

EXPLORE!



DISCOUNTED

Cycle Nicaragua to the Panama Canal

COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA, PANAMA - TRIP CODE CNCP

CYCLING

Why book this trip?

This adventurous cycle trip takes us on a journey through beautiful Central America. We ride through varied scenery - past volcanoes, cloud forest, rain forest and see the famous Panama Canal. Along our way we visit the volcanic island of Ometepe and the tropical islands of Bocas del Toro for a little relaxation.

- **Cycle Central America** - An adventurous and exciting way to see the best of Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama
- **Arenal Volcano** - Cycle around the live volcano and expansive lake
- **Caribbean Islands** - Relax in paradise on Bocas del Toro



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 13



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour Leader / Cycle guide
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Bicycle
Boat



ACCOMMODATION
11 nights comfortable hotel
2 nights premium hotel



CYCLING GRADE:
Moderate To Challenging



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Trip starts in Granada

Our journey begins in Granada, a colonial architectural gem, situated at the foot of Mombacho volcano on the north-west shore of Lake Nicaragua. Founded in 1524 by the conquistador Hernandez de Cordoba it was the first colonial city founded in Nicaragua. The baroque and renaissance buildings of the old town help to complement this wonderful setting.

The Tour Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at approximately 6pm for the welcome meeting. There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you will need to arrive into Augusto C. Sandino International Airport (MGA) in Managua, which is a 45-minute drive from our hotel. There are many evening flights into Managua, so if you do miss the meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If you arrive earlier in the day, you may want to explore the picturesque cobbled streets and take a break in one of the inviting cafes or eateries.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Con Corazon (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Cycle by Lake Nicaragua. Visit Masaya Volcano National Park (optional)

This morning we get used to our bikes on a short cycle from the hotel down to the shores of Lake Nicaragua and on to the Asese Peninsula, covered with lush tropical forest. After returning to our hotel there will be time to explore Granada on foot and some freetime for lunch. The city's narrow lanes and historic buildings are ideal to discover on foot. In the afternoon you have the option to spend more free time in charming Granada or drive to the tranquil setting of Masaya Volcano National Park on an optional excursion to Nicaragua's first and largest protected reserve. The views from Masaya Volcano provide us with a great panorama of the wider setting and we can explore the crater rim by foot. We return to Granada by bus later this afternoon.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 11 kilometres (total 80 metres ascent and descent)



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Con Corazon (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Cycle on Ometepe Island in Lake Nicaragua

Leaving Granada behind this morning we drive to the highland white villages, famed locally for their importance in ancient beliefs relating to witchcraft. High up in Catarina village we can enjoy the best views across the spectacular, blue Apoyo Lagoon in the volcanic crater before getting on our bikes for a 20 km ride through the tropical countryside, getting first impressions of villagers' and farmers' lives. Once we reach the Panamericana Highway we continue by bus and drive to the small town San Jorge where we make the one hour ferry crossing to the volcanic island of Ometepe, set in the expansive waters

of Lake Nicaragua - the largest freshwater lake in Central America. On arrival we get back on the bikes and ride 1 hour/13 km to our hotel in Charco Verde (or 2 hours/ 26 km if our hotel is located on Santo Domingo beach), always with the imposing Concepcion volcano on our left.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 33-46 kilometres (total 390 metres ascent and 780 metres descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Charco Verde (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Ride around Maderas Volcano

Ometepe is made up of two volcanoes which rise up from the waters of Lake Nicaragua - the perfect cone of Concepcion and the slightly smaller Maderas Volcano. Today is left free and your Explore Leader will explain the different optional excursions open to you which will vary slightly depending if we are staying in Charco Verde or Santo Domingo. You may choose to go off road and cycle a section around Maderas island until reaching Finca Merida where you have the possibility of sea kayaking. There are plenty of birds and insects to be spotted in the area and en route we see rural Nicaragua at its best, with lush tropical vegetation and small hamlets. Later you might want to cycle to Alta Gracia village where you can relax and swim at the fabulous Ojo de Agua lagoon or you may prefer to cycle to Santo Domingo beach for some rest and relaxation.

