

GOOD TIMES

GOOD TIMES IN MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA

"NOTHING HAPPENS UNLESS FIRST A DREAM." - CARL SANDBURG.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2007

Travel To Medellin, Colombia!

My first trip to Medellin, Antioquia - Colombia, March 2007...

When I booked my first trip to Medellin I did not know what to expect based on all the negative media reports in the US regarding violence in Colombia. It seemed that whenever I informed any of my friends, family and colleagues about my planned trip to Colombia, they all thought I was crazy! Well, my flight was already booked and my hotel room was reserved, so no turning back now. I was going to Colombia!

"What did I discover in Colombia?" some of you may ask.

Well, I did not come across any kidnapers upon my arrival. But, what I did discover was a wonderful magical world-class metropolitan city in South America. The culture, the food, the music, the warm weather, salsa clubs, vibrant nightlife, lots of modern and interesting architecture throughout the city, amazing views from the metro cable, a much superior metro system compared to the one back home. And a incredibly pleasant surprise, something that was not mentioned in any of the trip reports I read before my departure, an beautiful expansive water park to rival anything in the states.

I spent a whole day relaxing at "El Parque de Las Aguas" and found it to be a very enjoyable experience which divided my trip. I had a great time watching the locals spend their weekend with the family. There were many kids around the park with friends and family enjoying the beautiful weather and experiencing the various water rides available. There were many families who brought blankets and picnic baskets filled with typical Colombian dishes along with treats for the children to enjoy.

There are also many public parks in Medellin where the locals meet to socialize and talk about the daily news as well as world events. Old men sit on park benches snacking on fresh fruit, sharing treats with the birds, which also seemed to enjoy mixing with the locals. Young mothers busy taking care of their babies while the older children run around playing. The children are very friendly and love to play games and joke around with friends and tourists alike.

More importantly, what separates Medellin from other travel destinations in South America are the generous and friendly locals known as Paisas (pie-sahs). I traveled to Medellin alone but never felt so much at home due to the fact that the Paisas made me feel like family. Everyone I met was eager to show off their great city. I was continually being invited to travel across town to see many of the wonderful places a new visitor to Medellin must see during their trip.

One of the most frequently asked questions was, "What part of town does your family live in Medellin?" I told them I did not have any family in Medellin. To which they replied, "Who do you know in Medellin?" I said I did not know anyone. They all thought I was crazy but then responded with a smile, "You now have friends and family in Medellin."

The only negative comment I have about my experience in Medellin is that I put on a few extra pounds because almost everyone I met invited me to their home for a traditionally home cooked Colombian dinner, which I was always happy to accept all invitations. :-)

The Paisas are great at making you feel at home in a foreign country.

The first thing I did upon my return to the states was book another trip.

Tip: I would strongly suggest anyone interested in visiting Medellin to brush up on their Spanish because there are not too many Paisas who speak English. No worries, an English program has now been added as part of the student courses. Medellin takes pride and promotes reading in all its educational institutions as part of its transformation into a world class destination for travelers from around the world to visit.

This blog was created to promote the positive side of Medellin. It will be updated with the latest news, articles, information, trip reports and recommendations for those who are interested in traveling to the city of eternal spring.

Vive Colombia! I love Medellin!

Here are a few pictures from my first trip.



POSTED BY MEDELLIN TRAVELER AT 4:52 PM

1 COMMENTS:

Anonymous said...

Nice comments on Medellin. I had a similar experience with friends telling me Colombia simply isn't safe. My personal experience over many very fun and

positive visits (to Bogota and Medellin) to Colombia--it's about as safe as many cities in the US. Stay in the safe areas, take advise from hotels and reputable drivers/taxis, and you will find Colombia a safe and fun place.

The people are just as nice as you say they are. I am amazed. I have also received many invitations to home cooked meals and all have been **fantastic**.

El Corral may very-well be the best burger in the world :-)

What you left out--some of the most beautiful women in the world come from Colombia and the most beautiful women in Colombia come from Medellin. They are also some of the nicest women in the world. Women with personalities that always have a smile ready. Yes, this is certainly a comment on US women. Sadly I've met many with serious personality issues related to what I now realize are average looks. I've really had my eyes opened here. If I had found this beautiful city and these beautiful people when I was younger I would probably have made a life here. That still may happen :-)

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