



Guatemala | Tours | Nature and Mayan Legacy



Itinerary

Day 1: Welcome to Guatemala

Upon arrival to Guatemala City you will be met by STP Guatemala staff for the transfer to Antigua.

Day 2: Antigua Guatemala

Visit Antigua Guatemala, a colonial city declared by UNESCO “Cultural Heritage of Humankind”. We begin in Antigua’s Historic Centre, starting from the Main Plaza and visiting the main monuments of the city.

Day 3: Coffee + Macadamia Nut Plantation

In the morning we visit the Centro Cultural La Azotea, where you will enjoy a guided tour to a Coffee Farm and the Traditional Mayan Music Museum Casa K’Ojom. After tasting a cup of one of the finest coffee in Antigua, we continue to visit a Macadamia Nut Farm. PM free to further explore Antigua.

Day 4: Chichicastenango/San Andrés Xecul/Quetzaltenango

Early in the morning departure to Chichicastenango, where you will see the most colorful and picturesque outdoor market in Guatemala. Lunch at the house of a local family and have the opportunity to interact and taste a typical plate. Time at leisure for shopping in the market. Afterwards we continue to Quetzaltenango, stopping on the way in San Andrés Xecul which is a small town home to a stunning church with yellow façade and technicolored saints, angels, flowers, tigers and monkeys. We continue to Quetzaltenango; Guatemala’s second largest city, at 2,335 metres high, surrounded by beautiful volcanic countryside.



Day 5: Zunil/Almolonga/San Francisco el Alto (weaving workshop)

We visit Zunil, another of Guatemala's prettiest and most colourful villages located in a lush valley framed by steep hills and dominated by a towering volcano; and Almolonga, an indigenous agricultural and market town in which you will see local crafts and gorgeous vegetables during market day. We continue to San Francisco El Alto Market, **where** indigenous people from all the surrounding villages come to shop and exchange goods. This market is considered the largest market in the country - where you see the typical life. Back in "Xela" you will have the opportunity to learn the traditional backstrap loom weaving techniques used by indigenous people, in a workshop at a local textile cooperative

Day 6: Cantel / Lake Atitlán

We start our day heading to Cantel for a visit to a local cooperative run by the community in which the artisans produce glass products in an old fashioned way. Then we drive to Panajachel, a tourist village on the shores of lovely Lake Atitlán, considered one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. Time free to explore the town of Santa Catarina Palopó or Panajachel.

Day 7: Santiago & San Antonio Palopó

Departure in the morning by boat to the Maya-Tzutuhil village of Santiago Atitlán, famous for Maximón, a character that is widely worshiped by the inhabitants of Santiago. Santiago also offers a variety of handicrafts, colorful textiles, woodcarvings and naïf paintings. Afterwards we continue by boat to San Antonio Palopó. Each village has its own traditional costume. In the afternoon drive to Antigua Guatemala.

Day 8: Copán (Honduras)

Drive to Honduras. After short border formalities, you will arrive to one of the most impressive archaeological sites in the Maya World: Copán, declared "World Heritage Site" by UNESCO. Copán presents a sophisticated architectural style and a unique art for stone carving. Visit the main plazas, complexes and monuments.

NOTE: FROM COPÁN YOU CONTINUE FOR EXTENSIONS TO ROATÁN ISLAND

**Day 9: Quirigúa/Puerto Barrios/Livingston**

Departure in the morning, on the way to Puerto Barrios we will visit Quiriguá, a unique archaeological site surrounded by the largest banana plantation in Central America. Declared by UNESCO “Cultural Heritage of Humankind”, Quiriguá is famous for having the tallest stone-carved stelae in the Maya World. After the visit, continue to Puerto Barrios, where you will take a boat ride to the Garífuna town of Livingston, located where Río Dulce meets the Caribbean Sea. Livingston is the only town in Guatemala where the African Caribbean Culture has survived with all its traditions since the first settlers came at the end of the 15th Century, and today it is a peaceful, colorful and relaxed town.

