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## Sample Itinerary: Specialty 1

This *Specialty* itinerary shows the kind of trip we can put together for your specialty group, depending on your interests. In this case, we focus on interaction with creative locals through hands-on activities and workshops, as well as a volunteer day to give back to the communities you visit. We also include some incredible opportunities to discover the true secrets of Colombia's flower farmers and street artists, not to mention plenty of extra highlights sprinkled in.

### Day 1: Bogotá:

Welcome to the beautiful Andes mountains of Colombia! You start your trip in Bogotá, a sprawling modern metropolis with a long and fascinating history and distinct neighborhoods.

### Day 2: Exploring the capital

Head to the Candelaria neighborhood to learn about Bogotá's street art and, after lunch, transport back in time as you enter the famous Gold Museum (Museo de Oro) before finishing your day with a cable car ride up to the famous viewpoint of Monserrate.

### Day 3: The Salt Cathedral

In the morning, take your time enjoying a cup of high-quality gourmet Colombian coffee before heading north out of Bogotá to get a sense of Bogotá's art and underground architecture. Then it's back to Bogotá to have lunch with one of the city's most accomplished art dealers to view a host of private galleries, ending in the Fernando Botero Museum.

### Day 4: True Bloom

After a fresh breakfast, head to the airport for a quick flight to Medellín. Just outside Medellín, in the peaceful town of Santa Elena, visit an enormous flower farm in the area where most flowers purchased in the United States for Valentine's Day are grown and learn about flower cultivation. Afterwards, head for a special treat at the house of award-winning silleteros, the stars of Medellín's world-famous flower festival.

### Day 5: True Graffiti

True Graffiti takes you through the rarely visited and extraordinary Comuna 1 in northeast Medellín. The exclusive experience is designed by a youth collective of artists who are from these very neighborhoods, as they take you on a tour of local street art, lead a stenciling lesson, and put on a private break-dancing and hip-hop show.

### Day 6 - The City of Eternal Spring

We pick you up from your hotel and head over to the government center for an historical exploration from the industrial revolution up through to the dark days of the '80s and '90s. The afternoon brings an exclusive visit to one of



the sites of the city's music schools. The network of music schools was created in the '90s to teach classical music to children in the most dangerous parts of the city.

### **Day 7: Barrio Comparsa & The Musical School Network**

Today, gain a thorough understanding of how the people of Medellín used community action to reject violence and change the city. The members of Barrio Comparsa have specialized in interactive arts, dance, and music for more than 40 years and through a series of workshops and interactive activities, you create the tools you need to put on your own "carnaval" on the streets of Medellín with some of the most famous public performers in the history of the city. Afterwards, head to the hotel to rest before the evening's special event to meet the visionary founder of the musical school network and listen to a trio of musicians trained from the very first class of students in the '90s.

### **Day 8: Cocondo**

Deep inside the mountains of Titiribí, we find the coffee fields of Cocondo, the only certified organic farm in Antioquia and one of the few in Colombia. Here, learn what it really and truly means to be organic before visiting a waterfall to bathe in natural mountain spring water, applying a coffee mixture to give yourself an organic, unique, and truly authentic spa treatment.

### **Day 9: True Occidente**

After breakfast, head the beautifully preserved Santa Fe de Antioquia. This popular weekend vacation spot for Colombians is also full of a rich, 500 year-old history. Have a private gold-working workshop, hear stories about the creation of the town's many parks and wander the streets, have a private lunch menu-tasting of Chocoano food, and roam in and out of well-preserved homes rarely seen by the public. Finally, head to South America's very first suspension bridge, "El Puente del Occidente," designed by a Colombian architect who worked on the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge.

### **Day 10: Cartagena**

After breakfast, we have a short flight to Cartagena to stay in the heart of the old walled city. Spend the day wandering among the gorgeous bright yellow and blue walls and plazas that define the 500-year-old colonial architecture, and toast to your Colombian adventure with a sundowner overlooking the Caribbean sea.

### **Day 11: Boca Chica**

Today you are off to the bay of Boca Chica and the Batería del Angel San Rafael, which was key to victories that kept Cartagena safe from the French, as well as pirates, as you explore the fort as well as the island of Tierra Bomba. Your guide in Cartagena runs a non-profit on the island to help teach water sports to children from single-mother households, and with him you gain access to the community and hear about how he is supporting education on the island.

### **Day 12: Volunteer Day**

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Our volunteer day includes helping local organizations working toward healthy living. We spend the morning at the Fundación Granitos de Paz helping with their “patios productivos” project: at the foundation and in the backyards of people's homes around the neighborhood, locals are growing greens (spinach, kale, mint, basil, etc.) and selling the goods to restaurants and individuals throughout Cartagena. Afterwards, head back to the city center for lunch in Cafe Stepping Stone in the Getsemani neighborhood. This cafe buys its greens from Granitos de Paz and is also a social enterprise. Here, we learn about their business model helping Cartagena’s most disadvantaged gain job skills.

### **Day 13: Palenque**

Spend the day exploring the small village of Palenque, which was founded by escaped slaves in the 17th century. Declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 2005, Palenque is today seen as a trove of African linguistic, musical, and cultural traditions.

### **Day 14: Departure**

Enjoy your last morning in Colombia walking around the neighborhood, exploring the old city walls, and delighting in some final bites of local cuisine. Check out the artisanal shops and learn about traditional goods such as the “mochila” bags, a product hand-stitched by the Indigenous peoples of the coast, and grab any last souvenirs before we head to the airport for your flight home.

