

12 Days Colonial Treasures Of Central America

Colonial Treasures of Central America is a 12 day tour through Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua with the following destinations:

Guatemala City, Lake Atitlán, Antigua, Suchitoto, León and Granada

Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua have important Spanish-colonial heritage, amongst the best-preserved to be found in Central America. Colonial Treasures of Central America combines the three countries in one package offering the clients diversity in culture, nature and landscapes.

The main tour always starts on a Tuesday. The clients can however decide to go on a pre-tour, which starts on Monday, or extend their stay in Nicaragua by going on one of the two offered post-tours.

Day 1: Guatemala City

Arrival at International Airport Guatemala, transfer to your hotel in Guatemala City.

Guatemala City is the capital of the Republic of Guatemala since 1775, after a series of earthquakes destroyed the former capital, Antigua. In addition to a wide variety of restaurants, hotels and shops, the city has numerous art galleries, theatres, and museums (including some fine collections of Pre-Columbian art) and offers an increasing amount of cultural activities. The city is divided in 22 zones. Zone One is the Historic Center, lying in the very heart of the city, where many important historic buildings are found, including the National Palace of Culture, the Metropolitan Cathedral, the National Congress, the Presidential House, the National Library and the Constitution Plaza. Zone Ten, along with being the financial district of the city, is among the most popular areas for pop culture, shopping and entertainment. A district within Zone Ten, known as Zona Viva, contains many of the city's most popular and most expensive hotels, restaurants, bars, and other entertainment venues for urban dwellers.

Day 2: Atitlán Lake

Transfer to Atitlán Lake with a stop at the Maya site Iximche, for the Tour. Iximche is a Maya site in the western highlights of Guatemala. The name derives from the words Ixim and Che, meaning literally "maize tree". It was inhabited by the Kaqchikel, a Mayan tribe. At its height, Iximche had a population of 10,000. Soon after the arrival of the Spanish conquistador Pedro de Alvarado in 1524 the city was abandoned as the Spanish demanded excessive tribute. The ruins of Iximche were declared a Guatemalan National Monument in 1960.

Lake Atitlan is a lake in the Guatemala Highlands, and is considered one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. The name is derived from its meaning "at the water". Atitlan is the deepest lake in Central America and supports extensive coffee and avocado plantations, as well as other agricultural produce such as beans, tomatoes, cucumbers and garlic.

Day 3: Chichicastenango

Day tour at Chichicastenango. Return to Panajachel at the end of the day.

Chichicastenango, commonly referred to as "Chichi", is a small city located in the crests of mountaintops about 2-3 hours northwest of Guatemala City. Chichicastenango is home to a colorful market that serves as one of the largest local trade centers in the area. Here you can find all sorts of wares including pottery, coffee, jewelry and woven textiles.

Day 4: Antigua Guatemala

In the morning you visit Santiago de Atitlán. Afternoon transfer to Antigua.

Tour Santiago de Atitlán: Transfer by boat to Santiago Atitlán, located on the southern shore of Lake Atitlán. The town is famous for its art and the tocoyal, a long handmade ribbon that is worn by the indigenous women. The town is also home to the impressive Parroquial Santiago Apóstol, one of the most magnificent churches in the Lake Atitlán area, dating from the XVI century. Visit to the Mayan community Tzutuhil, a UNESCO site, is also included.

Antigua, a colorful and charming town is less than an hour from Guatemala's capital city. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1979, Antigua is known for its beauty and historical importance. The cobblestoned streets, balconies and colonial buildings offer visitors a wonderful mixture of cultural and religious tradition, and the fact that it is surrounded by three volcanoes make for nice scenery.

Day 5: Antigua Guatemala

Free Day to discover Antigua on your own.

Day 6: Suchitoto

Transfer to Suchitoto in El Salvador. Along the way you visit Joya de Cerén.

After Arrival: Tour Joya de Cerén. Visit of the archaeological site of Joya de Ceren, declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO. Joya de Ceren is considered the most important archaeological discovery in recent years in Latin America. The pre-Columbian Mayan village is incredibly intact despite of the layers of volcanic ash. No wonder the site is often referred to as the "Pompeii of the Americas".

