The tourist attractions of *Huila* are spread in parallel to its geography. Located in the lowest part of Colombia's central area, this department is characterized by varied agricultural production and amazingly different landscapes that capture the attention of travelers, especially the Desert of *La Tatacoa* and the Colombian Massif, which are situated at opposite ends of the department.

A Party of Stars in the Desert

The Desert of *La Tatacoa* calls attention by its ochre and ash colored mazes.

{rokbox title=|Desert of La Tatacoa|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/huila/desierto-tatacoa.jpg{/rokbox}

Desert of *La Tatacoa*

Traveling from *Bogotá*, one of the first surprises along the road is the Desert of *La Tatacoa*. This 330 km² tropical dry forest, paradoxically, very near the Magdalena and Cabrera Rivers, where the erosion of hundreds of years created an ochre and ash-colored environment, attracts tourists with its forms and mazes.

The Desert of *La Tatacoa*, a fantastic place under which underground water flows, is located on land that tends to descend. Above it, a usually clear sky unfolds to facilitate study and contemplation from the Astronomical Observatory.

With the fascinating images of this arid zone in mind, the traveler continues his trip to *Neiva*, the capital of the department.

Neiva: A Warm, Happy City

{rokbox title=|Bambuco Festival in Neiva|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/huila/festival-del-bambuco.jpg{/rokbox}

*Bambuco*Festival in *Neiva*

This city, located at 442 meters above sea level, has an average temperature of 28ºC that seems to rise due to the warmth and hospitality of its people, especially at mid-year during the Folk Festival and National *Bambuco* Pageant. At this time, the rule is to welcome visitors with affection and kindness for them to fully enjoy one of the most authentic feasts in Colombia.

Neiva stands out for being a port on the *Magdalena* River and for the typical restaurants on the riverside.

Neiva stands out for being a port on the *Magdalena* River, as well as for the typical restaurants on the riverside, the *Isla del Mohán* Park, and the monument to *La Gaitana* - all close to the pier.

Continuing south, it is a good idea to bathe in the medicinal hot springs of the municipality of *Rivera* before going on to the towns where the best special coffee in *Colombia* is cultivated. So say expert international tasters who have savored and given their approval to the flavor of this beverage. *Palermo*, *Tello*, *Gigante*, *Garzón*, and *Isnos* are several of the locations where coffee fields burst forth this exclusive fruit.

{gallery}turistainternacional/Adondeir/huila/huila{/gallery}

Huila's Archaeological Treasure

{rokbox title=|San Agustín Archaeological Park|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/huila/san-agustin.jpg{/rokbox}

San Agustín Archaeological Park

In 1995, UNESCO declared *San Agustín* Archaeological Park a World Heritage Site. It is one of the most important symbols in the department thanks to the amazing works left by millenary, advanced cultures that inhabited the region before the Christian era. This majestic legacy is represented by collections of statues, stone reliefs, funerary mounds, cobblestone roads, embankments, and terraces.

Also part of the *San Agustín* treasure is *Alto de los Ídolos* Archaeological Park, in the municipality of *Isnos*. Standing out are the artificial funerary mounds joined by an embankment – an artificial road of sorts filled with soil. Huila's archaeological legacy is complemented by *La Chaquira*, *La Pelota*, and *Purutal* hills. In the first one, the carved stone figures located at the edge of the canyon of the *Magdalena* River are amazing. At *La Pelota*, figures with interesting details are found, the serpent and the eagle among them. In *Purutal*, the use of wild plants to color stone works is worth mentioning.

Towards the Water Factories

One of the sites that most appeals tourists is the Strait of the *Magdalena* River, where the river is only 2.20 meters wide.

The department of *Huila* is also an extensive region of natural and water resources that may be reached by horseback or hikes requiring a journey of several days. The main destination is the Colombian Massif, the huge area where the *Andes* Mountain Range splits into *Colombia*'s main mountain chains: Eastern, Western, and Central.

The Colombian Massif is a large area shared with the departments of *Cauca* and *Nariño* and is considered the country's most important source of water; the
Caquetá
,
Putumayo
,
Cauca
, and
Magdalena
Rivers originate there.

The *Cueva de los Guácharos* National Natural Park, one of the first natural areas to be declared (on November 9, 1960) worthy of protection, is located in the vicinity of the Colombian Massif. This 90 km² reserve preserves sub-Andean and Andean forests and paramos and owes its name to the *Guácharo*, a cave-dwelling, frugivorous bird.

Sites for Contemplation and Adventure

{rokbox title=|Huila Handicrafts|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/huila/artesanias-huila-ed.jpg{/rokbox}

Huila Handicrafts

Returning to the topic of the abundance of water in the Colombian Massif, it must be said that it is also the location of the Magdalena Lake, the place where the river by the same name and catalogued as the river of the fatherland is born. A few kilometers downstream is the *Magdalena* Strait, a beautiful landscape that reduces the width of the river to a mere 2.20 meters.

The force of the water that passes through the *Magdalena* Strait is used by rafters who like to challenge the river in its narrowest part and, further on, in places like the
Isnos
bridge and Versalles. And amid the bountiful water of southern
Huila
, there is also the imposing
Salto de Bordones
, a 400-meter waterfall that does not cease to astonish travelers.

In every direction, the department of *Huila* offers the most appealing reasons to tour it meter by meter and reap the benefits of a spectacular, generous nature.

Did you like *Huila* as a destination? We invite you to keep browsing through:

- *Bambuco* Festival Photo Gallery
- *San Agustín* Archaeological Park
- *La Tatacoa* Desert
- *Bambuco* National Folk Festival
- Adventure and Extreme Sport