

Bienvenidos a ECOS Escuela de Español y Salsa

Cartagena de Indias (Colombia)



Manga, carrera 17 #16-05 Cartagena de Indias Colombia
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Bienvenidos a ECOS, welcome to ECOS

Dear Student

Please receive our warm greeting from **Cartagena de Indias, Colombia**.

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to ECOS!

Experience abroad is experience for life. While studying abroad you will encounter a different culture and a different language. You will learn to look at things from other perspectives, and to be open to new ideas. Far away from friends and family, you will face the challenge of becoming independent in a new environment. These are skills that you will find extremely useful in the future.

ECOS (Español, Cultura, Ocio y Salsa) is a private Spanish school focused on teaching Spanish abroad in a cultural immersion. We believe in excellence; so that we are strongly committed to academic quality and the highest level of client service.

It is time to visit South America and the best way to do it is through the front door: COLOMBIA. This beautiful country is located in the heart of the American continent. This is also the perfect moment in the world to invest time in learning or improving Spanish as a Foreign Language in COLOMBIA.

This guide provides you with essential information about studying with ECOS.

We wish you every success during your time with ECOS and in COLOMBIA.

Muchos saludos



Leydis Soto (Colombia)
Co-Founder



Beat Jenni (Switzerland)
Co-Founder

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About us

ECOS Escuela de Español provides high quality Spanish language courses in Cartagena (Colombia). ECOS was established in 2016 by **Leydis Soto (Colombia)** and **Beat Jenni (Switzerland)**. Our students hail from all over the world: and come for both professional and personal development.

ECOS is the language school with the Swiss touch: Swiss quality made by Colombians. We teach Spanish with passion!

What does it make us special?

- Small groups (max 5)
- **Swiss-Colombian management**
- Privileged location (5 Minutes by foot to the old city and «Getsemani»)
- Homestays families, apartments and hotels are very close to the school (2 – max 15 minutes by foot)
- Carefully selected homestay families
- Long experience of ECOS-Teachers
- Teaching materials are structured and didactic (self-development)
- Teaching materials are included
- 3 free weekly activities (Salsa, cooking-class, city-tour) organized by ECOS
- Professional, international Salsa teachers
- In Germany: **BILDUNGSURLAUB** anerkannt
- Modern school facilities

Address

ECOS Escuela de Español S.A.S

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- 5 minutes' walk to Getsemani
- 10 minutes' walk to Centro de Convenciones
- 15 – 20 minutes' walk to the Historic Center

Emergency contacts (WhatsApp or WhatsApp call)

+57 (301) 505 99 36 Office ECOS
+57 (301) 510 99 48 Office ECOS
+57 (313) 566 41 39 Leydis Soto (Co-Founder / CEO)
+41 (79) 335 20 74 Beat Jenni (Co-Founder)

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Your first day at ECOS Escuela de Español y Salsa

On your first day, please come to our reception by 07:30. If you are in a homestay, your host family will help you to come to school.

After the placement test and interview, you will start your spanish lessons.

What to bring to school on your first day?

- your passport (original or a photocopy)
- your visa letter, in hard copy or electronic form
- a pen
- your WiFi enabled device (smartphone, tablet or laptop)

By the way: we recommend always having a copy of your passport with you.

Timetable of your course

Standard Course (15 hrs)	09.00 am – 12.00 pm
Intensive Course (20 hrs)	08.00am – 12.00 pm
Bildungsurlaub (30 hrs)	08.00 am – 12.00 pm + 01.00 pm – 03.00 pm
Standard PLUS+5 (15 hrs + 5 hrs)	09.00 am – 12.00 pm + afternoon
Standard PLUS+10 (15 hrs + 10 hrs)	09.00 am – 12.00 pm + afternoon
Intensive PLUS+5 (20 hrs + 5 hrs)	08.00 am – 12.00 pm + afternoon
Intensive PLUS+10 (20 hrs + 10 hrs)	08.00 am – 12.00 pm + afternoon
Private Lessons	afternoon
Semi-Private Lessons	afternoon
Group classes SALSA	afternoon
Private classes SALSA	afternoon

Public Holidays

On our homepage you will find the list of public holidays. There you can see on which days the school is closed. These are the days marked in red.

Rescheduled sessions

-Public holidays: When there is a public holiday and the school is closed, Ecos will make-up for the lessons during the rest of the week.

-Illness: if you are ill and can't attend the school, it will be justified with the doctors prescribed and the school will help you to make-up for the lessons upon availability.

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Team and teachers of ECOS Escuela de Español y Salsa

All our teachers are highly trained and have university degrees that guarantee an excellent experience in learning Spanish as a second language. The experience of the teachers is 5 to more than 20 years!



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About our school Philosophy

Thanks to our EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY and in accordance with our Mission and Vision, now as a student, you are our most special project. You will live the ECOS experience: you will see how we care about achieving effective and efficient progress in you every day in the acquisition of Spanish as a foreign language. You will witness how we privilege the use of language and interaction activities, promoting spaces for meaningful communication and using your personal experiences and real contexts as contributing elements to your learning as indicated by the TASK-BASED APPROACH, the COMMUNICATIVE METHOD and the FUNCTIONAL-NOTIONAL PROGRAM.

