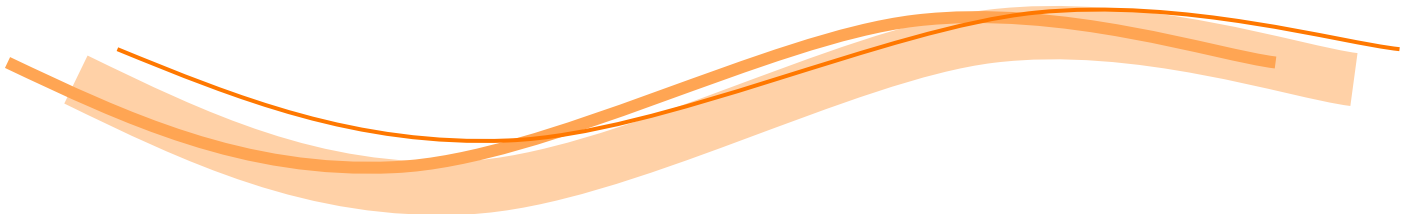




**CARTAGENA &
SAN ANDRES
COLOMBIA
with NOLITOURS**





COLOMBIA – CARTAGENA & SAN ANDRES

Colombia is bursting onto the Tourism scene with its rich heritage, undiscovered Caribbean coastline and perfect weather way south of the hurricane belt.

The magnificent destination of **Cartagena** in Colombia is a UNESCO World Heritage Site – and Cartagena promises an extraordinary vacation. The colonial city within stone fortifications offers historical treasures. And there are modern, luxurious hotels, beautiful beaches, diverse restaurants, exciting excursions and a vibrant nightlife.

The city was one of the first sanctuaries of freed African slaves in the Americas and is currently populated by an ethnic mix representative of Colombia's own variety. Cartagena is located on Colombia's northern coast, facing the Caribbean Sea. Nearby coral reefs, powdery beaches, impressive mangroves, and waterways complement the historic and urban beauty.

The Colombian **Island of San Andres** is a miniature paradise in the southernmost Caribbean. Perfect beaches, warm waters that are home to many fish and coral, excellent water-sports, diving and ecotourism await you by day - and music and dancing by night. Nolitours flies direct to San Andres Island from Montreal in the winter. (see special section later in these notes for more on San Andres)

Nolitours also flies directly to Cartagena, offering all inclusive packages as well as a number of spectacular excursions from Cartagena:

Cartagena City Tour: visit fascinating sights such as the La Popa Convent, San Felipe Castle (a fortress built in 1657 by the Spanish for protection against pirates while shipping gold out to Europe) and Los Zapatos Viejos (a massive sculpture of an old pair of shoes - created by Hector Lombana in memory of a local poet).

Cartagena's 500-hundred year-old coralstone forts and great parts of its walled city are admirably intact and represent some of the finest examples of civil and military architecture of the Spanish colonial times.

Santa Marta City Tour: visit the oldest city and South America and Simon Bolivar's last home amongst other sights. Stroll through "America's Pearl" Bay and finish up with a visit to the Decameron Galeon Hotel for lunch and the opportunity to swim in the ocean or pool.

Rosario Islands: Tour a spectacular coral reef and bathe in a the turquoise sea as you visit these beautiful islands. Also experience a

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	<p>dolphin show.</p> <p>Snorkelling Tour: Admire the exotic marine life off the beaches of Baru and Rosario Islands.</p> <p>Dolphinarium and Eco Tour: Head to Isla Palma with white sand beaches, surrounded by coral reefs. Swim in crystal clear waters, explore the mangroves and enjoy a spectacular dolphin show.</p> <p>Archeological and Cultural Adventure: Travel to the town of San Juan Nepomuceno. Then stop at the handicraft centre at San Jacinto. Visit the Ethnic Archeological Museum and attend a regional folk dance show</p>
Location	Cartagena is positioned on the northern Caribbean coast of Colombia. Colombia itself is situated in South America, and bordered to the north by the Caribbean Sea; Panamá and the Pacific Ocean are to the west, Brazil and Venezuela to the east, and Peru and Ecuador to the south.
Geography	<p>You'll probably be spending most of your time in the small historic Old Town, where most tourist sites are located, or at the city's beaches. The modern part of the city has a Miami-style resort feel and consists of Bocagrande, El Laguito, and Castillo Grande. This is where you'll find modern high-rises, all inclusive resorts, many of the city's top-notch hotels, and some of Cartagena's better beaches. The outer walled city consists of the Getsemaní neighborhood, a poorer, less glamorous version of the inner walled city. However, this is rapidly up-and-coming. The exclusive neighborhood of Manga, about a 5-minute taxi ride from the Old Town, is home to Cartagena's yacht club.</p> <p>The best way to explore the picturesque inner walled Old Town is on foot. You can stop and take in Cartagena's imposing churches, people-watch in its many plazas, and enjoy a bit of shopping.</p>
Name	<p>The Spanish colonial city was founded on June 1, 1533 and named after Cartagena in Spain.</p> <p>The country name "Colombia" comes from Christopher Columbus.</p>
Population	The city had a population of nearly 900,000 in the last census, making it the fifth-largest city in Colombia.
Language	Spanish, although much English is spoken in the resort areas.
Currency	<p>The Colombian peso (COL\$) is the official currency. Money is denominated in notes of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, and 50,000, and coins of 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 pesos.</p> <p>Currently, the exchange rate is COL\$1,830 to \$1 as at 5th October 2013.</p> <p>Unlike in other Latin-American countries, the U.S. dollar is not widely accepted in Colombia, except in a few super-high-end establishments. You can convert your currency in upscale hotels, at casas de cambio</p>

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	(money-exchange houses), at most banks, and at the airport. Credit cards , particularly Visa and MasterCard, are generally accepted in midrange and upscale shops, as well as at upscale restaurants and hotels around the country. In rural areas and small towns, you are unlikely to find establishments that accept credit cards.
Tipping	In midrange and expensive restaurants, there is usually a 10% tip included in the bill. It's not common to tip in budget restaurants or in taxis, so there's no need to do so unless you're feeling generous.
Government	Presidential republic.
Documentation	Currently a Passport but no visa is required for Canadians – but always check with your travel agent ahead of travel.
Time zone	EST: Colombia is on the same time zone as Ontario and Quebec, being almost directly due south.
Health	There are good health facilities in Cartagena. As South America is a more exotic destination, I recommend that travellers consult with their family doctor with regard to the possible need for inoculations such as yellow fever or anti-malarial pills, though no vaccines are required to enter Colombia.
Safety tips	There's no doubt that Colombia has had safety issues in the past – however, this has really applied to other parts of this large country and anyway the security issues have been largely dealt with by the present government. No place of course is entirely free of crime, so you should always take sensible precautions. The fact that a major tour company like Transat and Nolitours is sending charter planes into the destination – and that 300,000 cruise-liner passengers a year now visit Cartagena – tells you that you need have no additional safety concerns in planning a trip to Cartagena and this part of South America.

CLIMATE	
General climate	Cartagena has a pleasantly warm climate, temperature average 28°C to 30°C throughout most of the year.
Today's weather	Today, October 5 th 2013, the temperature is 31C with a sun and showers mix.
Best time to visit	Winter is the best time for Canadians to visit – the winter weather is idyllic in Cartagena and there are direct charter flights from Toronto to Cartagena.

