

REGIONAL NARRATIVES

OF TOURISM

Tota Lagoon, Boyacá, EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.

BOYACÁ

• GUARDIANS OF THE EARTH •

COLOMBIA 

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**MINISTRY OF COMMERCE,
INDUSTRY AND TOURISM**
VICE MINISTRY OF TOURISM

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Tota Lagoon, Boyacá, **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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Boyacá, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

FERTILE AND KIND LAND

The historic department of Boyacá, synonymous with fertile and bountiful land, is the guardian of the earth. It is a kind and giving terrain that one must know how to interpret in order to get the most out of it.



Boyacá, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

It is a department that enjoys a nutrient-rich, fertile and very productive soil. *"We have a blessed and fertile land, because what we sow is given, from the moment it is harvested with love and dedication, you will see the result."* It is the feeling of a people who hold the land in their hearts, which is why they care for, admire and respect it. Their land is fertile and rewarding as it has a geography with all the thermal floors, which has created an abundant territory for the production of a wide variety of foodstuffs.

"It is a privileged and rich land. Here there is good milk because the cows have healthy pastures, a variety of potatoes, peas, maize, coffee, etc." assure the villagers.

But it is clear that, while they are privileged with this land, those who work it must have an ancestral wisdom that will enable them to interpret this fertile soil in order to make it even more productive and profitable. The people from Boyacá believe that *"there are ancestral roads, mountain tops that were used by the indigenous people to see everything: they read the signs, the position of the clouds, and our grandparents and their grandparents learned these things, so they knew the best times to harvest."*



Ocetá Moorlands, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

They are strong believers and practitioners of Catholic values. They are appreciative of their prosperity, and regard Boyacá as a blessing. *“Thank God we have these crops, this gastronomy and these beautiful landscapes.”*

It is no coincidence that many of the tourist attractions in Boyacá revolve around the birth of this fertile and bountiful land, starting, for example, with its gastronomy.

Under the premise that everything that is harvested is eaten, traditional dishes such as cocido Boyacense (stew), the variety of soups (mazamorra chiquita, cuchuco de trigo, mote de maíz), fritanga (fried meat and vegetables), arepa (corn patty), envueltos (boiled corn and cheese in a wrapped banana leaf) and amasijos (bakery preparations), reflect this abundance. The Tomatina Festival in Sutamarchán is a celebration that brings the community together with the growers and, at the same time, is a manifestation of gratitude for the abundance of their crops.

“Our food is an ancestral wealth. Soups are our trademark dish because they bring together everything that the harvest gave us: cubios, broad beans, turnips, beans, potatoes, all these tubers that come from our indigenous

people and grandparents.”

Similarly, its connection to the land is crucial to be able to interpret it properly. Boyacá is a magical place that brings together a myriad of sites that reveal this “interpretation” of nature, which they have had since ancient times and which enables them to connect with their Catholic faith. You only have to visit the temples and astronomical observatories such as Patio de Brujas (Ráquira), Zaquen-cipa (Santa Sofía) and El Infiernito or Muisca (Villa de Leyva), or go on religious tours (Virgen de Chiquinquirá, El Topo, Morca) to appreciate the significance of these places for their inhabitants.

“We are renowned for the temples and basilicas that are an essential part of the national religious art, that’s why you see the pilgrimage to Chiquinquirá or Morca, the pilgrimage to the Virgen de la Salud, or the healing mass in Samacá.”

Lastly, you have to see the landscapes that the land and its food provide. The wide variety of landscapes across five thermal floors invites you to admire all kinds of scenery, from snow-capped mountains, moorlands and thermal springs to lagoons and deserts, such as the Nevado del Cocuy, the Ocetá Moorlands (Monguí), the thermal springs (Paipa), Tota Lagoon, Iguaque Lagoon and the Candelaria Desert and Muzo (known as the world capital of emeralds).

“It is a department with wonderful landscapes of mountains, valleys, forests, moorlands and crops, which are steeped in tranquillity wherever you go.”



Crafts, Boyacá, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE AND TRADES

The wealth of knowledge that the people of Boyacá have acquired through working, ploughing, harvesting and sowing the land is enthralling and highlights their ability to excel in a wide range of trades.

