

BOKANA TRAVEL

COLOMBIA

TRAVEL GUIDE 2026

CAPURGANÁ & SAPZURRO

You arrive by small plane or boat and get around on foot: clear bays, jungle trails and a path that crosses into Panama.

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THE ESSENTIALS

DARIÉN JUNGLE, CARIBBEAN SEA, NO CARS

Capurganá is a village in the municipality of Acandí, in northern Chocó, where the Darién jungle runs down to the Gulf of Urabá. No road links it to the rest of Colombia: you arrive by small plane or by boat, and once you're there everything moves on foot or by sea. A few minutes by boat take you to clear-water bays like El Aguacate and Playa Soledad, and trails leave town for waterfalls and freshwater pools.

Ten minutes away by sea is Sapzurro, a smaller, quieter bay. From there a path climbs the border ridge and drops down to La Miel, Panama's first village, with a turquoise beach. This is a trip for switching off: patchy signal, little access to cash and a pace set by the sea and the rain.

WHERE IT IS

Northern Chocó, municipality of Acandí, on the Gulf of Urabá next to the Panama border. There's no road access.

GETTING THERE

Medellín (Olaya Herrera) to Acandí with Satena, Monday to Friday: about 1 hr to 1 hr 20 min, plus a 40-minute boat ride to Capurganá. Clic runs direct Medellín–Capurganá flights of about 1 hr 15 min.

WEATHER

Hot and humid year-round, 24 to 30 °C (75 to 86 °F). About 2,450 mm (96 in) of rain falls each year; February is the driest month and May the wettest.

DOCUMENTS

Colombian ID (cédula) for residents; passport for foreign visitors. To cross into La Miel (Panama), Colombians should bring a valid passport too. A yellow fever shot is recommended, given at least 10 days before.

MONEY

Colombian peso (COP). Bring plenty of cash: most businesses don't take cards and you can't count on ATMs. La Miel accepts pesos too.

LANGUAGE

Spanish. Much of the population is of African descent and organized into community councils.

TIME ZONE

Colombia time (UTC-5), no difference. La Miel, in Panama, keeps the same time.

PLUGS

Types A and B, 110 V, 60 Hz, same as the rest of Colombia.

DON'T MISS

HIGHLIGHTS

01
SAPZURRO

A small bay with calm water, about 10 minutes by boat from Capurganá. If you'd rather walk, the jungle trail takes a couple of hours and ends with a view of the sea.

02
LA MIEL, IN PANAMA

From Sapzurro, hike up the border ridge, marked with both countries' flags, and down to La Miel: a turquoise beach and a post of SENAFRONT, Panama's border service, where they check your documents. You pay a small fee in cash.

03
EL AGUACATE AND THE PISCINA DE LOS DIOSES

A clear-water bay 10 to 15 minutes away by boat, good for snorkeling. About a 10-minute walk away is the Piscina de los Dioses (Pool of the Gods), a pool formed by rocks at the edge of the sea.

04
PLAYA SOLEDAD

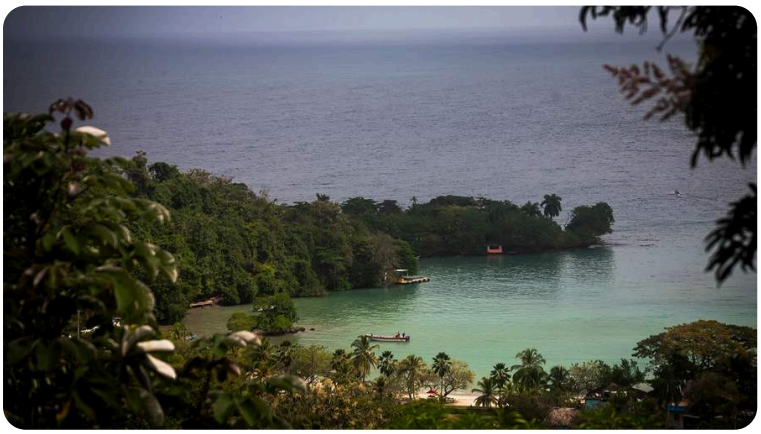
Pale sand, turquoise water and jungle right down to the shoreline, about 25 minutes by boat from Capurganá. It's the most popular full-day trip in the area.