Suchitoto is famous for its church and its cobblestoned streets. The town offers excellent views of the Suchitlan Lake that was created by the Lempa River. The town had a significant role in the indigo trade during the colonial period. Suchitoto means "Place of birds and flowers" in Nahuatl language, spoken by the Pipils, founders and first inhabitants of this place.

Day 7: Suchitoto

Features of the past mixed with modern culture make Suchitoto a vibrant city that is well worth a closer look. A tour around the city takes you to the most emblematic buildings of the city, such as the Santa Lucía Church, the Arte para La Paz (Art for Peace) Museum and Las Ruinas Theatre, among others. During the tour you enjoy a historical-cultural narration about the city.

Day 8: León

Transfer to the port of La Union where you embark a boat that takes you to Nicaragua, crossing the Gulf of Fonseca. You continue to León.

The city of León is a cultural-historical attraction with an authentic atmosphere where you can easily connect with the locals. León offers a quiet, relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. The center with its colonial buildings, beautiful churches and the cathedral- which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site is only one of Leon's many attractions. You could also decide to go to one of the volcanoes in the surrounding area, or head to the beach reserve Juan Venado. One of the most popular attractions is volcano boarding at Cerro Negro.

Day 9: León

Today: Walking City Tour León. Explore by foot the fascinating history of one of Nicaragua's oldest and most influential cities. During a guided walk you visit revolutionary murals, baroque and neoclassical churches and an art museum displaying works by internationally renowned artists. We continue the tour exploring the local market and colonial buildings, among them Nicaragua's first university. In addition, you climb the rooftop of Central America's largest Cathedral, registered on UNESCO's list of World Heritage.

Day 10: Granada

Transfer to the colonial city of Granada, with en route stop at Masaya volcano and market. Lunch included, overlooking the Laguna de Apoyo. After Arrival you will go on the Tour: Masaya Highlights (Masaya Volcano – Artisan Market). Look inside an active volcano, explore a colorful market, and have lunch at a crater lake all in one day! The tour starts at Masaya Volcano National Park. Your driver brings you to the summit of the volcano, where you can peek inside the active crater. Your next stop is Masaya's artisan market, where you can purchase quality Nicaraguan handicrafts. You have lunch overlooking the impressive Apoyo Lagoon before you continue to your destination, Granada.

Granada was founded in 1524 and is believed to be the second oldest city established in mainland Latin America by the Spanish conquest. Nowadays Granada is characterized by bright-colored Spanish-colonial architecture, visible throughout the city center. The ambiance is very pleasant and there is a wide array of popular restaurants and bars, especially along the boulevard from the central park to the shores of Lake Nicaragua.

Day 11: Las Isletas Boat Tour – Granada

Situated at the foot of Mombacho volcano, Las Isletas consist of around 360 small forest-covered islands, formed by a volcanic eruption 20,000 years ago. You are transferred to the harbor where you meet the captain and board a motor boat. During the tour, your guide will point out the exotic flora and fauna. You make a stop at one of the islands to enjoy a complimentary drink before heading back.

Day 12

Transfer to the International Airport Augusto C. Sandino in Managua.

End of the program

COLONIAL TREASURES OF CENTRAL AMERICA

*Minimum 2 people

Colonial Treasures of Central America	Standard	Superior
Total Price per Person (DBL Room)	\$ 2.127	\$ 2.515
Single Supplement	\$ 681	\$ 719

*Price per Person in USD,

Included Hotels

Destination	Standard	Superior
Guatemala		
Ciudad de Guatemala	Best Western Stofella	Barceló Guatemala
Lago Atitlán	Villa Santa Catarina	Portal del Lago
Antigua	Villa Colonial	Porta Antigua
El Salvador		
Suchitoto	La Posada de Suchitlán	Los Almendros de San Lázaro
Nicaragua		
León	Hotel Flor de Sarta	Hotel El Convento
Granada	Hotel Patio del Malinche	Hotel Plaza Colón

Included in cost:

- ✓ Accommodation including Breakfast
- ✓ Lunch during Masaya tour (no beverages)
- ✓ Transfers
- ✓ Tours mentioned with English Speaking Guide
- ✓ Entrance fees
- ✓ VAT/Taxes

The price does not include:

- Meals and beverages not mentioned in the Program
- Personal expenses
- International flights
- Optional tours
- Migration fees

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