

Guatemala Tikal and Lake Atitlan

Multisport Tour

An Inn-based Hiking, Mountain Biking, Zip Line-Canopy Touring, Lake Kayaking, Archeological and Cultural Adventure, with Optional Extensions to Belize's Caribbean or to Honduras' Copan Ruins!

Welcome to Guatemala: the land of lost jungle cities, cradle of the ancient Mayan civilization, mystic rain forests, and beautiful colonial towns nestled among towering volcanoes! Explore the Mayan ruins of Tikal, hidden deep within the jungle. Here, majestic pyramids tower above the forest canopy, alive with mysterious howler monkeys, tree frogs, and a myriad of colorful jungle birds. Our journey into the highlands includes hiking and mountain biking among active volcanoes and kayaking on emerald crater lakes. Add to this a fantastic blend of colorful markets, as well as the beauty and tradition of the Mayan people, and you can begin to imagine the adventure that awaits!

This exhilarating multi-sport itinerary takes you to the country's highlights, plus off the beaten path destinations to explore Guatemala like few can! We climb an active volcano and head deep into the remote & traditional Mayan highlands where we bike through spectacular volcanic scenery on local trade routes and see remote, colorful local markets. Indulge in an exciting mountain hike and zipline canopy tour. Learn more about the typical way of life here and visit the Maya God Maximon after kayaking on the renowned, high altitude lake of Lake Atitlan, with her majestic volcanoes. For a grand finale, climb temples in the jungle at the world famous site of Tikal, and then opt for a kick-back Caribbean extension to Belize or visit the exotic ruins of Copan in nearby Honduras!

Day 1: Arrival Day and Transfer to Antigua, Hotel Aurora (502-7832-0217 <http://www.hotelauroraantigua.com> / private baths) **or similar (no meals included)**

A tour representative will greet you in Guatemala City, the political and economic capital of this captivating country. Escaping the hustle and bustle of the city take an immediate transfer to the beautiful city of Antigua. Here, you can enjoy the quaint feel and traditional Spanish colonial architecture as you stroll along cobblestone streets of this World Heritage Site and former colonial capital of Guatemala. Relax and enjoy your new surroundings tonight, as we'll all meet in the morning to begin our adventure!

- Guatemala City-Antigua Transfer [1 hour]

Day 2: Bike Ride and Pacaya Volcano Hike, Hotel Aurora or similar (B,L,D)

After breakfast we start with an exhilarating downhill ride toward the coastal lowlands on asphalt and some dirt roads through local villages. Near the bottom our support vehicle picks us up to for a short drive to the trailhead of active Pacaya Volcano.

The hike begins with a fairly strenuous section through wonderful pine forest up to the more tricky volcanic ash section and finally to the sulfur-smoking cone (depending on volcanic activity level we may not be able to get all the way to the cone). On occasions you can even see small eruptions and lava flow depending on

the activity of the volcano. From the higher slopes we enjoy great views of the northern volcanoes, the Pacific lowlands and all the way to El Salvador. A short way down, we stop to enjoy a picnic lunch with the impressive volcano in close sight. Back at the base of the volcano, our support vehicle awaits us for our transfer back to Antigua.

- Bike ride [16 miles/2310 feet of descent]
- Pacaya Volcano Hike [3-4 hours, 500 meters/1640 feet elevation gain / drop]
- Shuttle [2+ hours roundtrip]

Day 3: Bike to Totonicapan, Homestay (502-7723-1100) (B,L,D)

Today we shuttle from Antigua to the central highlands area known by the locals as Alaska. After lunch, we bike through some of the most spectacular scenery in all of Guatemala on local paths and trails, complete with views of distant volcanoes. If the day is clear, more than ten volcanoes can be seen at once, including Tajumulco which is the highest in Central America (4220 meters above sea level). Towards the end of the ride a spectacular downhill brings us to the highland village of Totonicapan where we stay with a local family.

