

7 DAY

THE PERFECT LOOP

The Absolute Best Of Colombia's Coffee Region



7 DAYS / 50% PAVED / 50% EASY OFF-ROAD / INTERMEDIATE SKILL LEVEL

A scenic view of a mountain landscape with a motorcycle parked on a road in the foreground. The motorcycle is a dark-colored cruiser, and the road is paved. In the background, there are rolling green hills and mountains under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds.

COLOMBIA'S BEST GEOGRAPHY FOR COFFEE PRODUCTION ALSO HAPPENS TO BE IDEAL FOR MOTORCYCLE TOURING.

If you're looking to experience the best of Colombia and only have a week, we highly recommend this trip. Based on the feedback from dozens of travelers, we have put together what we consider to be the "Perfect Loop" of Colombia's famous coffee region. Best of all, it's located right in our backyard, only 2 hours from Medellin.

HIGHLIGHTS

NEVADO RUIZ VOLCANO

Explore a stratovolcano.

THERMAL SPRINGS

Stay at a beautiful hot springs hotel.

HANDFEED HUMMINGBIRDS

A one of a kind experience.

PARAMO

Ride through alpine tundra. See 200 year old plants.

COFFEE FARM VISIT

Harvest coffee with a local family.

WAX PALMS FOREST

See the tallest palm trees in the world.

SPECTACULAR VIEWS

As always, enjoying all the twists and turns while riding through some of the most amazing scenery in the world.

A COFFEE REGION MOTORCYCLE TRIP CHECKS ALL THE BOXES

Lush green mountain vistas with soaring wax palms over 150ft tall. Check. Colonial haciendas turned into chic hotels and bed and breakfasts. Check. Hot springs flowing from snow-capped volcanoes. Check. Twist the throttle and lean into turn after turn after turn as you make your way through high mountain passes and fog covered forests. Check. Include the cosmopolitan city of Medellin as the starting point of the trip, and you have a motorcycle trip from heaven.