Our total optional cycling distance today is approximately 26-80 kilometres (optional) (total 150 metres ascent and 150 metres descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Charco Verde (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE

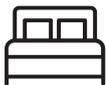


MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Over the border to Costa Rica

We start the day with a cycle ride back to the ferry port. From Charco Verde this is 13 kms and from Santo Domingo this would be 26 km. We then cross back to the mainland by ferry and drive the short distance to the Costa Rican border. After border crossing formalities (which may be extremely slow and require patience!) we drive 3 hours to Tilaran where we spend the night.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 13-26 kilometres (total 330 metres ascent and descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Guadalupe (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



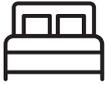
MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Cycle around Arenal Lake and Volcano

A short 10 minute drive this morning brings us to the starting point for our ride around Arenal Lake; a challenging route that takes in the spectacular backdrop of one of the world's most active volcanoes. Set in an area of national park covering some 9,884 acres, Arenal volcano has been especially active since the massive eruption of 1968. This, along with the impressive manmade Lake Arenal, has helped the area to regenerate through tourism. Since 2010 Arenal's volcanic activity appears to be decreasing. Our

challenging ride ends in the rural town of La Fortuna where we spend the next two nights. For those interested it is possible to start earlier today and ride a total of 68 km (total 1390 metres accumulated ascent and 1850 metres descent).

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 46 kilometres (total 740 metres ascent and 1080 metres descent) with the option to extend the ride.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel San Bosco Inn (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Free Day in La Fortuna

Today is left free for resting or exploring the tropical rainforest in more depth on either a canopy excursion, a visit to the hot springs or a jungle walk across hanging bridges. Alternatively, you may wish to cycle in and around La Fortuna, taking in some of the impressive scenery, agricultural lands, cascading waterfalls and hot springs. This is one of the fertile high plateaux where most of Costa Rica's crops are grown.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 50 kilometres (optional) (total 350 metres ascent and 600 metres descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel San Bosco Inn (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Cycle through the stunning Orosi Valley to Turrialba

We start the day with a four hour drive to the small town of Orosi, set in the impressive Orosi Valley, forged by the meandering course of the powerful Reventazón River. This picturesque valley is the setting for today's ride, as we discover the lush green vistas of what many consider to be some of the country's best landscapes. Our destination is our accommodation located outside Turrialba, amid the central valleys, lush tropical gardens and volcanic peaks of Turrialba Volcano National Park.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 46 kilometres (total 880 metres ascent and 1180 metres descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Turrialtaico Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Cycle to the Panamanian border. On to Bocas del Toro idyllic islands

Driving up over the nearby mountain ridges this morning we then descend by bus towards the Caribbean coast. In Puerto Viejo we switch from the bus to our bikes and cycle to the border with Panama through a totally different side of Costa Rica; first along the lush, tropical Caribbean coast and later past enormous banana plantations. We then cross the Panamanian border by way of an old railway bridge across which we push our bikes. Once again the border crossing may be very slow and require patience. We then continue by bus to the port of Almirante, from where we take a boat to the Isla Colon and the small town of Bocas de Toro, our base for exploring the stunning archipelago and the equally spectacular Parque Nacional Marino Isla Bastimentos. The archipelago itself is made up of a number of beautiful forested islands lying in warm Caribbean waters and the laid back beaches and dazzling reefs make this the ideal Caribbean paradise to relax or explore. Today's ride has a 9km dirt section in it.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 31 kilometres (total 300 metres ascent and 300 metres

descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Swans Cay (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



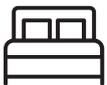
SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - Free day on Bocas del Toro. Optional snorkel, boat trip...

