

# REGIONAL NARRATIVES OF TOURISM

Puerto Carreño, Vichada, THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.

## VICHADA

● THIS IS WHAT THE LLANERA CULTURE LOOKS LIKE ●

COLOMBIA 

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**BETWEEN THE PLAINS  
AND THE RAINFOREST**

PAGE 3

**THE LLANEROS  
AND ADVENTURE**

PAGE 5

**TRADITION,  
THE BEST HERITAGE**

PAGE 7

**KEY WORDS  
AND CONCEPTS**

PAGE 9





Puerto Carreño, Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

# WELCOME TO A NEW WAY OF NARRATING COLOMBIA

We are delighted to take this step forwards with you during this stage of promoting the tourism of our country and, first of all, we would like to thank you for being part of this strategy geared towards the growth and strengthening of the sector. It is people like you who make it possible for increasingly more Colombians and foreigners to explore Colombia.

The Government's goal was to find innovative content associated with cultural expressions and natural attractions in our country, to enable the stakeholders of the tourism sector to publicise destinations and experiences to promote Colombia in the best possible way.

Following in-depth research into our 32 departments plus Bogotá, needs and perspectives were identified with a view to promoting the country.

This is what led to the creation of the regional narratives of tourism, which are a tool for anyone who wants to generate attractive content and benefit from this department-based research, which featured the participation of researchers, composers, writers, journalists, entrepreneurs, artisans, artists, cultural advisers, social leaders, singers, traditional cooks, indigenous communities, natural parks' representatives, tourists, chefs and other experts from all regions of the country.

So, together, we are going to take advantage of these opportunities for communication and we are going to show that Colombia is the most welcoming country in the world.

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*PROCOLOMBIA*

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# ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

As a result of a tourism promotion initiative, we have created the regional tourism narratives and their accompanying magazine—a tool to convey them to local tourism operators. Both the toolkit and this publication are designed to complement each other and offer an outstanding opportunity to attract tourism from all corners of the world.

As a reader, you will have at your disposal **33 research modules**, broken down by region and department. Additionally, a content manual is available, a guide teaching you how to best wield this information and create content for different media that efficiently communicates destinations' offers and aligns itself with their needs. The initiative also includes the podcast series "**Sounds from the Heart of Colombia**", 33 stories that reconstruct environments, voices, songs of nature, and the cultural identities of each of our departments, as well as a series of photographs and illustrations of the main destinations.

The following pages contain articles showcasing the highlights of each department in keeping with the aforementioned narratives, as well as information providing a general summary of the research. If you were to require more in-depth information, we recommend reviewing the 33 modules comprising the regional tourism narratives.

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*PROCOLOMBIA*

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Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

# BETWEEN THE PLAINS AND THE RAINFOREST

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*The unique department of Vichada is diversity and contrast, as its geography includes the savannahs of the plains and the Amazon.*

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The department of Vichada has stunningly diverse geography, where the plains blend with the Amazon rainforest. The moriche palm tree grove is the department's hallmark, representing the region's relationship with water and diversity, and from which the fibres are extracted to weave its handicrafts.

*"It is a palm grove of one of the most representative palms that is a hallmark of our region, identifying our area in the estuary, (...) a palm with a fairly thick stem that can live in the water almost all the time and has very beautiful fibres, which is crucial for the work of the artisans."*

The Llaneros are regionally characterised by their ability to dash across vast plains on horseback; however, in Vichada people also excel at fishing, hunting and sailing the river.

*"Two main things characterise and identify the Llaneros: their devotion to their customs and the relationship of their work with animals, in the case of livestock, but also their relationship with farming and travel, fishing, hunting and the rainforest."*





Livestock, Vichada,  
**THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

Due to its geographical characteristics and its proximity to the Amazon region, you can enjoy its spectacular and outlandish fauna and flora and its legends.

*"Here we have not only bird watching, but also pink river dolphin watching. Here we call them **toninas**, in the Amazon they are called **pujeos**."*

Due to its wealth of water resources, its gastronomy includes fish dishes, such as grilled cachama and curito catfish broth. Its gastronomy has also been influenced by its geographical location and history, by the passing and settlement of indigenous communities that produce traditional foods such as mandioca fruit, mañoco and fariña, a flour that comes from bitter cassava.

*"Mañoco: mañoco is fariña; it is a cassava cereal; it is dehydrated cassava; it is bitter cassava that cannot be consumed directly, it has to undergo a process. It is a cassava that cannot be eaten as is; it is wild cassava, the indigenous people and their ancestors learned that it cannot be eaten in its original state, that is why they chop it up and leave it to ferment, depending on the quality of the cassava."*





# — THE LLANEROS AND ADVENTURE

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*The fascinating adventures and exploits of the Llaneros on their long journeys cemented a culture of strong and courageous character.*

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The Llanero tradition is intensified by the adventures that arise from the feats of the Llaneros and their abilities to brave the rivers and savannahs, from herding cattle to encountering animals such as speckled and regular caimans, coral snakes and jaguars. The exploits of the Llaneros are consolidated in the department's imagination based on these encounters.

*"The Llaneros of this sector of Vichada are more inclined to the question of animals, such as the deer, the wild caiman that had an influx in this sector after arriving from Venezuela."*

Fishing has become a passion for the Llaneros of Vichada. Thus, it has now become one of the main activities for tourists who can responsibly catch a huge variety of fish such as the butterfly peacock bass, a hallmark of the department.

