

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Please refer to the separate Visa Information Guide



Airport

The correct airport is **Cartagena Rafael Núñez International Airport, Colombia**. Please note that this is the only airport in Cartagena, Colombia; do not confuse this with Cartagena, Spain, or Columbia Metropolitan Airport – which is in the USA!!

Airlines flying into Cartagena:

Direct From U.S.:	Delta, Jet Blue, Avianca, Spirit (NYC, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Atlanta)
From Europe:	KLM, Lufthansa, Avianca (most via Bogota)
From Asia:	Via U.S. then Bogota (unless transferring via 1 of the direct departure cities above)

Conference location

The Conference will be held at the **Estelar Cartagena de Indias Hotel & Convention Center and the Grand Hyatt** hotels which are adjacent properties in the **Bocagrande area of Cartagena**. This is located just 10 minutes taxi ride from the airport.

Getting To/From the Airport

Taxis to and from the airport to the hotels are fairly reasonable, and more so if you are paying in pesos, and are probably the most convenient mode of transportation. Visit the taxi kiosk that is located within the baggage claim area and give them the address to your hotel. The taxi service from the airport is regular, reliable, and affordable.

Airport Transfer service

IFEAT will be offering a pay to book airport transfer service via it's official contractors for those who prefer not to take a taxi for the short journey to the hotel(s). Information on this service will be released in due course.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Currency and exchange

Currency : Colombian Peso (\$COP). Note that prices in Colombia are shown with a dollar sign but the price you are seeing is in Colombian Pesos.

USD 1.00 = \$2,833.00 COP

GBP 1.00 = \$3,955.00 COP

Euro 1.00 = \$3,502.00 COP

Bills in Colombia are in denominations of \$1,000, \$2,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, \$20,000, \$50,000, and \$100,000.

When travelling to Colombia, it is recommended that you bring cash with you, especially US dollars or Euros in high denomination bills. The exchange rates offered at the airport Currency Exchange desks are the least favourable for exchanging your money, if you happen to have a layover in Bogota, the exchange rates are slightly more competitive. There are also ATM's in both Cartagena and Bogota Airports.

Either way, it is a good idea to exchange just enough money needed to buy a coffee or pay for a taxi, once you arrive at your hotel there are more options.

Places to exchange currency

Bocagrande area: The Conference hotels are in the Bocagrande area of the city, which offers the best selection of hotels and restaurants in Cartagena, in addition to being located close to the city's beaches. You can change currency at most hotels and there are many Currency Exchange shops, including Carrera 2 and Calle 8, which offer some of the best rates in the area.

Bancolombia is one of the biggest banks in Colombia, and Cartagena has many branches located throughout the city. This is where you will always find the best exchange rate in all of Cartagena. This option would be the best for anyone planning to exchange a large quantity of money at once, as it ensures that you receive the best rate. The only disadvantage of exchanging money at the bank is that you have to go very early in the morning, or right after they reopen in the afternoon at 2pm, as it is common for banks to have very large queues. The only requirement to be able to exchange money at Bancolombia is that you have to bring your passport. It is also important to know that not all banks offer a currency exchange service, and if they do, they usually only exchange pesos for US dollars and Euros, not GBP or other types of currency. Also note that most banks in Cartagena open at 9:00 am close from 12pm to 2pm (except those who are inside malls) and reopen in the afternoon until 5 or 6pm.



ATM's: The best way to get cash is to use your bank ATM card. These are almost universally accepted at *cajeros automáticos* (ATMs) in the country. *Cajeros* are almost everywhere except in the smallest of towns or in remote areas. Withdrawal fees are relatively expensive, although they vary. You can usually take out up to around COP\$300,000-500,000 (the equivalent of around US\$105-180) per transaction. Many banks place limits on how much one can withdraw in a day (COP\$1,000,000 or US\$350).

There are a number of ATM's in the vicinity of the Estelar, Grand Hyatt and satellite hotel(s) including inside the nearby Bocagrande Square Mall.

Credit and debit card use is becoming more and more prevalent in Colombia. When you use your plastic, you will be asked if it's *credito* (credit) or *debito* (debit). If using a *tarjeta de credito* (credit card) you will be asked something like, "¿Cuantas cuotas?" or "¿Numero de cuotas?" ("How many installments?"). Most visitors prefer one *cuota* ("Una, por favor"). But you can have even your dinner bill paid in up to 24 instalments! If using a *tarjeta de debito*, you'll be asked if it is a corriente (checking) or *ahorros* (savings) account.

Tipping

In most sit-down restaurants, a 10 percent service charge is automatically included in the bill. Wait staff are required to ask you, "¿Desea incluir el servicio?" ("Would you like to include the service in the bill?"). Many times restaurant staff neglect to ask tourists about the service inclusion. Of course if you find the service to be exceptional, you can leave a little extra in cash. Tipping is not expected in bars, nor is it expected at cafés, although tip jars are becoming more common in larger cities.

It is not customary to tip taxi drivers. But if you feel the driver was a good one, driving safely and was honest, or if he or she made an additional stop for you, waited for you, or was just pleasant, you can always round up the bill (instead of COP\$6,200 give the driver COP\$7,000 and say "Quédese con las vueltas por favor" ("Keep the change"). Taxis are very inexpensive but note that sometimes a tip is already included in the fare for non-Colombian visitors.

In hotels, usually a tip of COP\$5,000 will suffice for porters who help with luggage, unless you have lots of stuff. Tips are not expected, but are certainly welcome, for housekeeping staff.