

# **REGIONAL NARRATIVES**

## **OF TOURISM**

Eastern Plains, Arauca, THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.

# **ARAUCA**

• **EXPERIENCING AND NARRATING EXPLOITS OF THE PLAINS** •

**COLOMBIA** 

VISIT **COLOMBIA.TRAVEL**



©ProColombia - 2021

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

---

All rights reserved. Partial or complete reproduction of this material without explicit permission of ProColombia is strictly prohibited.

The published material, including, but not limited to, illustrations, articles, photographs and, in general, information comprised in LAS NARRATIVAS REGIONALES is protected by the intellectual property laws of the Republic of Colombia. The document and its contents, as well as the statements and/or opinions expressed in the publication and in the art that accompanies it, are the result of research carried out by the author and reflect the opinions and interpretations of the work's author, which are personal in nature, and do not correspond to or reflect the position of the National Government and/or ProColombia, or the rest of the entities that have been involved in the project, who shall not assume any responsibility for the position, truthfulness, authenticity, or originality of the information contained therein, nor for any direct, indirect, incidental, or consequential, punitive, special, derivative, and/or any other type of damage arising from what is expressed therein. Its purpose is limited to the promotion of Colombia.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**IN THE HEART OF**  
A LAND WITHOUT LIMITS

PAGE 3

**ADVENTUROUS**  
LAND

PAGE 5

**THE LLANERO,**  
AUTHENTIC AND PURE

PAGE 7

**KEY WORDS**  
AND CONCEPTS

PAGE 9

# 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.

---

*PROCOLOMBIA*

---



Eastern Plains, Arauca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**



Arauca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## IN THE HEART OF A LAND WITHOUT LIMITS

---

*The idyllic department of Arauca is a flat and unbounded land, in the midst of immense hatos or ranches, large boundless and fence-less estates, delighting those who visit it and want to sing about its geography.*

---

It is located in the middle of the Eastern Plains and shares a border with the state of Apure (Venezuela) along the Arauca River. It has generated major cultural ties that enrich the department's culture and its history.

*"The Venezuelan plains and the Colombian plains have a common axis, and the axis is the heart of Arauca, where the music is generated that goes to the department of Meta, the effect of which is amplified in Venezuela because of the influence we have."*

It is a department located in the heart of this unbounded land, with immense ranches and farms through which you can ride on horseback and be dazzled by the grandeur of Arauca's sunrises and sunsets.

*"I have seen the Llano's most beautiful sunrises in Arauca. When we take tourists to the ranches and lodges we always tell them that the sunsets and sunrises are not to be missed."*

It is impossible not to want to sing about its geography, the beautiful savannahs, the sunsets, sunrises, and the Arauca River, which is one of the most symbolic places for the people of Arauca.

*"We have a Venezuelan influence because we were born by the river that has been sung about the most; this is the river where people have been most inspired, it is today's most musical river: the Arauca River."*



Hallaca,  
**THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

Its proximity to Venezuela means that it shares its gastronomy with the neighbouring country. The most popular dishes include hallaca (meat and vegetables in ground corn wrapped in a banana leaf), pisillo de chigüiro (capybara meat dish), Venezuelan arepa (corn patty), tumbos (banana passionfruit) and sopa de picadillo de carne seca (minced beef soup). In their recipes they use wild and exotic animals typical of the plains, such as deer, capybara, wild pig, chicamo, Llanos side-necked turtle, speckled caiman.

*"That minced beef soup is a delicacy. Here we also have pisillo de pescado (boiled fish dish), arepa, cachapa (corn patty), fried pork, and tumbos. Our gastronomy is very rich and there are very exotic dishes primarily at Easter (...) Dishes such as Llanos side-necked turtle stew, chicamo, which is an endangered species, and a soup made from speckled caiman or babo, as we call it here."*

Thanks to its characteristic geography of open and limitless savannahs, a recent interest has emerged around activities such as rallies that feature participants from different latitudes, given that Arauca has the perfect terrain to enjoy this type of activity.