GETTING AROUND	
Getting There	Nolitours features weekly flights with Transat this winter to Colombia: Thursday departures from Toronto direct to Cartagena from December 19th 2013 to April 3rd 2014 Friday departures from Montreal to Cartagena from November 15th 2013 to March 28th 2014

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	<p>Monday departures from Montreal to San Andres Island from December 23rd 2013 to April 7th 2014</p> <p>Flight time is 5.5 hours to Cartagena and 4.25 hours to San Andres</p> <p>Cartagena's Rafael Núñez Airport is about 3km from the historic Old Town of Cartagena.</p>
Cities	<p>Apart from Cartagena which is explored in more depth in these notes, Colombia has many other cities worthy of exploring:</p> <p>The capital, Santafé de Bogotá, is a unique, modern and thoroughly charming city. Everywhere you look different panoramas unfold within its colourful, mountainous setting.</p> <p>One of the oldest cities in Colombia, Santa Marta, lies in the midst of a singular landscape, facing a heavenly bay on the Caribbean coast. This congenial little city can easily be toured on foot, and its main centres of interest adjoin the beach.</p> <p>Nicknamed the "city of eternal spring," Medellín is the birthplace of world-renowned painter Fernando Botero. It is also Colombia's principal cultural centre, where art galleries can be found in all the big hotels.</p> <p>Middle-class and a bit straight-laced, Pereira stands out for its monuments, murals, parks, and streets. The public scribes on the sidewalk with their typewriters also add a quaint touch to the city. For only a few pesos, they will pen love letters or formal requests, as the case may be.</p> <p>Santiago de Cali, stretches languorously between the wide-open arms of the two cordilleras, and basks in an enviably sunny climate. It is nicknamed the "city of women" because of its many beautiful women. This city features enchanting colonial buildings, long shady avenues and patios overflowing with flowers.</p> <p>With its charming atmosphere, Popayán is one of the country's older cities that is most typically Colombian. The downtown area is a veritable history book; all its buildings are like works of art in an outdoor exhibition. The churches, hotels and residences are lovingly polished gems. San Agustín, located 110 km from Popayán, is undoubtedly the most fascinating archeological site in South America.</p>
Distances	<p>Cartagena is 473km NW of Medellín and 658km NW of Bogotá, Colombia's capital city.</p>
Ferries	<p>There are boats for the offshore islands and for trips along the coast. There's even a hovercraft service to Isla Baru which is exciting if a little expensive at \$60.</p>

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Trains	There is no train service operating here.
Car Rental	Budget, Hertz and National are represented in the city, but car rental is not recommended for any but the bravest visitors!
Buses	To reach destinations outside of the Old Town such as the San Felipe fort, there are many buses running all over the city. Ask the driver or other people who are waiting which bus goes to your destination. Chiva Bus is a must do fun activity in Cartagena. These are open air, colorful buses going through the city loaded with people having fun, drinking and enjoying the loud beat of local music. A good activity for couples, families or groups. There are various pickup locations at mostly tourist hotels.

ACCOMMODATION TYPES	There's a wide range of accommodation options here from all inclusive beach resorts to small hostels in the Old Town. See the prize hotel description later in these notes for a recommended example of the former.
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LIFESTYLES	
Kids	The beach activities and boat trips to the islands should keep the youngsters happy. Many of the all inclusive resorts also feature Kids Clubs and babysitting.
Teens	Active teens will love this destination. From snorkeling and diving to windsurfing and bargaining for souvenirs. And then there are the best forts on the Spanish Main to explore!
Romance	Cartagena, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the Venice of Colombia and the country's most romantic city, with one of the most impressive old towns in the Western Hemisphere. With just the right mix of sun, sand, and colonial charm, it's likely to be the highlight of your trip.
Honeymoons & Weddings	Cartagena is Colombia's top honeymoon destination and is full of romance, five-star hotels, and excellent dining options. For a ride in a horse-drawn carriage, ask as a hotel or at a carriage-station - there are several in the historic centre. The service is available by day or night inside and outside the old city.
Seniors	Seniors will relish the upscale resorts that are comfortable bases from which to explore one of the most fascinating cities on the continent. There are plenty of excursions available that make seeing the sights a breeze.

UNIQUES	Cartagena has more nicknames than any other city I know! The Heroic City The Door of the Americas Capital of the Caribbean The Mother City
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	<p>The Walled City The Key of the West Indies The Fort of the Kingdom Best Fortified City of the Americas</p>
Surprising	<p>Colombia is the only South American country to have coastlines on both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean.</p>
History	<p>Cartagena was founded on June 1, 1533 by Spanish commander Pedro de Heredia, in the former location of the indigenous Caribbean Calamarí village. The town was named after Cartagena, Spain, where most of Heredia's sailors had resided.</p> <p>Initially, the city had fewer than 2000 inhabitants and only one church. The dramatically increasing fame and wealth of the prosperous city turned it into an attractive plunder site for pirates and corsairs – French privateers licensed by their king. 30 years after its founding, the city was pillaged by the French nobleman Jean-François Roberval. The city set about strengthening its defences and surrounding itself with walled compounds and castles. Martin Cote, a Basque from Biscay, attacked years later. A few months after the disaster of the invasion of Cote, a fire destroyed the city and forced the creation of a firefighting squad, the first in the Americas.</p> <p>Many pirates planned to attack Cartagena, which became more and more interesting to them. In 1568, Sir John Hawkins of England tried to trick Gov. Martín de las Alas to go against Spanish law and open a foreign fair in the city to sell goods, planning to ravage the port afterwards. The governor declined, and Hawkins besieged the city, but failed to reduce it.</p> <p>In 1586, Sir Francis Drake, a nephew of Hawkins, came with a strong fleet and quickly took the city. The governor, Pedro Fernández de Busto, fled with the Archbishop to the neighboring town of Turbaco, and from there negotiated the costly ransom for the city: 107,000 Spanish Eight Reales of the time, or around 200 million in today's US dollars. Drake had destroyed one-quarter of the city, the developing Palace of the Township, and the recently finished cathedral.</p> <p>After this disaster, Spain poured millions every year into the city for its protection, beginning with Gov. Francisco de Murga's planning of the walls and forts; this practice was called Situado. The magnitude of this subsidy is shown by comparison: between 1751 and 1810, the city received the sum of 20,912,677 Spanish reales, the equivalent of some 2 trillion dollars today. The city recovered quickly from the attack and occupation by Drake and kept growing, and continued to attract attention from its opponents.</p> <p>The Raid on Cartagena in 1697 by Sir Bernard Desjean, Baron de Pointis and Jean Baptiste Ducasse was an all-out invasion that was politically motivated. Absent a male successor to the Spanish Habsburg</p>

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throne, King Louis XIV wanted his grandson Felipe V to assert the right of succession, and the taking of Cartagena de Indias could help significantly. The political purpose behind the invasion was somewhat undermined by Ducasse, the governor of Saint-Domingue – today's Haiti – who brought his soldiers with a plan to steal, but ended with pirates and thieves destroying the city. Entry to the city was not easy because of the recently finished first stage of walls and forts, which slowed the invasion and made it costly. While Desjean only asked for 250,000 Spanish reales in ransom, Ducasse stayed a few months and dishonored the baron's promise to respect the churches and holy places. He left the inhabitants with nothing.

