

16 Days Archaeology and Cultural Experience Guatemala



Day 1: GUATEMALA CITY – ANTIGUA GUATEMALA

Pick up at Guatemala City International Airport “La Aurora”.

Day 2: COLONIAL TOUR AND DE LA GENTE TOUR

Morning (Estimated time 4 hrs)

Royal Plaza (City Hall, Palace of The Captains General and the Mermaid Fountain), the Cathedral Ruins, Colonial Art Museum, Santa Clara Convent, San Francisco Church and Convent, Casa Santo Domingo Museums, Capuchinas Convent and La Merced Church and Convent finishing at the view point of the city “Cerro de La Cruz” (The Cross Hill).

Lunch break

Afternoon (Estimated time 3 hrs)

Coffee experience (Community Project)

We work with coffee farming communities to create economic opportunity that improves the quality of life for their families and communities

Includes:

Transfers, bag of Arabica coffee, local farmer as guide and translator.

Day 3: CHICHICASTENANGO MARKET (Thursday or Sunday) & QUETZALTENANGO

Transfer to Chichicastenango to visit the biggest and most colorful market in Central America. It includes the visit to the Church of Santo Thomas, the Calvary Church, the cemetery, The Maya shrine of Pascual Abaj and the Museum of Ceremonial Masks. In the afternoon tourist will be transferred to Quetzaltenango to discover the south-east of Guatemala.

Day 4: QUETZALTENANGO

In the morning they will visit Salcajá and San Andrés Xecul, both of which are indigenous villages with beautiful colonial churches. In the afternoon they will visit the villages of Cantel, Zunil, Almolonga and the hot springs at Fuentes Georginas

Day 5: QUETZALTENANGO - LAKE ATITLAN (PANAJACHEL)

In the morning they will take the tour of the historical center of Quetzaltenango. In the afternoon transfer to Lake Atitlán.

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Day 6: TOUR OF PUEBLOS (LAKE ATITLAN)

Scenic boat ride across Lake Atitlan to the village of Santiago Atitlán visiting the Maya God

Maximón and learn about the textiles, spiritualism and beliefs of the T'zutujil Maya. Then they will visit the village of San Juan La Laguna where they can admire the work of women's textile cooperative to see hand weaving and natural dying process. It also includes the visit to studios / homes of celebrated naïf painters. Then there is a last stop at San Marcos La Laguna previous to return to hotel Panajachel.

Day 7: PANAJACHEL – IXIMCHÉ – COMALAPA - ANTIGUA

On their way back to Antigua guests will have the opportunity to explore one of the most important archeological sites in the history of Guatemala. "**Iximche**" is a Pre-Columbian Mesoamerican archaeological site in the western highlands of Guatemala. It was the capital of the late postclassic Kaqchikel Maya kingdom from 1470 until its abandonment in 1524. The architecture of the site included a number of pyramid-temples, palaces and two Mesoamerican ball-courts. Traditional lunch break.

Then there will be a stop at San Juan Comalapa, a picturesque village located in the highlands of Guatemala, it is often called the "Florence of America" because of the many Kaqchikel painters living there. Here you will be able to observe several local art galleries, where artists show their work. In addition, you will visit the colonial church and the colonial art museum and the Mayan Art Museum.

Day 8: ANTIGUA – COPAN

An early morning departure heading to the north – eastern part of Guatemala, where you will see the vegetation change from one region to another in just a few hours. In about 5 hours they will stop in the Guatemalan border El Florido and from there to the archaeological site of Copan. Free afternoon.

Day 9: COPAN

Right after breakfast they will visit Copan National Park with its trails complex spitting and staircases with Maya glyphs. Discovered in 1570 by Diego García de Palacio, the Maya site of Copan is one of the most important sites of the Mayan civilization. The site is functioned as the political, civil and religious center of the Copan Valley. It was also the political center and cultural focus of a larger territory that covered the southeast portion of the Maya area and its periphery. It also includes the Archaeological Museum of Copan and the Museum of Mayan Sculpture.

Day 10: COPAN – QUIRIGUA – RÍO DULCE

On the way to Rio Dulce we will stop at the Quirigua ruins. The park is covered by a complex of impressive carved sandstone stelae and sculpted calendars among which is the highest trail around the Mayan world, with more than 10.60 mts. tall, there are also zoomorphic figures dating from the Maya Classic period. This site constitutes an essential source for the study of Mayan civilization. It is a medium-sized site covering approximately 3 square kilometers (1.2 sq mi) along the lower Motagua River, with the ceremonial center about 1 km (0.6 mi) from the north bank. Free afternoon

Day 11: RIO DULCE - LIVINGSTON

The Rio Dulce is Lake Izabal's outlet to the Caribbean. With a total length of just 26 miles (42 km), it is certainly not Guatemala's longest river, but undoubtedly the most famous one. Clear water, abundant tropical vegetation and fascinating wildlife attract Guatemalans and international visitors alike.

On this day we will visit the Island of Birds and the Ak-Tenamit Project, a Kekchí community. We will continue then to Tiqwal Ha (Hot springs) the perfect paradise on the banks of Río Dulce. Next stop is Livingston where they will have a guided tour to experience the Garifuna culture (reggae music and art, coconut bread, tapado, etc.). It also includes the visit of Siete Altares (Seven Altars waterfalls) & Playa Blanca.

Day 12: RIO DULCE – FLORES ISLAND

On this day they will visit the Castle of San Felipe de Lara, a fortress built in the seventeenth century by the Spanish to prevent looting of stores that were on the shores of the lake.

Afternoon transfer to Flores Island.

Day 13: TIKAL NATIONAL PARK

On this day guests will be transferred to Tikal National park (approx. 1hr) to explore the amazing UNESCO protected Mayan site of Tikal where huge Mayan temples rise above the jungle. Wild life such as monkeys and tropical birds are abundant in the surrounding rainforest. Tikal is the largest excavated site in the American continent. It is the country's most famous cultural and natural biological preserve. The site possesses a certain magic, like puzzles without full answers it fascinates everyone. We will visit the main Plaza with all its famous constructions, and other ruin complex.

Day 14: YAXHÁ NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast they will be taken to Yaxhá National Park (approx. 1hr) to explore this atmospheric lakeside site ending with refreshments & wonderful views at sunset over the rainforest canopy from atop the main temples. They will also visit de site of Topoxte (located in an island). Both of them are situated in the middle of the jungle.

Day 15: FLORES – GUATEMALA CITY

Private transportation from Flores to Guatemala City.

Day 16: GUATEMALA CITY – AIRPORT

Transfer to Guatemala City International Airport “La Aurora”.

End of services

Guatemala 16 Days / 15 Nights	
Total Price Per Person (Base 1/2 Double Room)	\$ 3,880

Includes: private transfers, breakfast where it is indicated, domestic flight tickets, hotels, and tours mentioned in the itinerary

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