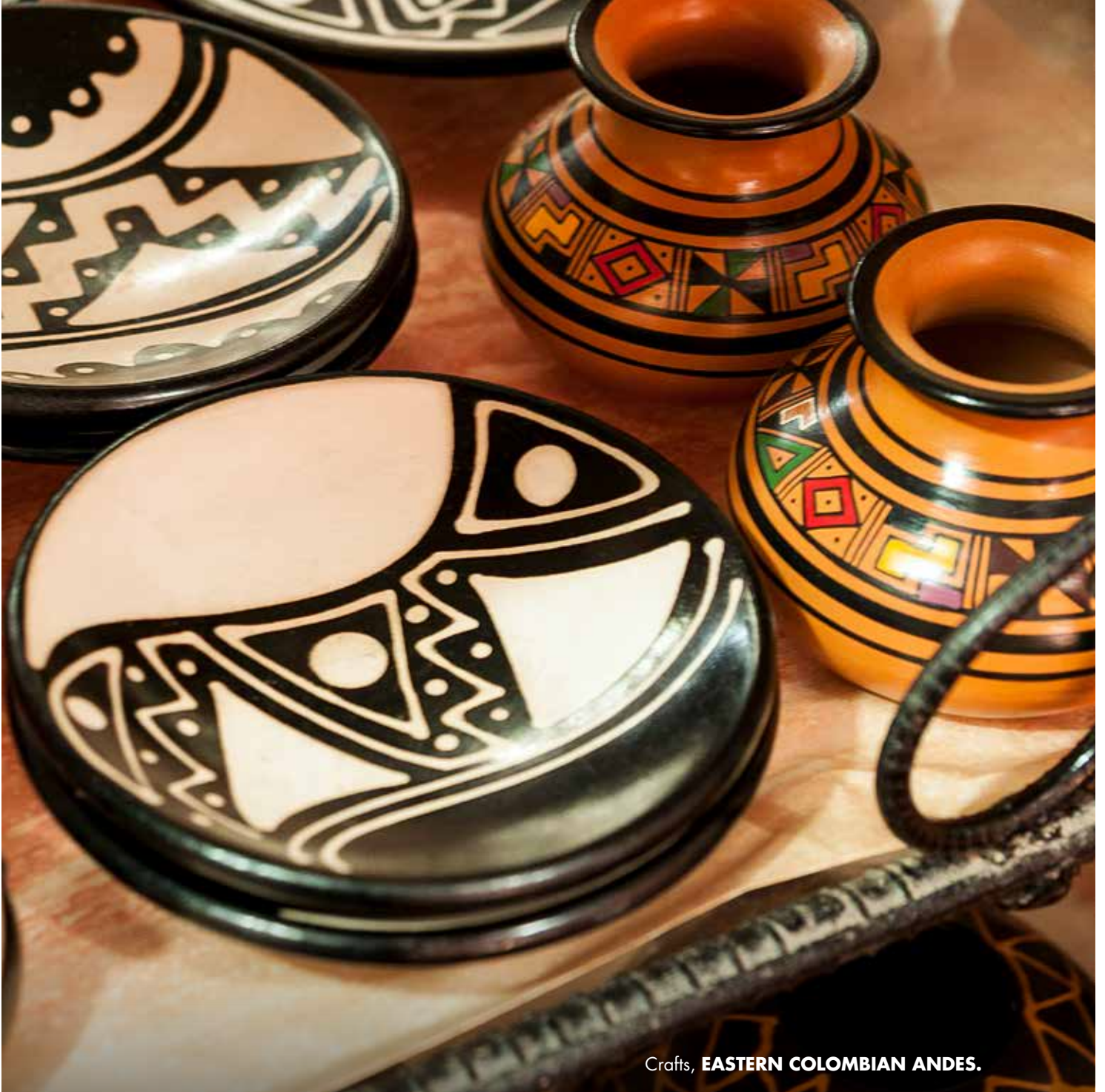
The land has shaped the people of Boyacá through different trades, turning them into masters of many different professions. Not only in trades directly related to the land, but also in other activities that derive from it and taking advantage of the resources available in the department.

"There is huge wealth here: there is oil, water, productive land and healthy animals. We also have a massive transport industry that is very strong and has been going on for years."

They are experts in making handicrafts and weaving ruanas, espadrilles, rugs, blankets, baskets, pottery, balls and hats. In mining, they work with emeralds, oil, coal and lime. In agriculture, they are at the forefront in the cultivation of potatoes, onions, garlic, tubers, fruit, barley, carrots, coffee, maize, sugar cane and vegetables, as well as in livestock farming, where they excel in the production of dairy products, meat and leather. In industry, they are outstanding in transport, iron and steel, cement and liqueur.

Knowledge and trades are passed down from generation to generation in families. The teachings come from the grandparents and patriarchs, from whom they learnt most of the traditions that are so highly valued today, particularly in the field of crafts. *"My grandparents knew everything... they predicted when it was the best time to sow, to harvest, when to fertilise the land,"* maintain the anonymous accounts of various locals.

"That custom of shearing the sheep and then going through the whole process of dyeing the wool to process it and make ruanas or rugs, we learned that from our grandmothers and they learned it from their grandmothers."



Crafts, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

The people of Boyacá remember and share their knowledge and wisdom through cultural manifestations and activities, in celebrations or elements that represent them. For instance, the International Culture Festival in Tunja, the pottery of Ráquira, the ruanas of Nobsa, the Terra-cotta House in Villa de Leyva and the basketry of Guacamayas.