During the 17th century, the Spanish Crown paid for the services of prominent European military engineers to construct fortresses. Today these are Cartagena's most significant identifiable features.

Engineering works took well over 208 years and ended with some eleven kilometres of walls surrounding the city, including the Castillo San Felipe de Barajas, named in honor of Spain's King Philip IV. It was built during the governorship of Pedro Zapata de Mendoza, Marquis of Barajas and was constructed to repel land attacks. It is equipped with sentry boxes, has buildings for food and weapons storage, and contains underground tunnels connecting the fortifications.

When the defenses were finished in 1756, the city was considered impregnable. Legend has it that Charles III of Spain, while reviewing in Madrid the Spanish defense expenditures for Havana and Cartagena de Indias, looked through his spyglass and remarked, "This is outrageous! For this price those castles should be seen from here!" Cartagena was a major trading port, especially for precious metals. Gold and silver from the mines in the New Granada and Peru were loaded in Cartagena on the galleons bound for Spain via Havana. Cartagena was also a slave port; Cartagena and Veracruz, (Mexico), were the only cities authorized to trade African slaves. The first slaves were transported by Pedro de Heredia and were used as cane cutters to open roads, as laborers to destroy the tombs of the aboriginal population of Sinú, and to construct buildings and fortresses. The agents of the Portuguese company Cacheu sold slaves from Cartagena for working in mines in Venezuela, the West Indies, the Nuevo Reino de Granada and the Viceroyalty of Perú.

On February 5, 1610, the Catholic Monarchs established the **Inquisition** Holy Office Court in Cartagena de Indias by a royal decree issued by King Philip II. With Lima and Peru, it was one of the three seats of the Inquisition in the Americas. The Inquisition Palace, finished in 1770, preserves its original features of colonial times. When Cartagena declared its complete independence from Spain on November 11, 1811, the inquisitors were urged to leave the city. The

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	Inquisition operated again after the Reconquest in 1815, but it disappeared entirely when Spain surrendered six years later to the troops led by Simón Bolívar, the Liberator of South America.
Books	Frommer's South America South American Handbook – Ben Box Andes – Michael Jacobs: a new travelogue which includes a passage on Cartagena and is reviewed at http://www.pinterest.com/pin/228768856041917440/
1000 Places to See Before You Die	Cartagena has its own entry in this book, where the Ciudad Vieja, or Old Town, is described as “an open-air living museum”. It's one of just two entries for Colombia, the other being the spectacular Gold Museum in Bogota .
Must Sees	In 1984, Cartagena's colonial walled city and fortress were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. La Popa , Cartagena's highest point, is where you'll find the convent of Nuestra Señora de La Candelaria. El Castillo de San Felipe de Borajas is another Cartagena must-see, and one of the military wonders of the world. The castle/fort was built (1536-1657) to protect the city from attack. Be sure to check out its dark underground tunnels and peek through its many lookouts.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES	
Golf	The exclusive golf course Karibana has one of the best 18-hole golf courses in the country and is situated close to the major resorts in Cartagena.
Fishing	Fishing is available from numerous operators and is excellent, both in the Caribbean and in the swamps along the coast.
Horse riding	Horseback riding is available through many of the resorts.
Hiking	Long walks along the beach to the many fishing villages are possible and exploring the Old Town of Cartagena is best done by foot.
Cycling	Colombia has a strong biking community and bike rentals are possible from several locations.
Diving	This is an excellent location at which to learn to dive or if you are already qualified, to enjoy spectacular dives off some the nearby Caribbean islands. Nolitours offers an excursion that is great for first time divers.

CULTURE	
Arts	Cartagena is the Arts Capital of Colombia as the various arts festivals noted below attest. The Modern Art Gallery is the best in the country.
Music	The cumbia is the traditional Colombian musical genre best known in

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	<p>the world. Its origins date back to Guinean dances. It emerged from musical and cultural syncretism between Indians, Africans and Europeans in the Magdalena delta region.</p> <p>Cumbia combines their contributions. It is performed in groups by couples who dance in a circle to the beat of the drums and gaita music and hold a lit candle in their hands.</p> <p>Nowadays, vallenato and national pop music are the stars of the world's musical scene. Colombian music is an always-reinventing melting pot of tendencies and rhythms.</p> <p>Cartagena International Music Festival.</p> <p>World-renowned musicians and orchestras flock to crumbling, colonial Cartagena on Colombia's Caribbean coast for the Cartagena International Music Festival each January. The Adolfo Mejía Theatre, Plaza San Pedro Claver and Plaza de la Trinidad are just some of the concert venues.</p> <p>Organised by the Victor Salvi Foundation, run by the harpist Victor Salvi and his Colombian wife, the festival has filled some of Cartagena's most historic venues since it began in 2007.</p>
Films	<p>Cartagena de Indias International Film Festival</p> <p>Feb – March</p> <p>Catch films from Colombia, Latin America and across the world at the annual Cartagena de Indias International Film Festival. Heredia Theatre and the Naval Museum are among the venues and open-air screenings take place in the old city too.</p> <p>Gabriel García Marquez's novel Love in the Time of Cholera although set in an unnamed city, is obviously in Cartagena. The 2007 film movie of the novel was filmed in Cartagena.</p>
Museums	<p>Cartagena is a city full of history, which can be visited at the Palacio de la Inquisición (Palace of Inquisition), where the Spanish Inquisition tortured, judged and convicted men accused of crimes against religion. It is situated in 'Plaza de Bolivar', in the historic centre.</p> <p>There's also the Gold Museum, the Naval Museum and the Modern Art Museum.</p>
Festivals	<p>Hay Festival Cartagena</p> <p>January</p> <p>Latin American and global literati swarm the magical, crumbling old town and modern part of Colombia's colonial coastal city during the Hay Festival Cartagena. The Colombian branch of the famous literary festival hosts talks and readings with authors and poets.</p> <p>Head to Plaza Santo Domingo, Casa Mapfre, Adolfo Mejía Theatre and other city venues for daily scintillating talks, discussions and readings on a range of subjects that are translated where necessary for both an</p>

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	<p>English- and Spanish-speaking audience.</p> <p>There are also film screenings and music concerts in the evenings and art and photography and science exhibitions in Cartagena History Museum, Cartagena Museum of Fine Arts and other cultural spaces. Look out for events with major world-renowned authors, like Mario Vargas Llosa, Ian McEwan and Michael Ondaatje.</p> <p>The Hay Festivalito spreads the buzz of the large festival to nearby towns and communities - El Pozón, Membrillal, La Boquilla, Las Palmeras and Boston - and lays on free talks and workshops with top writers and musicians for children and teenagers.</p>
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ATTRACTIONS	<p>About 16 km north of Cartagena is the Volcán del Totumo, a 15m high mud volcano. You can enter the crater and take a mud bath (entrance C\$2.000), which is enormous fun and highly recommended. The nearby laguna then serves as a natural bath for washing off the mud.</p>
Beaches	<p>If you don't have time to head to Las Islas del Rosario, visit Cartagena's main beaches: Bocagrande, El Laguito, and Castillo Grande, in the south, and, in the north, La Boquilla and Marbella.</p> <p>Playa Blanca is widely regarded as the best beach of Cartagena, but is not that easy to reach. With its white sand and crystal clear water it is probably one of the best beaches in Colombia.</p>
Parks	<p>Las Islas del Rosario, a national park popular with tourists, is famous for its coral reefs, crystalline waters, and beautiful beaches. The islands are about 45km from the city and can only be reached by boat. You can arrange a trip to Las Islas del Rosario through your hotel or by heading to the Muelle Turístico, where you can buy tickets directly. Your hotel will also be able to arrange tours directly. Boat trips generally cost between COL\$35,000 and COL\$60,000, though you will also have to pay a national park tax of COL\$9,400.</p> <p>Your boat will most likely take you to the Acuario San Martín on the Isla San Martín de Pajarales, where you can enjoy a dolphin show and observe other marine animals. Another choice on Isla San Martín de Pajarales is to go snorkeling. The island has excellent coral reefs, and if you've already seen your share of aquariums and dolphin shows, go for the snorkeling.</p> <p>After visiting the aquarium, most boats will head to Isla de Barú, where you'll have a typical Cartagena-Caribbean lunch, complete with coconut rice, fried plantains, and a whole fish (eyes and all). Your tour will give you about 3 hours on Barú, where you can go swimming, sunbathe, or explore the island.</p>
Gardens	<p>Botanical gardens Jardin Botanico de Guillermo Piñeres</p> <p>A pleasant escape from the city rush, 18 km out of Cartagena close to "Turbaco", a small town 20 km from the centre of Cartagena. Take a bus to the bus terminal and get off at "la Bomba de Amparo", a big</p>

