

Barichara, Colombia

Organization of American States and Museum of Modern Latin America
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Barichara is a small village situated approximately 190 miles to the north of Bogotá. It was founded in 1742 by Spanish settlers, although the area had been inhabited by the 'Guanes' Indians many years before the first Spaniards arrived in America. The traditional Spanish Mediterranean style of architecture has been adapted to this small village through the work of talented native craftsmen using local materials.

The richness of detail and individual expression give the simplicity of the village as a whole, an admirable harmony and balance. The blue, green, and brown on the doors, windows, and baseboards of the homes and buildings act as colored elements contrasting with the large area of white wall. The slanting red tile roofs and flagstone streets dominate and give utility to the whole.

The streets are without vegetation. Plants and flowers, however, are abundant in the interior of the homes. Patios and sunrooms are full of their color. This tradition of design can be seen throughout Latin America as an integral part of the Spanish culture in the Americas.

Image descriptions

A parish church with notable stone work on façade.

White walls are seen in pleasant contrast with the flagstone street and the tile roofs.

The lush vegetation in the central patios can be seen through the openings in the tile roofs.

A large arched doorway of stone, the same design as the main portal of the church. There is a long tradition of stone carving among the native artisans.

The graceful arches of the patio filled with plants and flowers. Around this space, the rooms and activities of the household follow the old Spanish tradition.

Detail of a window. Closed wooden shutter against the white wall.

Two streets follow the natural unevenness of the terrain. The streets are lined with white walls reflecting the bright sun. Homes have their doors and windows shuttered and closed to the street to protect the interior environment from the heat and dust outside.

View from the bell tower of the church. Note the natural harmony created with the tile roofs and surrounding country-side.

A heavy wooden door with an antique lock forged from iron.