GUARDIANS OF THE EARTH

All who inhabit Boyacá's land have a vital role to play as guardians and caretakers of the land, which is the country's great food pantry.



“

Boyacá nowadays represents respect, gratitude and protection of the land, since it is of key importance in the national diet. It is “the mother of Colombia: it nourishes and protects,” as they proudly put it.

“We are responsible for delivering and supplying some of the food for the families of Colombia. We stand by our homeland by delivering hundreds of products that supply the homes of Colombian families. Every day on Colombians’ plates there is bound to be something that comes from our little land, from Boyacá.”

The people of Boyacá are the caretakers or guardians of the land, and therefore they have a dedicated, caring, grateful, generous, self-sacrificing, supportive and responsible personality. They are not interested in showing

off but in protecting.

“People know us as the quiet ones or the submissive ones, and sometimes it is because we are slow to build up confidence. But if someone from Boyacá likes you, they’ll take food from their own mouth to give it to you.

In keeping with their status as watchmen and guardians of the land, they are believing and practising Catholics. They primarily believe in the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, whom they call the “Patron Saint of Colombia” and have huge devotion and faith in her, thus reaffirming the values of protection and care that permeate their essence.





KEY WORDS
AND CONCEPTS





Ruana, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

PROTECTIVE

The ruana, an emblematic weaving of the region, embodies protection. It protects against the cold, is waterproof and is even said to serve as protection against a gunshot (the bullet becomes entangled in the wool). To protect means to watch over, to look after, to care for the well-being of others. This is how this region, which is the main source of the country's food supply, is described.



Pottery, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

HANDMADE

Hands are of great value when it comes to care, but they are also associated with creation, work and attention to detail. This concept also takes on a special meaning in this culture, because what is done with love is received with gratitude. The hands used to weave baskets and garments are the same hands used for cooking and preparing dough or tilling the soil.



Tota Lagoon, Boyacá, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

BOUNTY

Boyacá is a fertile and bountiful land where everything grows. A bountiful region is a region that does not waste: they use the roots, leaves, fruits, meat, bones, rennet, milk and sour milk.



Boyacá, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

WEAVERS OF WORDS

The language of carranga music is the language of the people of Boyacá, because it tells of their daily life and identifies them. It is poetic language (in verse and packed with literary figures —anaphorae, metaphors, dilogies, etc.). To weave words is to interweave them to beautify “the whole.” And the whole is, indeed, the oral tradition, that through which knowledge is transmitted in order for it to endure over time.



Villa De Leyva, Boyacá, **EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



GEOGRAPHY

- Sierra Nevada del Cocuy
- Tota Lagoon
- Playa Blanca (Aquitania)
- Ocetá Moorlands (Monguí)
- Chivor Reservoir (Macanal)
- Iguaque Lagoon
- Pozos Azules (Villa de Leyva)
- Los Paso del Angel Ecotourism Park (Santa Sofia) among others.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Thermal pools (Paipa)
- Pueblito boyacense (Duitama)
- Bridge of Boyacá
- Christmas Tour (Corrales, Floresta, Busbanzá, Boyacá Bridge) among others.



REPRESENTATIVE FIGURES

- Jorge Velosa
- Nairo Quintana among others.



FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

- Tomatina Festival (Sutamarchán)
- International Culture Festival (Tunja)
- Aguinaldo Boyacense (Tunja)
- Festival of Lights (Villa de Leyva)
- Festival of Wind (Villa de Leyva) among others.

KEY CONCEPTS



GASTRONOMY

- Cocido boyacense (stew)
- Mazamorra chiquita (corn-based soup)
- Cuchuco de trigo (pork stew)
- Mute de mazorca (meat and vegetable soup)
- Fritanga (fried meat and veg)
- Arepa (corn patty)
- Envuelto (boiled corn and cheese in a wrapped banana leaf)
- Amasijos (sundry bakery preparations) among others.



MINERALS

- Emeralds among others.



MUSIC

- Carranga among others.



RELIGIOUS TOURS

- Our Lady of the Rosary (Chiquinquirá)
- Virgen El Topo (Tunja)
- Virgen de la O (Morca)
- Healing mass (Motavita)
- Virgen del Coro Sanctuary (Zetaquirá) among others.



Traditional food, Boyacá,
EASTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.



SOME MUNICIPALITIES

- Villa de Leyva
- Sáchica
- Tunja
- Chiquinquirá
- Puerto Boyacá
- Muzo
- Macanal
- Guicán
- Aquitania
- Monguí
- Ventaquemada among others.



CRAFTS

- Wool weavings (Nobsa)
- Pottery (Ráquira)
- Basketry (Guacamayas) 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.

• **REGIONAL NARRATIVES OF TOURISM** •

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