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	gasolin station 25 minutes out of the centre. Together with your entry ticket you get leaflet which lists about 250 plants identified in the gardens, including some varieties of coca plants.
Historical Sites	<p>Enter the city through the historic Torre del Reloj, one of Cartagena's most recognized architectural sites. From there, you'll find yourself in the Plaza de los Coches, where you can buy traditional Colombian and Cartagenian candy and sweets at the Portal de Los Dulces. Next head down Calle de la Amargura, past La Plaza de La Aduana (stop here if you're looking for tourist information), to La Plaza de San Pedro, where you can visit the Iglesia/Claustro/Museo San Pedro Claver, constructed in 1580, as well as the Museo de Arte Moderno, a decent modern-art museum right off the square. Walk down Calle San Juan de Dios to the Cartagena Naval Museum, where you can take in antique naval instruments and objects. Walk past La Plaza de Santa Teresa, up Calle de A. Ricaurte (which becomes Calle Santa Teresa) to Plaza de Bolívar, where you can visit the free Museo del Oro as well as the Palacio de La Inquisición and La Biblioteca Bartolomé Calvo, once Cartagena's most important libraries. Be sure not to miss Cartagena's much photographed Catedral, built in 1586, destroyed by English pirate Francis Drake, and recently remodeled and opened to the public. Now walk up Calle Nuestra Señora del Carmen before arriving at the Plaza de Santo Domingo, one of Cartagena's most popular and vibrant plazas. Be sure to visit the Iglesia/Claustro Santo Domingo, a lovely 450-year-old church. Take a break at Plaza Santo Domingo for a light lunch or snack at one of the plaza's many outdoor cafes, where you can enjoy the colonial atmosphere.</p> <p>With your energy restored, head north on Calle de la Iglesia (which becomes Calle de Don Sancocho), past El Teatro de Heredia and La Plaza del Merced, and turn right on Calle de la Merced (which becomes Calle Del Estanco del Aguardiente and Calle del Sargento Mayor). Next turn left on Calle Chochera del Hobo, where you'll find La Plaza de San Diego, with its many stores, restaurants, and the famous Hotel Santa Clara. A short walk up the Calle de las Bóvedas will take you to Las Bóvedas, a former jail, used during the independence period that has been converted into 23 souvenir shops</p>

OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Shopping	<p>If you are looking for handicrafts, head to Las Bóvedas - former jail cells turned souvenir shops. In the historic centre are also plenty of high-end boutique shops selling Colombian designer clothing, leather goods, and emeralds. For discount shopping, head to Getsemaní, where you can buy cheap clothing, shoes, and just about anything else you can imagine.</p> <p>Emeralds are of course Colombia's most famous buy - and are</p>

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	available for sale all over Cartagena, including polished and uncut loose emeralds and beautiful jewelry. The prices are extremely reasonable and the variety available is extensive in the old walled city. The stores that sell emeralds and emerald jewelry use various names such as "Taller y Fabrica de Joyas" (workshop and manufacturer of jewelry), "Museo de Artesanias y Esmeraldas" (museum of crafts and emeralds) or simply "Joyeria" (jewelry).
Markets	Bazurto Market in Cartagena is a fun place to lose yourself among the colours and scents of this bustling local market full of produce from the surrounding tropical farms.
Nightlife	<p>Half the reason Cartagena is Colombia's top tourist destination is because of its vibrant nightlife. Cartagena's party scene is well developed with something for everyone - whether you want to sip cocktails on the beach, salsa dance Caribbean-style, or jam to '80s rock. Much of the nightlife is centred on Calle del Arsenal, in the Getsemaní neighbourhood, though there are also several party options in the inner walled city.</p> <p>Mr. Babilla, Calle Arsenal no. 9B-137, plays crossover music and is by far Cartagena's most famous nightclub. The eclectic decorations, tasty cocktails, and party-hard atmosphere bring in Colombia's cream of the crop and a large foreign clientele. La Carbonera, Av. del Arsenal no. 9A-47, another popular nightclub in the Getsemaní neighborhood, plays a little bit of everything.</p> <p>Café Havana, Calle Media Luna and Calle del Guerrero, in the Getsemaní neighborhood, is dedicated to Cuban music. This place also offers decent sandwiches and light fare, and it's one of the more atmospheric places in town. There is often live music and the clientele tends to be foreigners.</p>

CUISINE	
Food	<p>The kitchens of the Colombian Caribbean blend many intense flavours from the wide variety of produce in the fertile soils of the region, in combination with poultry, red meat and river-fresh and salt-water fish and seafood.</p> <p>Cartagena's cooks naturally start by using local techniques of fried dishes with rice, soups and dressings; but they also adopt things from other climes around the world, such as meat cooked over a low fire, with vegetables, all with delicious and distinctive sauces and strong flavours. One of the best traditions of Cartagena's cooking is arroz con carne en tabaquito. It is made from diced salted meta with a dressing, mixed in with rice to form a delightful savory dish with a distinctive aroma. You will find almost everything in the Colombia Caribbean kitchen, with every shade of taste and flavour.</p>

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Drink	<p>Coffee is of course the most famous drink produced in the country. Until you have tasted Colombian coffee made fresh in Colombia, you have not truly tasted coffee at all. It is one of the highlights of any visit to the country. On a personal note, I did not like and therefore did not drink coffee at all at the time of my first visit to Colombia. I have drunk coffee ever since...in part trying to recapture that wonderful aroma and taste of true Colombian coffee!</p> <p>You must try the local juices which are made from tropical fruit, such as the mamón and the corozo, when in season. Other flavors include water-melon, mango, tamarind, carambolo, peaches and plums.</p>
Restaurants	<p>La Cocina de Pepina is a typical Colombian-Caribbean restaurant in the Getsemaní district. It is an attempt to recreate the tastes of a region known as “Bolívar Grande”, now the Departments of Córdoba, Sucre and Bolívar. Plantain, yucca, yams and marrows come from the smallholdings that supply the restaurant. The dishes of “Pepina” evoke the age-old customs of the lands around the Caribbean, some drawn from the times when foods were preserved by sun and salt, such as the salazones.</p> <p>They also serve dishes based on beef, pork or chicken, placed in the sun with salt and spices. Then they are cooked with steamed vegetables and served with yucca, yams or plantains. And since they are not served with soups or rice, they are called “viudas” (“widows”).</p>