DAY 1 / MEDELLÍN – SONSÓN



El Tesoro

Cra. 7 #665, Sonsón,
Antioquia, Colombia
+57 48691217



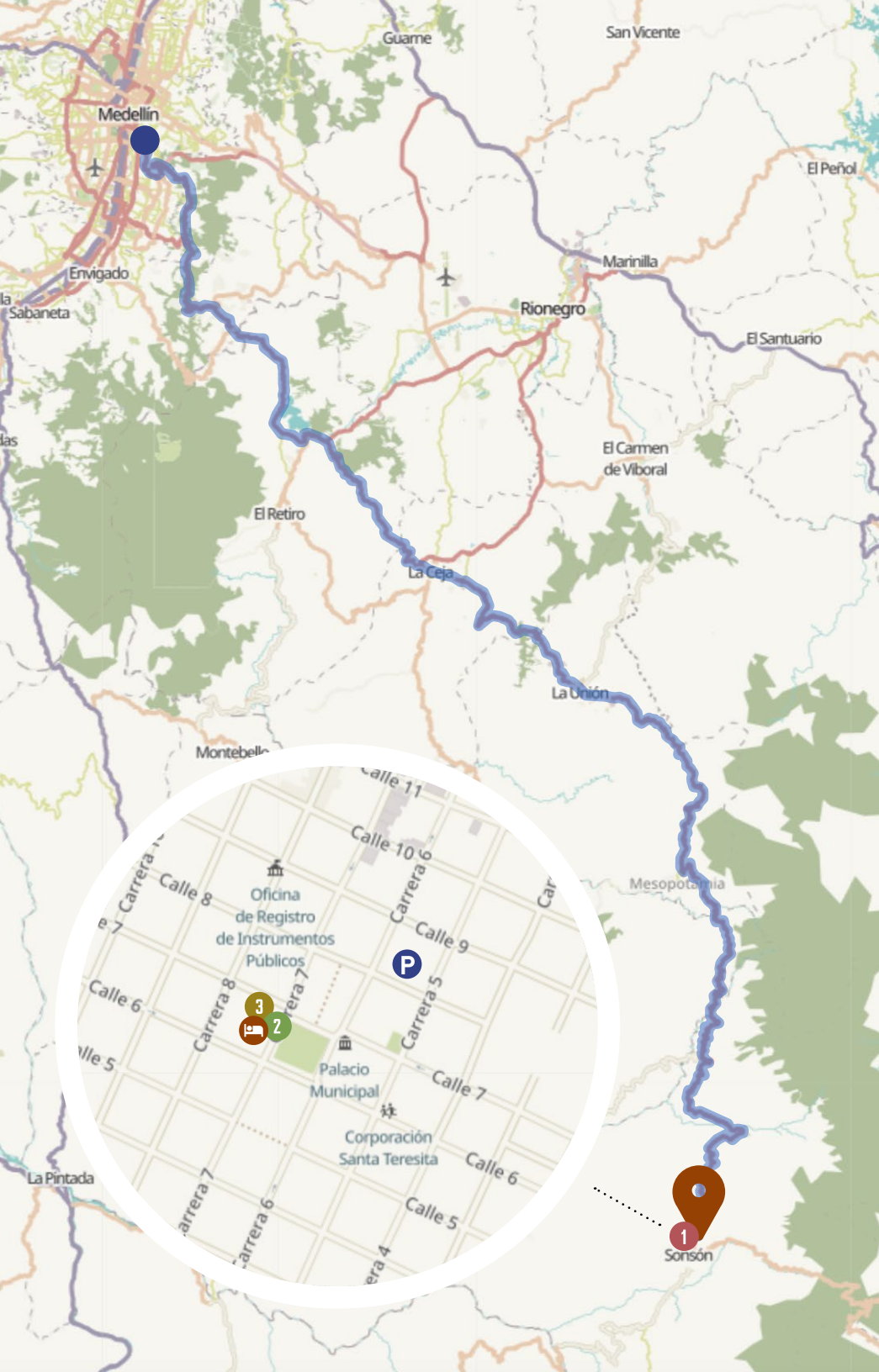
Sonsón Parking

Cl. 8 #5-23, Sonsón,
Antioquia

This is going to be an interesting trip. Today we ride to the former guerilla conflict zone of Sonsón. Sonsón has been off-limits for decades due to guerilla activity. Although it's safe now there is very little information on the internet about the area. Consequently, it's untouched by tourism which makes it the perfect place to get an authentic taste of Colombia.

The ride to Sonsón is great. One of the best things about this ride is the miles and miles of exciting twists and turns. Ups, downs, ascending curves, descending curves, increasing radius curves, decreasing radius curves. You're going to get a ton of riding experience on just this one road. The pavement here is in good shape and as is the case in lots of areas in the countryside, there is very little traffic.





1 THE TOWN OF SONSON

The town of Sonson is located at a high elevation but we're going to climb even higher. The Paramo de Sonson is a lookout point that stands at over 10,000ft in elevation. The lookout has a scenic view of the fog rolling across the cloud forest and nearby valley. By now it will be late afternoon and we'll head back to town to check in to our hotel and grab a pizza and a beer.

2 EL TESORO HOTEL

