

SOUTH AMERICA · ADVENTURE · HIKING · BEACHES · WILDLIFE · MOUNTAINS · ISLANDS



Venezuela

Venezuela holds some of South America's most dramatic scenery: Angel Falls plunging 979 m off a tabletop tepui, the multi-day trek onto Mount Roraima, the white-sand cays of Los Roques and the wildlife-rich Llanos plains. Tourism infrastructure has thinned after years of economic crisis, so check the FCDO travel advice and book through experienced local operators.

**The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to parts of Venezuela.**
Read the latest FCDO travel advice before planning a trip. Your travel insurance may be invalid if you travel against FCDO advice.
FCDO advice last updated 14 October 2026.

 CAPITAL Caracas	 CURRENCY Venezuelan bolívar (VES) £1 ≈ VES 1,180	 LANGUAGE Spanish	 BEST TIME Dec–Apr
 DAILY BUDGET £40–£200 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type A, B 120V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 14h via Madrid, Bogota or Panama City ~£700–£1,250 return	 TIME ZONE UTC-4 standard time

Venezuela packs Andes, Caribbean coast, grassy plains, jungle and tabletop mountains into one country. The tepuis of Canaima National Park and the Gran Sabana in the south-east are the headline: fly to Canaima for Angel Falls, or approach Roraima overland from Santa Elena de Uairén. Off the Caribbean coast, the atolls of Los Roques are a short flight from Caracas, while the Andes around Mérida rise to Pico Bolívar at 4,978 m. Between them, the Llanos are among the continent's best places to see capybara, caiman and anaconda. Most visitors link these regions with domestic flights rather than long road journeys.

Since the economic collapse of the 2010s, tourism has shrunk dramatically and many hotels, airlines and services operate patchily, so independent travel takes real effort; most visitors book packages with experienced operators who handle transfers. Prices are largely in US dollars and are not as cheap as many expect. The reward is space: at Angel Falls or on Roraima's summit you may share the view with only a handful of others. It suits adventurous travellers, hikers and birdwatchers. Many are surprised by the warmth of their welcome, the variety of arepas, and how far a little Spanish goes.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

NATURE
Angel Falls
The world's highest uninterrupted waterfall drops 979 m off Auyán-tepui in Canaima National Park. Fly to Canaima, then travel upriver by motorised dugout; boats run mainly in the wetter months, when the falls are fullest.
- 2

ADVENTURE
Mount Roraima
A tabletop mountain where Venezuela meets Brazil and Guyana, climbed on a guided trek of about six days from Paraitepui across the Gran Sabana; the summit is a surreal plateau of black rock, quartz crystals and endemic plants.

3

BEACH

Los Roques Archipelago

A national park of around 350 coral cays and islands in the Caribbean, with powder-white beaches, turquoise lagoons and excellent bonefishing; fly from Caracas and stay in posadas on Gran Roque.

4

WILDLIFE

Los Llanos

The seasonally flooded plains of Apure and Barinas teem with capybara, caiman, anacondas, giant anteaters and scarlet ibis; stay on a working ranch (hato) and explore by jeep, on horseback and by boat, ideally in the dry season.

5

ADVENTURE

Mérida and the Sierra Nevada

Venezuela's Andean university town is the base for trekking, paragliding and canyoning, and for the Mukumbarí cable car, one of the world's highest, which climbs to Pico Espejo at 4,765 m.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Caracas

≈ 3 million people

A sprawling capital in a valley below Waraira Repano (El Ávila) National Park; most travellers stay only between flights, but the cable car up the mountain and the colonial centre reward a day.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Maracaibo

≈ 2 million people

The oil capital on the shore of Lake Maracaibo, famous for gaita music and as the base for guided trips to see the Catatumbo lightning over the lake's south-west corner.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Valencia

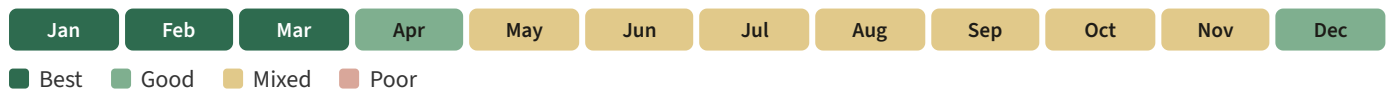
≈ 1.5 million people

Venezuela's industrial third city, with a handsome cathedral and Plaza Bolívar; mostly a transport hub, but a gateway to Puerto Cabello and the beaches of Morrocoy National Park.

