

## Vacations in the sea of seven colors



{rokbox title=|The Baptist Church on San Andres Island/Photo Carlos Sueskún.}|images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/sanandres/ampliacion/sanandres-iglesia bautista1.jpg{/rokbox}

The Baptist Church on San Andrés /Photo Carlos Sueskún.

[San Andres](#) is 700 km from the Colombian mainland, a miniature paradise with influences from England and Spain, pirates and corsairs, blended into a rich culture which moves to the beat of reggae. Perfect beaches, excellent water-sports, diving and ecotourism.

Your first glimpse of [San Andres island](#) is the sea of seven colors, home to many-hued fish and coral, working their magic on the visitor. After an afternoon on the beach or shopping duty-free, night falls and the air is alive with music and dancing.

## An island overflowing with culture



{rokbox title=|Local fisherman, San Andrés /Photo Carlos Sueskún.}|images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/sanandres/ampliacion/sanandres-pescador.jpg{/rokbox}

Local fisherman, San Andrés /Photo Carlos Sueskún.

No-one knows exactly when the Dutch settlers arrived to set up their faros, but they were soon followed by the English and the Irish; and then came the fight with the Spaniards to keep possession of the island. But despite the comings and goings of the pirate Sir Henry Morgan between here and Jamaica, something of the Dutch culture remained in [San Andres](#) .

Then the African slaves, European settlers and Spanish colonists passed through, each leaving

behind a few seeds of their wisdom, not to mention aromatic plants and some traces of their favorite foods, which have now come together to form part of one of Colombia's richest culture: the native or raizal tradition.

San Andres has Dutch, Spanish, English and African influences: a truly multicultural island!

It's another language, another very special way of looking at life, something that has the most profound effect on the visitor – something really different. The people there speak to each other in creole, a mixture of 17th century English, Spanish and African dialects. They also speak modern English and Spanish – very useful for the visitors! This blend of cultures had a very special effect on their music, which happily combines reggae, reggaeton, raga, soca, calypso, merengue, vallenato and salsa. All kinds of music, for all kinds of dance.

As part of their dedication to the island culture, some ecotourism parks have been created, such as Granja de Job Saas and West View, where the guides will tell you not only about the natural features to be seen there but also about the values and customs they preserve. This is also where you can buy craftwork made from [coconut](#) wood and totumo, which are typical of the island.

### Johnny Cay: peace and quiet on the beach



{rokbox title=|Beaches on Johnny Cay, San Andrés /Photo Carlos Sueskún.}|images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/sanandres/ampliacion/sanandres-johnny cay.jpg{/rokbox}

Beaches on Johnny Cay, San Andrés /Photo Carlos Sueskún.

A quarter of an hour by launch from [San Andres](#) is the tiny island famous for its beaches and Coco Locos: Johnny Cay. White sand embraces the green shade of the palms. Fried mojarra fish with plantains Delicious cocktails.

Johnny Cay is a destination of sun, sand; and for being caught up by the beat of the island music.

The beach is perfect for walking too – you can go all round the island. In some places there are exotic coral formations with pools that reflect and merge with the deep, blue of the sky.

The soundtrack to all this is reggae and the colors are those of the rastafarians. Johnny Cay is an invitation to join in the beat with the islanders who attend to their visitors with a smile on their faces and a joke on their lips. And the palm leaves provide more than shade: before your eyes the local people make them into hats, baskets and any number of woven objects.

## **Were you enchanted by San Andrés? Why not read about...**

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- Crafts in San Andrés: [Crafts and coconuts](#)
- [Diving in San Andres](#)
- San Andrés: [Sun and sand](#)

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