We stay at the El Tesoro hotel located on the main square. This is a 200-year-old mansion that has been converted into a unique hotel. Unlike other hotels, this one hasn't been updated and still retains its original charm. In addition, the hotel is somewhat of a museum and is filled with an eclectic collection of antiques. Looking over everything will keep you captivated for hours.

3 PIZZA!

Located next door to the hotel is a great pizza restaurant. From the second-story balcony, we can enjoy a brick oven pizza while people-watching on the main square. It's good to note that Sonson leaves the warm weather of Guatapé behind. Located at 8,100ft you'll want to bring a jacket because it's going to be cold at night.

DAY 2 / SONSÓN TO PENSILVANIA



Colina Plaza

Cra. 6 #446, Pensilvania,
Caldas, Colombia
+57 68555574



Pensilvania Parking

Cl. 5 #6-85 a 6-1, Pensilvania,
Caldas, Colombia

The road from Sonson is unpaved but in good condition. Almost as soon as we leave Sonson we have to stop to take photos of the expansive valley right outside of town. The rest of the ride consists of windy roads and spectacular views of the surrounding coffee and sugarcane plantations. In the middle of the trip, we drop into a warm valley and cross a bridge over a white water river before winding back into the mountains on the other side. Just before we arrive in town, there's a panoramic view of the town precariously sitting on the top of a hill. Once we arrive, we feel like you have somehow discovered a special place that hardly any other foreigner has set eyes upon.