*"The diverse department of Vichada is characterised by its major potential for eco-tourism. Here, there is a lot of sport fishing and we conduct various controls to protect the tourists who visit us."*

The legends and cultural manifestations of their relationship with the river —featuring the Mohán as guardian and with common themes of fish— highlight the relevance of the Sikuaní indigenous communities on the department's culture.

*"Vichada is currently experiencing everything linked to indigenous tradition... It is very well grounded, marked with all its rhythms, its allegories, its songs, traditions, rituals and processions."*

On another note, rivers are one of the department's main attractions —the Orinoco, Meta, Bitá, Vichada, Guaviare, Tuparro and Muco— as well as the natural pools in its rock formations.

*"Regardless of whether you are a fisherman or an eco-tourist, what I have seen that attracts tourists the most is the rock formations. Precisely because of the formations, some of them have generated natural pools. We call them the **luna** or moon because they look like the craters of the moon."*



Orinoco River,  
THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.

# TRADITION, THE BEST HERITAGE

*The cultural manifestations that the department of Vichada offers us are a vehicle which, on the one hand, raises awareness regarding the culture of Vichada, and on the other, safeguards such a valuable tradition.*

Today Vichada offers cultural manifestations that seek to safeguard the Llanos culture and highlight the presence of indigenous communities in the department. The folklore and culture of the Llanos are invigorated through festivals and celebrations, such as El Cachicamo de Oro, the Folklore Festival and El Curito Pageant, with activities such as joropo dances, playing llanera music, coleo (equestrian sport) and tasting the department's exquisite gastronomy.

*"Here we have the best festivals, the biggest festival in the world is the Palometa de Oro festival in Vichada, which is for children, where children play the harp, the maracas, the cuatro, the bandola, and sing and dance, there is strong music, in a more folk style and also poetry from the plains. Children are also taught, for example, to ascertain the species of bream."*

There are festivals in the department that involve indigenous communities as well, such as the Indigenous Cultural Festival, the Bitter Cassava Festival and the Cumaré Pageant.

*"And like in each of the municipalities there is the cumare palm, the bitter cassava, and so on... so all that is included. The indigenous people also play a very special role because they are also given spaces to participate in the festivals now."*

These communities also excel in the department's crafts: basketry, for example, is very traditional and widespread, as is woodwork.

*"Indigenous culture has its handicrafts. They make hats, carriers (satchels) and brooms out of liana vines, and they also use wood (...)."*

The fauna is also represented in the handicrafts, which include wooden artefacts with figures of the likes of deer, armadillos, capybaras, turtles, caimans, anteaters and tapirs.

Thus, Vichada is a highly diverse land marking the meeting point of the geography of the savannahs of the plains and the Amazon. Rivers here are synonymous with adventure, exploits, biodiversity and culture. The department's crafts highlight the presence of indigenous communities in Vichada's culture and the Llaneros safeguard the joropo tradition in their festivals.







Chigüiro (capybara), Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**





## KEY WORDS AND CONCEPTS



Butterfly peacock bass, Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

### BUTTERFLY PEACOCK BASS

A hallmark of the department's fauna. The fish that the people of Vichada identify with.





Moriche palm, Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## MORICHE PALM

The symbol of the department's flora and it is associated with life and water.



Fishing, Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## FISHING

The activity that highlights the skills of Vichada's Llaneros in their habitat and has become an attraction of the department.



Puerto Carreño, Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## THE RIVER

The river is an inspiration for the feats of the Llaneros of Vichada, its gastronomy, legends and rites that involve the indigenous communities.



Basketry, Vichada, **THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO.**

## BASKETRY

They represent the department's handicrafts and indigenous culture is noteworthy in their craftsmanship.

# KEY CONCEPTS



## FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

- La Cachama Dorada Festival
- La Escoba de Moriche Festival
- El Curito Festival and Pageant
- Indigenous Cultural Festival and Cumaré Pageant
- El Trompo Festival
- Red Caribbean Festival
- Indigenous Bitter Cassava Festival among others.



## REPRESENTATIVE FIGURES

- Llaneros
- Indigenous communities: Guahibo, Sicuani, Piaroa, Piapoco, Cubeo, Puinave, Amorúa and Sáliva among others.



## EMBLEMATIC PLACES AND ACTIVITIES

- El Tuparro National Park
- Rock formations
- Sport fishing
- Pink river dolphin watching
- Orinoco River
- Natural pools among others.







## GEOGRAPHY

- Orinoco River
- Vichada River
- Tuparro River
- Tomo River
- Meta River
- Muco River
- Itiviare River among others.



## CRAFTS

- Basketry (fibres from the moriche palm, mamure, piragua, and jalapatrás)
- Wood among others.



## GASTRONOMY

- Hayacas (meat and vegetables in ground corn wrapped in a banana leaf)
- Cachama a la brasa (grilled cachama)
- Chigüiro (capybara)
- Caldo de curito (catfish broth)
- Bream
- Cashew fruit sweet
- Ternera a la llanera (roast veal) among others.

## THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON-ORINOCO

We sincerely hope that all these tools will serve as a point of departure to offer better services, optimise promotion and strengthen our tourism industry, which will be prepared for the golden future that awaits it.



Scan this code and view the 33 modules of the regional narratives of tourism.

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