

Guatemala - Land of the Maya

GUATEMALA, HONDURAS - TRIP CODE GM

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Guatemala is one of the only remaining places where the living Maya culture can be truly experienced. This trip contrasts old and new, visiting modern indigenous communities thriving in the highlands around Lake Atitlan, as well as the early Maya cities of Tikal, Quirigua and Copan (Honduras). Hitting the highlights as well as getting far off the beaten path, this trip encompasses the beauty and colour of ancient Central America.

- **Lake Atitlan** - Take a boat trip on this stunning lake, encircled by volcanoes, and visit the neighbouring Maya villages
- **Maya sites** - Discover the atmospheric site of Tikal, its spires poking out of deep jungle, and the peaceful site of Copan

- **Chichicastenango Market** - Throw yourself into the bustle and colour of this busy market, and see the modern Maya culture come to life
- **Festivals** - Witness the Holy Week celebrations in Antigua, or the giant kite festival celebrated as part of the Day of the Dead festivities in Sumpango

					
INCLUDED MEALS Breakfast: 14	TRIP STAFF Explore Tour Leader Boat Crew Driver(s) Local Guide(s)	TRANSPORT Bus Boat	ACCOMMODATION	TRIP PACE: Full on	GROUP SIZE: 12 - 18

Itinerary

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

Trip information

Country information

Guatemala

Climate

In the high plains (1524m-1981m) the climate is temperate all year round. In lower areas the climate is semi-tropical. The mountains can be cool especially at night. In general, the dry season in Guatemala lasts from Nov - April. From May to October there are often fine mornings and clear evenings but afternoon rains tend to be heavy. The Peten lowlands tend to be rainy all year round though less so from February to April.

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

Honduras

Climate

Climate change varies depending upon altitude. Mid range temperatures reach about 28°C. Rainfall is low to moderate with May to October being the wettest season. Temperature ranges in the lower reaches of the slopes and along the coast are more constant, with less rainfall.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-6	2 Pin Flat	Roman Catholic and Protestant	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.

Copan - Macaw Mountain US\$10; re visit ruins US\$20.

Antigua - Coffee and Music Museum US\$8; Pacaya Volcano US\$65 (min group of 4); Jade workshop US\$48; La Casa del Ron - Rum tasting US\$13

Clothing

Lightweight clothing and a sunhat are essential in mid-summer though a warm sweater or fleece jacket is necessary for cool evenings in the highlands. A waterproof is essential. The jungle lowlands around Tikal are hot and muggy, and it can rain at any time of year. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts are recommended on jungle walks. Bring a swimming costume.

Footwear

Comfortable trail boots with ankle support are essential for visiting Maya sites because of the amount of walking/climbing involved. Also trainers and/ or sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of luggage and a day pack. Remember, you are expected to carry your own baggage - don't overload yourself.

Equipment

Bring insect repellent, sunscreen, a sun hat, torch and a waterbottle.

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\$ 50, approx. 385 Quetzales for group tipping

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

Guatemala

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
£8.00 - 10.00	£2.00 - 4.00	£1.00 - 2.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Quetzal (GTQ)

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 GTQ is approximately GTQ 9.7 to the British Pound. 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 Guatemalan Quetzal. 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

Honduras

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	£1.75	£2

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Lempira (HNL)

Recommended Currency For Exchange

You can choose to either change your money in advance or on arrival at the airport/ border. At the airport you will find both ATMs and Bureau de Change and at the border there are exchange opportunities. We recommend you take your cash in USD as the GBP are hard to exchange. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they may not be accepted. The exchange rate with the HNL is approximately HNL 30 to the British Pound. 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 Lempira. 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

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat

Accommodation notes

On this trip we stay in a wide range of accommodation, ranging from simple (in Guatemala's remote areas), to premium graded hotels.

The hotel in Nebaj, in the heart of Guatemala's Ixil Triangle, is a simple, clean and comfortable property, and certainly the best in the area. It has a cafe, small bar and WiFi available in the common areas, and has a great location in the centre of the small town of Nebaj.

On the shores of Lake Atitlan, we stay at the Villa Santa Catarina, a colonial-style building arranged around a courtyard, large swimming pool and beautiful grounds. The situation on the lake is the highlight, and it's just a short drive to the small town of Panajachel with its access to restaurants, cafes, markets and bars.

In Antigua we spend two nights at the beautiful Villa Colonial, a colonial style accommodation with a lush garden, swimming pool and fantastic views to the Volcan Fuego from the balcony of the restaurant.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety 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

Guatemala: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens. Honduras: Citizens from UK, New Zealand, Australia, New Zealand and most EU nationals do not require a visa. 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 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.

Guatemala

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.

Honduras

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.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

We have planned the dates of this tour to coincide with the Semana Santa celebrations in Guatemala. You can witness the colourful flower carpets and some of the impressive processions that mark Holy Week in the colonial city of Antigua.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**