DAY 3 / PENSILVANIA TO SALAMINA



Salamina Highs

Centro Calle 4 Nro. 5 - 21,
Salamina, Caldas, Colombia
+573232262382

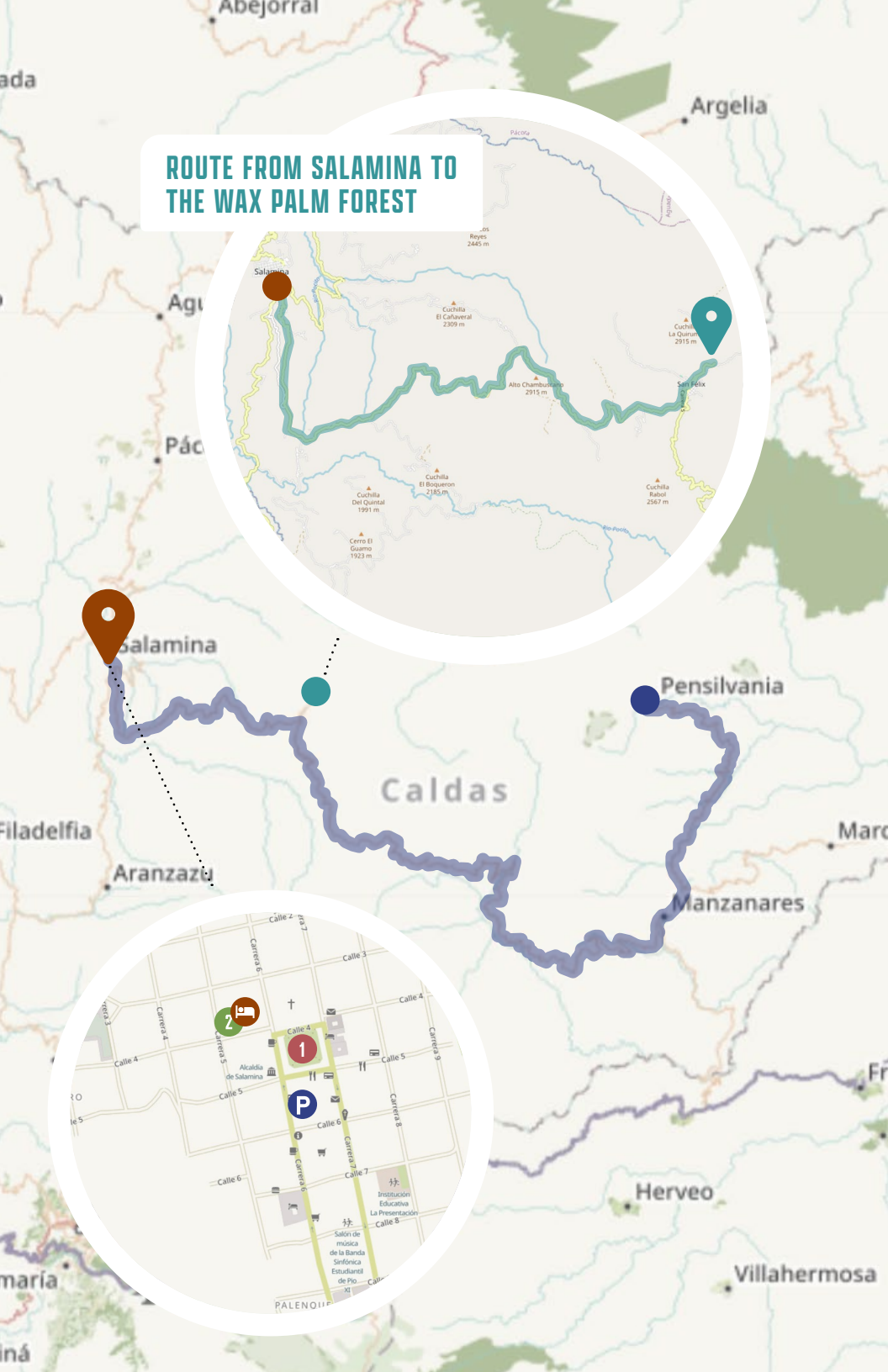


Salamina Parking

Cra. 7 #533, Salamina,
Caldas, Colombia



ROUTE FROM SALAMINA TO THE WAX PALM FOREST



1 THE TOWN OF SALAMINA

Salamina is Colombia's best-kept secret. Tucked away in a far off corner of the coffee region, the beauty of Salamina is a sight to behold. The town itself is situated on the peak of a mountain, with entire streets sometimes appearing as if they are about to slide off the side of the mountain. Once we enter the town, we see why it has earned national heritage status. Houses climb the sloping streets with each one seeming determined to outdo its neighbors. Elaborate woodworking takes the form of intricately decorated doors, windows, balconies, and zócalos (the distinct lower sections of the whitewashed facades). It's hard to walk the streets of Salamina without constantly looking upward at the flower-filled balconies.

2 THE FOUNTAIN IN SALAMINA

A gorgeous bronze basin fountain made in Paris sits in the central plaza surrounded by tall trees and benches. In 1900 the fountain was brought to town on the back of ox and mules. Since then it has become a symbol of the region. There are also various restaurants surrounding the main square where you can try typical local dishes, including the local favorite of steamed eggs (Huevos al Vapor), made with the help of an espresso machine.

3 SALAMINA HIGHS HOTEL

One of the nicer boutique options in Salamina is the Salamina Highs hotel. Formerly a coffee hacienda, the owners have beautifully restored the house and converted it into a charming boutique hotel. The property is complete with spacious rooms, king-sized beds, and a beautiful courtyard with jasmine trees and a jacuzzi. The hotel has a perfect location and is only a two-minute walk from the main square.