05
EL CIELO RESERVE

A two- to four-hour hike through thick jungle and streams to waterfalls and cold-water pools. Use of the ecological trails is charged separately.

06
DIVING THE DARIÉN

Capurganá has dives down to 30 meters (98 ft), with barracuda, grouper, rays and lobster. If you've never dived, El Aguacate is a good place to start with a mask and snorkel.





PLAN YOUR TRIP

WHEN TO GO

From December to April there's less rain; February is the driest month. Those months, plus Holy Week and the midyear school holidays, are high season, so book flights and hotels early. From May to November it rains more, especially in May, though downpours usually alternate with sunny spells. Between February and October, leatherback turtles nest on the beaches of the Acandí, Playón and Playona Sanctuary, with hatchlings emerging in July and August.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

BEST

JAN – MAR

The best time to go.

GOOD

APR · JUL · DEC

A good time, with a catch on weather or crowds.

RAINY

MAY – JUN · AUG – NOV

More rain: keep plans flexible.

WHAT YOU NEED TO TRAVEL

For Colombian travelers: a cédula is all you need to travel within Colombia, but here it's worth bringing a passport for La Miel, your vaccination card and cash for several local fees. Fees and checks change often, so confirm them before you go. Traveling on another passport? Requirements differ, so message us and we'll check yours.

- ID: Colombian ID (cédula) for residents; passport for foreign visitors. For Colombian minors, tarjeta de identidad or registro civil (birth certificate).
- La Miel (Panama): documents are checked at the SENAFRONT post. Local operators report that Colombians on a day visit are asked for their cédula and passports aren't stamped, but bring a valid passport too, since border checks can change.
- Yellow fever vaccine: Acandí is in the Ministry of Health's recommended vaccination zone. Get the shot at least 10 days before and bring your card; you can check your record at mivacuna.sispro.gov.co.
- Local fees, in cash: a port fee at the departure dock, COP 10,000 for use of the ecological trails, and a tourist fee of COP 3,000 to COP 4,000 to enter La Miel.
- Community contribution: as of July 2026, the Cocomanorte community council was asking for a voluntary COP 50,000 per visitor and had announced plans to make it mandatory; Acandí's mayor's office opposes it. Ask whether it's in force when you book.
- Medellín–Acandí flights use small 19-seat planes, so check the airline's baggage limit before you pack.
- Boats leave in the morning and may be canceled in bad weather or rough seas. Always wear your life jacket.

Checked in October 2026 with Colombian Ministry of Health: recommended yellow fever vaccination zones. Rules change, so confirm with the official source before you travel, or message us and we'll help.

WHAT WE'D TELL A FRIEND

BOKANA TIPS

1 **Bring cash from Medellín**

Almost everything is paid in cash: boats, fees, restaurants and entry to La Miel. Budget for the whole trip and split the money across a few places.

2 **Pack light and dry**

The plane is small and on the boat, bags travel under plastic sheeting. Use a soft bag, put everything in waterproof bags and keep a small bag with your documents and phone close.

3 **Early boat, light stomach**

Boats leave in the morning and the ride can be bumpy. If you get seasick, take something before boarding, and confirm the departure time the day before.

4 **Water and bug spray**

Tap water isn't considered safe to drink, so buy water or bring a filter. For the trails, wear closed shoes that can get wet, and pack bug spray and sunscreen.

5 **Go to La Miel early**

Leave Sapzurro around 7 a.m. to hike in less heat and have the beach to yourself. The last boat back usually leaves around 4 p.m.

6 **Check conditions before you go**

This is a border area with a history of armed groups and migrant smuggling, though in the first half of 2026 crossings through the Darién were down more than 99% from 2023. Travel with licensed operators, stay on tourist trails and respect checkpoints.

TRAVEL MINDFULLY

Between February and October, leatherback and hawksbill turtles nest in the Acandí, Playón and Playona Sanctuary. Visit only with community guides and park rangers, with no lights or noise on the beach. Don't touch or stand on coral when you snorkel, and carry all your trash back out of the jungle.

