



Richard Emblin

The memories of his first trips to the country are kept in the childhood photos of the family albums of the time when he traveled by land from Caracas with his parents. But it was in 1990 - as a press photographer and war correspondent - that he had the opportunity to come back and stay for three weeks. Later, Richard returned in 1991, supposedly for two years, but he fell in love, he married, and now works for the country as director and editor of [The City Paper](#), a monthly publication that talks in English about beautiful and cultural Colombia. The Colombia he knows very well, and enjoys and feels...

Due to his experience and background, Richard Emblin is a world character who has been at the core of several wars and has fought his own battles in search of his dreams. The fusion of his various origins is quite singular: son of a British father and a Colombian mother, born in Caracas, lived in Germany, British and Canadian nationalities. And among all these countries: Colombia - he found part of his roots here and the cues to continue his road in life.

What is your nationality?

RE: I am British and Canadian.

How long ago did you decide to come to Colombia?

RE: In 1990, when I was working as a press photographer for the English newspaper The Sunday Telegraph.

What was the reason for your trip?

RE: To cover the 1990 presidential elections.

Was it your first time in Colombia?

RE: No. As a child, I had come by land from Venezuela with my parents, but those memories

are kept in photos.

Initially, how long did you plan to stay in the country?

RE: I was here for three weeks due to my work, but I thought I had to come back.

Why did you decide to extend your stay?

RE: I wanted to really get to know the land where my mother was born, to find part of my roots.

During the time you have lived in Colombia, what places have you visited, which have you liked the most, and why?

RE: With some exceptions, I know the country from top to bottom. I do not want to fall into the cliché of mentioning the usual places, but there are regions that exerted an impact on me because I felt the closeness and appreciation of the people. For example, the influence zones of the Atrato River, the Middle Magdalena, and the Cauca River in Cauca. I like the sunsets in Caquetá, the south of Bolívar, Marsella, Villa de Leyva, and the ride on the Panamerican Highway between the departments of Valle and Nariño...

What did you do before coming to Colombia? What do you do now?

RE: I was a press photographer and war correspondent. In Colombia, I worked as a graphic editor for El Tiempo daily newspaper, and at present I am the director and editor of The City Paper, a free-circulation paper written in English that speaks well about Colombia and is directed to foreign tourists and English-speaking residents.

Why do you think foreigners should visit Colombia?

RE: Because Colombia is a biodiverse country and has a centuries-old cultural wealth. It is amazing, but even in the most remote villages there is a foreigner. Word of mouth promotion is also important; foreigners arrive here because someone spoke well about Colombia.

Do you have plans for returning to your country.

RE: No. Definitely not.

What Colombian city or destination that you have not been to would you

like to visit?

RE: The Upper Guajira, Guainía in the Orinoquia, Vaupés, the depths of the plains. Yet I do know part of Caquetá and Meta, where the sounds of nature are amplified, where the bugs are amplified...

What plan would you recommend to a foreigner who would like to visit Colombia for the first time?

RE: There are many. Colombia is a country of communities. I recommend visiting the Caribbean because it has been promoted a lot, but also the landscapes of inner Colombia, the coffee mountains. Villages like Guane, Barichara, and Villa de Leyva. To the young, I recommend landscapes for engaging in adventure sports, such as rafting in San Gil. But definitely, what is interesting about Colombia is the intangibles – the people make the difference.

Do you believe Colombia is a world-class tourist destination? Why?

RE: Totally. Cartagena, Medellín, Bogotá are world-class cities. Infrastructure and services have improved, although some training is still lacking. People seek safety and good service in every respect. And these guarantees are found here. There are authentic regions where a grand hotel is not necessary, but that is not a reason for not being world-class.

Do you know the “Colombia, the only risk is wanting to stay” promotional campaign?

RE: Totally. I consider it a successful campaign.

Do you agree with the slogan?

RE: Totally. I agree with the campaign. It is successful.

Do you consider yourself a foreigner in love with Colombia? Why?

RE: More than being in love, I have a commitment to Colombia. It is a country that has been generous to me. In spite of not having the Colombian nationality, I feel Colombian, “not everything in Paradise is perfect...”.