

Cartagena: Once a Pirate's Paradise, Now a Tourist Gem



It is a large city seaport on the northeast coast of Colombia, founded by Spanish explorers in 1553. Soon after its foundation, the port became a rich and important trade center, thus becoming a target for the French, British and Dutch forces, as well as the pirates. For this reason, the Spanish built numerous fortresses around the city, many of which survived until today. One of the most spectacular aspects of Cartagena are the remains of its protective walls. They used to stretch for more than 10 km; the city was surrounded by solid stone. Thanks to these, much of the old town's charming buildings are preserved.

The visitors shouldn't miss a tour around El Castillo de San Filipe, the biggest of the forts constructed by the Spanish. Underneath, the tourists may admire the intricate system of underground tunnels.

There are some beautiful squares around the old town, as well as many museums. One of the very popular ones is located in the Palace of the Inquisition, which - by itself - has a very terrifying history. Here, in the museum of torture instruments, the curious visitors may discover the information about the individual methods used and those who died here.

Other must-see places are the Cartagena Cathedral; built in the 16th century, The Heredia Theater, or the Government Palace and the newly restored Santo Domingo Church.

There are plenty of fancy restaurants, affordable hotels and beautiful beaches in this Caribbean paradise - and it is still waiting to be discovered.

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