- Mountain biking [2 hours, 9miles, 1000 feet gain/2300 feet loss]
- Total transfer time for the day [3 hours]

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- Overnight as a guest by a local Latino family. Simple clean rooms, usually shared bathrooms/hot water. Dinner and breakfast with families. Most of the family members speak no or limited English but are very friendly and welcoming.

Note: if for any reason you would prefer to stay in a hotel, please let us know in advance.

Day 4: Hike and Bike the Alaska Highlands and Transfer to Lake Atitlan, Posada Santiago (502- 7721 – 7366) or similar in Santiago (B,L,D)

Today we venture deeper into the spectacular highlands region. The paths in this area are the same ones used by countless generations of Maya to move about the country. We bike past adobe houses, patches of forest and sacred sites still used for Maya offerings. In the distance, volcanoes command the horizon. In the afternoon, it's a fun-filled downhill bike ride past highland farms, pine forest and ridges with wonderful views toward Lake Atitlan. After the visit we shuttle to the shore of stunning Lake Atitlan.

- Biking: [6 miles, 825 feet of gain/loss, 2 hours]
- Total transfer time for the day [3 hours, including 20 minute boat ride]

Day 5: Kayak Lake Atitlan and Hike Cerro de Oro, Posada Santiago or similar in Santiago (B,L,D)

This morning we kayak on what many have called “the most beautiful lake in the world”, Lake Atitlan. Pass by local fishermen, indigenous Maya women doing their chores and men working in the fields wearing their famous embroidered Santiago shorts. You’ll also have impressive views of the three lake volcanoes.

Once at Cerro de Oro we hike this impressive hill by foot. At the peak of this sacred hill we can sometimes witness Mayan rituals in process, which is an amazing and authentic glimpse of local Mayan life. There are also great views of the whole lake and her surrounding volcanoes from atop this hill.

Down at the foothill of the Cerro de Oro we transfer in local pickup trucks to Santiago Atitlan. This lively tzutuhil Maya town features a market and its strange Maya God, “Maximon”, whom locals revere and perform rituals in front of to bring good luck – or bad!

- Kayaking [1-2 hours, 4 miles/7 kms]
- Hiking [1.5 hours, 300 mts/1000 feet elevation gain/loss, 2 miles/3.34 kms]
- Boat transfer time of 1 hour
- Local truck transfer time 20 min

Day 6: Visit to Chichicastenango Market and Hike to Antigua, Hotel Aurora or similar (B,L,D)

We depart from Lake Atitlan to visit the local crafts and goods market of Chichicastenango. Browse through the aisles of handicrafts, food, flowers, pottery, wooden boxes, condiments, medicinal plants, candles, incense, grindstones, pigs and chickens, machetes, textiles and masks used in traditional dances.

Just a few minutes walk from the church of Santo Tomás in the center of Chichicastenango is a wooded hill. Atop this hill is an ancient rock [*abaj*] with a carved face, known all over Guatemala as Pascual Abaj. Maya shamans and priests perform ceremonies here daily. People come for all sorts of things: to bless a marriage, to pray for a good harvest, or to remedy a problem such as preventing thieves from stealing their corn.

In the afternoon we leave our vehicle behind and hike on local trails down to the Antigua valley.

- Chichicastenango Market visit [2 hours]
- Hiking on trails to Antigua [2 hours]
- Total transfer time for the day [4-1/2 hours]

Day 7: Transfer to Guatemala City and Flight to Peten for Uaxactun community tour, Camping among Mayan Temples in Uaxactun. (B,L,D)

We transfer to the airport in Guatemala City for an early morning flight to the northern rainforest area of the Peten. On the way to Uaxactun we take an exhilarating zipline adventure. Each zipline offers a totally different experience: some are adrenaline-generators at nearly 200 feet above ground while others offer striking scenic views. We then continue on to Uaxactun, famous for the oldest complete Maya astronomical complex and one of the longest-occupied Maya sites. It’s also the community where the “Chicleros” (gum collectors) have come to work for over 100 years.

