

# REGIONAL NARRATIVES

## OF TOURISM



# CALDAS

● BLAZING TRAILS THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS ●

COLOMBIA 

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La Miel River, Caldas, **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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Estate at a coffee plantation, Caldas, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



Nevado del Ruiz, Caldas, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

# AT THE FEET OF THE IMPOSING NEVADO VOLCANO

*The breathtaking natural environment surrounding the department of Caldas is a landscape to be admired. Highlights include coffee-scented mountains, the imposing Nevado del Ruiz volcano, exotic birds and spectacular valleys.*

The panorama you can find in Caldas is one of majestic mountains. Among these you can find the Nevado del Ruiz, one of Colombia's active volcanoes. It is situated in the Los Nevados National Natural Park, which is not only part of Caldas but also spans the departments of Tolima, Risaralda and Quindío.

This picturesque place is home to a major abundance of volcanoes, which gives rise to multiple thermal springs located near Manizales, the department's capital.

The name Manizales is inspired by the abundance of "Maní stones", which predominate in a natural peat bog in Colombia's central mountain range, known as the "cabal zone".

*"Environmental tourism is what is holding sway and we have a natural park boasting conservation and nature."*

Additionally, Caldas is a department surrounded by thermal floors, enabling endless experiences and tourist activities thanks to its wide variety of landscapes, temperatures, flora and fauna. For instance, there is a distinction between the warm climate of the Cauca river valley and near the Magdalena river and the cold climate found in the moorlands. In this region of stunning natural beauty you can observe hundreds of birds, chiefly including hummingbirds that thrive in the department and throughout the coffee-growing region, as well as the Amazonian motmot, the emblematic bird of the city of Manizales. As for its flora, the department possesses a huge variety of plant species representative of the region, such as the myrtle tree, which is the symbolic tree that is emblematic of Manizales, the trumpet tree and the Andean princess flower.



Hummingbird, WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.

# A CULTURE INSPIRED BY VARIOUS IDENTITIES

*This is a charming land of migrants, of open and helpful people who invite you to discover each of the legacies left by other cultures in the department.*

The identity of Caldas is built through various cultures. It is a department with an identity hailing from different parts of the world and notable figures. It is fascinating to observe how this blend of cultures has become an inspiration to build the DNA of the *paisa* region.

Manizales was founded by settlers native to Antioquia, who came to the department in search of a more prosperous life in unexplored lands. It is said that Fermín López, born in Rionegro (Antioquia), was the first to inhabit these lands. After settling in the town of Salamina (Caldas), he came to inhabit what is known today as Morro de San-

cancio. He also encouraged other settlers from Antioquia, such as Manuel Grisales, Antonio Ceballos, Joaquín Arango and Marcelino Palacio, to settle in the territory with their families, occupying what is known today as Chipre. After the arrival of the settlers from Antioquia, settlers began to arrive from other regions of Colombia, such as Boyacá and Tolima.

This is why, although the coffee-growing region in general has a strong Antioquian heritage, its origins also stem from settlers from other parts of Colombia. This tradition was honoured by the monument to the settlers, which exists today in the Chipre neighbourhood of Manizales and commemorates the history of these people, who had to face major challenges.

The eclectic mix of cultures that can be found in Caldas is not only evident in the history of its colonisation, but also reflected in other aspects of everyday life in the department, such as its handicrafts, its gastronomy and its fairs and festivals, which have been influenced by its own and outside cultural expressions and then adapted to its own local culture.

To start, there's the name of the department itself, which is inspired by Francisco José de Caldas, who hailed from the town of Popayán, nicknamed the Wise Man because he was a scientist, engineer, botanist, astronomer, naturalist and military man, among others. He was acknowledged as a very learned and erudite man.



Estate at a coffee plantation, Caldas, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

It is a similar story with handicrafts. One of the department's most representative items is the Aguadeño straw hat, which originated from an Ecuadorian who arrived in Aguadas (Caldas) and taught its inhabitants to weave hats, taking advantage of the natural resource available in the territory: the iraca palm or toquilla.

