

3 Things to Do in the Walled City of Cartagena, Colombia

The walled city of Cartagena is one of the most stunning historic UNESCO cities i've visited. It has its own culture and flair and the colorful alleyways and constant buzz make this city always come to the top of my list when i'm asked where I would recommend to go in the world. This is where you should stay if you're visiting, and you might not ever want to leave. Here are a few reasons why:

1. **You can have some of the best Ceviche in the world:** La Cevicheria is home to what Anthony Bourdain calls some of the best Ceviche he's had. Now, I would say it's pretty damn good, but I would also say you can get some pretty incredible ceviche in Panama as well. However, what makes this place one of my favorites is their hot sauce that they make and bottle themselves! Anyone that knows me knows i'm a hot sauce aficionado, and the combination of fresh seafood and some spicy sauce makes me about as happy as a kid on Christmas. Check this place out when you're here.



Eat here. I beg of you.

- 2. You can get lost, and enjoy it too:** The streets are meandering here, the street signs are hard to see, and for the most part, there's no way to figure out from a faraway waypoint where you are. But this is all ok here in Cartagena. Much like other older cities around the world (Marrakech in Morocco, The Old City in Barcelona, Casco Viejo in Panama) you tend to walk down a meandering road and not know where you're going, but there's something fun and interesting happening around every corner here and you won't ever get bored or actually feel lost. The walls are colorful, there's a million smells, and this is a place where time slows down and you can enjoy just getting lost.



How can you not want to get lost in this? (Rhetorical)

- 3. You can Enjoy Sunsets with a Cocktail in the Streets:** Everyone loves this, the romantical gesture of having a cocktail on a patio on the street, watching the locals stroll by. You can't beat Cartagena if this is one of your favorite leisurely activities. I would check out Demente, El Baron, and Donde Fidel.



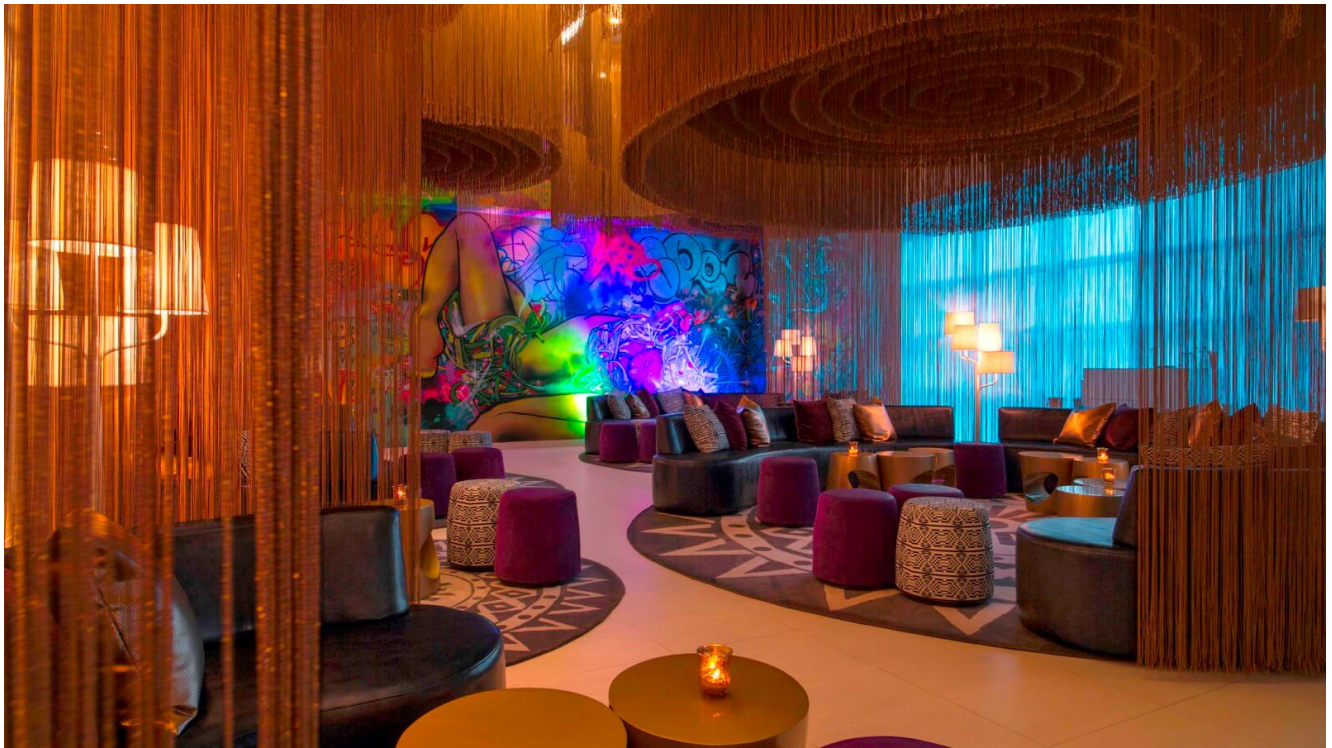
It might be 85 at night, but it's perfect for a drink and some people watching

REVIEW: W Bogota – It's real Colombian here!

This has got to be one of the cooler W hotels in terms of design and style. Its a small one but its great location and great room rates make it a great home base if you find yourself in the city of Bogota.

What you immediately notice when you enter this property is the moodiness of the place. This is not unlike most W hotels

which have slightly darker surroundings and evoke a sense of sensuality and mystery.



That's one sexy lounge. It's also a great place to hang out in before you head out for the night!

If you book early enough, check out the suites – they go for great prices, and they're totally worth the price. For less than \$200 I was able to get a suite with its own game room and pool table, and this was during peak holiday season!

The service was above average for a W hotel, they were extremely accommodating when we needed to check in early and even though the room wasn't ready they gave us complimentary spa access in order for us to freshen ourselves from our journey.

The rooms themselves were in great condition as of this writing, and had a whimsical and charming quality to them.

Especially awesome were the bathrooms, with LED lighting in the showers and gold fixtures that couldn't help but remind me of something that would be in the infamous Pablo Escobar Mansion.



The gold touches really make this room pop visually. It's got some of the most interesting contemporary furnishings i've ever seen in a room. Clean yet warm and inviting



Gold tiles, a gold shower, and gold fixtures. Remember, gold is best!

PROS:

- Its got a bathroom that stands out and makes you wanna smile
- The service is on par with some higher tier hotels
- The rates are phenomenal for the quality of hotel you are getting into

CONS:

- It's a smaller property so it doesn't have a grand feeling to it

SECRETS:

- They really appreciate SPG loyalty here so remember to use your SPG card if you have one. Also, they have a disproportionate amount of suites so it's relatively easy to upgrade at the front desk, I highly recommend

trying that out if you didn't book a suite ahead of time

THINGS TO DO IN THE AREA:

- You really should check out Tabula when you're here. Anthony Bourdain recommends this restaurant and so do I.