Many of Uaxactun’s residents nowadays make their living from gathering forest products such as chicle (exported to Japan), allspice and xate palm leaves (ornamental plants exported to the U.S. and used for floral arrangements). Guests will tour the site and the community and will learn more about the chicle process and the different crafts. The community also has a small interesting archaeology museum which we visit.

For sunset we go to the lookout tower to enjoy the amazing view. If we’re lucky we’ll be able to see the ruins from Tikal rising above the jungle! Tonight is spent in canvas tents in the “E” complex of the Mayan sight. Dinner is usually served in the center of the astrological plaza. Showers and bathroom facilities are within 2 minutes walking distance from our tents.

- Guatemala City-Flores flight [1 hour]
- Zipline tour [8 cables]
- Transfer to Uaxactun area [2 hours]
- Uaxactun Tour [3 hours]

Day 8: Tikal National Park and Ruins Tour, Hotel Aurora or similar in Antigua (B,L,D)

Today visit mystic and magical Tikal National Park! Once in the park enjoy a guided tour of the famous Maya temple site in the jungle. Lunch is included at a local restaurant.

There are thousands of ancient structures at Tikal and only a fraction of these have been excavated after decades of archaeological work. The most prominent surviving buildings include six very large Mesoamerican

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step pyramids, labeled Temples I-VI, each of which support a temple structure on their summits. Some of these pyramids are over 60 meters high (200 feet).

The ruins lie among lowland rainforest. Conspicuous trees include gigantic kapok, the sacred tree of the Maya, tropical cedar and Honduras mahogany.

Agoutis, coatis, spider and howler monkeys, oscillated turkeys, guans, and leafeater ants can be seen regularly.

This afternoon we transfer back to the airport and fly back to Guatemala City. At the airport you will be met

EXTENSIONS

Belize-Caribbean Island Extension

Days 1-4. Transfer from Flores or Guatemala City to one of the following Caribbean resorts: Ambergris Caye: Victoria House or Mata Chica (High end), Ramons (Mid-range), Mata Rocks or Sunbreeze (Economy); Placencia: Turtle Inn (High end), Calico Jacks (Mid-range), or Nautical Inn (Economy)

Noted for the western hemisphere's longest barrier reef, 1,400-year old Mayan ruins, sparkling white-sand beaches, and huge tracts of pristine tropical forest, Belize is the Caribbean's best-kept secret. Getaway to this unspoiled paradise for several days on the Great Maya (Belize) Barrier Reef, the longest unbroken barrier reef in the world, stretching some 200 miles and spanning the entire length of the country.

Ambergris Caye is a white sand beach island that runs parallel to the barrier reef for 30 miles. This is a great base from where to go on diving tours or to take lessons, to go on organized snorkeling trips and to go fishing. You can even take day trips to the mainland if you would rather be based by the beach. Hotels are based along the shoreline either close to the main town of San Pedro or more remotely up into the northern end of the island – only really accessible by boat. Alternatively, stay in coastal Caribbean in southern Belize at Placencia, with all similar ocean options and amenities.

- Contact us for rates and availability.

Trip Details:

Trip Type: Inns

Trip Length: 9 days/8 nights

2011 Departure Dates: November 19-27 (singles), December 3-11

by a transfer to take you to your hotel in Antigua for a farewell dinner. The rest of the evening is free to enjoy the nightlife.

- Tikal private tour [half day]

Day 9: Departure Day (B only)

Transfer to the airport in Guatemala City in plenty of time for your international flight out or onward to the next segment of your adventure extension. Hasta luego...until we meet again!

