



Colombia—

Easing into South America

We have made it all the way from Brooklyn to South America, and Colombia marks the beginning of a new chapter. We land in Bogotá, Colombia's capital, two days before New Year's Eve. We don't know what to expect, but it quickly becomes clear to us that Bogotá is a truly vibrant and modern city, full of culture and interesting people. It feels only right that we spend three more days exploring it. Our original plan was to set out from Cartagena, near the northern border of the country, but Bogotá is in the very center. So as not to miss the northern part of the country, we decide to head north through the region of Santander and then around west to Medellín.

Eager to find the best secondary roads in that area, we reach out to Gustavo A. Pasquale, a local motorcycle builder and

fellow adventure rider. He has been exploring Colombia for years and helps us map out the next few days on dirt roads through the countryside of rural Santander.

Colombia has a deep colonial heritage, so we can't miss out on visiting two of the most quintessential towns in the country, Villa de Leyva and Barichara. A few people have already told us that Barichara is one of the most beautiful towns in Colombia and it's easy to see why once we get there. Old white adobe walls slowly peeling away, quiet cobblestone streets, perfectly kept squares, stunning architecture, traditional blue doors and windows, and the quietness of the valley that cradles the town, it's like stepping back into a simpler time. It's a great way to start easing into this part of the continent.



← Villa de Leyva. The Plaza Mayor, which at 150,694 square feet is the largest square in Colombia and the biggest cobbled square in South America.