WHERE TO EAT

OUR RESTAURANT PICKS

Chosen for their food, their track record and what past diners say. Price: $ budget · $$ mid-range · $$$ splurge.

REEF GASTROBAR CAPURGANÁ $

Seafood gastrobar and cocktails · El Muelle area (Capurganá)

★ **4.8** · 90 reviews on Google Maps

Right by the dock, with one of the best sea views in the village, it's among Capurganá's top-rated spots at a moderate price.

What diners love: Reviewers praise the food, the tropical-fruit cocktails, the sea view and very warm service. Several call it their favorite place of the trip.

Order: Passion fruit mojito and the seafood dish of the day

Closes mid-afternoon and reopens at 4 p.m.; come for sunset.

KUKAMBA BAR & GRILL $$

Grill and seafood · Across from the church (Capurganá)

★ **4.6** · 91 reviews on Google Maps

The most-reviewed restaurant in the village, with a more ambitious menu than the beach shacks: octopus, prawns and grilled meats.

What diners love: Diners single out the grilled octopus, the garlic prawns, the grilled fish and the owners' warmth. They describe it as clean, comfortable and close to fine dining.

Order: Grilled octopus or garlic prawns

A dinner spot; closes around 9 p.m.

RESTAURANTE JOSEFINA'S $$

Home-style seafood · La Caleta beach (Capurganá)

★ **4.4** · 59 reviews on Google Maps

Seafood with local seasoning facing the beach. A good address for trying lobster in Capurganá.

What diners love: People rave about the cook's seasoning, the lobster, the mixed ceviche in red sauce and the personal service. A simple, quiet place by the sea.

Order: Lobster or mixed ceviche in red sauce

Open until 9 p.m.; bring cash.

CAFE DEL MAR SAPZURRO $

Specialty coffee and breakfast · La Diana beach (Sapzurro)

★ **5.0** · 48 reviews on Google Maps

A specialty-coffee stop right on the sand in Sapzurro, good for breakfast before the hike to La Miel.

What diners love: Reviewers love the specialty coffee and the location, right at the water's edge. It holds a perfect score on Google Maps.

Order: French toast with coffee

Open until 9 p.m.; it also rents rooms.

RESTAURANTE-LOUNGE CHIRIQUÍ $$

Fish and beach drinks · La Miel beach (Panama)

★ **4.3** · 217 reviews on Google Maps

La Miel's most-reviewed restaurant sits right on the beach, so lunch comes with the sea in view.

What diners love: People like the coconut rice with fried fish, the portions and the laid-back music. Opinions on prices are split: some find them fair for the area, others steep.

Order: Coconut rice with fried fish

Closes around 5 p.m.; accepts pesos.

Ratings and review counts checked in October 2026; they change over time. Review summaries are our own. Hours and prices vary, so check before you go.

LOCAL FLAVORS

WHAT TO EAT

ARROZ CON COCO

Coconut rice, the coast's essential side, made with grated coconut. It reflects the African roots of Caribbean cooking.

SANCOCHO DE PESCADO

A hearty fish soup with cassava, plantain and corn on the cob, made for sharing at the table.

FRIED FISH WITH PATACÓN

The catch of the day, crisp outside and juicy inside, with patacón (twice-fried green plantain), salad and coconut rice. The classic beach lunch.

LOBSTER AND SEAFOOD

Lobster, crab, octopus and ceviche show up on menus all over town, almost always with coconut rice on the side.



BOKANA
TRAVEL

PICTURE YOURSELF IN CAPURGANÁ & SAPZURRO? LET'S PLAN IT TOGETHER.

Join one of our groups on your own, or bring your people on a private trip.
Scan the code or message us.

Chat with us on WhatsApp

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bokanatravel.co/en/destinations/capurgana/

SOURCES

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Parques Nacionales Naturales: Santuario de Fauna Acandí, Playón y Playona
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Awake Travel: Capurganá, Sapzurro y La Miel (documentos, tasas y vacunas)
Roadtrip: Capurganá en 5 días (tasas locales 2026)
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Viajando Colombia: experiencias gastronómicas en Capurganá
Power Plugs & Sockets: Colombia
Google Maps (fichas consultadas el 4 oct 2026)

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