Copan Pre or Post-Trip Extension, 3D / 2N

Day 1: Antigua-Copan Transfer, Hacienda San Lucas (<http://www.haciendasanlucas.com/index.htm> 504-651-4495) or Marina Copan

We depart Antigua around 9am and travel through Guatemala City, and then down into the central desert area of Guatemala and up into the hills of the Copan area – crossing the border into Honduras. After checking into our hotel, we visit the bird park, just outside of Copan where rescued birds are looked after in a beautiful lush river valley setting. Overnight in the wonderful Hacienda San Lucas with views over the Copan Valley & the renowned site itself.

- Land transfer [5 Hour]
- Bird Park [1-3 hours]

Day 2. Copan Ruins, Hacienda San Lucas or Marina Copan (B,L)

Today you'll be met at the hotel and transferred to the Copan Ruins where you'll experience a private guided tour of this most impressive site and the sculpture museum. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant, and the rest of the afternoon is free to explore the quaint town of Copan Ruinas or relax at the Hacienda, walk their trails or explore their small archaeology site of Los Sapos.

- Activities [half day tour?]

Day 3. Explore Quirigua, Guatemala City Transfer (B)

Today transfer back into Guatemala to the UNESCO protected site of Quirigua, full of elaborately carved stelae. Then continue on to Guatemala City.

- Transfer [3hours Copan to Quirigua; 3 hours Quirigua to Guatemala City]
- Time to explore Quirigua

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2012 Departure Dates: January 14-22, February 18-26, March 17-25, April 14-22 (singles), May 12-20, June 16-24, July 14-22, August 18-26, September 15-23, October 13-21, November 17-25 (singles), December 1-9

Price: \$2298 (\$700 per person surcharge for total group size of 2; \$300 per person surcharge for total group size of 3)

Single Supplement: \$350

Group Size: Minimum 2 / maximum 12

Trip Rating: Moderate

Activities: Hike, mountain bike, kayak, explore Mayan ruins, zipline canopy tour, markets and coffee farm visits, scenic flights

Gateway City: Guatemala City, Guatemala

Meeting Time & Place: Upon arrival on Day 1 at the airport in Guatemala City

Trip Conclusion: Airport transfer on Day 9

Trip Fees Include: All meals from Breakfast on Day 2 through Lunch on Day 8 plus breakfast on Day 9, accommodations and activities as described in the itinerary, equipment for included activities, vehicle transfers, park entrance fees, internal flights to and from Tikal, and professional guide and driver.

Trip Fees Exclude: International airfare to and from Guatemala, any pre- or post-trip lodging, all meals on Day 1 and Dinner on Day 8, optional activities and extensions, personal expenses, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, guide gratuities, and National airport taxes (\$3 each way for the flight to Flores) and airport international departure taxes (currently \$30 plus \$3 security tax—the \$30 may be included in your airfare so be sure to check).

Trip Details: Belize-Caribbean Island Extension

Trip Type: Inn--based tour

Trip Length: 3 nights

Departure Dates: Available as a pre or post trip add-on

Price: Contact us for rates and availability.

Group Size: Minimum 2 / maximum 12

Activities: Island Activities vary, Diving extra

Meeting Time & Place: Upon Arrival

Trip Conclusion: Airport transfer on last day

Trip Details: Copan Extension

Trip Type: Inn--based tour

Trip Length: 3 days/2 nights

Departure Dates: Available as a pre or post-trip add-on

Price: Contact us for rates and availability.

Group Size: Minimum 2 / maximum 12

Trip Rating: Easy

Activities: Hiking, Copan Ruins Visit

Meeting Time & Place: Day 1, Guatemala City

Trip Conclusion: Day 3, Guatemala City

The Next Step...

References Don't take our word for it that The World Outdoors trips are the finest in the adventure travel industry. Ask our past guests. *Call about any of our trips and we'll be happy to refer you to someone who's been there with us.*

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The Best Value in Active Travel Guarantee: *We commit to you that all of our trips are of the highest quality at the best value.* If you find a trip of equal quality that matches our itinerary and inclusions at a lower fare within 30 days of booking your trip with us, we will gladly refund the difference. A simple guarantee that assures you of the best trip at the best fare!