MORE INFO	
Brochures	Pick up the Nolitours Sun 2013-2014 brochure from your local travel agent.
Website	www.nolitours.com for packages to Cartagena and San Andres from

AIRLINE PRIZE PARTNER	Transat
Flight details	<p>Thursday departures from Toronto direct to Cartagena from December 19th 2013 to April 3rd 2014</p> <p>Friday departures from Montreal to Cartagena from November 15th 2013 to March 28th 2014</p> <p>Monday departures from Montreal to San Andres Island from December 23rd 2013 to April 7th 2014</p> <p>Flight time is 5.5 hours to Cartagena and 4.25 hours to San Andres</p>

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES	I have been fortunate enough to travel throughout Colombia, from the Venezuela border to the Ecuador border on two occasions.
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SPECIAL FEATURE: SAN ANDRES ISLAND	<p>Vacation in the “sea of seven colours”</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Your first glimpse of San Andres island is the sea of seven colours, 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Geography	San Andrés is the largest of the island group in the Department of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina – a part of

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	<p>Colombia. San Andrés is located in the Caribbean Sea, about 230 km from the coast of Nicaragua and north-eastern Costa Rica, and 750 km northwest of the coast of Colombia.</p> <p>The island is 12.5 km in length and 3 km in width. It has an area of 26 km² within the total area of the group of islands of 45 square kilometres making it the largest island in the archipelago.</p> <p>San Andrés is crossed from south to north by a small mountain range whose highest peak is Cerro La Loma, also known as El Cliff. San Andrés' soils indicate that their formation is due to the eruption of a volcano which threw rocks older than the seafloor to the surface, creating the islands. Despite this, there is fertile soil and the soil is mostly red clay. It is easy to find small deposits of quartz on the island, especially in the neighborhood of Loma Cove. Aside from the main settlements, the island is almost entirely covered in grass, trees and other vegetation, as well as sand along the coastline rather than rocks. The central area is marked by a chain of hills (Flowers, Orange, Shingle and Lion's Hill). The island has only small, ephemeral streams draining the land area, but no major rivers.</p> <p>On the southwest coast of the island are some features, namely (from north to south) Bobby Rock, Boobie Rock, Fisher Rock and Tyler Rock. A feature named Rock Point is located on the southeastern coast. Suky Bay lies in the central western part of the island near Cove Sea Side. The northern part of the island has a beach, while the western part of the island has no beaches.</p>
Attractions	<p>Activities include a visit to San Luis, a small stretch of white sand; a tour of the island; the aquarium; Johnny Cay; the Blowing Hole; and Big Pond, a lake at the top of the island. At La Loma, visit the oldest Baptist Church in America. Enjoy partying to the rhythms of Caribbean music and savoring a typical dish at Fisherman's Place.</p>
Johnny Cay	<p>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.</p> <p>Johnny Cay is a destination of sun, sand; and for being caught up by the beat of the island music.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The soundtrack to all this is reggae and the colours 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 the make them into hats, baskets and any number of woven objects.</p>

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Beaches	<p>The beaches of San Andres are bathed by a seven-colour sea made placid and safe by coral barriers.</p> <p>The following are worth mentioning:</p> <p>Bahía Sardina (Spratt Bight) located in the northern part of the island, near the main hotel and tourist sector. It is a city beach with white sand shaded by palms and a nice view of the Johnny Cay Island.</p> <p>San Luis Beach is located only ten minutes by car or bus from downtown San Andres. This is an option for resting on a beach with a more isolated and tranquil atmosphere.</p>
Coconut Handicrafts	<p>In the year 1853, following several social and economic upheavals, the cultivation of coconut palms displaced the cultivation of cotton in the Archipelago of San Andrés. From then on, the islands began to smell and taste of coconut.</p> <p>Not only did coconuts become the main characters in the gastronomy of the islands; they also became the basic material for the handicrafts of the region.</p> <p>The shell of the coconut is the part most used for handicrafts. These are primarily bowls, sauceboats, spoons, necklaces, earrings, bracelets, barrettes, card holders, belts, dishes, coasters, cups, sugar bowls, and lamps.</p> <p>But for the shell to become a product, some preparation is necessary. The shells must be soaked in water for ten to fifteen minutes or until they have absorbed the maximum amount of water. Then, the outside of the shell is scraped and cleaned with a knife or a spoon. Later, the shell is sanded until its surface becomes absolutely smooth and shiny.</p> <p>When the shell is ready, the desired shapes, previously cut out from cardboard, are outlined on it. Finally, the shell is cut and the assembly of the handicraft begins.</p> <p>The inhabitants of San Andrés are so skillful they seem to make use of magic use in manufacturing their products. Not only do they surprise everyone with new designs every day; they also combine coconuts with other natural materials like wood, leather, ceramics, seeds, tagua, and silver.</p>
Diving	<p>Dive in coral reefs and the aquarium accompanied by fish in many colours, butterfly, sergeant, bishop, and globe, among them. You may see seahorses around the gorgonias, rays, and, perhaps, barracudas.</p> <p>Visibility is between 15 and 30 m, the currents are few, and there are over 40 dive sites such as La Caleta de José, La Calera, Las Piedras de la Langosta, Trampa Tortuga, Nirvana, Bowle View, Wild Life, La Rocosa, El Avión, and others.</p>
Nolitours Excursions	<p>Island Tour</p> <p>Tour the island's main attractions, including Captain Henry Morgan's Cave and the Pirate Museum, an island lookout point, the Coconut Museum, and the most exuberant landscapes and residential areas of</p>

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	<p>the island.</p> <p>Johnny Cay and Acaurio</p> <p>Enjoy swimming, sunbathing and snorkeling (equipment not included) on the magnificent beaches of Johnny Cay, Aquario and Haynes Cay.</p>
Flora and Fauna	<p>The island has rich floral diversity in its vast mangrove swamps, the largest mangrove forest on the island being the Old Mangrove Point Regional Park. There are 12 mangrove forests in red, black and white colours, rich with many species of flora and fauna revitalizing the ecosystem. There are also coconut palm trees, breadfruit trees, tall growth of local trees, green and lush pastoral lands and farm lands. The bird species named San Andres Vireo or St. Andrew Vireo (<i>Vireo caribaeus</i>), occurs exclusively on the island, favors mangrove and scrub bush habitat. It is a small, innocuous, but delicate bird, green in colour, in the Aves class of Passeriforms of the Vireonidae family. It is about 5 inches (130 mm) in length, weighs about 16–20 g, found in clutch size of 2, and feeds on insects and fruits. IUCN has listed this bird species under the Critically endangered list. Its habitat has been threatened due to large-scale expansion of the island lands for development of the capital city in the last few decades. It is reported that habitat of these birds is now confined to about 18 km² area in the southern part of the island.</p> <p>Another bird found in abundance on the island is the White-winged Dove (<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>). The aqua faunal species found here are oysters and crabs. The coral species found in the island's shores are: Cuerno de Venado, Cuervo de Arce, Coral Columna, Brain coral, Coral Látigo, star coral, fan coral, finger coral and Coral Pluma.</p>
Shopping	<p>San Andres is a tax free zone - so prices are often cheaper than on the Colombian mainland. There are lots of shops in the town centre, many of which specialize in perfumes.</p> <p>You can purchase alcoholic beverages at very competitive prices; bargain as much as possible, you may cross the street and find the same object cheaper.</p> <p>Clothing is very cheap too and you can find famous brands as well as good quality local clothing. Beware of counterfeit merchandise - shop only in reputable stores and boutiques.</p>
Language	<p>The island population of around 75,000 speaks Spanish but most of them also have enough English to make communication no problem for Canadians.</p>
Flights	<p>Nolitours has Monday departures from Montreal to San Andres Island from December 23rd 2013 to April 7th 2014</p> <p>Flight time is 4.25 hours to San Andres</p>

