

Press Contact:

Alicia Buonanno

[Gregory FCA](#)

O: 610-228-2096

Alicia@GregoryFCA.com

Company Contact:

Leora Hafri

[Friendly Planet Travel](#)

215-572-9594 ext. 223

LHafri@FriendlyPlanet.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Friendly Planet Travel Invites Travelers to Experience Colorful Colombia**

New seven-day tour is the latest from Friendly Planet Travel to make an emerging destination accessible to travelers

JENKINTOWN, Pa.—September 30, 2013—From [Cuba](#) to [Myanmar](#) to Easter Island, international group tour operator [Friendly Planet Travel](#) has been on the cutting edge of introducing travelers to some of the most exciting and undiscovered locales in the world for more than three decades. The company's latest offering, a seven-day tour to [Colorful Colombia](#), is no exception. Travelers on this brand-new tour will experience Colombia's wealth of cultural attractions, friendly and engaging people, Caribbean white sand beaches, exotic tropical rainforests, and towering mountains that reach elevations up to 18,000 feet—starting at just \$2,399 including airfare.

“Colombia’s landscape is as varied as its culture,” says Peggy Goldman, President of Friendly Planet Travel. “But common misperceptions have led many travelers to overlook this fascinating, diverse country as a travel destination. It is an amazing land of contrasts, and we are proud to introduce the *real* Colombia to our travelers as it evolves into one of South America’s best emerging touristic destinations.”

Colombia had already become among the safest of South American destinations to visit by 2012, according to an article published by [Knowledge at Wharton](#). However, outdated perceptions of the country have contributed to an inaccurate image in many travelers’ minds. On Friendly Planet Travel’s Colorful Colombia tour, travelers will be able to see *the real Colombia* first-hand—its incredible diversity, cultural history, amazing architecture, rich geography, and the simple warmth and hospitality of its people.

The seven-day Colorful Colombia package includes round-trip airfare from Miami to Bogotá via scheduled carriers, including fuel surcharges, taxes, and fees; all ground transportation and transfers; superior hotel accommodations with private bathrooms; 14 meals; comprehensive guided sightseeing, including entrance fees; and a professional English-speaking tour guide.

[Colorful Colombia](#) begins in Colombia’s capital city of Bogotá, located in the beautiful Andes Mountains. Travelers will spend the night at the [Hotel Hilton Bogotá](#). After a walking tour of the city and a visit to Bogotá’s charming Old Town, [La Candelaria](#), travelers will visit Simón Bolívar Square. They’ll then stop at the Gold Museum to marvel at its astonishing collection of pre-Hispanic gold work—the largest collection of its kind in the world. The tour continues

beyond the city to the [Zipaquirá Salt Cathedral and Mine](#) to visit the underground Roman Catholic Church, constructed inside a salt mine 200 meters below ground, where the 12 stations of the cross are carved into the salt rock. In addition to being a popular tourist attraction, the Cathedral is an important place of pilgrimage in Colombia.

The next day begins with a morning flight to Colombia's famous Armenia Coffee Region, [Triángulo Del Café](#), located between a lush valley and one of the highest expanses of the Cordillera Central Mountains. After checking in at the [Hotel Del Campo](#), travelers will tour a coffee plantation to learn about the coffee-making process and, of course, sample the world-famous coffee produced there. Upon returning to the hotel, a local chef will join the group for a culinary adventure preparing and enjoying a regional delicacy.

Day four will lead travelers deep into the heart of the coffee region, where they will learn about the culture and people of the pueblos, and the [Valle Cocora](#), with its lush Swiss-like landscape. They'll also have the opportunity to browse the stores of Salento for handmade crafts and souvenirs, take part in a ritual wax palm planting ceremony, and converse with a traditional arriero, or mule driver, and learn about the instrumental role these workers play in Colombia's coffee production. The day ends with a regional dance demonstration before dinner.

On the fifth day, travelers will depart for the Caribbean Coast Region of [Cartagena](#), a colonial walled city and fortress that was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984. After lunch in Cartagena, travelers will enjoy a walking tour of the narrow streets in the historic city center, with its flower-covered balconies, cafes, bars, and restaurants nestled among the brightly colored colonial buildings. They will also visit the San Felipe Fort set atop a hill with a commanding view of both land and sea before continuing on to La Popa Convent to explore its treasures.

The evening will be spent aboard a Chiva Papayera, a traditional decorated Colombian bus that offers a tour of the city, complete with music and local drinks. The tour will make a stop at a local night club before ending the night at the [Sofitel Santa Clara](#) hotel.

The sixth day will be spent at leisure, exploring Cartagena's remarkable center, including museums, historic monuments, and libraries. Travelers can also explore the fashionable districts of El Centro and San Diego, known for chic cafes, trendy nightclubs, beautiful plazas, and elegant residences. An optional excursion is available to the local fishing community of La Boquilla for \$100. There the villagers will perform a dance before a local fisherman steers travelers through the Cueva Del Manglar, a rich and bio-diverse ecosystem inhabited by kingfishers, white herons, and pelicans. During this excursion, travelers will also enjoy a demonstration of traditional fishing methods, using handmade nets and weights to catch fish and crustaceans.

Friendly Planet's [Colorful Colombia](#) tour is available in 2014 on the departure dates of March 15, April 5, May 10, June 7, July 5, Aug. 2, Aug. 30, Sept. 27, Oct. 25, and Nov. 22 for \$2,399; and Dec. 20 for \$2,699—all if booked by Dec. 3, 2013.

For more information about Colorful Colombia, or any of the other fascinating adventures that Friendly Planet Travel offers, visit FriendlyPlanetTravel.com.

ABOUT FRIENDLY PLANET TRAVEL

Friendly Planet Travel makes high-quality exotic travel affordable for everyone. Since 1981, Friendly Planet Travel has been arranging all-inclusive escorted discount vacation packages and cruises to the most exciting destinations in the world at the lowest possible prices.

Each year, Friendly Planet Travel offers more than 30 different group travel packages to Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and South America—at discounts of hundreds of dollars off similar vacations. With no hidden charges, add-ons, or surprises, Friendly Planet Travel vacations include convenient flights and airfare; carefully selected, first-class and superior hotels; knowledgeable, English-speaking guides; many meals; planned itineraries; as well as friendships and memories that last a lifetime.

Friendly Planet Travel offers its extensive, economical travel services to private groups, including universities, religious institutions, alumni associations, and families. Groups who wish to travel together can count on Friendly Planet Travel's three decades of experience to operate their group travel program expertly and always at the very best possible prices. Visit the company at www.FriendlyPlanetTravel.com. You can also follow Friendly Planet Travel on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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