Colombia
X Marks the Spot!

Colombia is a country in South America.

Where so you think it is exactly?

X
X Marks the Spot!

Here is Colombia. The capital city is called Bogotá. Over 47 million people lived in Colombia in 2012.

Do you think it’s a hot or cold country?
What’s the temperature like there?

There are snow covered volcanoes and the Andes mountains in central Colombia, however there are tropical beaches in the north and west.

There are huge areas of grassland in the east.

Dense forest covers nearly the whole of the south and in the north west you will find wet and warm jungle.

Thousands of years ago, Colombia was nearly completely covered in jungle but over the years, people have cleared the trees to create farm land.

As the landscape is so diverse, many species of wildlife live here.
Culture

The official national language is Spanish.

The currency is the peso.

Most Colombians consider themselves to be Roman Catholics.

A very traditional form of Colombian dress is the ruana.

It is like a large shawl or wrap and people who live in the cooler parts of the country still wear them today.

Can you design you own using traditional colours and patterns?
Carnivals are important to South Americans and the Barranquilla carinal is no exception.

It is held every year in the city of Barranquilla and is Colombia's most important celebration.

It starts 4 days before Ash Wednesday and lasts 4 days.

There is a grand parade full of colourful floats, music and dancing.

The carnival slogan is – Who lives it, is who enjoys it.

Can you design your own carnival outfit ready for the parade?
Education

Children go to primary school when they are 6 years old and leave at the age of 12.

They then go onto secondary school (high school) until the age of 16.

Families have to buy the text books for their children and all pupils must wear uniform.

At 16, students decide to go to university (if their families can afford to send them) or take up technical training to prepare themselves for work.

How does this compare to the UK?
Food and Drink

Colombian food varies depending on which region you visit. Colombian dishes generally use a lot of meat.

A dish associated with the capital city is ajiaco. This is a soup made from 3 types of potatoes, chicken and corn generally accompanied by capers, cream or avocado.

Colombians drink large quantities of beer and coffee (which it is very famous for).

Other Colombian specialities include: roasted ants, chunchullo (stuffed and fried cow intestines) and bandeja paisa which is seen by many as the national dish of Colombia. It is a huge mixture of food on a platter including grilled steak, fried pork rind and chorizo sausage with rice and red beans. This is usually topped off with a fried egg.
How does coffee go from this to this?

Colombia is considered to produce the highest quality coffee in the world. Coffee needs a hot and humid place to grow so Colombian tropical rainforests is ideal.

Does your family buy coffee? Next time you see a jar, have a look and see where the beans have come from!
The Coffee Story

After 2 to 4 years, the coffee plant will produce a small white blossom.

The blossom drops off and is replaced with green berries.

When the coffee beans are ready they turn red. The coffee bean lives inside the berry.

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The Coffee Story

The harvest lasts for 6 months starting in December and the beans are picked by hand.

The beans are removed from the berry and dried. The beans are green at this stage.

The coffee beans are roasted which gives them their dark brown colour.

The beans are ground down and the end product is what is mixed with hot water.

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