The city was considered a jewel of the Spanish colony.

The historic center is the old city, protected by eleven kilometers of walls, several forts and the castle of San Felipe de Barajas, the most important military construction in colonial America.

It is possible to tour the city without following a predetermined route. Visitors can allow themselves to be carried away by the beauty of the colonial streets that are the city's best heritage.

Due to the traffic of goods, gold, and slaves, it was one of the most important Spanish ports in America.

However, several sites deserve to be mentioned visited: the cathedral; the Palacio de la Inquisición, the San Pedro Claver church and convent; the house of the Marqués de Valdehoyos; the temples of Santo Domingo and San Agustín; the Plaza de la Aduana; the San Diego and La Merced parks; the convent of Santa Clara, recently converted into a luxury hotel; the seats of the Chamber of Commerce and the Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje; old aristocratic mansions, the Heredia theater; and the house of Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez.

The tour through the historic center can be combined with a trip to the hill of La Popa, a magnificent observation point that overlooks the bay and is the site of one of the oldest and most beautiful monasteries in the whole country. It can also be combined with a trip to Manga, a traditional neighborhood with curious houses and gardens from the first half of the twentieth century, built in a profusion of styles.