



the
leap

MIDLIFE PROGRAMME

Leap to Colombia

COMMUNITY + JUNGLE CHALLENGE + HISTORIC SITES + BEACH BLISS

Colombia *Experience*

This vibrant journey through Colombia blends cultural immersion, bold adventure, and meaningful contribution in a way that's truly energising.

LOCATIONS:

BARICHARA + TAYRONA NATIONAL
PARK + CARTAGENA + ROSSARIO
ISLANDS

ACCOMMODATION:

HOSTELS + HOTELS

ENVIRONMENTS:

CANYONS + JUNGLE + CARIBBEAN

PROJECTS:

SOCIAL IMPACT + REFORESTATION

TEAM SIZE:

12 PER DEPARTURE

SOCIAL:

BUZZY VIBES

FITNESS:

AVERAGE

STAY LENGTH:

12 DAYS

Reserve your place

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From salsa-filled streets and colourful colonial towns to hands-on community projects, you'll experience the full richness of Colombian life. It's a trip that challenges and recharges in equal measure, leaving you not only revitalised, but more connected to the world, and to yourself.

Your adventure begins in the snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada, winds through the wild jungles of Tayrona National Park, and culminates on a pristine Caribbean Island. You'll hike ancient Spanish paths linking charming villages tucked into breath-taking canyons, canoe along meandering jungle rivers, and explore the colourful streets of Cartagena.

Throughout, you'll contribute to reforestation and community development projects led by our trusted partners, Brendan and Josi Topp, whose local contacts allow you to experience the real Colombia, off the beaten track.

If you're seeking an adventurous journey filled with authentic Latin American culture, awe-inspiring landscapes, meaningful contributions, and mouth-watering food (yes, the food is delicious), then pack your bag and join us for an unforgettable experience.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 1 Barichara, Central Highlands *Arrival + Transfer*

Your adventure starts with a flight via Bogota to Bucaramanga, which accesses the beautiful central highlands, famous for its dramatic canyons, roaring rivers, and waterfalls. Here, you'll be picked up and taken on 3-hour (but very scenic) drive to Barichara, a charming UNESCO World Heritage town.

Barichara has a very cool laid-back vibe, often referred to as the most beautiful towns in Colombia. With its cobblestone streets, whitewashed buildings, and terracotta roofs, it feels like stepping back in time.

This is where our partners Brendan and Josi Topp are based, who deliver this unique Colombian adventure. Through their connections you are going to meet some extraordinary people and places.

When you get here, you'll settle into your accommodation, stretch your legs around the town square and start poking about in all the artisan shops, showcasing local pottery, woodcrafts, textiles, and more table mats that you can shake a stick at. Finishing up with a sundowner and a delicious supper at one of the town's restaurants, known for its delicious Santander cuisine.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 2 Barichara

Gong Bath + Hiking

To help recover from the jet lag we've arranged for you to start your day with a relaxing cuenco style gong bath. Locally this is practiced a lot and promises to connect and re-frame your energy, getting you into great shape for the adventure ahead.

After this you'll set out on a scenic 6.5km hike along an ancient footpath that links Barichara to another historic and pretty town called Guane. The hike is easy-going giving you plenty of time to enjoy the stunning views and the peaceful surroundings. This historic route, known as the "Camino Real," has been used for centuries, offering a glimpse into the area's rich history. You'll stop for a leisurely lunch in Guane, enjoying the quaint charm of this small town.

After lunch, you'll head back to Barichara, ready to relax before supper at Mija – another local favourite. FYI – the food in this town is amazing.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 3 Barichara Reforestation *Yoga + Reforestation Project*

Today your day will start with an energising yoga session with Josi, on the hotel's roof top terrace, before you head off on the stunning Don Diego River - fed from the Sierra Nevada mountains to help with a community led reforestation project. Their goal is to reforest the community lands ensuring that the stunning landscapes are preserved for future generations.

This is a project that every Leap team contributes to, with over 1,000 trees already planted in the region. So, gardening gloves on, you will head out to plant up young saplings. However, it won't be done quietly as the local community use this opportunity to practice their English so it will be a fun exchange.

Lunch will be a picnic next to one of the many natural swimming pools up stream. Utter heaven.

In the evening, you'll head to Elvia for supper. This is a renowned local restaurant famous for its creative menus which sometimes include insects and other random ingredients. Utterly delicious.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 4 Barichara

Yoga + Family In Need project

On your last day in Barichara, you'll start the day with another Josi style yoga session, before the family in need project.

