

Cartagena

0 500 km



Caribbean Sea



MARELLA CRUISES

Cartagena, Colombia

Explore Ashore

Port information

Currency

Colombian Peso is the local currency; however, US Dollars are accepted in some of the more touristic areas, i.e. some shops, taxis and some restaurants.

Language

Spanish is widely spoken in Cartagena, but most vendors, store operators and attraction employees will be able to speak enough English to communicate with you.

Getting around

Taxis

Taxis are really the only means of transportation for cruise passengers who haven't booked shore tours from the port. From the visitors area you will have to walk to the port gates, taxi drivers in blue shirts with "TAXI" imprinted all over them wait to take you where you want to go. To Old Cartagena, which is a 15-minute journey is approximately, 20USD taxi ride up to 4 sharing.

If you take a taxi for around 20 minutes, it will cost approximately 25USD approximately.

Taxis aren't metered, but there will be tourism officers near the taxi area to help you negotiate a fair price ahead of time. If your driver is taking you somewhere and bringing you back, you won't have to pay until the conclusion of your return trip to ensure that you won't be ripped off. You can choose to have a driver drop you off and pay a one-way fare, but be aware that it can be difficult to find transportation back to the port. Also, be aware of enterprising locals who offer rides to tourists on the backs of their motorbikes. It's unsafe, and it's unregulated.

Walking into town takes approximately 40 minutes, which is not recommended.

Main highlights

Head into the **Old Town** between the first main gate and the second, you'll find yourself in an outer area called **Getsemani**, which circles the Old Town and is home to lively, low-cost cafes, shops and bars. Through the second gate, head left towards the **Plaza de Bolívar**. You'll hear the tinkling fountains of this lovely little park before you get there, and you'll know you're in the right place when a gigantic bronze statue of South America's liberator, Simon de Bolivar.

Main highlights

If history, atmosphere and the darker side of human nature are of interest to you, head to Cartagena's most remarkable attraction, the **Palacio de la Inquisicion** that has a sunny, tree-lined courtyard contains a gallows a chopping block, and other small exhibits showing the type of paraphernalia involved in witchcraft.

Museo del Oro y Arqueología: At one corner of the square is the Museo del Oro y Arqueología or gold museum (free admission) and a jewelry store heavily promoted by sellers who rove outside trying to usher in customers. If shopping is your thing, this is a good place to bargain for rubies, emeralds and gold. Also worth seeing is Cartagena's 16th-century cathedral, which lies nearby and was once bombarded by Sir Francis Drake.

Take a stroll around **Las Murallas** Old Town's dense walls, will reveal striking sea views. If you prefer some shade, enjoy the tranquil dappled courtyard of the 17th-century **Convento de San Pedro Claver**, which lies in the street of the same name. Its small museum charges a nominal fee to enter. Next door, the **Iglesia de San Pedro Claver** has a fine Italian marble altar.

The most notable exterior fortress is the **Castillo de San Felipe de Barajas**, which was first called for in 1533. Construction started in 1639, and it took 150 years to complete. When it was finished, the fortress proved completely impregnable, to the chagrin of various marauding hordes. You'll have fun roving the battlements and exploring the warren of underground tunnels, which were designed to amplify the faintest footfall so that enemies could not creep through. Approximately 9USD to walk around.

Essential information

Tourist information

There is a red tourist information booth at the port terminal.

Internet access

There are a few Wi-Fi hotspots in the town.

Nearest beaches

To the south of the walled old town is a peninsula broken into three districts Castillo Grande, El Laguito and Bocagrande, which make up the "seaside resort" of Cartagena, which is approximately 15-minute drive dependant on traffic. Filled with good quality hotels, bars, shops and restaurants, this area is a magnet for holidaying Colombians and international tourists. Closest to port, you'll find La Boquilla, which lies about 5 miles north of Cartagena and is approximately 40 minute drive dependant on traffic. A 10-minute cab ride beyond Boquilla is Manzanillo Beach

Shopping

You will find many shops in the town area of Cartagena. The Colombian specialty products here are cigars, woven bags, glass jewellery and gems. You may find some of the tourist shops are quite expensive as many of the Colombians who holiday in this area are very rich.

PLEASE NOTE:

As with all tourist destinations, please keep a close eye on valuables

Useful phrases

Hello	Hola
Goodbye	Adios
Yes	Si
No	No
Please	Por favor
Thank you	Gracias
How are you?	Como estas?
Toilets	Banos
Do you speak English?	Hablas ingles?
Where is...?	Donde esta...?
How much is this?	Cuanto cuesta esto?

Your Destination Services team would like to wish you an enjoyable day in Cartagena.

There can be last minute changes. Please check *Cruise News* for the latest information before you go ashore.