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<p>NOLITOURS & TRANSAT</p>	<p>Transat Holidays and Nolitours have launched their winter 2013/2014 programs. See at a glance if a hotel is rated as, for instance, luxury or family friendly thanks to the brochure designations. Transat Holidays has grouped resorts into different “Collections”. Resorts in the Transat Holidays “Distinction Collection”, for example, offer you exclusive privileges and added services. And the Luxury Collection means the ultimate in elegance and pampering.</p> <p>Plus discover innovative new ways to discover your destination. For example Nolitours offer the noliZONE – designed for vacationers who want to explore, meet new people and really get to know their destination. And with both the Transat and Nolitours programs make it easy to choose a combination of two very different destinations during one trip.</p> <p>Book early and be sure to get the exact dates and the perfect destination for you. And there is no reason to wait this year. Both Transat Holidays and Nolitours have some great reasons for you to book now. Enjoy the warm feeling that comes with everything being booked just as you want it, and the anticipation of your dream trip to come.</p> <p>There are 25 Sun destinations and 350 Resorts to choose from. There is a wide variety of fantastic resorts on offer, carefully selected and categorized by the experts from Nolitours and Transat Holidays so you can choose the vacation that is just right for you.</p> <p>Ask your travel agent for the Transat Holidays Sun Collection 2013-2014 and Nolitours Sun 2013-2014 brochure and go to www.transatholidays.com and www.Nolitours.com</p>
<p>TRANSAT and NOLITOURS in COLOMBIA</p>	<p>Transat and Nolitours have a wide choice of Colombian vacations with weekly flights and a range of resorts. Fly to Cartagena directly from Montreal and Toronto and fly to San Andres directly from Montreal.</p>
<p>Nolitours Background</p>	<p>Nolitours is part of Transat A.T. Inc., an integrated tour operator that specializes in holiday travel and offers more than 60 destination countries. Transat, which was created in Canada and has offices in many other countries, is an international company that owns an airline, provides destination services, is active in the accommodation industry and operates an extensive travel agent network.</p> <p>Transat is now the largest tour operator in Canada, and is at the core of the vertical integration process developing and marketing vacation products as well as flights to destinations in the South and Europe.</p> <p>The company acts as a master craftsman in assembling different</p>

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	<p>components of leisure travel: air transportation, passenger transfers from airport to hotel, accommodation, recreational and cultural activities, meals, cruises, and much more.</p> <p>Website: http://www.transat.com</p>
Early Booking Incentives	<p>Book before Oct 31 with Nolitours and receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Save \$100 per couple - Have the opportunity to change your travel date up to 7 days before departure. <p>Book before Oct 31 with Transat Holidays and receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Price Guarantee on participating hotels from the Distinction and Luxury Collections. If a lower Transat price becomes available up to 30 days before departure, you are entitled to a cash refund. - Free upgrade to Option Plus or CanJet Select on your flight with Distinction and Luxury Collections. Get free seat selection and upgraded inflight services. - Travel dates can be changed up to 7 days before departure
Option Flex	<p>For even more peace of mind – consider Option Flex from Transat Holidays and Nolitours. For only \$49 at the time of booking, should anything unexpected happen, Option Flex has you covered. You can change your departure date, destination or hotel up to 3 hours before departure. You can transfer your vacation package to a friend or family member up to 7 days before departure. Or you can cancel your trip and get a full refund.</p>
Transat Background	<p>For over 25 years, Transat Holidays has been offering a large selection of vacation options in Europe, Florida and the south, as well as cruises. In addition to more than 200 south hotels available in the form of all-inclusive packages, Transat also offers a wide range of flights, packages, tours and à la carte products in some 30 European destinations. Their packages are flexible and tailored to stays of varying lengths. Their employees aim to exceed vacationers' expectations in order to maintain their position as a market leader here in Canada. They see their role as turning holiday dreams into reality: making the vacation experience of their guests one of the most memorable ever.</p> <p>Transat offer flights from East to West and all in between, such as Hamilton, Thunder Bay, Ottawa and from the West Coast.</p>
Transat Collections	<p>Because we all have our own definition of ideal vacation, Transat Holidays has designed exclusive Collections to meet the needs of different travellers. Last winter (2012/2013), the Distinction and Luxury collections represented 19% of Transat Holidays' business. Out of 452 hotels offered by Transat Holidays and Nolitours, 61 are exclusive to them, and they accounted for 38% of the 2.7 million room nights sold. Together, Collections product represented 59% of Transat Holidays and Nolitours room nights.</p>

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Experience Collection

Beyond its beautiful beaches and fabulous weather, the south offers a wealth of fascinating travel opportunities. So, Transat has put together a collection of out-of-the-ordinary experiences to complement your dream vacation under the sun. You could experience traditional life in a tranquil Mexican village for instance:

San Sebastian del Oeste escapade. First Day: Depart Puerto Vallarta in the morning. Enjoy the scenery and observe rural life in Mexico as you wind through the mountain roads on your way to San Sebastian del Oeste, one of Mexico's "magical towns". Nestled in the Sierra Madre, this 17th century mining village of 600 residents has retained its colonial architecture and enchanting essence, and is a living museum untouched by time. You'll see all the local sights, including a museum, a church, an ancient prison, a fort once used for storing gold and a coffee plantation. Stop at a traditional restaurant and savour authentic Mexican cuisine for lunch. Afterwards, you'll have free time to explore this peaceful town and its cobblestone plaza. Take part in a cooking workshop at your hotel and enjoy your creation for dinner.

Overnight in San Sebastian del Oeste. Second Day: After breakfast, tour a tequila and moonshine distillery before returning to your resort in Puerto Vallarta.

Also: Coffee and Culture from Huatulco.

Duo Collection

Vacations don't have to come in neat little boxes. Transat Holidays has introduced a line of packages that allows travellers to enjoy a more complete vacation experience by combining two very different destinations. You could spend part of your vacation soaking up the sun on a beautiful beach, and the other half exploring the cultural and historic attractions of an intriguing city or town. Or you could opt for a few days of snorkelling in a gorgeous coral reef, before relaxing to the sounds of the surf in a completely different destination.

Manzanillo and Guadalajara

Two unique experiences, one trip: Combine your seaside getaway in Manzanillo with a stay in the modern yet traditional city of Guadalajara. Manzanillo is the perfect venue for life's unhurried pleasures: from world-class golf to deep-sea fishing and scuba diving. Guadalajara: is known as the "Pearl of the West"; this fascinating city boasts charming plazas and impressive architecture. Birthplace of tequila and Mariachi music, Guadalajara is considered the cultural centre of the region. The nearby town of Tlaquepaque is also famous for its pottery and blown glass. Stay one night at Las Hadas Golf Resort & Marina, three nights Hotel de Mendoza in Guadalajara and three more nights at Las Hadas.

