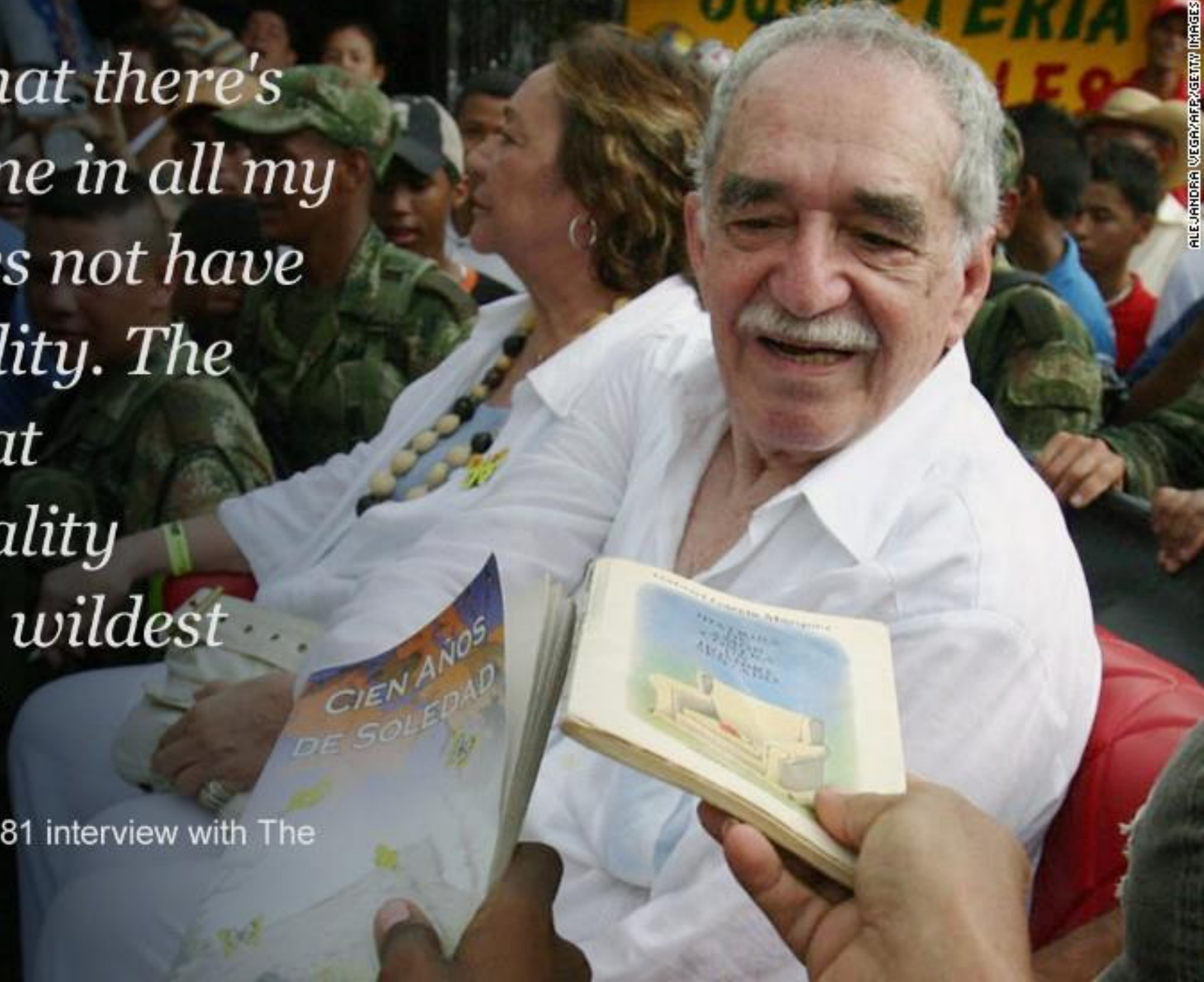


*“The truth is that there's not a single line in all my work that does not have a basis in reality. The problem is that Caribbean reality resembles the wildest imagination.”*

