

CENTRAL AMERICA MULTI COUNTRY - ROUTE OF THE MAYAS



INTRODUCTION

The route of the Mayas is an amazing journey through the mysterious ruins of the Yucatan and Central America. Explore the empire that emerged from the humid rain forests and flourished for nearly 600 years before vanishing. Dive into this fascinating Maya civilization and learn more about their way of life, traditions and culture.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival transfer in Antigua

Arrive in Guatemala City airport and transfer to Antigua by private vehicle. Free afternoon to explore this romantic town on your own.



DAY 1: Antigua

Antigua is a beautiful old colonial city, the former capital of Central America and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city sits beneath three volcanoes, surrounded by coffee plantations and indigenous communities. The city is renowned for its Spanish colonial buildings including the baroque La Merced church with its ornate yellow and white façade. The streets are lined with pastel coloured buildings and churches, and the markets and plazas throb with activity.



TRIP CODE

LATSROM

DURATION

15 Days

LOCATIONS

Guatemala, Belize



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DAY 2: Antigua Walking City Tour

You will be met at your hotel reception by your private guide to begin your half day walking tour of Antigua. Your tour will cover the cultural, historical & social highlights of this colonial city with a behind-the-scenes look at some of the many ruined churches, convents, and cathedrals. Entrances are included to the Iglesia San Francisco, the Cathedral and La Merced Church. This tour is flexible and if you have specific sites that you wish to see please notify your guide. If you wish to visit other monuments you will need to pay the entrances directly.



DAY 2: De La Gente Traded Coffee Tour

You will be met by your bilingual host driver for a short transfer to the small town of San Miguel Escobar, just outside of Antigua. In town we will be met by a local guide from De La Gente (DLG). DLG is a charity working to support small independent coffee producers and promotes environmentally responsible agriculture in Guatemala. This tour takes you to visit some of the families supported by this organisation where you can work side-by-side with small coffee farmers in their daily coffee processing, pick, pulp, ferment, wash, dry, trilla, sort, and grade the coffee (depending on the season), roast coffee over an open fire and grind by hand on a grindstone before sampling their handiwork. After the coffee tour guests have a simple, traditional meal in a local home before transferring back to Antigua. Coffee Season is Nov to Mar. This tour includes a donation to DLG which the Viaventure Foundation also supports on an annual basis.



DAY 3: Comala Market & Iximche to Lake Atitlan

You will be met at your hotel by a private guide for the 1 hour transfer to Comalapa. You get the chance to learn more about Guatemalan history and see a famous mural painted by school children that depicts major historical events up to the signing of the peace agreement in 1996. You will visit local painters who continue the tradition of native paintings, visit a local market to meet some friendly Guatemalans; you can also visit a small museum dedicated to the composer who wrote Guatemala's national anthem. After lunch you can explore the Mayan ruins of Iximiche. Included: Private transfers, bilingual driver, entrance fees, donation to painters, lunch.



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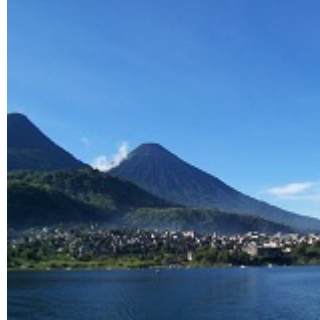
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DAY 4: San Juan & Santiago Full Day Lake Tour

Today you will be transferred to San Juan La Laguna Village where you can visit a local textile cooperative to see how the use of natural dyes and materials works locally. You will also visit the home and workshop of local Naif painters before boarding a boat to take you to Santiago Village for lunch. After lunch you will visit the home of the Maya God, Maximon. His home changes every year as he is looked after by a different 'brotherhood'. You can also witness a Shaman perform rituals on locals (on selected days), if you wish you can hire their services for a personal ceremony. A trip to a local church and market is also included.



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DAY 5: Chichicastenango Market & Transfer to Antigua

Guests are met at their hotel by their English speaking, private driver (Who will be their host for the day) for the 1hr transfer out to the highland town of Chichicastenango. Along the way guests will pass through the central highland region and see the local Maya people in their traditional dress going about their daily lives - working in the fields, collecting firewood, traveling between markets, selling their wares. Upon arrival at Chichicastenango you can explore this famous market escorted by your driver - both the local areas of the fruit & vegetables & everyday items as well as the craft area where you can find endless variety of beautiful textile, wooden & ceramic crafts. Guests can also visit the famous St Tomas Church where local Maya people come to perform Maya rituals within the Catholic church - demonstrating the interesting way the two faiths have combined in recent times. If they want to guests can also hike up the hill to the Pascual Abaj ritual site to see if any local shaman are performing rituals and/or to the cemetery on the outskirts of town. Lunch is provided and when guests are ready they will be transferred onto Antigua (Approx 2,5hr).