Barichara is all about community spirit and helping those in need – it's part of the culture here. Every Leap team that arrives in Barichara is paired with a family, and your mission today is to lend a hand and make a real difference to their lives.

The tasks vary depending on the family's needs, but they often involve hands-on work from painting and levelling floors to gardening, washing, shopping, and sorting various household needs. These simple but impactful projects leave a lasting effect on the families and give you the opportunity to be part of local life.

Sundowners and supper will be at Sierra in Barichara.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 5 Tayrona National Park Transfer

Transfer day to the Caribbean coast.

It's quite a mission with a drive back to Bucaramanga and a flight to Santa Marta, via Bogota but must be done and soon forgotten when you reach Santa Marta, the historical coastal town that is the second oldest city in South America and the entry point to the famous Tayrona National Park.

Home for the next 2 days will be a pretty eco-lodge in the park - think lush jungle canopy, monkeys and parrots.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Days 6-7 Tayrona National Park *Jungle Hike + Deserted Beaches*

The next couple of days are all about exploring Tayrona - a stunning natural reserve, located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Famous for the incredible variety of landscapes, from snow-capped mountains to lush jungles, and pristine Caribbean beaches.

It's also home to the ancestral territories of the Kankuamo, Kogui, Wiwa, and Arhuaco indigenous communities, and the Lost City, an ancient settlement built in 800 CE and rediscovered in 1975.

Your first day here will be to hike for about 5-6 hours, on jungle trails, along meandering rivers and past towering trees, where the sounds of the forest come alive with the calls of exotic birds and wildlife. When you reach the beach you will hop on board a private speed boat to take you to a deserted beach for a picnic lunch before returning to the lodge for sundowners.

The following day you will take another gentle boat ride along the river to reach the most beautiful spot where the river joins the sea. Magical. After this you will then head to a fun beach side hostel for the night - stylish, laid back and time to cool off.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 8 Rosario Islands

Transfer + Chill

With your recharge phase very much in mind – today you'll head out to the stunning Rosario Islands, called the Las Islas del Rosario in Spanish.

They are a group of 27 islands located about an hour or so away from Cartagena by boat. These stunning Caribbean islands are home to clear water, white sand, and a very chilled vibe. Here you'll stay in a peaceful eco-lodge to do just that – chill, swim, and snorkel in crystal-clear waters. Utter heaven.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 9 Rosario Islands

Chill + Marine conservation

This day you can completely chill or alternatively, if you're up for a bit of exploration, you can visit a nearby marine conservation project on another island.

This offers a unique opportunity to snorkel over vibrant coral reefs and witness the incredible underwater life. You'll also have the chance to get involved in marine regeneration efforts, contributing to the preservation of the region's delicate ecosystem.



Colombia *Itinerary*

Days 10–11 Cartagena

Markets + History

Your last 2 nights will be spent back in Cartagena which is the undisputed queen of the Caribbean coast, a historic city of superbly preserved beauty lying within 13km of centuries-old stone walls. It is the epitome of boho chic with arty cafés, cocktail bars, and amazing shopping.

We aim to get you there by lunch time, so you have the afternoon and the following day to fully explore Cartagena's old town which is a UNESCO World Heritage site, renowned for its well-preserved colonial architecture and colourful streets. As you wander along the cobblestone paths, you'll discover charming plazas, grand colonial buildings, and fascinating landmarks, each telling a story of the city's rich history and its strategic importance as a port in the Spanish Empire to its vibrant Afro-Colombian culture.

As the evening falls, Cartagena's lively atmosphere will come to life. The streets will glow with soft lighting, and the air will be filled with music. Time for drinks, salsa, and a fun supper out.




Colombia *Itinerary*

Day 12 Cartagena

Departure


You'll have a relaxed morning before heading back to the airport for your flight home, taking with you memories of a truly unforgettable journey through Colombia's rich culture, stunning landscapes, and meaningful connections.




A photograph of three women sitting on a dark, rocky ledge, hugging each other from behind. They are all looking out over a vast, blue ocean under a clear sky. The woman on the left has her hair in a braid and wears a green lace top. The woman in the middle has blonde hair and wears a dark grey tank top. The woman on the right has short blonde hair and wears a light blue tank top. They are all wearing patterned shorts. A large, faint, stylized letter 'L' is visible in the background on the left side of the image.

It was fabulous and the most amazing adventure. I loved it all and can not recommend this trip with The Leap more. We saw and experienced more of Colombia than I would have thought possible.





“AMAZING trip, thank you to everyone who made it so special. Beautiful memories, & so many laughs.