Today is left free to enjoy the Caribbean with a number of optional activities that you might like to try. The islands boast stunning beaches and coral reefs and there are opportunities to snorkel or dive the rich waters. You may like to take a boat trip around the archipelago and marine park, or visit one of the unpopulated outlying islands. The bikes will not be available today as they cannot be carried across to the island on the ferry.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Swans Cay (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE

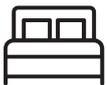


MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 11 - Drive over the continental divide and ride on to Santiago

After taking the short ferry ride back to Almirante we drive south and then upwards over the Continental Divide and the cool Panamanian highlands. We commence today's cycle at Fortuna lake (1070 metres above sea level) and the route offers us a few ascents and a long downhill before we reach some fabulous natural pools in the forest for a refreshing dip. We continue by bus to the centre of the country and our night stop in Santiago, a busy provincial town and one of the oldest settlements in the country.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 35 kilometres (total 880 metres ascent and 1820 metres descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Gran David (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 12 - Cycle through farmland and ranches. Drive on to Panama City

Today's cycle ride begins near Santiago and on the bikes we pass farmland and ranches that offer an insight into a traditional and rural Panamanian way of life. After lunch we drive to Panama City (3 hours), hopefully with time for a swim in the Pacific Ocean before arriving into our final destination. In the evening we can explore the neighbourhood around the hotel - full of good restaurants and street life.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 38 kilometres (total 400 metres ascent and 450 metres descent)



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Hampton Inn (or similar)



Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 13 - Visit Panama Canal. Coastal bike path in Panama City

A short drive out of town takes us to Miraflores lock, one of the best viewing points on the Panama Canal. We can take time to explore the story of the canal construction in the excellent museum and see huge container ships making their way through this major lock separating the Pacific Ocean from the 26m higher Gatun lake in the interior of the Canal zone. After a short drive back to Panama City we will cycle along the short but impressive new cycle path that follows the coast line from the Canal Zone and through Panama Vieja, affording fabulous views of Panama City's impressive skyline. The afternoon is left free for you to take a walk through fantastic Panama Vieja - the historic town from colonial times - and can have our farewell dinner here.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 7 kilometres on the flat.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Hampton Inn (or similar)



Grade: Premium Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 14 - Trip ends in Panama City

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Panama City.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Tocumen International Airport (PTY), which is which is a 45-minute drive away.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Country information

Costa Rica

Climate

Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page. Costa Rica has a tropical climate with high temperature humidity and rainfall. The average temperature is 21°C in the highlands and variable in the lowlands. The rainy season is from May to November and the summer from December to April, but it does still tend to rain, usually in short bursts. Bear in mind that Costa Rica has 12 microclimates and weather can vary significantly in one day.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-6	2 Pin Flat	Christian, Roman Catholic	Spanish

Nicaragua

Climate

Tropical, with little seasonal variation in temperature. The heavy rainy season is May to October but it can rain at any time along the Caribbean coast of Rio San Juan. There are 3 main climactic zones, the hot tropical lowlands and the cooler hill region, which has a larger range of daily temperature.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-6	2 Pin Flat	Roman Catholic	Spanish

Panama

Climate

Panama has a tropical climate with high temperature and humidity, the average temperature 30°C. The rainy season is from May to November and the summer from December to April. The rainfall is of a tropical nature, falling for 1-2 hours in the afternoon.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-5	2 Pin Flat	Roman Catholic	Spanish

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Granada - Masaya Volcano National Park - USD 10-20 depending on numbers.

Ometepe - Sea kayaking USD 25, San Ramon waterfall USD 5

Arenal - Canopy - USD 50; Hanging bridges USD 60 ;Hot springs - USD 35

Bocas del Toro - Excursions include kayaking, snorkelling or dolphin watching, all approx. USD 25

Panama Canal - Museum entrance fee Miraflores lock USD 15

Clothing

Bring your cycling gear including shorts and gloves. Remember weather is changeable in the mountains and it can be cool and wet at higher altitude, and even on some evenings, so bring some warmer clothing too. A raincoat is essential at all times in case of rain. Don't forget your swimming costume.

Footwear

If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to trip that combine sightseeing with cycling.

Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

We recommend you bring a daypack and one main piece of luggage (total allowance: 44lb/20kg) which will be transported between hotels while you cycle. Check the bike details section to see if a pannier or handlebar bag is provided on the bike. Please note that there is a weight restriction of 7kg for hand luggage/daypack for international and internal flights.

Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. It is a legal requirement in Costa Rica to wear a helmet that meets current safety criteria. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn. Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. Panniers are not provided so you may wish to bring a light rucksack to wear whilst cycling. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, travel plug, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$ 40 for group tipping

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

International Departure Taxes

There are several border crossings on this trip - the total cost of border fees will be approx US\$10

Costa Rica

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£13	£13	£3	£1.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Costa Rican Colon (CRC)

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport. Here you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change. The exchange rate with the CRC is approximately CRC 800 to the British Pound. USD are accepted in some shops / restaurants. We recommend you take some emergency cash in USD as the GBP exchange isn't very good. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they may not be accepted. Please check on line for up to date information

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

ATMs can be found in the major towns and cities for cash withdrawals in Colones. Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card are widely accepted in many shops and restaurants but some may be subject to a service charge

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques

Nicaragua

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£10.00 - 12.00	£2	£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Cordoba (NIO)

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport. Here you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change. The exchange rate with the NIO is approximately NIO 42 to the British Pound. We recommend you take some emergency cash in USD as the GBP exchange isn't very good. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they may not be accepted. USD can be used in some places in Nicaragua. Please check on line for up to date information

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

ATMs can be found in the major towns and cities for cash withdrawals in NIO. Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card are widely accepted in many shops and restaurants but some may be subject to a service charge

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques

Panama**Food and drink**

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£7	£10	£3	£0.7

Foreign Exchange**Local currency**

Balboa (PAB)

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Local currency in Panama is the Balboa (PAB). You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport. Here you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change. The exchange rate with the PAB is approximately PAB 1.20 to the British Pound. US dollars are legal tender in Panama. Notes should be in good condition, otherwise they might be difficult to use. Please check on line for up to date information.

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

ATMs are not widely available outside of Panama city. Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are not widely accepted outside Panama City.

Travellers Cheques

Please note credit card are not widely accepted

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Bicycle, Boat

Accommodation notes

Comfortable - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Panama: Citizens from the UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canada do not require a visa for a stay up to 30 days. However, on entry you will be required to show that you have either 500USD in cash or a credit card. Please note that upon entering Panama by land from Costa Rica you may be required to present a copy of your return ticket home.

Costa Rica: Citizens from the UK, US, Canada and most EU countries do not require a visa for a stay up to 90 days. Citizen of Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland do not require a visa for stays up to 30 days.

Nicaragua: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport

holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit)

For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements.

Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Costa Rica

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Nicaragua

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. All travellers coming to Nicaragua from the following countries (even if only in transit) must present an international certificate of vaccination: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Panamá, Paraguay and Venezuela. From the African Continent, all countries are included except Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Sao Tomé and Príncipe and Somalia. This list is regularly updated please check NaTHNaC for the most up to date list. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Panama

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Cycling information



CNCP_DistanceChart

General cycling information

On this trip we cycle 286 km over nine days (an average of 32 km per day) with further optional rides available. The terrain is often undulating to mountainous. 95% of the route is on tarmac roads in reasonably good condition while 5% is ridden on dirt or gravel roads which are rough at times. A support vehicle is available throughout the trip (except on days 3, 4 and 5). We have graded the route as moderate to challenging.

Bike included

27 gear mountain bikes with front suspension

Bike information

Your included bike in Costa Rica and Panama will be a 27 gear Trek 4500 mountain bike with front suspension and will be the correct frame size for your height. A 21 gear mountain bike with v-brakes is used for the Nicaraguan section. A water bottle holder is included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. A support vehicle accompanies the rides throughout the trip except on day 10. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

Cycling grade

ModerateToChallenging

Additional Information



CNCP_Map



CNCP_Map_CostaRica_Panama

Why book this trip

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**