Also: Cancun and Merida

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	<p>Distinction Collection</p> <p>Transat Holidays' Distinction Collection was especially designed for travellers looking for an enhanced travel experience. Located on stunning beaches, these resorts offer exclusive privileges, added services and superior comfort. You'll notice the difference the minute you arrive. Beautiful surroundings, attentive service, superb facilities and spacious accommodations serve as the backdrop for that special vacation you've always wanted.</p> <p>Before takeoff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid the wait at the airport with Online check-in service at www.airtransat.ca - Upgrade to Option Plus and enjoy even more privileges <p>On the plane</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Italian leather ergonomic seats - Welcome champagne glass - Choice of hot meal and complimentary glass of wine <p>During your stay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-stop transfer from the airport to your resort - Exclusive room location - Concierge service - Minimum of three guaranteed reservations for à la carte restaurants - 24-hour room service
Awards	<p>Agent's Choice Awards: For the fifth consecutive year, Transat Holidays was named Wholesaler of the Year by travel agents in 2012.</p>
New Brochures	<p>Transat Holidays Sun 2013-2014 and Nolitours Sun 2013-2014 brochures are available at your local travel agent and cover vacations through to October 2014.</p> <p>Also newly released are:</p> <p>Transat Holidays Florida Transat Holidays Cruise Transat Discoveries</p>
Air Transat's New Comfort Zone	<p>With so many new comfort features, you're on vacation the minute you take your seat. Air Transat is giving their fleet a full makeover. Starting in 2012, one by one, the planes and passengers are soaring to new heights in design and comfort. They are rolling out the new cabins over the next two years. For a glimpse of what it all looks like:</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBse6WOCd70</p>
Air Transat Kids Club	<p>To ensure that your family vacations are fun and unforgettable from beginning to end, Air Transat has created Kids Club so that young passengers can really enjoy themselves whilst onboard an Air Transat flight. It is designed to make air travel a fun experience for young travellers (and for their parents!). Even before the doors of the plane are closed following boarding, every child receives a small bag containing all sorts of surprises and games. The more fun they have, the easier the</p>

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	<p>flight. Furthermore, children who are members of Air Transat Kids Club enjoy certain exclusive privileges.</p> <p>Members of the Air Transat Kids Club will enjoy several benefits that the whole family can share. You can check in at a special "Air Transat Kids Club Members" counter. Thanks to these special counters located in major Canadian airports where Air Transat flies, checking-in is quicker than before. At check-in, special tags will be placed on your baggage; as a result, your baggage gets priority treatment.</p>
Air Transat Upgrades	<p>Air Transat has added more legroom on all their aircraft, making the journey to and from your destination even more comfortable. They have also introduced a new Economy Class meal service on sun destination flights. Passengers flying south will now be welcomed onboard with a glass of champagne, while early morning passengers will be greeted with a mimosa.</p> <p>The meal service has also been improved. The airline will now offer passengers a more complete meal tray, including a choice of two hot meals, a complimentary glass of wine and dessert.</p>
Best Leisure Airline	<p>Air Transat was named World's Best Leisure Airline at the Skytrax annual World Airline Awards, held at the 2012 Farnborough International Airshow, near London in the UK.</p> <p>Distinctions were based on a survey measuring the satisfaction of more than 18 million customers. Conducted over a 10-month period, this survey included over 200 airlines that were rated on 38 different aspects of the passenger experience. The study analyzed customer satisfaction for the Airline Passenger Experience, from check-in to boarding, onboard seat comfort, cabin cleanliness, food and beverages, onboard entertainment, and service of staff.</p> <p>In the past five years, Air Transat has gained other recognitions as a result of its numerous environmental initiatives. In 2011, the Company ranked first worldwide in the Atmosfair Airline Index environmental performance indicator, in the long-haul category. Air Transat also obtained the Platinum LEED-EB (existing building) certification for its headquarters, located within the Montreal–Trudeau airport site.</p> <p>Air Transat was recognized as the Best Charter Airline for the fifth consecutive year at the Agents' Choice Awards, which represents the largest sampling of travel agents in Canada. The airline also received the Family Friendly Airline Award, which acknowledges carriers that provide additional services and extra comfort to children & parents.</p>
Transat Compensation Plan	<p>Transat has introduced a new compensation plan for clients affected by an advanced flight schedule change on all South, Florida and Europe flights, packages and cruises. This new policy applies to all bookings made with Transat Holidays, for Air Transat or CanJet flights.</p> <p>Applicable to schedule changes within 45 days of departure.</p>

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	<p>Schedule change of 3 to 12 hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transat will offer a \$50 voucher for future travel. <p>Schedule change of 12 to 24 hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transat will offer a \$75 voucher for future travel. <p>Schedule change of 24 hours or more and cancelled flights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients can cancel their flight and are entitled to a full refund in the event of a schedule change of 24 hours or more. • Transat will offer a \$50 voucher for future travel to clients who cancel. • Transat will offer a \$100 voucher for future travel to clients who accept the date change. • Clients who choose a product at a lower fare will be refunded the price difference, whereas clients who select a product at a higher fare will be required to pay the balance. <p>Schedule change of 3 hours or less</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No compensation will be offered to clients experiencing a schedule change that is delayed or advanced by 3 hours or less.
Transat Club Class	<p>Enjoy exclusive privileges such as complimentary seat selection, wider, more comfortable leather seats, a choice of gourmet meals and fine wines, priority check-in, baggage service and boarding.</p> <p>Club Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Club attendants • Attentive, personalized service • Exclusive, spacious Club cabin <p>Drinks & Snacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome cocktails • Complimentary non-alcoholic drinks, snacks and bar service <p>Club Privileges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased baggage allowance • 40 kg checked/15 kg carry-on • Exclusive, rapid check-in counter in most airports • Priority boarding • Practical travel items (on Europe flights) • Free headsets • Canadian newspapers <p>Comfort & Refinement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider, more comfortable leather seats • More leg room • Complimentary Seat Selection: call 1-877-872-6728 • Choice of gourmet meals • Choice of wine and more

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Option Plus	<p>This Economy class option includes many priority privileges and services including priority check-in, priority baggage handling, an extra 10kg baggage allowance and even champagne. Here's what you get:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance seat selection on roundtrip flights • Priority check-in at a dedicated counter • Priority baggage handling • Priority boarding • Complete Air Transat travel kit on flights to European destinations • Snacks from the On Board Bistro selection • Alcoholic beverages during drinks service 200ml bottle of champagne (Sun and Europe) • Supplementary baggage allowance up to 10 kg per flight segment • Wine or beer with the meal • Headsets <p>The cost is \$79-\$119 for southbound destinations and \$99-\$209 for European destinations as at October 2013</p>
Transat and Sustainable Tourism	<p>Transat recognizes the prime importance of the environment, host communities, cultural diversity, and their relationships with their employees, customers and partners. Transat is firmly committed to the responsible development of the tourism industry, and has adopted the following definition of sustainable tourism:</p> <p><i>"Sustainable tourism entails respect for nature, as well as for host communities and their values; it combines positive socio-economic benefits for local populations with an enriching experience for travellers."</i></p> <p>The issue of the environment, as far as Transat's own facilities are concerned, is a clear and basic target. Their environment committees have implemented concrete initiatives with regard to recycling, conservation of resources, the disposal of obsolete electronic equipment, and raising employee awareness.</p> <p>Air Transat has begun developing an environmental management system that could lead to an ISO 14001 certification in the future. To find out more, consult the Transat and the Environment sections at their website:</p> <p>http://www.airtransat.ca/en/Info/the-environment-its-everyones-business.aspx?ExitID=69&ContentType=voyageur</p> <p>Eco-responsible certified hotels</p> <p>Transat urges its hotelier partners to excel in social and environmental responsibility, and formally recognizes the efforts of accommodations that commit to certification in this area. Certified establishments must maintain performance levels to continue using such labels. The indicators used vary depending on the certification scheme, but many certification organizations have begun aligning their benchmarks with</p>

