

HONDURAS & NICARAGUA - HIGHLIGHTS OF HONDURAS



TRIP CODE

HOTSHOH

DURATION

6 Days

LOCATIONS

Honduras



INTRODUCTION

From cloud forests to Mayan ruins and a beautiful coastal line, Honduras has it all and this active tour gives you the chance to experience it in all its glory. Walk through high cloud forests, explore the ruins and jungle and have the chance to spot wildlife before relaxing in the natural spa of Gracias.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival in San Pedro Sula

On arrival into San Pedro Sula Airport, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure.



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DAY 2: Day Tour to Cusuco National Park

After breakfast at the hotel, you will be met and taken on a guided day tour to Cusuco National Park, nestled in the Merendon mountain range. Travelling on mainly dirt mountain roads, you will reach the Park's Visitor Centre after about 2 hours. A boxed lunch is provided. Cusuco National Park is an untouched cloud forest with an environment that is native only to Central America. This environment is unique because of the moisture dropped into the forest by the clouds that usually cover the mountains. The cloud forest habitat reaches its full splendour at altitudes of 1,800 meters above sea level (6,000 ft). Huge ferns mixed with pine, oak, liquidambar (American sweetgum) and many broad trees flourish in this environment. Jaguars, deer, peccaries, howler monkeys, armadillo, tapir and many tropical birds, including the famous quetzal also live here. The Park's highest peak, Cerro Jilincó, reaches a height of 2,242m. From the Visitor Centre, you will hike some of the trails that lead into the heart of the park, where you will see giant ferns, and with luck, the elusive quetzal. During the hike your bilingual guide will point out many interesting facts about the cloud forest. Late afternoon, you will transfer back to San Pedro Sula.



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DAY 3: Transfer to Gracias

After breakfast at the hotel, you will be transferred from San Pedro Sula to Gracias. The historic town of Gracias is one of the prettiest settlements in Honduras. Founded in 1536, the town's original name was Gracias a Dios (Thanks to God) and for a short time it was the capital of Central America before the capital was moved to Antigua, Guatemala. The quiet cobblestone town has an impressive fort, colonial buildings and churches and is an undiscovered gem and one of the best-kept secrets of Honduras! After checking in at your hotel, you will head to Celaque National Park for a guided hike. From Gracias, a dirt road leads up to the community of Villaverde, the route following a creek that provides water to the city of Gracias. It is 9kms to the Visitor Centre and en route you will pass through several different Honduran coffee fincas (farms). Between the months of November and February, you may be able to see some of the coffee being picked. The Parque Nacional Montaña de Celaque, is one of Honduras's most pristine national parks and boasts one of the largest tracts of cloud forest left in Central America. It is home to El Cerro de las Minas, the country's highest peak (2,849m) and shrouded in forest. There are rivers, waterfalls, sheer cliffs as well as an abundance of wildlife including pumas, ocelots, quetzals, monkeys, squirrels and reptiles. Celaque, a word from the Lenca dialect meaning "box of water", provides water to all of the communities that are around the National Park. From the Visitor Centre, take a guided hike through the Park along some of the trails. You may see many orchids and abundant bird life. There is a waterfall and you can visit the area where the pine forest transitions into a broad leaf forest that is typical of a tropical cloud forest.



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DAY 4: Copan Coffee Tour

After breakfast at the hotel you will be transported from Gracias to Copan Ruinas. En route you will take a Copan Coffee Tour at Finca Santa Isabel, with lunch included. The tour begins high in the mountains, at the plant nursery where young plants are nurtured until they are ready to become a part of the finca. From here you wander down the trails that meander through the lush, green foliage of the rainforest canopy. Take in the breathtaking beauty of the tropical rainforest and observe the abundant bird and butterfly populations. You will be shown the growing, harvesting, and processing from bean to cup. After lunch you will continue on to Copan Ruinas, a small town with cobblestone streets, full of colonial charm and access point to Copan Ruins.



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DAY 5: Copan Ruins

Today's full day tour of Copan Ruins includes a guided tour of the Main Archaeological Site and Museum of Sculptures in the morning, followed by lunch and then a tour to Las Sepulturas or the Tombs or Rastrojón in the afternoon. The UNESCO Maya ruins of Copan are probably the most popular and important attraction in Honduras. Copan was one of the most important sites of the Maya civilisation. Discovered in 1570 by Diego Garcia de Palacio, the ruins were not excavated until the 19th century. The ruins are noted for their extensive sculpture, carved stelae of ancient rulers and the well-preserved hieroglyphics. The tour of the Main Archaeological Site includes the Acropolis, the Ball Court, the Hieroglyphic Stairway and the Great Plaza of the Stelae, as well as the Museum of Mayan Sculpture, acclaimed by experts as unique in the Mayan World. A masterpiece within the museum is an exact size replica of the famed Rosalila Temple, discovered in 1989. After lunch, your tour takes you to Las Sepulturas or El Rastrojón. Las Sepulturas was a Maya residential area in the Copan Valley with buildings arranged around courtyards. The complex also features several wealthy tombs. El Rastrojón opened to the public in 2013. The site consists of several buildings and was used for over 1,300 years as a defence for kings and nobles of Mayan Copan. At the end of the tour you return to your hotel in Copan.



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DAY 6: Transfer to San Pedro Sula

After breakfast at the hotel, you will be transferred from Copan Ruinas to San Pedro Sula. Please note: The drive from Copan to San Pedro Sula takes approximately 3.5 hours. Please ensure that you do not book a flight out of San Pedro Sula earlier than mid-afternoon to ensure adequate time for the transfer and to check in for your onward flight.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Hotel
Inclusions	Accommodation Breakfasts Other meals as stated Transfers Tours with professional guides
Difficulty Rating	1 (easy)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu's "Pass it on" programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.
- 4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise

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your impact on both local environments and communities.

5) Chimu Adventures' offices also take a number of sustainability measures including carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure's internal processes are also structures to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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