we inherited that and it is preserved today in Antioquians' DNA, that ability to provide solutions. They transported not only cargo but also messages that connected the region. They brought news and there is a very significant theme that arises from this, being the Paisas' hospitality, our pride for what we are and for what we have achieved."*



# THRIVING AND DRIVEN PEOPLE

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*Paisas are like an electrocardiogram, climbing to the top of the mountain to achieve goals and falling from it to be reborn and reinvented. They are exemplified by the creation of opportunities in the midst of adversity, from topography, the creation of civilisation and the forging of opportunities, they have overcome many hindrances.*

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The metaphor of the electrocardiogram identifies them, given that it is an analogy to the ups and downs they experience in their day-to-day lives. Their story tells of intricate events that have caused them to fall, but also to get up again stronger. This is what has enabled them to be entrepreneurs and innovators.

*"We have suffered major blows, but what that entails is that they drive and push us to get up again."*

Part of their history has been marred by negative factors and players that —beyond eclipsing the image of their inhabitants— have managed to catapult them to bestow upon their region new meaning. Paisas believe that in order to establish their achievements they first had to fall down.

They are tough, they reinvent themselves, they are reborn, they stand out and nourish their capacity to overcome obstacles, to avoid getting stuck, to be creative, to look for ways forward and not to give up.

*"Paisas do not get stuck, they are always probing, always struggling to find a solution, to find an answer to everything."*

For this reason, they are at the juncture between tradition and modernity, always remembering their muleteer origins but projecting their future through innovation.

*"We are rooted in our muleteer past. It is from them that we have the strength and drive to push on."*

The traits of Paisas include their temper, determination, positivity, drive to improve themselves and to always seek what is good in any situation. This is manifested in some of the city's tourist attractions. Commune 13 and the Museum House of Remembrance are places that tell the world about that "dark past," but through an approach that teaches many lessons and redefines the value they both held for the department. These days they have become must-sees for tourists, confirming the people of Antioquia's ability to see opportunities in the midst of adversity.

## COMMUNE 13

The commune managed to transform and channel violence into artistic expression, becoming a showcase for urban art.

*"It is the resistance, people driving forward in the midst of war in order to progress. That ability to overcome everything that happened here... to know that this was a mountain and that it was also dangerous, and these days it brings together culture and art."*

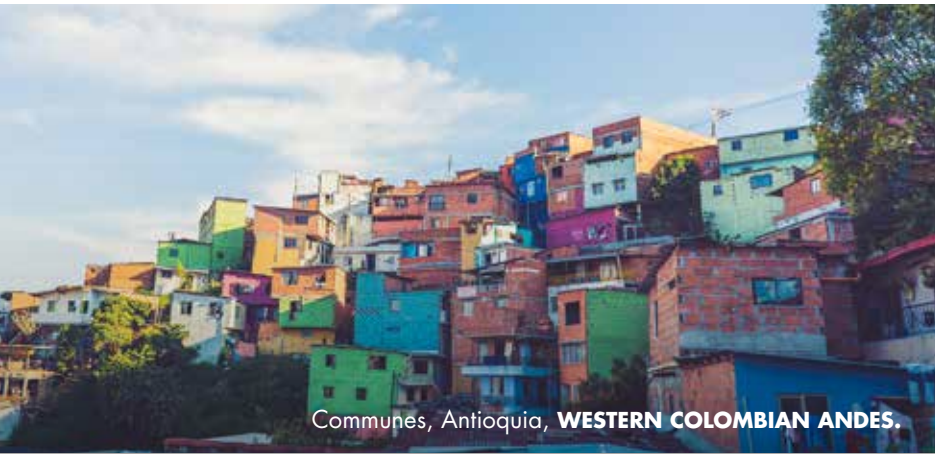
## MUSEUM HOUSE OF REMEMBRANCE

It contributes towards dialogue and meetings to overcome the armed conflict, bringing hope and illusion.



**KEY WORDS**  
AND CONCEPTS





Communes, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## CATERPILLAR TO BUTTERFLY

Antioquia is a region that was historically struck by violence, and shields itself from the stigmatisation left by the past. To distance itself from the stigma, it acknowledges its past and places greater importance upon its self-transformational ability.



Aburrá valley, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## FROM ON HIGH

Climbing implies travelling a path to reach the top: the place where hurdles are overcome and strategies are created to continue forwards. Thus, reaching the top and looking back over your path up brings pride and satisfaction.



Guatapé, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## TRIUMPH

As the road travelled (in particular in Antioquia) is a steep one, reaching the top is a task that requires major efforts.



Plaza Botero, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## SUPERLATIVE

People from Antioquia always seek to showcase their achievements. So you could say, Antioquia is a region of people who work to draw attention to their abilities, to always be superior.

# KEY CONCEPTS



## GEOGRAPHY

- Mountains
- Highlands
- Valleys
- Summits
- Hills
- Peaks
- Moorlands
- Thermal springs
- Volcanoes of mud among others.



## GASTRONOMY

- Bandeja paisa (rice, beans, fried meat and plantain, arepa)
- Fiambre (rice, meat and vegetables wrapped in a banana leaf)
- Mazamorra paisa (bowl of cooked corn often served with milk and panela)
- Arepa blanca (corn patty) made with cheese and sweetcorn
- Empanada (corn dough patty)
- Tamal antioqueño (boiled meat and vegetables in banana leaf)
- Morcilla (black pudding)
- Frijoles con pezuña (beans with pork hoof) among others.



## REPRESENTATIVE

- Arrieros (muleteers)
- Silleteros (flower porters)
- Fernando Botero
- Pedro Nel Gómez
- Tomás Carrasquilla
- Débora Arango
- Trovadores among others.



## FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND FESTIVITIES

- Flower Fair
- Corn Festival
- Plantain Festival
- Festival of Lights
- International Tango Festival
- Book and Culture Festival
- Diablitos Festival
- Fruit Festival among others.



Silletero (flower porter), Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



Concert stage, Antioquia, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



## CROPS

- Coffee
- Plantain
- Cocoa
- Avocado
- Maíz (corn)
- Potato
- Las Flores  
among others.



## EMBLEMATIC PLACES AND ACTIVITIES

- Museum of Antioquia and Plaza Botero
- Means of transport: Metro, tram and metrocable
- Commune 13
- Museum House of Remembrance
- Parque Explora
- Nutibara Hill - Pueblito Paisa
- Arví Park
- Silletera estates in Santa Elena
- Coffee plantations
- Peñón de Guatapé (inselberg)
- Guatapé
- Heritage villages: Jardín, Santa Fe de Antioquia and Jericó
- Ceramics workshops in Carmen de Viboral  
among others.

## WESTERN 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.

Santa Fe de Antioquia, WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.

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