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	<p>the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria. To help you make an informed choice when you take your next vacation, Transat list six certifications for hotels and beaches. You can also find certified hotels by searching by destination.</p> <p>Certifications for hotels</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biosphere Responsible Tourism 2. Green Globe 3. Green Key 4. ISO 14001 5. Travelife <p>Certification for beaches</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Blue Flag
Gift Certificates	<p>Here's your chance to make a loved one's dream come true. With Transat gift certificates you can offer the gift of travel from packages to car rental. Transat gift certificates are valid on all Air Transat, Nolitours, or Transat Holidays products in their brochures. They can be redeemed at a travel agent's office at the time of reservation. To order your gift certificates call 1-800-322-6649.</p>
2013 Hurricane Policy	<p>Nolitours and Transat Holidays provide you with true peace of mind. Vacationers can travel secure in the knowledge that you will be protected should a hurricane affect your destination city in Florida, Mexico, the Caribbean or Central America. This Nolitours/Transat Holidays policy covers reservations for departures between June 1 and November 30, 2013. If the conditions stipulated in the policy are met, you may choose one of these four options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel at a later date 2. Travel to another destination city 3. Travel to the booked destination city 4. Cancel with a full refund in credit vouchers
Nolizone	<p>Nolitours' lively noliZONE was specifically created for travellers who would like to step outside their resort, meet new people and really get to know their destination. With tons of fun activities throughout the day and night, your biggest dilemma will be deciding what to do next. Introduced in 2011, the It Zone in Puerto Plata was so successful that this concept has been launched in other destinations.</p> <p>Their noliZONE representative will always keep you informed on upcoming activities and events, and you can also visit www.nolizone.nolitours.com to get the latest news and updates on what is going on in the noliZONE.</p>
Social Media	<p>Stay in touch with Transat and Nolitours at their two Facebook sites:</p> <p>http://www.facebook.com/airtransat http://www.facebook.com/nolitours</p>
Groups	<p>Group rates are available – as few as 10 adults make up a group. Talk to your travel agent to check the current details of Transat's group</p>

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	deals.
Price Guarantee	<p>Transat's Price Guarantee on Luxury Collection resorts: Should your vacation package become available at a lower price than the one you paid, they will refund you the difference in cash (up to \$400 per adult). Transat's Luxury Collection packages have been carefully chosen to offer only the best 5-star resorts with all the amenities for the most pampering of getaways.</p> <p>If you book by October 31, 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enjoy this Price Guarantee - Receive a free upgrade to Option Plus or CanJet Select - Have the opportunity to change your travel date up to 7 days before departure
Transat Discoveries	<p>This is Transat's program to the exotic destination of your dreams! It features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - international flights on scheduled airlines like Cathay Pacific, Air France, KLM, South African Airways, Air Canada and LAN - 4 star accomodation (some 3 and 5 star) and transfers - Small-group tour with English-speaking guide - Unique experiences with most meals and excursions included <p>For more information contact your travel agent and view the tour itineraries in the brochure or at www.transatdiscoveries.com</p> <p>Here are some of their destinations they offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beach stays in Thailand and Vietnam - Health retreats in Tunisia and Morocco - Diving in the Red Sea and Galapagos Islands - Overland safaris in Kenya and Tanzania - More options in over 40 countries.
Nolitours Excursions in Cartagena	<p>Cartagena City Tour Visit Cartagena's most fascinating sights such as La Popa Convent, San Felipe Castle, and Los Zapatos Viejos. Then stroll the walled Old Town with its monuments and intriguing shops.</p> <p>Santa Marta City Tour Visit the oldest city in South America: Santa Marta. See Simon Bolivar's last home and other key sights. Stroll through America's Pearl Bay and finish up with a delicious lunch with open bar at the Decameron Galeon Hotel where you can swim in the pool or the ocean.</p> <p>Rosario Islands Tour a spectacular coral reef, bathe in the turquoise sea and marvel at the beauty of these islands. You will also experience a dolphin show.</p>

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	<p>Snorkelling Tour Admire exotic marine life as you snorkel over crystalline waters. A knowledgeable guide will accompany you and provide explanations and information about what you are seeing. All this takes place off the beaches of Baru and Rosario Islands.</p> <p>Mini Scuba Diving Course You will receive an initial training in the basics of scuba diving off the beaches of Baru and Rosario Islands. Take a break, and then you'll execute the second dive which takes about 40 minutes. A whole new world will open up for you.</p> <p>Fishing Expedition Set out on a fishing trip in the Portonaito Swamp and the coast of Baru Island to see what you can catch under the guidance of local experts.</p>
Special Deals with Nolitours to Colombia	<p>Nolitours currently have some very special deals to Colombia: Prices for the Decameron Cartagena start from just \$1379 for one week all inclusive including flights. Book and pay by the end of October at Occidental Grand Cartagena and you can save \$300 per couple per week with their Early Booking Bonus.</p>

HOTEL PRIZE PARTNER	<p>The Decameron Cartagena Resort is just 1 km from the old city and a lively and popular resort. There is a disco and nightly entertainment. Enjoy unlimited à la carte restaurant meals in a choice of 4 restaurants (Italian, Seafood, Steakhouse and Japanese) – plus this hotel includes one dinner at the San Pedro Restaurant in the old walled city as part of your package.</p>
Location	<p>Across the road from Bocagrande beach in Cartagena, Colombia. 10 km from the Cartagena airport and 1 km from the old city.</p>
Facilities	<p>Access to the Isla Del Sol Beach Club (transfer to and from the pier, boat transfer, lunch and open bar. Reservations required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complimentary facilities in Old Cartagena with changing room, bathroom, storage, bar, snacks and guest services (10 am to 5 pm, every day except Sunday) • Disco • Day pass to the Royal Decameron Baru (subject to availability) • Gift shop and Jewellery store (• Internet and Wifi (lobby)
Accommodation	<p>A total of 280 rooms featuring: 1 king-size or 1 queen or 2 twin beds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air-conditioning • Bathroom with shower • Hairdryer

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV • In-room safe • Balcony (in some rooms) • Maximum occupancy 4 adults (or 2 adults and 2 children under 12)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily activities program • Introduction to scuba diving in pool • Nightly entertainment
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's activities: 9 am to 6 pm • Children's pool
Restaurants	Ciacco's buffet À la carte restaurants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bocaccio (Italian) • Alibech's (Steakhouse) • Galeotto (Seafood) • San Pedro (Japanese)

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