DAY 4 / SALAMINA TO MANIZALES



Termales del Otoño

Kilometro 5, Antigua Vía al
Nevado, Caldas, Colombia
+57 601 5875220

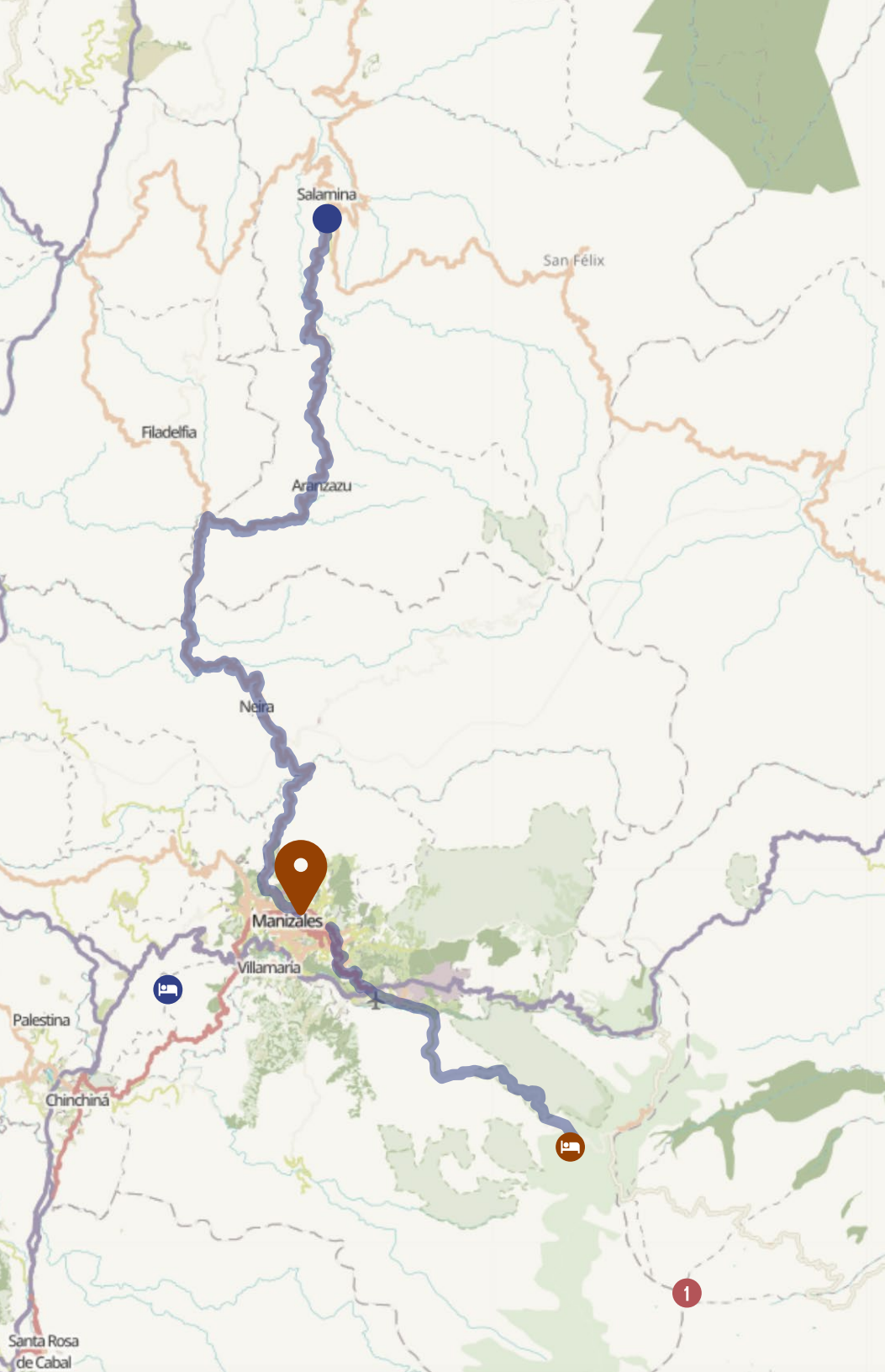


Hacienda Venecia

Manizales, Caldas,
Colombia
+57 320 6365719

Today takes us to the famous Nevado Ruiz Volcano. Colombia is part of the Ring of Fire, a 40,000 kilometer (24,900 miles) long string of volcanoes that forms a horseshoe-shaped ring around the edge of the Pacific Ocean. This Ring of Fire contains 75% of the world's volcanoes and 90% of its earthquakes with Colombia itself being home to 23 volcanoes, of which 19 are considered active. Conveniently located right in the heart of the coffee region is Nevado Ruiz stratovolcano which reaches a staggering height of 5,311m (17,424ft)





1 NEVADO DE RUIZ

Rides around the Nevado del Ruiz are often touted as “The best rides in Colombia.” You’ll ride up through the clouds until arriving in a high altitude tundra known as Paramo. Sitting at 13,000ft you will be surrounded by ancient plants that look a lot like cactus. Called frailejones these plants are actually related to sunflowers and are over 150 years old. Although you are at a high altitude the temperatures aren’t freezing and the cool air feels more like a sunny day in the Swiss Alps than sitting on a stratovolcano on the equator.

Although beautiful, Nevado Ruiz was the cause of one of the most devastating events in Colombian history. On November 13, 1985, after ignoring evacuation warnings from geologists, the Nevado del Ruiz erupted. The intense heat of the eruption melted the volcano’s ice caps producing high-speed avalanches of mud, water, and debris (called lahars) that rushed down the side of the mountain destroying the town of Armero and claiming the lives of 23,080 of its residents.

You can still visit the destroyed town of Armero and see abandoned buildings which are actually the upper levels of the town with the lower parts still covered with dirt.