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DAY 6: Private Transfer Antigua - Copan

After breakfast, you will be met at your hotel and be transferred to Copan (Honduras) in a private vehicle.



DAY 6: Presentaion & Diner with an Archaeologist

Tonight you will have a diner at home with an archaeologist working in Copan. David Sedat will give you a 1 hour presentation to introduce you to the mayan world and the mystery of Copan.



DAY 7: Copan Tour with Tunnels & David Sedat

Today David Sedat will meet you again for a guided visit of the Copan Ruins.



DAY 7: Private Transfer Copan - Guatemala City

You will be met at your hotel and be transferred to Guatemala City in a private vehicle.



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DAY 7: Guatemala City

Guatemala City, Guatemala's capital is known locally as Guate. The Centro Historico (Historic Centre) lies in the heart of the city, and is home to many historic buildings including the Palacio Nacional de la Cultura (National Palace of Culture), the Metropolitan Cathedral, the National Congress, the Casa Presidencial (Presidential House), the National Library and Plaza de la Constitución (Constitution Plaza).



DAY 8: Transfer to the airport for onward destination

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.



DAY 8: Flight: Guatemala City - Flores

In due time board your flight from Guatemala city to Flores.



DAY 8: Private Transfer: Flores - El Remate Area

Private Transfer from Flores to el Remate Area.



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DAY 8: Ceibal Site Guided Tour

Guests are picked up and transferred by land to the town of Sayaxche (1.5hr) on the shores of the River, "Rio Passion". From here guests board a boat for an hour boat transfer down this pretty river into the rainforest área surrounding the site at Ceibal. A pretty strenuous climb up the hillside brings guests out at the site which is amongst a forest of Ceiba trees - hence the name. The site has many beautiful carved stelea and an interesting circular monument believed to be an astrology platform as well as other interesting monuments. When guests are ready they will transfer back to their hotel the same way. In the dry season we may use land transportation the whole way to the site so that guests do not have the steep hike up to the site.



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DAY 9: Uaxactun Camping & Tikal Tour Day 1

You will transfer in from Flores / El Remate and tour the archaeology site and community and will learn more about the chicle process and the different crafts. You can visit a local museum and then for sunset, you can visit the lookout tower for drinks. If you are lucky they will be able to see the ruins from Tikal rising above the jungle. After sunset drinks you will go back to the campsite for a local dinner. Night spent camping in thr jungle under the stars.



DAY 10: Private Transfer Tikal - Belize Border

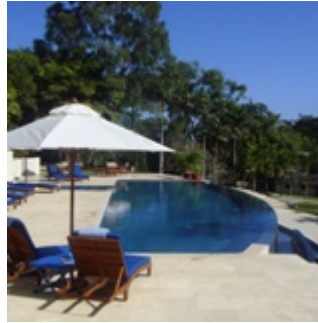
Private transfer from Tikal to the Belize Border.



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DAY 10: Transfer Guatemala Border - Cayo Dct. (Chaa Creek)

Private transfer from the Belize border to your hotel in the outer area of Cayo District.



DAY 10: Chaa Creek: Complimentary Tour

Entry into the 365-Acre Rainforetreserve, Guided tours of the natural history centre and butterfly farm, access to the Ruta Maya Trail System, Canoeing, Bird Walk with naturalist guide and interpretive tour of the Rainforest Medecine trail at Ixchel farm.



DAY 11: Caracol and Rio Frio Cave & Pools

You will be met at your hotel and transferred to the Maya village of San Antonio. Here we have an opportunity to see the Mestizo culture that is the mix of Maya and Spanish - you will see members of two tribes that live in San Antonio-the Mopan and the Yucatec. From here you will visit the Pine Ridge Nature Reserve, which is a national park and here you can learn about the reforestation programs taking place. Then, a one hour drive takes us to the Maya site of Caracol which is the largest archaeological site in Belize. On the way back to the hotel you can choose to visit the Rio-on Pools and Rio Frio Caves if you wish. Included: Private transfers, guide, lunch and entrance fees.



DAY 12: Transfer to the airport for onward destination

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.



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DAY 12: Flight: Belize City to Punta Gorda

In due time board your flight from Belize City to Punta Gorda.



DAY 12: Arrival transfer in Belcampo

You will be picked up at the Punta Gorda airport and transferred to Belcampo Lodge.



DAY 13: Belcampo Lodge: Complimentary Activities

Self Guided: Kayaking or canoeing on the rio grande river, mountain biking and hiking through the onsite trails.



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DAY 15: Transfer to the airport for onward destination

You will be transferred from Belcampo Lodge to Punta Gorda Airport in a collective transfer operated by the hotel.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Deluxe

Inclusions

Private transfers & excursions with bilingual speaking guide, except at Belocampo Lodge in Belize where we include self guided activities such as: Kayaking or canoeing on the Rio Grande river, mountain biking and hiking through the onsite trails.
Accommodation in deluxe properties with private facilities

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.

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4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise 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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