## ADVENTUROUS LAND

---

*This department is home to the daily exploits and journeys faced by the Llaneros, crossing these vast lands in the sunshine, accompanied by their cattle. It tells the story of the beginning of the exploits of the journey of liberation and the plainsmen who travelled the Orinoquía region transporting cattle through a land without limits.*

---

The timeless stories of the adventures of the characters of the liberation campaign and the stories of the first Llaneros, those who crossed the Orinoco with their cattle, live on in the department of Arauca. All of this has remained in the DNA of its inhabitants, highlighting their immense bravery, which drives their exploits and adventures.

*“Here we have historical places such as the house where Simón Bolívar passed through in Matecandela, where the Liberator and all his people stopped, I think it is a very emblematic place, but there is also Tame, the cradle of freedom, where Bolívar and all his people met.”*





Eastern Plains, Arauca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

They hold dear memories of the exploits of their ancestors, who transported cattle all over the Orinoquía region, on journeys that could last up to a month and a half. For this reason, they are seen in popular culture as representatives of the authentic Llaneros.

*"Trino Torres died at the age of 104. He was one of the real Llaneros, one of those who would take 1,000 steers from Arauca to Villavicencio on a journey that lasted 42 days from here to Villavicencio."*

The department's most emblematic places also reflect that liberating deed and the importance of the heroes who took part in that adventure. The monument to the heroes is very emblematic, and there is also the cultural hike in support of the liberating deed, which took place on the occasion of the bicentenary.

It is very common in the department to hear the tales of legends about the adventures of the Llaneros in their travels through Arauca. These notably include the Fireball, which is a light that moves across the plain. It also has writers who reproduce the Llanero culture through poems, stories and novels. Some prominent writers include Silvia Aponte, Miguel Matus and Humberto Amaya Luzardo.

*"My books talk about the Llaneros, about life, customs, the tales of the Llaneros, the stories they told me as a child and the stories I had to experience."*



# THE LLANERO, AUTHENTIC AND PURE

*The Llanero culture is built upon joropo (dance), music, vaquería songs, coleo (equestrian sport), contests and festivals, all cultural manifestations that narrate and celebrate the authenticity and purity of the Llaneros.*

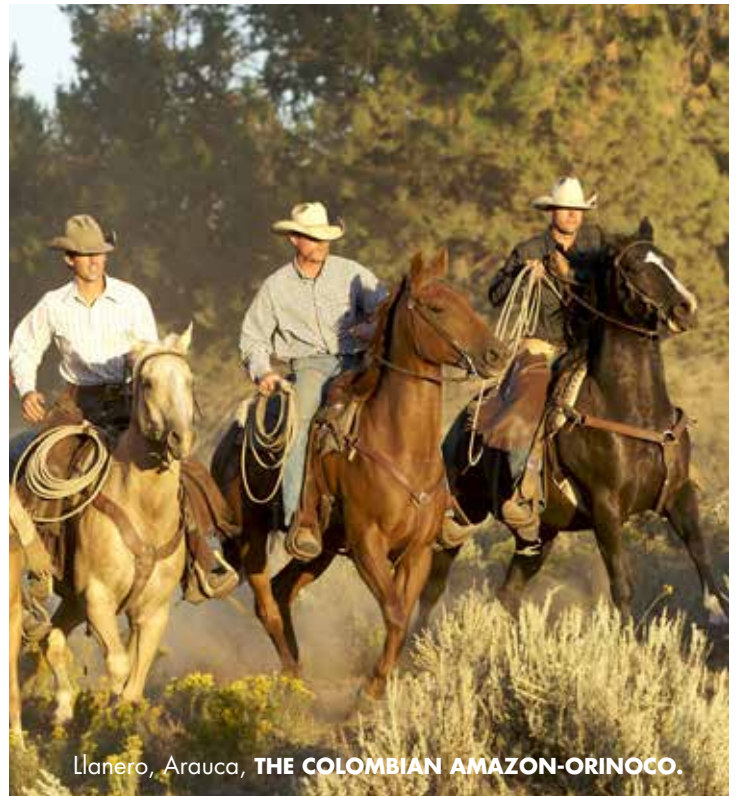
Arauca has competitions that highlight the ability of the Llaneros, such as the "Auténtico", in which participants must demonstrate their skills working the plains, from wrangling cattle to galloping across the Arauca River.