DAY 5 / LOCAL EXPLORATION



Termales del Otoño

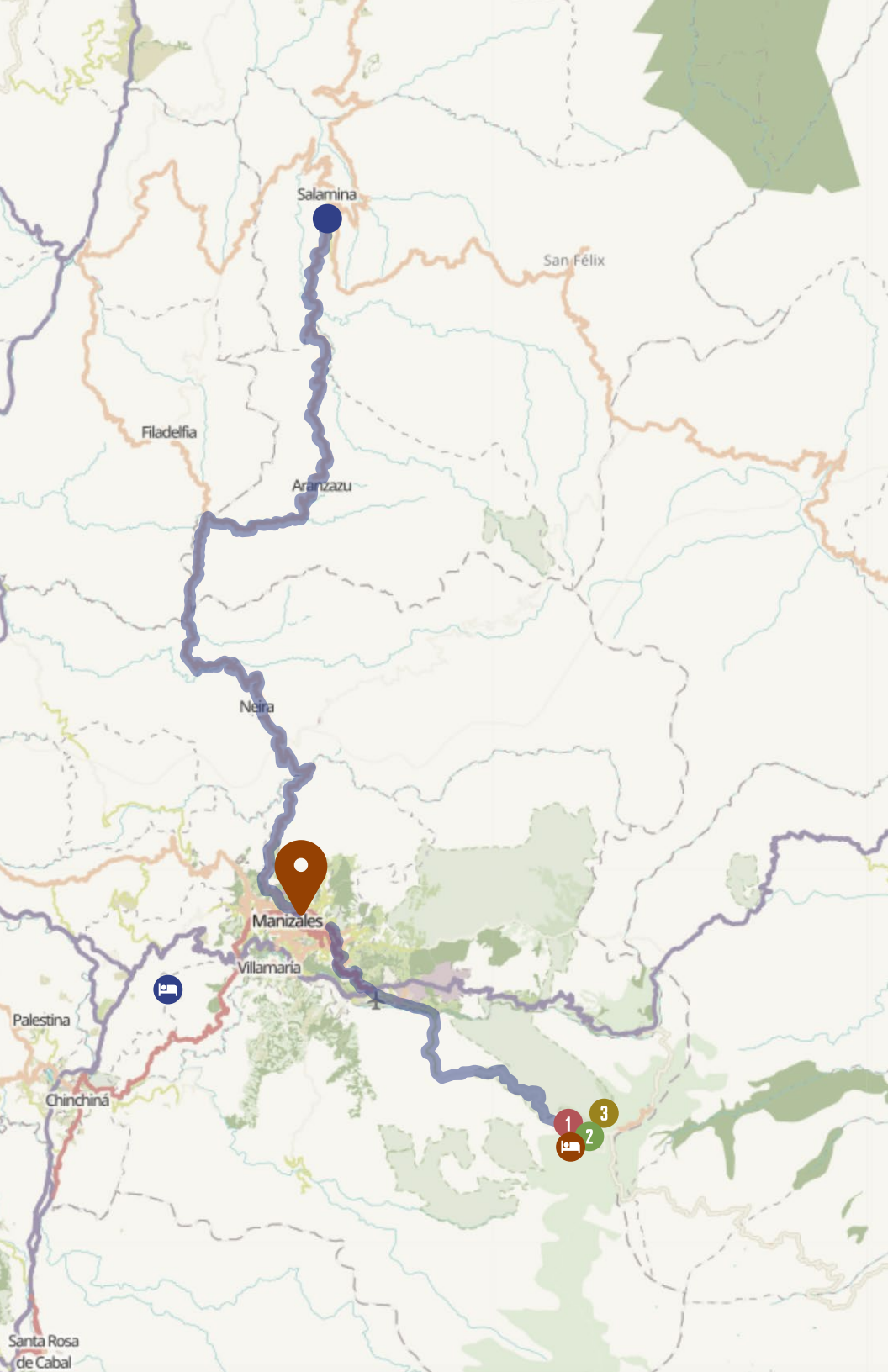
Kilometro 5, Antigua Vía al
Nevado, Caldas, Colombia
+57 601 5875220



Hacienda Venecia

Manizales, Caldas,
Colombia
+57 320 6365719





1 TERMALES DEL RUIZ HOTEL

Whatever you do, don't even think of coming down from the volcano without spending at least one night at the Termales del Ruiz Hotel, one of the few hotels actually located on the side of an active volcano. Located amid stunning landscapes at 3500masl (11,500ft), this glorious thermal-bath complex is the place to go to for total relaxation. The ride to get here is just as good. Visiting this hotel means navigating an off-road route that takes you from the relatively low altitude of Manizales through the jungle and into the high altitude paramo. Constructed in the 1940s by a German skiing champion, the rooms have the feel of a classic alpine lodge because it actually was an alpine ski lodge, used by the first-ever Colombian ski-team. While not huge, the rooms are certainly comfortable.