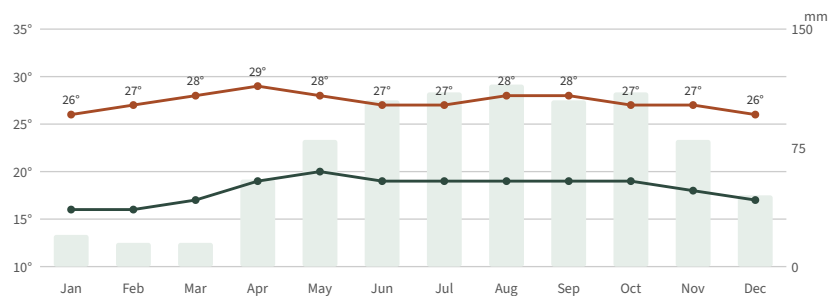
Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Venezuela

Best time: **Dec–Apr.**

**Average climate in Caracas**

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb–Mar	El Callao Carnival In the gold-mining town of El Callao, carnival brings calypso, steel drums and costumed madamas, a heritage of Caribbean migrants that UNESCO now recognises.
May–Jun	Diablos Danzantes de Corpus Christi On Corpus Christi, devil dancers in painted masks and red costumes parade in towns such as San Francisco de Yare, a tradition UNESCO lists as intangible heritage.
Nov	Feria de la Chinita Maracaibo's November festival honours its patroness, the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, with processions, gaita music and street parties around 18 November.

How much does Venezuela cost?

SHOESTRING £40 per person / day ≈ VES 47,220 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £90 per person / day ≈ VES 106,244 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £200 per person / day ≈ VES 236,099 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Pabellón criollo The national plate: shredded beef stewed with peppers and onion, black beans, white rice and sweet fried plantain, sometimes topped with a fried egg ('a caballo').	Arepas Grilled corn cakes split and stuffed to order; try reina pepiada (chicken and avocado) or dómino (black beans and white cheese), eaten at any hour.	Hallacas Christmas parcels of corn dough filled with a stew of beef, pork and chicken with olives, raisins and capers, wrapped in plantain leaves and boiled.
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Getting around

Distances are long, so domestic flights from Caracas are the practical way to reach Canaima, Puerto Ordaz, Mérida, Los Roques and Margarita, though schedules change often. Long-distance buses link the major cities, with frequent police and National Guard checkpoints. In Caracas, the metro is cheap and local ride-hailing apps such as Ridery operate. For remote areas, most visitors rely on tour operators' private transfers.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  A B 120V — bring a UK-to-A/B adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Telephone: 911 (ambulance, fire, police) Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +58	TIME ZONE UTC-4 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Restaurants usually add a 10% service charge; leave a little extra in cash for good service, and tip guides, drivers and porters on tours.

ETIQUETTE

Greetings are warm: a handshake, or a single cheek kiss between women and between men and women. Avoid political debates with strangers, and dress neatly in cities.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Simón Bolívar International Airport (CCS), Caracas; Arturo Michelena International Airport (VLN), Valencia

Visas & entry for Venezuela

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

If you arrive by air, you can stay for up to 90 days visa-free on a 'tourist card', issued on arrival. You must show your return or onward travel ticket.

If you're arriving overland or by sea, you may need to get a visa in advance. Contact the nearest Venezuelan embassy or consulate for advice.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A

Tetanus

Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya

Dengue

Hepatitis B

Rabies

Tuberculosis

Yellow fever

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK. There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

Malaria risk in some areas

- There is a risk of malaria in all areas of Venezuela particularly in the Amazonas, Bolívar, Delta Amacuro and Sucre states: antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Venezuela

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Thu 24 Dec 2026	Christmas Eve
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Thu 31 Dec 2026	New Year's Eve
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Mon 8 Feb 2027	Carnival Monday
Tue 9 Feb 2027	Carnival Tuesday
Thu 25 Mar 2027	Maundy Thursday
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Mon 19 Apr 2027	Declaration of Independence
Sat 1 May 2027	International Worker's Day
Sat 15 May 2027	Family Day
Thu 24 Jun 2027	Battle of Carabobo
Mon 5 Jul 2027	Independence Day
Sat 24 Jul 2027	Birthday of Simon Bolivar
Tue 12 Oct 2027	Day of Indigenous Resistance

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Spanish

ENGLISH	SPANISH	SAY IT
Hello	Hola	OH-la
Thank you	Gracias	GRAH-see-as
Please	Por favor	por fah-VOR
Excuse me	Disculpe	dees-KOOL-peh
How much is this?	¿Cuánto cuesta?	KWAN-toh KWES-tah

Know before you go

- Bring plenty of clean, undamaged US dollars in small denominations: prices are often quoted in dollars, change is scarce and foreign cards frequently fail.
- Book Angel Falls, Roraima and Los Roques through established operators, which arrange flights, guides and park permits, and confirm exactly what is included before paying.
- Keep your passport and copies handy: roads have frequent police and National Guard checkpoints (alcabalas), and officials expect to see original documents.