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Generally speaking, Bogotá's south is a bit more dangerous while the north is, on the whole, a different story. Many locals walk well after dark between, say, Zona Rosa and Parque 93's club and restaurant scene, whereas in La Candelaria you'd want to be way more cautious.

- Always be on guard – pickpocketing is rampant on buses and the TransMilenio.
- Avoid deserted streets and take taxis after hours – the extra security of a taxi app is always best.
- Police posts known as Comando de Acción Inmediata (CAI) are strategically placed around the city – use them in an emergency.

Safety in Bogotá

Since the mid '90s, Bogotá has made many surprising advances, including managing to reduce its homicide rate from 80 murders per 100,000 residents in 1993 to just 15.8 in 2016 (mobile phone theft fell by 20% from the previous year as well) – statistics that mirror the downward spiral of the overall Colombian murder rate for the same year (the lowest in four decades). Today, Bogotá is one of the safest urban areas in Latin America – so safe, in fact, that Pope Francis visited in 2017.

In 2016, the Colombian government and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) signed a historic ceasefire deal, so Bogotá potentially sees less bombings than it once did at the height of Colombia's armed conflict, but that doesn't mean they have stopped entirely: a bombing at Centro Comercial Andino killed three people in 2017 (the bomb was attributed to members of a smaller urban guerilla group known as Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo, or MRP, their first attack that caused fatalities). Also in 2017, a bomb injured 29 (26 were police officers) in La Macarena. Though no arrests have been made, known members of the National Liberation Army (ELN) are wanted for the attack. While tourists are not specifically targeted, it's not hard to be in areas where these things happen. Thankfully, the Colombian government announced a ceasefire with ELN in late 2017, while active peace talks in Quito, Ecuador, were ongoing. Bogotá – and Colombia – breathed a sigh of relief.

Hostel owners report a considerable drop in robberies in La Candelaria, which is generally safe during the day but can still be dicey at night. Always be aware of your surroundings. Be wary of handling your phone near the edge of streets as thieves on motorcycles and bikes have been known to ride by and snatch them. If you opt to stay in La Candelaria, choose accommodations not only based on your general criteria but security as well. Avoid walking alone or with anything valuable at night in the area – these days there is more of a police presence at night in the district, though it's still a far cry from the show of force during the day.

Muggings remain common around Calle 9 up the hill nearer the poorer neighborhood of Barrio Egipto, which remains a notable hot spot. Despite tours now being offered there, under no circumstances should you ever wander there on your own. Do not stray beyond Carrera 1. At its north end, there is now private security in Parque de los Periodistas (you'll see them walking around with dogs) hired by the universities, so this once sketchy area is now a lot safer as well. Solo travelers should always exercise caution on the road between the Universidad de Los Andes and Monserrate, though a police presence on the mountainside trails from 6am has curbed incidents here dramatically.

Police presence has been stepped up in Macarena as well, though it's still a good idea to take a taxi and stick to the main restaurant streets – La Perseverancia barrio, just north of Macarena, has a very dodgy reputation and it's not difficult to stray into it if you are unfamiliar with the area.