

## Trek To The Lost City



Duration: 10 days

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountains, declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1979, run through Colombia and end close to the Caribbean Sea on the north coast. They are cloaked in dense tropical rainforest, which hides the ruins of Teyuna, dating back some 1500 years, and more famously known as the Lost City.

As the world gets smaller it becomes harder to visit places before they become a tourism hotspot, but our Lost City trek gives us the opportunity to do just that. To reach the 1200 ancient stone steps that lead up to the city, we trek on steep, sometimes overgrown and muddy trails, through lush jungle and river valleys, crossing clear streams. En route we pass indigenous Kogui communities, descendants of those early builders.

After time to explore the uncrowded ruins and marvel at what would have been here in years gone by, we return and head to historic Cartagena, with a stunning Caribbean backdrop, this is a tough trek full of natural beauty and cultural discovery, and is guaranteed to be a trip of a lifetime!

This trip generates around **93 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per person**. Because of our commitment to responsible travel, **we offset 100% of these emissions**, including flights booked with us.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

## Day 1: Depart London

## Day 2: Arrive Santa Marta

We arrive in Santa Marta, on the northern coast, depending on flight times we start our trip with a city tour and

some lunch before transferring to our hotel. After freshening up, there should be time to relax and explore the old streets or wander by the bay. Santa Marta was founded by conquistadores, and is Colombia's oldest surviving city; there is plenty to see. Later we meet for dinner and a trip briefing. Night hotel.

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### **Day 3: Santa Marta – Casa Adan Camp**

Our journey starts with an early morning jeep ride from Santa Marta on roads and then dirt tracks to the small village of El Mamey; here we have lunch while our local support team sorts the kit, and we set off! The route eases us in fairly gently, with an early chance to cool off at a swimming hole; it's hot with little shade before we enter the jungle proper. Then there's a steep climb up through rainforest, which in the heat and humidity feels much further than it actually is, before descending into a lush valley. Night camp.

**Drive approx 2 hours; Trek approx 4-5 hours**

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### **Day 4: Casa Adan Camp – Paraiso Teyuna Camp**

After an early breakfast, we trek steadily uphill through the heart of the jungle – it's beautiful, but tough terrain and we take it slow. Spotting wildlife in dense jungle can be tricky, but the air around us is thick with birdsong and the hum of insects; the diversity in these forests is impressive. You may see toucans, parakeets and hummingbirds, and some of the many species of tiny frogs. Larger mammals include tapirs, otters and jaguars, though they are very elusive and you would be very lucky to spot them! After regular stops for fresh fruit, we reach the top of our ascent and are rewarded with a long downhill walk through some beautiful landscapes and Kogui villages of round, thatched huts and farmed pockets of land. This is a really tough day but once we reach camp we can enjoy a swim in the crystalline river. Night camp.

**Trek approx 9-11 hours**

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### **Day 5: Paraiso Teyuna Camp – Lost City – Wiwa Camp**

An exciting day ahead, and we rise early to ensure we have plenty of time to explore the Lost City. The jungle path leads us alongside the river for a stretch, and we cross over to reach the ancient flight of stone steps rising through the dense vegetation to the ruins – count them to see if there truly are 1200! This is a sacred city, held in high respect by the local people, and we enjoy a tour to appreciate its history and significance. There is also sometimes an opportunity to hear some of the sacred stories from el Mamo, the local spiritual leader. After soaking up the views and unique atmosphere that surrounds these incredible ruins, it's time to return back along the trail via last night's camp, and further on to Wiwa. This is a long, tough day, but a real highlight. Night camp.

**Trek approx 10-12 hours (incl 3 hours at Lost City)**

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### **Day 6: Wiwa Camp – El Mamey – Tayrona National Park**

Our final day in the jungle sees us returning back to the trailhead at El Mamey, stopping en-route at a waterfall where we can cool off. We meet the 4 x 4 vehicles and drive back to the road, and on to our wonderful hotel near

Tayrona National Park, where a well-earned bed and shower await! There should be some time free to enjoy relaxing in the hotel pool or perhaps a short walk to the beach. Night hotel.

**Trek approx 5.5-7 hours; drive approx 1-1.5 hours**

*(Dinner not included)*

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## Day 7: Tayrona National Park – Santa Marta

A hike with a difference today, as we explore beautiful Tayrona National Park, where the rainforest meets the Caribbean. It's stunning, with huge granite boulders and small coves protected by the coral reefs. We explore the old trails at a relaxed pace, before enjoying a swim in the natural swimming-holes. This coastal beauty contrasts hugely with the more arduous rainforest habitat we have been immersed in. We then drive back to Santa Marta. Night hotel.

**Trek approx 4 hours; Drive approx 1.5 hours**

*(Dinner not included)*

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## Day 8: Santa Marta – Cartagena

After breakfast we transfer to the colonial city of Cartagena (lunch stop en-route); it was an important town and port for the Spanish colonies, and the walled city and San Felipe fortress have UNESCO World Heritage Site status. After a city tour of the main historical sites, including the fortress which dominates the city, we have plenty of time to relax, wander and shop the markets to our hearts' contents. Farewell dinner in local restaurant. Night hotel.

**Drive approx 5 hours (incl stop for lunch)**

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## Day 9: Cartagena; Flight departs

Free time to enjoy discovering more of the charm of Cartagena, before transferring to the airport for our flight home (flight departure time dependant)

*(Lunch and Dinner not included)*

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## Day 10: Arrive UK

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London to Santa Marta / Cartagena
- All known airline taxes
- Internal flight departure taxes
- All transport and transfers as part of itinerary
- All accommodation on shared basis
- All meals except where specified

- Discover Adventure crew (number dependant on group size)
- Local guides and cooks
- Local support team and back-up equipment
- Entrance to Lost City ruins and other sites visited as part of the itinerary
- **We offset 100% of the carbon emissions from your trip, including flights booked with us**

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Travel insurance
- Sleeping bag
- Any meals specified 'not included' in itinerary
- Personal spending money, souvenirs, drinks and tips for the local guides/support crew
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

### GRADE | ORANGE

All our trips are designed to provide a challenge. Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **ORANGE** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors. Trip duration, accommodation and living conditions are also taken into account. Some sections will feel more challenging than others, but the grade reflects the overall trip. Unusual weather conditions can also have a significant impact.

The Accommodation icon indicates the living conditions while trekking/cycling. While there are usually several factors that present a challenge, the Challenge icon indicates the trip's most challenging element, for most people.

[Trip grading explained](#)



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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 12 Jul 2025, and the challenge is subject to change.