



Trends, Tips and Lessons Learned

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Given the increase in both business interests in Colombia and personal travel to the area, we thought we would highlight the current risks associated with travel in Colombia to ensure you are properly informed and protected when you are there:

- Security in Colombia has improved significantly in recent years, including in tourist and business travel destinations like Cartagena and Bogota, but violence by narco-terrorist groups continues to affect some rural areas and large cities. The greatest threat to visitors to Colombia remains street crime. Gangs of youth, usually 3-5 males, fueled by drugs or alcohol, brandish both fire arms and edged weapons to intimidate their victims. If victims comply quickly, odds are that they will not be harmed.
- The incidence of kidnapping in Colombia has diminished significantly from its peak at the beginning of this decade. Nevertheless, terrorist groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), and other criminal organizations continue to kidnap and hold civilians for ransom or as political bargaining chips. No one is immune from kidnapping on the basis of occupation, nationality, or other factors.
- There has been an increase in petty crime, including a significant increase in pick pocketing of passports in the El Dorado Airport in Bogota, and at luxury hotels, especially around the dominant Colombian holidays, Christmas, Easter Week, and summer holidays (July and August).
- Due to criminal activities the U.S. Embassy defines two areas in Bogota that are always off limits for all U.S. government officials and family members: "Galerias" District (between Calles 53 and 54 with Carrera 24 through 27) and "Plaza de las Americas" District (Avenida Primera de Mayo between Carrera 68 and Avenida Boyaca).
- Some of the most common methods used by criminals in Colombia are robberies of ATM customers; robberies of taxi passengers (particularly in Bogota, Cali and Medellin); robberies of tourists departing airports; counterfeit money scams; and, the use of disabling drugs to temporarily incapacitate tourists and others at bars, restaurants, and other public areas, perpetrators may offer tainted drinks, cigarettes, or gum. Avoid leaving food or drinks unattended at a bar or restaurant, and be suspicious if a stranger offers you something to eat or drink. Further, do not hail taxis off the street. The trustworthy taxi companies rely on the telephone dispatch service that most hotels, restaurants and stores use. These places will call a taxi for you and it will arrive within minutes.
- U.S. government officials and their families in Colombia are only permitted to travel to major cities in the country by air. They may not use inter or intra-city bus transportation or travel by road outside urban areas at night and the same is recommended for all U.S. citizens who visit the country.

The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in Colombia is 123 for police, ambulance, and fire. There will not be an English speaker answering the telephone.

About Corporate Resolutions

Corporate Resolutions Inc. was founded in 1991 and is headquartered in New York City, with additional offices in Hong Kong (Asia-Pacific), London (Western/Eastern Europe), Miami (Latin America/Caribbean) and Boston. Corporate Resolutions conducts background checks and business investigations globally and offers a suite of investigative solutions including background checks, Ethics Hotlines, FCPA investigations, business intelligence and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) compliance reviews. Our professional staff is comprised of former FBI and US Customs Agents, white-collar investigators, intelligence analysts, public record specialists and investigators both nationally and internationally. Ken Springer, President and Founder of Corporate Resolutions Inc., is a former FBI agent who, along with Joelle Scott, Director of Business Intelligence, recently published *Digging for Disclosure: Tactics for Protecting Your Firm's Assets from Swindlers, Scammers and Imposters*. www.corporateresolutions.com.