2 THERMAL POOLS

Outside, there are two large hot thermal pools. Sitting in the steaming hot pools while feeling the cool mountain air and looking out over the valley below feels great after a long ride. The lodge is also great for watching hummingbirds. Located on a hillside above it, there's a birding shelter beside a gushing stream where 17 species of hummingbird come to feed including the second largest hummingbird species in the world. The front desk can provide you with brightly colored sugar water feeders to feed the birds from your hand.

3 FRAILEJONES FOREST

Head uphill through a side road and you'll come to a forest of frailejones, a tundra plant that's been adapting at this altitude for eons, covering its flowers in white hairs to protect it from the sun and surrounding its stems in dead leaves to protect it from the cold.

DAY 6 / MANIZALES TO JARDIN



Casa Passiflora Boutique Hotel

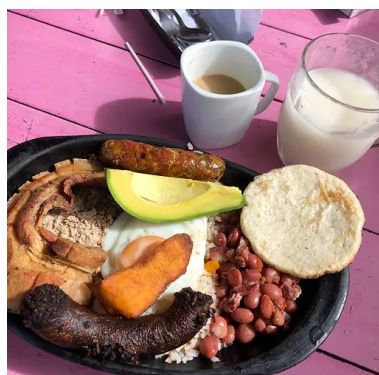
Cra. 5 #11 - 48, Jardín,
Antioquia, Colombia
+57 318 2421000