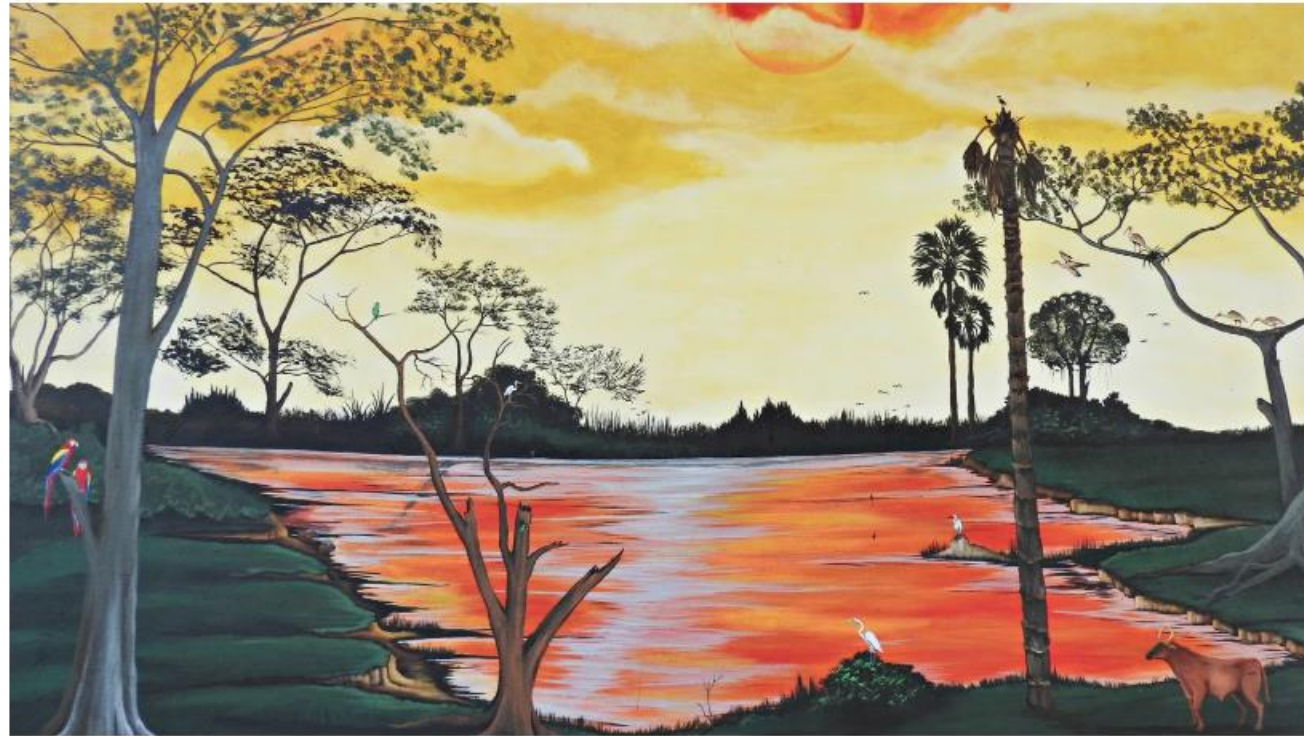
Gabriel Garcia Marquez, 1981 interview with The Paris Review







# 8 Must-Visit Colombian Destinations for Lovers of Literature



Orocue, Casanare, Colombia | © Chris Bell/Culture Trip



Chris Bell  
20 February 2018



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# Gabriel García Márquez Literature tour in Cartagena De Indias.

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## Highlights





# Gabriel García Márquez Literature tour in Cartagena De Indias.

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Reviews



**cheribokern** wrote a review Jul 2019

Beijing, China • 250 contributions • 43 helpful votes



## Gabo lives!

“Duran Duran brought Gabo to life for us! Starting with an in depth explanation of his life and family , then a quick review of the books that would feature in the tour, all in the shade and cool of the Naval Musuem’s patio - Duran walked us into and through Gabo’s world and stories. We were shown all of the places of the real and fictional characters, introduced to sites that the real man inhabited and those which were sparked by his ideas.

