THE CHANGING TIMES OF COLOMBIA

J-Term Immersive Learning
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My trip began on the Caribbean coast of Colombia, in the colonial city of Cartagena...
I explored the historic walled city, stumbled upon lively street performers...

... and visited the Palace of the Inquisition which was the 18th century Holy Office of the Inquisition in Cartagena.
I then flew to Medellin for the E2E “Taller para la Gestión de Impacto Social”

We played interesting ice breakers, had fun networking opportunities, and even made some new friends.
My group worked to tackle the problem of chaotic growth of the tourism sector and how to create a sustainable industry for the future of Colombia. Not an easy task!
A group of people that ARE working towards a sustainable tourism sector in Colombia are “Real City Tours”. They offer a free walking tour of Medellin that discusses the rich history of their city.

They work to educate tourists about the other side of Colombia. Many Colombians are passionate about changing the perception of their country away from drugs and violence and forward to the wonderful art, culture, and ecosystems of their diverse country.
We walked around Medellin for 4 hours exploring the interesting art and architecture, and how to order a cup of coffee like a local...

Notice how the price gets cheaper the nicer you ask...
Next I traveled to Manizales, part of the “Zona Cafetera”, the famous coffee region of Colombia.

I spent 10 days at Hacienda Venecia, a coffee plantation that has also now been converted into a hotel, hostel, and family style guest house. They are hoping to be the first Rainforest Alliance certified hotel in Colombia. I worked with the Operations Manager and owner to prepare their staff and operations to receive the certification, which looks very possible for them to obtain!
They offer one of the most popular coffee farm experiences of the region where they teach about the history of coffee distribution, the growing, harvesting, and roasting process... all an UTZ and now Rainforest Alliance certified farm.
They also offer a newly designed Chocolate Experience...
They teach about how the indigenous of the area made tea from the fruit and the shells of the roasted seeds. We peeled roasted seeds, ground them to make a powder, and mix with milk and sugar to pour into bars to eat.
I spent my last day in Medellin exploring the local national Parque Ariv, along with the many art and history museums of the city. A wonderful way to wrap up 23 days in the exciting country of Colombia!