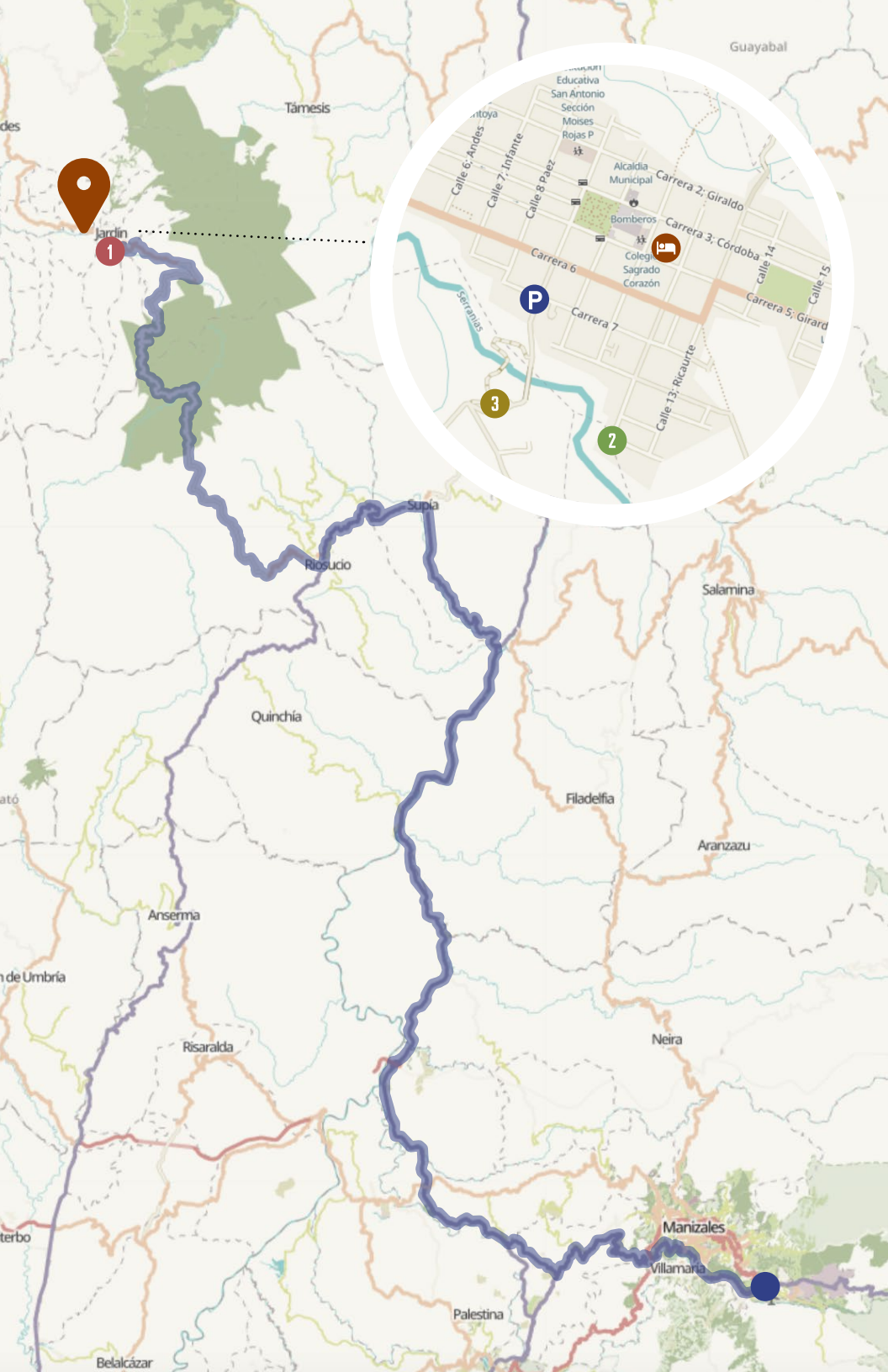


Jardin Parking

Cl. 9 # 1-07, Jardín,
Antioquia
+57 320 4553844

Jardin is the perfect place to finish a great trip. Leaving Nevado de Ruiz, we make our way down from the paramo and through the jungle until we reach the city of Manizales. Here we cross the city in about 30 minutes before we climb back up into the mountains towards the town of Riosucio. After reaching Riosucio the trail switches from pavement to unpaved gravel. We stay on the unpaved trail, winding our way through the forest until we reach the town of Jardin.





1 THE TOWN OF JARDIN

Revered for its brightly-colored houses and quaint mountainside location, Jardín is often dubbed 'the most beautiful town in all of Colombia' and acts as the poster-child for the culturally-enriched Antioquia region.

In Spring, when the town's floral decorations are in full bloom, Jardín is an explosion of colors (and tourists), and local cafes do a great job of reflecting the vibrant essence of the city with their rainbow-colored outdoor seating. The town looks tailor-made for postcards. In town, you can simply stroll the little colonial streets, admire the stunning architecture, and watch as cowboys come into town in the evening with their trained horses. The center of town is compact and easily explored on foot.

2 LA GARUCHA

A great way to get a bird's eye view of the town is by cable-car. La Garucha is a home built metal lattice cable car that pulls you across a valley while suspended hundreds of meters in the air. The views of the city, mountains, and valley below are incredible, and there is a restaurant located on the other side.

3 PARQUE NATURAL JARDÍN DE ROCAS

Visiting the Parque Natural Jardín de Rocas is a must-do trip for birdwatchers. You can see the shockingly bright orange and black Gallo de Roca Andino also known as the Andean Cock-Of-The-Rock. Located at what is known as a lek, we can see courtship displays with males trying to impress the females. The best time to go is in the early morning and just before dusk. You can get within feet of the birds as they socialize to start and end their days.

DAY 7 / JARDIN TO MEDELLÍN



Diez Hotel Categoria

Cl 10A #34-11, El Poblado, Medellín,
El Poblado, Medellín, Antioquia
+57 604 4481034

Sorry amigos, today we have to go back to Medellin. The trip is beautiful though and its a great way to end an awesome motorcycle adventure in Colombia.



COLOMBIA MOTO ADVENTURES

COLOMBIA MOTOADVENTURES.COM

Jeff@ColombiaMotoAdventures.com

WhatsApp: +57 321 491 7060