I love a good tour, and an informed and interesting guide brings life to the adventure. But I’ve never known a guide who could draw me into the world of his own mystical realism until I met Duran Duran. This man and this tour would make Gabo proud!”

[Read less](#) ▲

# Cartagena . . . in the footsteps of Gabriel García Márquez

Subscriber Only »



We've lost control of the bedtime routine. How can we get back

Apart from the audio tour, a good local guide printed in both Spanish and English that I found is *Cartagena Lure* which has insider information, itineraries and a list of the best the city has to offer.



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Known locally as Gabo or Gabito, the writer once said that all of his books have "loose threads" of Cartagena in them. Unlike Dublin, however, where Joyce is part of the tight warp and weft of the city, there are few public connections to Gabo in Cartagena and it was astonishing to discover that neither *Of Love and Other Demons* nor *Love in the Time of Cholera*, two of his great literary achievements informed by this city, were to be found in local bookshops.

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Gabriel Garcia Marquez

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# Literary Tour of Cartagena

Cartagena, Colombia

Enjoy a tour of the colourful city of old town Cartagena, through the eyes and palate of one of its greatest artists, Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Best known for his book 100 years of solitude, Gabriel was a winner of the Nobel prize for literature.

Behind the colourful walls of Cartagena, discover centuries of history, culture and flavours stirred by the fusion of Spanish, African



*Maxi Dress* **Newchic**

international film festival. She stands at one of the entrances to Cartagena's old town.

Perhaps the most exciting revelation for me while visiting Cartagena was learning that not only did Gabriel García Márquez have a home there, but his ashes are at a nearby cloister (currently doesn't function as one – it's a historical building). A taxi driver made an offhand remark while coming around a corner, waving at a huge, mamey-colored wall saying, "That's Gabriel García Márquez's residence. It isn't open to the public at this time, but there are plans to turn it into a museum." He stopped a moment so I can climb some steps nearby and catch a glimpse, but the house is not really visible from the outside. Resigned, I returned to the car, only to be told that his ashes were nearby. Or some of his ashes, at any rate: the rest of his remains are in Mexico.

The Claustro de la Merced, which houses Márquez's mausoleum and is operated by Cartagena University, is also not open to the public. Not really, but some folks are able to have a gander inside depending on the day or who's on guard. Those who gain access will be told they can't share any photographs they take, if they're allowed to take any at all, and can spend a little time enjoying a nice garden with a bust of Marquez standing at the center, where his remains are. It's a quiet place that is currently undergoing some refurbishment, but do try to have a look if you're ever in Cartagena.



**The Sofitel Santa Clara** (Calle Del Torno No. 39-29; 57-5-664-6070; hotelsantaclara.com) feels like the offspring of a luxurious hotel and a haunted house. The bar, El Coro, has Cuban music on many nights. Mr. García Márquez lives across the street and has been known to sip a drink at El Coro. A recent search found rooms starting at about 475,751 pesos, or \$250 at 1,900 pesos to the dollar.

For a less rarefied experience, the **Hotel Monterrey** (Carrera 8B, No. 25-103; 57-5-664-8560; hotelmonterrey.com.co), just

beyond the old city walls at the edge of Getsemaní, has well-appointed rooms starting at 247,390 pesos. It is not far from where the old market stood and where Mr. García Márquez, as a young man, made his start as a journalist. Ask for a room in the back, away from the loud salsa club next door.

### MÁRQUEZ SPOTS

The Basurto market is a short taxi ride from the walled city. It has a reputation for housing thieves and pickpockets, as such markets invariably do, but cautious and prudent travelers should have no troubles.

In the Plaza Fernández de Madrid, Florentino Ariza longed for Fermina Daza while sitting on a park bench under almond trees. The white house with the large overhanging balcony, near the corner where Calle de la Tablada meets the eastern side of the plaza, is the one on which Fermina's house is said to be modeled.

...and  
at this time  
of the Marquis.