*"In Aguadas, Caldas, the Aguadeño straw hat is made from the iraca palm, which is completely hand-woven and tells the story of the craftspeople who spend hours and hours weaving that hat."*

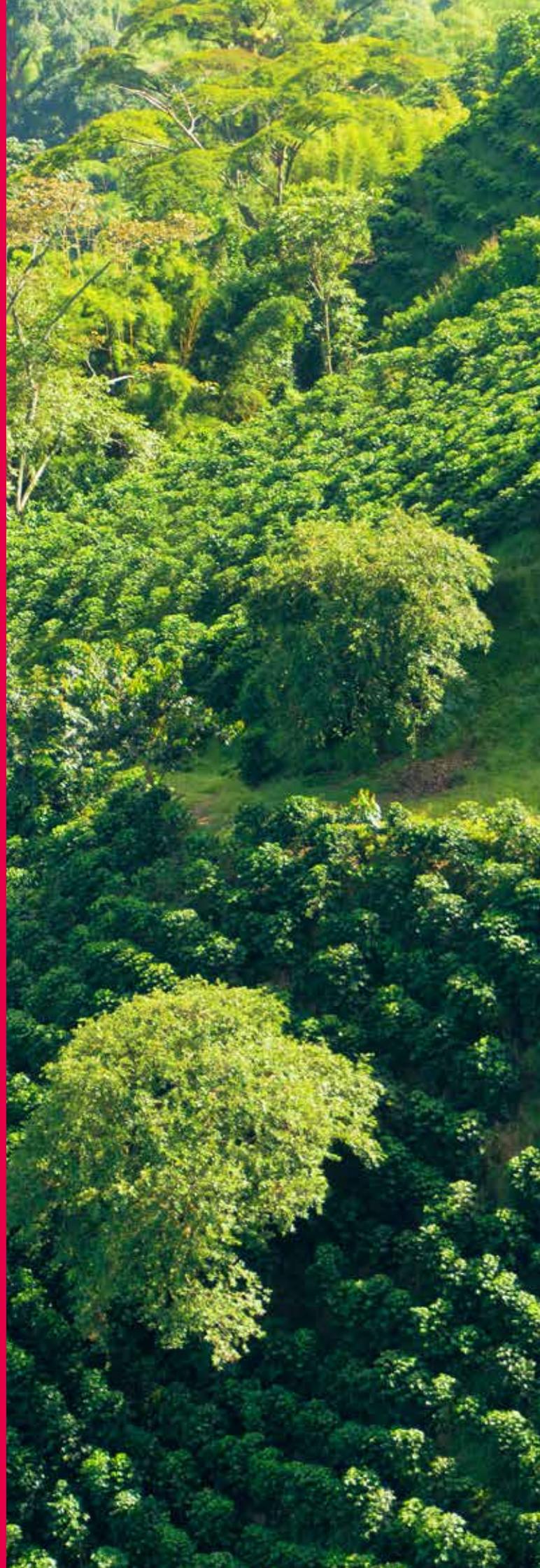
Its gastronomy is no stranger to this varied cultural mix and heritage. *"In Caldas there is no trademark dish as such, as many things were inherited from the people of Antioquia. But the food is homemade, cooked on a wood fire and has a delicious countryside flavour."*

The Manizales Fair, one of the department's most stand-out events, originated from a Manizaleño (Oscar Hoyos Botero), who was inspired by the Seville April Fair and brought it to his home town. It was gradually enriched by the customs of the region and the muleteer culture.

Manizales was also a crucial location for the coffee trade in the area, and a cableway was created to help connect the area with the Magdalena Medio region in order to expand this product's exports.

For this reason, the personality of the people of Caldas features a fascinating cultural mix resulting from the diverse cultural blend they have experienced. On the one hand, they retain a lively, enterprising, visionary and curious personality that they inherited from the muleteers, in addition to an open-mindedness and a certain intellectual air that they picked up from the Europeans who came to the region, and the European customs that they picked up from their travels. This scholarly faction is very deeply rooted, especially in Manizales, which is not only known as the city of "open doors", but is also deemed the "university city" of the Colombian Eje Cafetero, or coffee-growing region.

*"The differences between the people of the departments are that the Caldenses are more intellectual, the Risaraldenses are more commercial and industrial, and the people from Quindío are more laid back."*



# — AN AUTHENTIC AND CHARMING EXPERIENCE

*The Caldas experience is just like its people, uncomplicated and genuine. It is a destination to discover in a real and authentic way, it is the land of the Coffee Cultural Landscape, of strikingly colourful villages and talkative rural folk.*

The unforgettable Los Yarumos Ecopark can also be found on the routes of the Coffee Cultural Landscape. It hosts various activities to enjoy nature, such as birdwatching and outdoor activities and sports, such as canopy and climbing.