How do I join this trip? Call The World Outdoors at (800) 488-8483 / (303) 413-0938 and a Trip Consultant will reserve your space(s) or register online at www.TheWorldOutdoors.com. Your travel agent can also book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

Special Requests: If you have any special dietary needs or any special request that will make your trip more enjoyable, please be sure to notify your Trip Consultant or travel agent upon booking.

Then Leave the Rest to Us... Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including your reservation payment receipt and confirmation, travel insurance application, suggestions for preparing for your trip, a packing list, information on pre- and post-trip arrangements, a guest questionnaire and a liability release agreement.

Travel Protection: To make your trip with The World Outdoors even more carefree, we strongly recommend the purchase of our travel insurance plan. Offering comprehensive coverage and peace of mind, our travel insurance plan is designed to protect you in case of lost or damaged luggage, a sudden illness or death in the family, emergency medical expenses and transportation costs, and flight delays. We'd be happy to arrange travel insurance coverage for you, so contact us at (800) 488-8483 with any questions.

How do I book airfare for this trip? Call our in-house travel agent, Sherry Malanify, at 800-488-8483 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time Monday through Friday or you can email her at sherrym@theworldoutdoors.com. Sherry is also available to assist you with pre- and post-lodging needs. If Sherry is unavailable and your needs are urgent, please call James TravelPoints, a local travel agency, at 800-538-7461 and ask for Georgia (ext 251) or email her at GeorgiaT@travelpoints.com. Be sure to tell her you are traveling with The World Outdoors. Alternatively, you are welcome to book your airfare online, directly with the airline or through your personal travel agent.

General Information, Questions & Answers

What weather conditions can I expect? We run trips from November through May in Guatemala to take advantage of the drier season which has the most reliable weather, but weather is typically pleasant in Guatemala. Note that storms can still disrupt our schedule and delays may occur. For more information check out the Central American weather site on the internet: <http://www.intellicast.com>, enter Guatemala under the country prompt.

How difficult is this trip...Really? No experience is required for any activity, but this is an activity-oriented trip. We will spend three to six hours a day in moderately strenuous activities.

Tour Operator: This tour was designed by The World Outdoors and is conducted by a local tour operator selected for their reputation, service and reliability. Bilingual guides will lead all activities for the entire tour.

Emergency Contact Information: Our office in Boulder, Colorado is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time 1-800-488-8483. For emergencies outside of our normal business hours call Bill Marriner at 720-289-0460, Sherry Malanify at 303-915-9660, Darcie Carr at 303-595-8561 or Eric Wagner at 303-324-7795.

ViaVenture's office in Antigua, Guatemala is open Monday to Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. They can be reached from the U.S. at 011-502-783-22509, from outside Guatemala +502-783-22509 or within Guatemala 783-22509. After hours, call from the U.S. 011-502-577-84801 or 011-502-577-85063, from outside Guatemala +502-577-84801 or +502 7832 2509 ext.121, or within Guatemala 502-577-84801 or 502-577-85063. Via internet, skype: [viaventure_opscenter](https://www.skype.com/en/contacts/via-venture-opscenter). + means you need to dial the appropriate international calling code for the country you are calling from before the rest of the number. Ask local information for the correct code.

Pre- and Post-Trip Accommodation Recommendation:

- Contact us for recommendations if you are arriving early

We're Always Improving! While the information presented here details this trip's planned activities, routes, accommodations, departure and conclusion times, we are consistently seeking new opportunities to enhance this itinerary and your experience. Our actual activities and sites may vary due to season, special events, or weather. As a result, we reserve the right to alter the itinerary since unforeseen circumstances that mandate change may arise. Naturally, we will keep you up-to-date on any changes that may affect your arrival or departure times.

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