The ECOS student is confronted in each class with situations as similar as possible to reality outside the classroom, but is not limited only to simulate real contexts; but is guided by their teachers to live these experiences of daily life in different places and with various activities, where culture and language are immersed. Among them we have:

- Level Interaction
- Field Trips
- Social Work Visits
- Recreational Activities
- Extracurricular Activities
- Group Integration
- Open Space Classes
- Guided Cultural Tour
- Cooking Class
- Group Dance Class

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About our Spanish courses

Our Spanish packages include what you would normally see in an ordinary Spanish class which would be written expression, oral expression, vocabulary, listening comprehension, pronunciation, reading comprehension and more, but at ECOS we usually mix this with cultural activities inside and outside the classroom which makes class super funny and different.

Every week our school offers all students regardless of the course they have taken and totally free:

1 dance class (salsa, merengue, bachata, reggaeton)

1 class of typical Cartagena-Colombian cuisine

1 guided tour in the city

Further includes your course:

- the teaching material
- participation certificate
- 1 tutoring (if required)

Airport transfer

Ecos Escuela de español can arrange your transfer from the airport to your accommodation and vice-versa.

We will be happy to help you to arrive safe to your place and with a great driver.

Accommodation

Are you looking for a place to stay while learning Spanish here in Cartagena? Check out our variety of accommodation options! Whether you prefer your independence or love hanging out with other people, we have something for everyone.

Homestay family

Living with a host family is the perfect opportunity to practice your Spanish in a real-life, practical environment! Some of our families speak only Spanish, and you will get the chance to discover the Spanish way of life by participating in activities with your host family. The local people here are proud of their customs and can't wait to share them with you!

Life with a host family is always a very special experience. We carefully select our families and try to match the family with your needs. They may consist of parents with children, a couple, or a single person, and come from a variety of different backgrounds and socio-economic groups.

What's included?

All our host families provide room cleaning, towels, and bed linen. The use of facilities like kitchen and laundry can vary from home to home, but you can always decide to include half- or full board in your accommodation package.

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Shared Apartment / Studio Apartment

Our shared apartment and the studio apartment are well equipped and furnished with sofas, a dining table, chairs and a TV, as well as linen in the bedrooms. The kitchen has everything you need to make a delicious meal.

Hotel

Hotel and Hostel available on request.

All our accommodation options have air conditioning and free WIFI. The walking distance from the host families to the school are between 1 – 15 min. The studio apartment and the shared apartment are in the school building

Currency and money exchange

Colombia has Colombian pesos (COP) as its currency. It is better to download a conversion app on your mobile phone. So, you can easily convert. As examples see below (status: 01/08/2022):

COP 1'000'000 = USD 225

COP 1'000'000 = CHF 218

COP 1'000'000 = EUR 221

We recommend purchasing COP from an ATM using an EC card or credit card. For security reasons, withdrawals should be made within a bank during the day. Very close to ECOS is a gasoline station; there are a lot of ATM.

Taxis / Buses / indriver etc

Taxis are available at every corner. They are present in large numbers in the city.

Ordering a taxi by a phone call is almost an impossibility, so that we suggest downloading the app easy taxi.

Taxi costs within the city is between COP 8'000 to COP 15'000

Uber is not used often in Colombia, there is a new app that works for colombian SIN CARD and that's indriver a really good app where you can offer a rate price to go anywhere.

Buses can be a good option if you are open to live a local experience, but we suggest using transcribe which is a good option, fast and with air conditioning. For this bus you will need to buy a card and charge it with money to take the bus.

Security

Cartagena is the safest city in Colombia. There are around 2'000 police officers in the city. In addition, there are over 600 surveillance cameras in the city. The surveillance cameras are in direct contact with the police. All of this makes the city safe. (Source: Noticias Caracol)

The Centro Historico, Manga, Getsemani and Bocagrande are safe districts.

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We generally recommend that you do not wear jewelry.

We also recommend you take care when two people riding a motorcycle. It may be that snatch thieves are on the way.

In the evening we recommend taking a taxi back to your accommodation.

Electricity adapter

The following adapters are used in Colombia:



Useful apps

LEO (= Translator/dictionary): This app is useful for the translation of unknown words. The app can also be used during class.

Currency (= Converter): This currency converter helps to convert COP.

Google Maps: Destinations in Cartagena or Colombia can be easily found with google maps.

Cartagena de Indias

Without fear of mistake, when choosing Colombia, you cannot deny the pleasure of making the fantastic **CARTAGENA** (first tourist place of the country), your ideal destination:

For being a perfect resort of charms due to its eternal summer, its culture, its intense nightlife, its exuberant landscapes, the delight of its gastronomic offer, its magnificent beaches and its friendly and helpful people with whom WITHOUT A DOUBT **practicing Spanish** will be a funny task.

Colombia

This beautiful destiny, owner of unique celebrations, recognized as a business friendly leader among Latin countries; with a logistics, tourism and technological infrastructure competitive; with a privileged geographical location that makes it credible of a climatic diversity and gives it easy access to the global markets, and with a musically articulated, diverse, expressive, creative and mutable SPANISH, Colombia has an added value: the warmth and energy of ITS PEOPLE and its service and workforce so well qualified.

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Covid-19-Information

Life in Colombia is normal as it was before the pandemic, however for us, the health of our students, staff and the population in general is the most important, therefore we have implemented a biosafety protocol that comply with the requirements of the authorities. These can be:

- * Use of facemask (optional)
- * Disinfection of hands when entering school (optional)
- * Disinfection of the school facilities.

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Registrations and Accreditations:

- The school is registered in Dian and Camara de Comercio both Colombian legal companies.
- International Accreditation Eaquals
- Personería Jurídica granted by Gobernación de Bolívar.
- Students from Germany can apply for bildungsurlaub.



Certified Eaquals Member



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Gallery



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