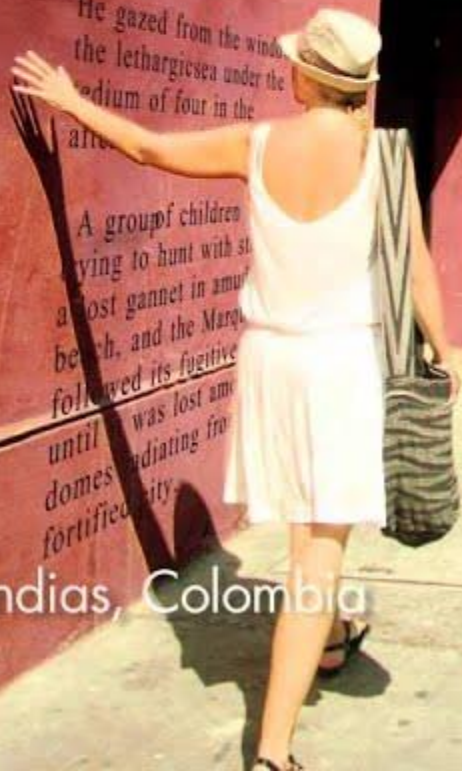
...while, said Abernuncio  
...music for her, fill the house  
...ers, make the birds sing,  
...out to see the sunset at  
...give her everything that  
...ke her happy". He waved  
...odbye up in the air and  
...or sentence.

...bits of voices escaped  
...the open balconies, bedroom  
...obs of love magnified by the  
...and fragrance of jasmine  
...eping streets. They saw the  
...y antique and heroic city of  
...as the prettiest of them all.

Sometimes bits of voices escaped  
fugitive from the open balconies, bedroom  
confidences, sobes of love magnified by the  
ghostly sound and fragrance of jasmine  
hot in the sleeping streets. They saw the  
ruins of the very antique and heroic city of  
Cartagera de Indias, the prettiest of them all  
abandoned by its residents to pass about deserted.

He gazed from the window  
the lethargic sea under the  
medium of four in the  
afternoon.

A group of children  
trying to hunt with stones  
a lost gannet in among  
beach, and the Marquis  
followed its fugitive  
until it was lost among  
domes radiating from  
fortified city.



Cartagena de Indias, Colombia





## HAY FESTIVAL CARTAGENA DE INDIAS

The XVI edition of Hay Festival Cartagena de Indias will run from January 28 to 31, 2021. At the end of the year we will return with news. Meanwhile, you can find out about our other festivals.



VIDEO-SUMMARY



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Best of Colombia In This Edition Travel

## Exploring Gabriel García Márquez's Colombia

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4

# García Márquez heads home to Macondo



Return of the native ... Gabriel García Márquez rides the 'Macondo Express'. Photograph: Alejandra Veja/AFP

For the first time in more than two decades, Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez is returning to his hometown which he immortalised as Macondo in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

García Márquez was yesterday travelling into Aracataca, the real name of the town near Colombia's northern coast, on the inaugural trip of the "Macondo Express" decorated with yellow butterflies that have come to symbolise Macondo.

The town was festooned with yellow balloons, with school children ready to greet Aracataca's most famous son at the station.

It would be the first time in 25 years that García Márquez has been to Aracataca, where he was born 79 years ago. The author has said he based the village in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which was published 40 years ago, on Aracataca.



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## Welcome to Aracataca

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Welcome to Macondo. Locals, maps, bus drivers and government officials will tell you it's really named Aracataca, and residents themselves rejected a name change in a 2006 referendum, but anyone who has read Gabriel García Márquez's masterpiece, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, might be interested to know that the great author's place of birth was also the inspiration for the fictional town of Macondo, so beautifully described in the novel.

While Cartagena and Mompós are the main Gabriel García Márquez destinations in Colombia, with gorgeous Mompós looking today pretty much as Macondo is described, Aracataca is a place for diehard fans to head to. This workaday and fairly unlovely town may not have much in terms of atmosphere or architecture, but it boasts the interesting and well-curated [Casa Museo Gabriel García Márquez](#), a faithful reconstruction of the Nobel Prizewinner's childhood home.







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