



Nevado del Ruiz /Pic. [biografica](#)

Los Nevados National Natural Park offers El Cisne visitors center; at 4,500 meters above sea level, it is one of the highest mountain refuges in Colombia. This park, with tall, majestic summits, is located in the jurisdictions of the departments of Caldas, Risaralda, Quindío, and Tolima. The Quindío, Santa Isabel, El Cisne, El Ruiz, and Tolima snow peaks, all surpassing 4,800 meters above sea level, make up this park that is home to species that are unique in the world, among them the snow parakeet and the páramo humming bird.

Mysterious lunar-like landscapes, a trip through time to the mountain's peak

The visitors center is located in a strategic sector of the Manizales – Brisas – Villamaría circuit, whose landscape complex brings offers the forest, páramo, super-páramo, and snow ecosystems, and crosses moraines that resemble moonscapes. Additionally, the Otún Lake offers a serene landscape. A large variety of high mountain recreational and sports activities are possible in the park, among them trekking, mountain biking, rock and ice climbing, and sports fishing.

Attention to visitors is concentrated especially in the north sector, at the Brisas, Chalet Arenales, and Refugio del Ruiz sites.

Characteristics

- The park covers an area of 58,300 hectares.
- It is located on the highest part of the central mountain range of the Colombian Andes.
- The following snow peaks are located in the area: Quindío at 4,750 meters above sea level, Santa Isabel at 4,950, El Cisne, at 4,700, and El Ruiz at 5,400. The volcanic chain is crowned by the Tolima peak at 5,200 meters.
- Temperatures range from 14° C to -3° C.
- The season of heavy rains goes from April to May. Light rains occur in October.
- The dry seasons go from January to February and from July to August.
- Andean forests grow in the valleys and slopes of the lower part of the park. The wax palm,

Colombia's natural tree stands out.

- The fauna is varied: Tapirs, spectacled bears, 20 species of bats and many species of frogs.
- The middle portion of the central mountain range was inhabited since Pre-Hispanic times by the Quimbaya Indians, famous for their goldwork, considered one of the most elaborate in pre-Columbian America, and for their ceramics.

How to get there

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By the Manizales – Murillo – Refugio Brisas route, a one-hour, 10-km will take visitors to the snow line.

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The Otún Lake can be reached after a 4-hour ride on the Manizales – Murillo - Refugio Brisas road..

Attractions

- Tours between El Ruiz snow peak, the Otún Lake, and Brisas.
- Mountain climbing
- Fishing
- Hikes on interpretive paths in the company of a guide
- Hot springs at El Ruiz snow peak
- ASulphur hot springs at El Rancho in the Combeima River basin in the department of Tolima.
- Snow peak complex: El Ruiz (difficult climbing due to its rugged topography), Santa Isabel (actually three peaks and considered the most beautiful in the massif), El Cisne (between El Ruiz and Santa Isabel peaks), and Quindío.
- The Otún Lake, at 3,900 meters above sea level, is appropriate for sports fishing.
- Gualí Waterfall at 4,000 meters above sea level.
- Laguna Verde (green lake): A small glacial lake south of El Cisne peak.

Recommendations prior to the ascent:

- Sweets should be eaten two days before the ascent; their consumption must be limited during the tour.
- No strenuous physical activities, including running, should be performed above elevations of 4,000 meters above sea level.
- People with cardiac or respiratory problems should not attempt the ascent.

- The ascent is not recommended during pregnancy.
- Adults over the age of sixty and children under the age of six should not ascend.
- It is inadvisable to during alcoholic beverages or smoke during the tour.
- Littering is forbidden, as well as collecting samples of fauna, flora and/or gas.

It is recommended to take:

- Mid calf shoes or boots.
- Comfortable pants.
- Gloves
- Waterproof jacket
- Cap
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Bathing suit
- Sunscreen
- Lip sunscreen
- Camara
- Hydrating beverages
- Fruit
- Spare clothes
- A walking cane
- A canteen
- Peanuts and candy

Access to the park



Los Nevados /Pic. [paulhs](#)

Consult your travel agent or visit <http://parquesnacionales.gov.co>

Lodging

Los Nevados National Natural Park has a visitor center by the name of El Cisne. It has nine shelters where up to 62 people may lodge in bunks or twin beds.

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- [Coffee Cultural Landscape destination](#)
- [Birdwatching in the Central Range of the Andes](#)
- [Rural tourism at Coffee Cultural Landscape](#)