Day 10: Río Dulce (Castillo de San Felipe and Ak Tenamit Cooperative)

River trip - a Río Dulce Cruise stopping to visit the local Mayan Cooperative Ak´Tenamit. Then we visit Castillo de San Felipe, the ruins of a fortress built in 1652 to keep pirates from looting the villages. In the early 16th century the commercial activity between Guatemala and Spain flourished throughout the former Golfo Dulce, and this fortress was built to protect the merchandise from the pirates of the Gulf of Mexico. Time to enjoy Río Dulce at the hotel on the river.

Day 11: Yaxhá

The Northern part of Guatemala was the birthplace of the great Mayan Civilization. The region witnessed the rise and fall of this ancient culture that was a very advanced stratified society which lived harmoniously with nature. The Maya were excellent astronomers and mathematicians and developed a complex hieroglyphic scripture. They were also very skilled in arts, stone carving and architecture, and established a vast commercial net-work from the North of Mexico to Costa Rica. The fall and collapse of this great civilization is still a true enigma.

In the morning transfer to the archaeological site of Yaxhá (“Turquoise Water”), considered an important civic and ceremonial Mayan site. It is settled on a hill overlooking the beautiful Laguna de Yaxhá and Laguna Sacnab. Epigraphic evidence assures that it had important relationship with Tikal, as a “satellite” of Tikal during the Classic Period (300-950 A.D.). Yaxhá is the only site in Petén, besides Tikal, that has a “Twin Pyramid Complex”.

Day 12: Tikal

Visit to Tikal National Park. Declared “Cultural Heritage of Humankind” by UNESCO. This majestic Mayan city is considered the largest and most monumental of all of the sites discovered in the Mayan World. Guided walking visit to the most important plazas, complexes and temples, enjoying as well the tropical forest, nesting place of hundreds of exotic birds and the habitat of a wide variety of wildlife.



Excelsior Travel & Tours

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(713) 686.4848

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NOTE: FROM FLORES YOU CONTINUE FOR EXTENSIONS TO CHIAPAS, CANCÚN OR BELIZE.

Day 13: Ceibal/Candelaria Caves

We depart by road to Sayaxché, where we take a boat through the La Pasión river, and continue to Ceibal. The archaeological site of Ceibal flourished from 200 A.D. to 900 A.D. and has an extraordinary number of Mayan stone carved monuments and temples. The stelae of Ceibal are one of the finest and best preserved which is why Ceibal is known as "The Gallery of Mayan Art". After the visit we continue to Cuevas de Candelaria National Park in Alta Verapaz.

Day 14: Candelaria Caves / Cobán

This morning we visit the Candelaria Caves, the largest complex found in Central America (30kms long) located at the foot of the Chamá Mountain Range. It is one of the most extraordinary underground systems on Earth. Afterwards we continue to the city of Cobán. We visit the Calvary Church where the Maya-Kekchí practice ceremonies to worship their pre-hispanic gods. Continue to the Quetzal Biotope.

Day 15: The Quetzal Biotope

Visit the lush cloud forest ecosystem of the Biotope "El Quetzal - Mario Dary Rivera," natural habitat of the national bird, the Quetzal. After the visit we continue to Guatemala City passing through a varied topography, from the misty cloud forests in Alta Verapaz, to the hot, dry tropical climate of the Motagua river valley where dinosaurs once roamed, to a cooler climate of Guatemala City.

Day 16: See you soon

At the specified time, transfer from the hotel to the airport for your flight back home.



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The Package Includes:

Prices include:

Itinerary and described hotels (subject to availability)

Ground transportation with tour guide (private services).

Daily American Breakfast (15); lunch in Chichicastenango, Tikal and Yahxá. Box lunch in Ceibal.

Boat ride in Lake Atitlán; Puerto Barrios/Livingston/Río Dulce and Ceibal

Entrance fees

Local guide fee in Copán

Not included:

Personal expenses

Tips for bellboy, maid, tour guide and driver

Beverages and meals not mentioned

Border fee in Honduras (\$5.00)

Notes:

“Transfer In” with guide only for 7 + pax

“Transfer out” without tour guide

Day 9 – boat from Río Dulce/Livingston for 2 to 3 pax.