

HONDURAS & NICARAGUA - HIGHLIGHTS OF NICARAGUA



TRIP CODE

NITSBON

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Nicaragua



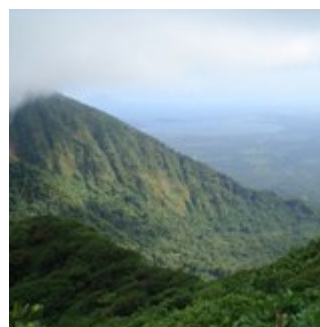
INTRODUCTION

Nicaragua is truly the land of lakes and volcanoes! This tour takes you from the capital Managua to a coffee plantation in the highlands, before continuing through the colonial towns of Granada and Leon. Of course along the way you'll visit the largest lake in Latin America and see Nicaragua's spectacular volcanoes. This tour can easily be amended to be combined with Costa Rica so if you're interested in this please just ask one of our consultants.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival transfer in Managua

Arrival into Managua airport and transfer to your hotel within Managua.




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DAY 1: Managua

Lying on the shores of Lake Managua, Managua became the permanent capital of Nicaragua in 1858. Despite the chaos and the many ruined buildings caused by earthquakes and civil war, Managua is an interesting city with sprawling markets and fascinating street art. The battered but intriguing Plaza de la Revolución (Revolution Square) is Managua's historical centre. It has been partially rebuilt and is flanked by landmarks such as the National Palace of Culture, Carlos Fonseca's tomb and the Old Cathedral that was designed and shipped from Belgium in 1920. The cathedral was severely damaged by the 1972 earthquake that destroyed most of Managua's town centre. Although derelict and no more than a hollow shell, it is still an alluring building.



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DAY 2: Managua City Tour and Selva Negra

Before heading to Selva Negra, your tour guide will take you on a Managua city tour which includes visits to the Acahualinca Indian tracks, Ruben Dario Theatre, Peace Park and other interesting places that form part of the latest history of Nicaragua. After lunch the trip continues to the Matagalpa area.



DAY 3: Coffee Tour, Selva Negra - Matagalpa Town

08:00 Hrs. Morning Coffee Tour at Selva Negra
 Then we head to Matagalpa, the more elegant and historical part of the region with a gargantuan cathedral and several big, shady parks. We visit the museum of Carlos Fonseca, the Coffee museum, and we see how black ceramic is made in an old traditional style. You'll also visit El Castillo del Cacao, where some of the best chocolate in Nicaragua is made using organic cocoa from small Matagalpa growers. Here you'll see the semi-artisanal process of creating delicious chocolate. The view alone is well worth the trip as you see the city and its surrounding mountains.



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DAY 4: Matagalpa to Leon Transfer

Transfer from Matagalpa to Leon. En route visit the Chorotega Museum in which you will have the chance to enjoy more than 1000 pieces of Pre-Columbian Indigenous art that dates from 500BC to 500 AC. On arrival in Leon take a brief city tour before being transferred to your hotel.



DAY 4: Leon

Leon, the original capital of Nicaragua in colonial times has had a turbulent and violent history. Founded by the Spanish, the city was abandoned in 1610 after a series of earthquakes. The ruins of the city, "Leon Viejo" were excavated in 1960 and designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. Leon has long been the political and intellectual centre of Nicaragua and it is home to Central America's second oldest university, founded in 1813. Although many of its buildings are crumbling, Leon is a fascinating colonial town, rich in Spanish colonial churches, secular buildings, monuments and historical sites.



DAY 5: Leon - Old Leon - Granada

Private transfer from Leon to Granada. After breakfast depart to the Ruins of Old Leon, declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO. Continue your trip to the colonial city of Granada. Rest of the day is at Leisure.



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DAY 5: Granada

Granada dates back to 1524 and is the oldest European settlement in the Americas. It is a beautiful city on the shores of Lake Nicaragua, with colonial buildings in pastel shades, historic churches and an 18th century fort. Central Park, the main plaza, is dominated by the colourful façade of the Cathedral of Granada that dates back to 1583. San Francisco is the oldest church in Central America and possibly the most striking building in Granada. La Merced is probably the most beautiful church in the city. Granada is a great base from which to explore the nearby Masaya and Mombacho Volcanoes, Lake Nicaragua and Ometepe Island.



DAY 6: Granada Colonial Town & The Islets (from Managua)

This morning we explore the charming colonial city of Granada with its mazes of narrow streets, large brightly coloured houses and beautiful buildings and churches. We visit La Merced Church, San Francisco Convent and the famous Casa de los Tres Mundos. Our knowledgeable guide will share with you the history of the city including the antics of the American filibuster William Walker who invaded Granada in 1855. We then enjoy a relaxing boat ride on Lake Nicaragua, where we cruise around some of the dozens of islands formed by the eruptions of the Mombacho Volcano.



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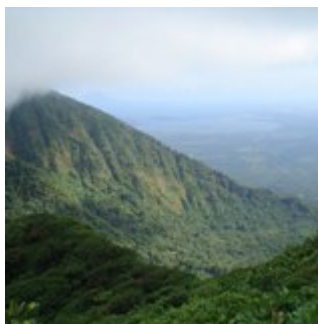
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DAY 7: Mombacho Volcano Tour

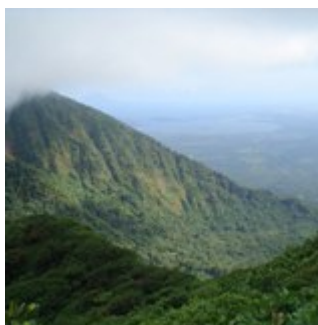
After breakfast we take a half-day tour to Mombacho Volcano Natural Reserve. For our visit, our vehicle will lead the way to the foot of the mountain where we will meet with the park keepers. Then we will switch vehicles and start our way up to the top on a four-wheel drive. The adventure begins on a paved road and right from the start you will be surprised by the biodiversity of this natural reserve, surrounded by exuberant vegetation and enjoying breathtaking views. When we reach the summit, you will understand why this ecosystem is a cloud forest. The park keeper will give instructions to everyone so we can enjoy our visit. We will then take the trails of the volcano (For approximately 1hr 45mins) to learn about the flora, fauna, the ancient people who lived there and the Vulcan logy of the area. If the day is clear enough we will visit an impressive viewpoint to observe the plain pacific region of Nicaragua, the neighbouring city of Granada and the great lake of Nicaragua and its islands. When we return from our walk, we will visit the biological station where you can enjoy a cup of coffee or purchase snacks. Our guide will let us know when it is time to board the vehicle that will transport us back to the foot of the mountain. Note: This is considered a moderate hike.



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DAY 8: Granada - Managua Private Transfer

Private transfer from Granada to Managua.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Standard
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Inclusions	<p>Private transportation for the entire trip, with the exception of day 7</p> <p>Excursions as specified on the itinerary</p> <p>Bilingual guide</p> <p>Accommodation with breakfast everyday</p> <p>Lunches as specified on the itinerary</p> <p>01 Night at Los Robles Hotel, Managua</p> <p>02 Nights at Selva Negra Hotel, Matagalpa</p> <p>01 Night at Los Balcones Hotel, Leon</p> <p>03 Nights at Alhambra Hotel, Granada</p> <p>Local taxes</p> <p>Exclusions</p> <p>Visa fees (if applicable)</p> <p>Optional activities not mentioned in itinerary</p> <p>Gratuities for staff/drivers</p>
Difficulty Rating	1 (easy)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

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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 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

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bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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