The Recinto del Pensamiento (Centre for Thought) also offers hiking experiences, birdwatching, a plant garden, a butterfly observatory, as well as other ideal activities for nature lovers and those seeking unique experiences that connect with the community and the environment.

If you are looking for a place to disconnect in the heart of the natural landscape, there are hotels where you can not only bask in the thermal waters that flow from the snowy mountain, but where you can interact with hummingbirds or sleep in magical locations surrounded by nature, such as the Hotel Termales el Otoño and the Hotel Termales del Ruiz.

For the more adventurous travellers, close to the Nevado del Ruiz volcano and Los Nevados National Natural Park there are several activities related to mountain biking and trekking, where you can do sport while admiring the sensational scenery.

Another way to discover the region is through the charming towns of Caldas. Visiting these splendid rural areas is a pleasure and you are sure to be won over by their architecture, their colours and their people. The must-sees include: Supía, a town with indigenous and Afro-Colombian roots and its traditional Collation Festival; Salamina, the origin of many of the campaigns for settlement of the coffee-growing region; and Riosucio, the municipality with the largest indigenous population in Caldas.

A distinguished event here is the Riosucio Carnival. Neira, on the other hand, is the birthplace of the typical sweet “corcho” made from panela (unrefined cane sugar), while Chinchiná is one of the flagship coffee villages.

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*“Caldas is a diverse department where you can experience its culture and nature in its true state, as it is in the daily life of its inhabitants. There are several coffee tours in which, like Risaralda and Quindío, tourists can discover the stunning Coffee Cultural Landscape.”*



La Miel River, Caldas, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



## KEY WORDS AND CONCEPTS



Biodiversity, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

### NATURAL WEALTH

El Nevado volcano, the trumpet tree, the Andean princess flower, the Amazonian motmot.



Aguadeño straw hat, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## THE LEGACIES OF ITS PEOPLE

The Neiran “corcho” sweet, the Supía collations, the Aguadeño straw hat.



Our Lady of the Cathedral of Rosario, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## THE CABLEWAY AND THE BASILICA

Iconic places in the capital of Caldas.



Balconies, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## COLOURFUL HOUSES

Made using the bareque technique.



Typical food, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

## THE LEGACIES OF ITS MIGRATORY CURRENTS

Charming villages, chorizo, Jeeps, arepa and home cooking.



Barista, Caldas, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**



Coffee farms, Caldas, **WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.**

# KEY CONCEPTS



## FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND FESTIVITIES

- Manizales Fair
- Latin American Theatre Festival
- Riosucio Carnival
- National Pasillo Festival
- Collation Festival
- Cordiality Festival
- Water Festival
- among others.



## EMBLEMATIC PLACES AND ACTIVITIES

- Monument to the settlers.
- *Glamping*
- Manizales Cathedral
- Coffee Tour
- Hotel Termales del Ruiz
- Hotel Termales el Otoño
- Los Yarumos Ecopark
- Recinto del Pensamiento (Centre for Thought)
- Towns of Caldas: Supía, Riosucio, Chinchiná, Neira, Salamina
- among others.



## GASTRONOMY

- Mazamorra paisa (bowl of cooked corn often served with milk and panela)
- Arepa (corn patty)
- Bandeja paisa (rice, beans, meat, fried meat and plantain, arepa)
- Homemade food, cooked on a wood fire
- Chocolate in aguapanela
- Flatwhiskered catfish
- Alfandoque sweet
- Neiran "corcho" sweet
- Supía collations
- among others.



## REPRESENTATIVE FIGURES

- Fermín López
- Manuel Grisales
- Antonio Ceballos
- Joaquín Arango
- Marcelino Palacio
- among others.



## GEOGRAPHY

- Nevado del Ruiz volcano
- Los Nevados National Natural Park
- Cauca River
- Magdalena River
- Moorlands
- 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.

Los Nevados National Natural Park, Caldas, WESTERN COLOMBIAN ANDES.

• REGIONAL NARRATIVES OF TOURISM •

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