*"It's about bringing the work of the countryside to the city. We christen the winner the Llanero Auténtico or true ranger. When it started, it consisted of half a day displaying work on the plain. At first there were only 20 or 30 people, but now there are 1000 or 2000 participants."*

There are also festivals and patron saint festivities in each of the municipalities, highlighting the plains' culture through music and dance, most notably featuring the harp and the joropo as musical hallmarks of the people of Arauca.

*"The most important thing is tradition, art, culture, music, where the harp originated, the real history of joropo, projecting images of the history of joropo."*

On another note, the espadrille has been adopted as the department's main handicraft. Items made of leather, wood and moriche palm are also prominent.



*"In the north they work with moriche palm a lot, in other parts they work with leather and a lot of handicrafts are made of wood. But for me, what represents us now is the leather espadrille."*

The Llaneros safeguard their heritage with activities that narrate their culture and traditions such as vaquería songs and religious activities: saints' wakes, singing rosary prayers, wakes for little angels.

*"Wake songs are central to saints' wakes, religious and social ceremonies held in honour of a particular saint, in order to request specific favours (...) Besides music, the wakes are characterised by games, storytelling and other entertainment" (UNESCO, 2019).*

# KEY WORDS AND CONCEPTS



Ranching implements, Arauca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## INDEPENDENCE LANCERS

Figures that historically represent the bravery that identifies Llaneros.



Llanero, Arauca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## VAQUERÍA SONGS AND RELIGIOSITY

Representing the department's intangible heritage.



Sunset, Arauca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## BORDER TERRITORY

Marking the relations between two nations, cultures and peoples.



Livestock, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## WORK ON THE PLAINS

Reflecting the everyday life of the plainsmen of Arauca and their versatility in taming cattle.



Espadrille, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## ESPADRILLES (ROUGH SANDALS)

The craftsmanship that represents the department.



Harp, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## HARP

The department's primary musical instrument giving joropo dance its melodies.



Chigüiro, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**



## GEOGRAPHY

- Arauca River
- El Cocuy National Park
- El Diamante Hill
- Savannahs
- Sunrises and sunsets
- Garceros (nesting place of herons)  
among others.



## REPRESENTATIVE FIGURES

- Trino Torres
- Heroes of the liberation campaign  
among others.



## GASTRONOMY

- Hallaca (meat and vegetables in ground corn wrapped in a banana leaf)
- Venezuelan arepa (stuffed corn patty)
- Pisillo de chigüiro (capybara meat dish)
- Sopa de picadillo de carne (beef mince soup)
- Chigüiro (capybara)
- Pericazas
- Pisillo de pescado (boiled fish dish)  
among others.



## FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

- Festival del Llanero Auténtico
- Festival Araucano de la Frontera
- International Joropo Tournament (dance)
- International Coleo Tournament (equestrian sport)
- Patron Saint Festival of Santa Bárbara
- Patron Saint Festival of Cravo Norte
- El Jiraro de Oro
- La Cotiza de Oro  
among others.

# KEY CONCEPTS



Hallaca, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**



## EMBLEMATIC PLACES AND ACTIVITIES

- José Antonio Páez International Bridge
- La Maporita ranch
- Las Camasas ranch
- Valbuena ranch
- La Panchera ranch
- El Tigre ranch
- Los Mantones ranch
- Work on the plains
- Cultural Centre
- Orinoquía Anthropological Museum
- El Encuentro Park
- Caribabare Estate
- Santa Barbara Rally
- Olympic Coleo Tournament (equestrian sport)
- Malecón eco turístico (esplanade)
- Los Libertadores Park among others.



## CRAFTS

- Espadrilles
- Leather crafts among others.

## THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO

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.

Eastern Plains, Arauca, THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.

• REGIONAL NARRATIVES OF TOURISM •

# COLOMBIA

 **PROCOLOMBIA**  
REPORTS TOURISM INVESTMENT COUNTRY BRAND

VISIT [COLOMBIA.TRAVEL](http://COLOMBIA.TRAVEL)