

COLOMBIA



NAME:	República de Colombia
POPULATION:	47,500,000 (2012)
ETHNIC GROUPS:	Mestizo (58%); white (20%); mulatto (14%); Amerindian (1%)
CAPITAL:	Bogotá (8,000,000); complete name: Santa Fe de Bogotá
Other cities:	Cali (1,900,000); Medellín (1,800,000); Baranquilla (1,300,000)
LANGUAGES:	Spanish (official)
RELIGION:	Roman Catholic (90%); Other (10%)
LIFE EXPECTANCY:	men (68); women (76)
LITERACY:	93%
GOVERNMENT:	democratic republic
PRESIDENT:	Álvaro Uribe
INDEPENDENCE DAY:	July 20 (1810)
MILITARY:	146,400 active troops
ECONOMY:	textiles, coffee, cocaine, petroleum, gas; 50% of world's emeralds
POVERTY RATE:	49%
INTERNET TLD	.co
MONEY:	peso (1,080 = \$1.00 US; 1997)
GEOGRAPHY:	Pacific and Atlantic Oceans; 3 ranges of the Andes; Magdalena River from Andes to Caribbean; There are more than 19 active volcanoes within the borders of Colombia, three of which are

over 17,000 feet high. The tallest Colombian volcano is Nevado del Ruiz at 17,457 ft. (5,321 m) high.

HISTORY:

- 10,000 BCE Major pre-Columbian civilization settled near present-day Bogotá: Chibcha people of Funza and Tunja kingdoms
- 1498 Discovered / encountered by Columbus
- 1525 Pedro de Heredia founded Cartagena
- 1536-1538 Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada subdued the Chibchas and founded Bogotá
- 1549 *Audiencia* of Nueva Granada created (Gran Colombia, Venezuela, Quito)
- 1740 Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada created (Colombia and Venezuela).
- 1808 Fernando VII was proclaimed king of Spain by creoles in Bogotá.
- 1811 Cartagena declared independence from Spain; Bolívar began war of independence.
- 1813 Bolívar virtual dictator of Nueva Granada.
- 1819 Bolívar liberates Nueva Granada.
- 1825 Bolívar returns to Bogotá after concluding independence for Perú, Ecuador, and Bolivia; Bolívar leaves Colombia returning to Venezuela.
- 1830 Bolívar, Venezuelan, dies in Colombia.
- 1831 Nueva Granada declared a separate nation.
- 1837 Civil wars begins in Colombia.
- 1846 Treaty with U.S. allows U.S. transit across Isthmus of Panamá.
- 1852 Slavery Abolished.
- 1861 Civil war
- 1863 Country renamed Estados Unidos de Colombia; new constitution
- 1861-1880 Civil war
- 1865-1896 José Asunción Silva (modernist poet)
- 1900-1903 *La guerra de los mil días* (civil war).
- 1903 Panamá declared independence
- 1928-present Gabriel García Márquez, greatest novelist of magical realism (*lo real maravilloso*) and the Generación del Boom.
- 1948-1958 Period of civil strife called “La violencia” (200,000 dead)
- 1964-2003 Guerrilla war by Popular Liberation Army (M-19; pro-Cuban)
- 1967 *Cien años de soledad* published by García Márquez.
- 1977-present Shakira (Shakira Isabel Mebarak Ripoll), one of Latin America’s greatest popular musicians and singers, was born and raised in Baranquilla, Colombia. She is a world famous singer, songwriter, record producer, and dancer; plus, since starting in 1994, she has been deeply engaged in charitable work.
- 1978-1982 Julio César Turbay Ayala, president
- 1981 Pres. Ayala breaks diplomatic ties with Cuba because Cuba was supplying arms to M-19
- 1982-1986 Belisario Betancourt, president
- 1985 M-19 guerrillas seize Supreme Court; 42 killed

- 1986-1990 Nevada del Ruiz volcano erupts; 20,000 dead
Virgilio Barco Vargas (Liberal) president
Pope John Paul II visits Colombia
- 1989 Jan. 13: Carlos Pizarro (M-19) and government sign peace treaty
Aug.: Carlos Pizarro assassinated
Aug 18: Luis Carlos Galán, principal presidential candidate, assassinated
- 1990 May 27: César Gaviria elected president (Liberal)
- 1992 Pablo Escobar, head of Medellín drug cartel, escaped from prison
- 1993 Escobar killed by police
- 1994 Ernesto Samper Pizano elected president, indicted, but allowed to remain in office
- 1998 Andrés Pastrana elected president
- 2002 Álvaro Uribe elected president
Under Uribe, the government, with US support and pressure, applied military measures against the FARC and other rebellious groups. Hence, there has been significant lessening of terrorist disorder and danger. For example, kidnappings dropped from 3,700 (2000) to 172 (2009) while murders dropped from 28,837 (2002) to 15,817 (2009).
- 2006 Álvaro Uribe re-elected president.
- 2007 Shakira led other Latin American, Spanish, and Portuguese artists to form ALAS, a “loose union of Ibero-American singers ... which would use the power of their fame to mobilize fans, and the politicians fans vote for, to advance the cause of early-childhood development” (New York Times Magazine, June 7, 2009, p. 25). For the New York Times article, click on either of the following New York Times photos:



- 2010 Juan Manuel Santos Calderón (b. 1951) elected 59th president of Colombia. He belongs to the Social Party of National Unity, which is a liberal-conservative coalition.

2016 (August 26) The government of Colombia and the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) revolutionary group signed an agreement ending a civil war (sometimes called a “war of liberation”) that lasted 52 years. By this agreement, there are now no wars or civil wars in the entirety of Latin America for the first time since Latin America’s independence from Spain in the 19th century. See the New York Times article about this event written by Professor Steven Pinker and Juan Manuel Santos, the president of Colombia himself See: => [New York Times article](#).

GOVERNMENT: Federal Republic; representative democracy

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES and GROUPS:

Liberal Party (Barco, leader)

Conservative Party (Alvaro Gómez Urtado, leader)

Partido Nacional (*blancos*)

Unión Patriótica (Communist Party): Bernardo Jaramillo, 1987- (Jaime Pardo, assassinated in 1987 by right wing death squads)

Drug Traffickers (los extraditables)

SIMON BOLIVAR (guerrilla umbrella organization for:)

M-19 Guerrilla organization: outside official politics (Movimiento 17 de abril)
leader: Carlos Pizarro

Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC: guerrilla organization)

Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN, National Liberation Army: guerrilla organization, leader: Manuel Pérez, Spanish priest)

Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL, People's Liberation Army: guerrilla organization)

PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF INTELLIGENTSIA:

José Asunción Silva, Modernist poet

Manuel Zapata Olivella, Afro-Colombian novelist

Gabriel García Márquez, magical realist novelist and journalist:

Cien años de soledad (1967)

La increíble y triste historia de la cándida Eréndira y su abuela desalmada (1972)

El otoño del patriarca (1975)

Crónica de una muerte anunciada (1985)

El amor en tiempos del cólera (1988)

El general en su laberinto (1989, Mondadori & La Oveja Negra)

Del amor y otros demonios (1994)

Noticias de un secuestro (1996)