The accommodation was wonderful and we saw a part of Colombia other tourists would never see because of the personal touch this organisation provides. I would highly recommend these trips to anyone wanting to get under the skin of a country.

Colombia *Staying & Food*

Accommodation

Throughout your adventure, we've carefully selected a mix of locally owned hotels and hostels that capture the adventurous spirit of the journey, ensuring you stay in authentic, comfortable places while embracing the local culture. The exact place will be determined by the numbers but to give you a flavour of what to expect have a look here.

Barichara: www.greatsmallhotels.com/barichara-boutique-hotels/hotel-hicasua

Tayrona National Park: [El Viajero hostel](#) and <https://hotelparquetayrona.com/en/>

Cartagena: [Osh Hotels](#)

Islas del Rosario: [Coralina Island](#)

Meals

Throughout your journey, breakfast and lunch are included, however for supper, we've left you the flexibility to explore the local restaurant scene. Colombia is known for its delicious and diverse cuisine, and each region offers its own unique flavours. From hearty stews and sizzling meats to fresh seafood and tropical fruits, you'll have the chance to experience the best of local dining at your own pace.

Whether it's a casual meal at a street-side café or a more refined dinner at a local restaurant, the food in Colombia is sure to be a highlight of your adventure.

Project *Background*

Brendan and Josi Topp, founders of *Jakera Colombia*, have been our trusted partners for over 15 years, offering unparalleled access to Colombia's authentic heart.



Their deep-rooted connections and commitment to sustainable travel provide travelers with immersive experiences that reveal the country's rich traditions and genuine people.

Our programmes, crafted in collaboration with Jakera Colombia, invite you to explore Colombia's great outdoors—trekking diverse terrains, camping in pristine wilderness, and volunteering on impactful social and environmental projects. This journey traverses the nation, offering firsthand cultural encounters with pre-conquest indigenous rituals, colonial heritage, and the vibrant, modern-day Colombia.

With Brendan and Josi's guidance, you'll venture off the typical tourist path, engaging deeply with local communities and landscapes. Their dedication to creating life-changing programmes ensures that your adventure is not only unique but also leaves a positive impact on the places and people you visit.



Colombia *Dates & Costs* 2026

22 FEB 2026	12 DAYS	£3450
09 MAY 2026	12 DAYS	£3450
04 OCT 2026	12 DAYS	£3450
09 NOV 2026	12 DAYS	£3450

INCLUDED:

- Pre-departure briefing
- Leap T-shirt
- Airport pick-up and return transfers for team flight
- Safety and induction briefing on arrival
- 24-hour emergency back-up, management and support by UK and in-country team
- All volunteering projects as described
- Project-to-project transport
- Accommodation as described
- Food as described
- Entrance fees to all activities

NOT INCLUDED:

- International and internal flights
- Private transfers to and from the airport if you do not arrive on the main team flight
- Travel insurance and medical expenses
- Food and accommodation if away from the programme
- Alcoholic drinks and some soft drinks
- Some meals, as described in the itinerary

Colombia *Nitty Gritty*

What to Pack?

Clothes

In addition to your normal holiday packing, please take:


- Hiking and yoga clothes
- A light jacket for the cooler evenings in Barichara
- Walking shoes or sturdy trainers for slippery terrain in the jungle

Equipment

- Towel/sarong
- 1 pair of working gloves – a pair of sturdy gardening gloves will do the job
- Water bottle
- Plug adapter – USA style

Toiletries & Medical

- Basic everyday toiletries
- Sun cream/after sun
- Insect repellent – containing Deet
- Antibacterial spray/cream for open wounds.
- Rehydration powders
- Savlon
- Antihistamines
- E45/Sudocream
- Immodium
- Mediplasters
- Personal Medication: Bring extra supplies, know the generic names of your medication, and ensure you can manage allergies (e.g. carry an epipen if necessary).

A large, vibrant mural of a man's face, likely a Colombian figure, rendered in a highly stylized, almost cubist manner. The face is composed of various shades of pink, orange, and yellow, with a prominent nose and a slight smile. The background of the mural is a complex, abstract composition of bright colors like blue, green, and red, with geometric shapes and patterns. A cornucopia of colorful, abstract shapes, including a cornucopia of colorful, abstract shapes, is visible on the left side of the mural. The mural is set against a dark, textured wall, and the overall scene is illuminated by bright, natural light.

I had no idea how colourful and vibrant Colombia would be. The culture and history was incredible. Thoroughly enjoyed and would recommend highly.



Reserve your place

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