

Providencia and Santa Catalina

Vacations to the natural paradise

Providencia Island and Santa Catalina are located in the western Caribbean Sea, about 240 km from the coast of Central America and 72 km north of San Andrés. Small aircraft operate daily between Providencia and San Andrés making it easier for travelers to plan their vacations.

Providencia island, a very seductive destination, has ever green mountains and a large coral barrier.

The two islands cover an area of approximately 22 km² and are separated by a 150-meter artificial canal dredged in the 17th century by pirates for the defense of the islands.

In Santa Catalina, corsairs Henry Morgan and Louis Aury built fortifications and installed canons that remain there to this day. Top travel destinations within the area.

Providencia island, which is also known as Old Providence, encompasses in its 17 km² so many landscapes of singular beauty that it constitutes an unequalled ecotourism destination. A visit to neighboring Catalina complements the trip. Here, the calm is disturbed only by the din of the birds and the sound of the waves against the rocks, among them, the famous Morgan's Head.



Plan your tour to the "The Morgan's Head" during your vacations to Providencia Island

Places to visit on your holidays:

Morgan's Head

Perhaps because legends end up becoming real, the passing of Pirate Morgan through the islands, in this case Santa Catalina, was left engraved on a huge rock that projects itself outward creating a human profile over the sea. This is Morgan's head, the rock that all visitors want to visit during their journey. It is a unique natural sculpture carved by waves.

Mc. Bean Lagoon

This is the national mangrove park. Its extension is 995 hectares, 905 of which are marine. The park encompasses the mangrove ecosystem, part of the coral barrier, an extensive lagoon with sea grasses, Crab Cay, Three Brothers Cay, and a stretch of dry forest where Cock Spur and Papta palm predominate.



Be ready to visit "Crab Cay" during your vacations /Picture: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/lcrf/>

Crab Cay

This small magical islet, located in front of the Ganet Bay Coast, is a favorite tourist site. Surrounded by clear waters and a beautiful underwater seascape, it is an ideal location for snorkeling. A large crag at the top is easy to reach for a stunning view of the Caribbean Sea.

Touring the islands by land

To really get to know the island, it must be toured by land. That is the way to get to Fresh Water Bay, where visitors will find hotels, tourist cabins, restaurants, and a pier from which boats depart to take visitors to the third largest coral barrier in the world and the best-preserved in the Caribbean.

The customs and traditions of Providencia Island reflect a strong Afro-Caribbean influence.

South West Bay has the largest beaches on the island. Typical food and barbecues may be enjoyed on the beaches of Manjanell Bay (Manzanillo). For less rural activities, the Santa Isabel sector is the place to go to.

Lovers Bridge

Lovers Bridge, built over the Aury man-made canal, joins Old Providence to Santa Catalina. It is supported by fixed and floating rafts, and its structure rises at the center to allow the passage of small boats. From the bridge, the view of both islands is peaceful and comforting. The seven-colored sea, sunrises, sunsets, seagulls, and boats moored at the bay impart a magical atmosphere.

Ecological trails

For the time of your vacations, try to enjoy ecological trails. They provide visitors a close, magical, and unique encounter with the exuberant flora and fauna of the island. It is easy to spend a day interacting with nature. It is as simple as visiting the Manzanillo, Peak, San Felipe, or Santa Catalina trails, among others.



Horse races on a Providencia beach /Picture: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/anthroject/>

The Peak Forest Reserve

This is the highest point of the whole archipelago of San Andrés y Providencia, offering a spectacular, majestic view from 360 meters above the level of the sea. Hikers take three hours to get there, but it is also possible to ascend on horseback. Here are the sources of most of the drinking water that supplies the island. It is a place to rejoice with nature and replenish the spirit.

Fairs and feasts

The Folk, Culture, and Sports Festival of Old Providence island and the horse races and regattas begin in June. This is the time when the islanders show visitors the wealth of their music folklore, gastronomy, and friendliness. Other activities include are a beauty pageant, horse shows on the beach of Southwest Bay, and regattas where the island boatpeople show off their abilities competing in small sailboats.

If you are in Providencia Island, enjoy the following:

- [Providencia: Lovers Bridge Special](#)
- [Providencia: Parque Natural Old Providence](#)
- [Photo gallery of Providencia and Santa Catalina Islands](#)

Map of Providencia Island