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TRIP DETAILS
17 days / 16 nts - Multi-country

Departures Daily
Trip Ref 2861

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

PRICES FROM $11,933

Central American Journey

Day 1: Arrive in Panama
Today you arrive into Panama International in the morning or early afternoon, and will be met upon arrival. You will be taken on a half day city tour of Panama, and afterwards transferred to Gamboa Rain Forest Resort.

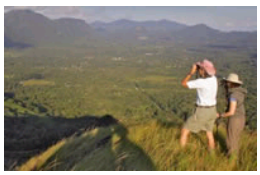
Day 2: Panama Canal - Gamboa Rainforest
Full Transit & overnight at Gamboa Rain Forest Resort.

Day 3: Embera Indigenous Village - Panama City
Embera day tour & overnight at Four Point Sheraton

Day 4: Panama City - Portobelo - Panama City
Day tour to Portobelo + One way train ride & overnight at Four Point Sheraton.

Day 5: Panama City - El Valle - Panama City
El Valle day tour & overnight at Four Point Sheraton.

Day 6: Panama City - Paso Canoas (Costa Rica Border) - San Jose



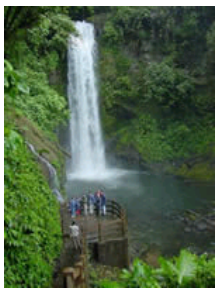
Early morning transfer to Paso Canoas. The departure time is set for 7am, and you are scheduled to arrive in Paso Canoas around 2pm. The process to cross over to Costa Rica is not a quick one, so be patient.

The Costa Rican driver will be waiting for you with a sign in the Costa Rican immigration building, located about 100 meters from the Panama immigration building. Once in contact you will be transfered to San Jose (7-8 hours), and arrive in the evening.Overnight at Hotel Britannia or similar to rest after a long journey.

Day 7: San Jose - Poas Volcano + La Paz waterfalls - San Jose
This morning at 07:40am a guide will meet you at your hotel to take you on a full day trip to Poas Volcano + La Paz waterfalls. This is a group tour.We take the Pan-American Highway towards the city of Alajuela. In this route we pass through the Agriculture Monument, the monument to Juan Santamaria and the famous Mango Park. As we ascend towards the volcano we stop for a brief explanation of our golden bean, coffee, and then continue our trip through fern, flower and strawberry farms.

There is a obvious change in the temperature and in the vegetation. This is going to prepare us for the pleasure of the exuberant cloud forest of Poas Volcano. At the volcano we will have time to observe the impressive main crater with its sulfur fumaroles. Then we will hike on a trail to the beautiful Botos Lagoon that will allow us to learn about the different ecosystems in the park.

We will continue our trip towards the Caribbean, stopping to see La Paz Waterfall Gardens, a natural park where we will walk through spectacular trails which will take us to White Magic Waterfall, the most spectacular one in the area. Inside the park we will also visit the largest butterfly observatory in the country that remains a collection of tropical jewels and the impressive hummingbird gallery, serpentarium, bird house & frogs exhibit.



Once we have finished our walk we will set off for a lunch buffet and then begin our return trip to San Jose. Tour includes, guide, round trip transfer, entrance to Pas Volcano & La Paz waterfalls & lunch. Overnight at hotel Britannia (Deluxe room) in San Jose.

Day 8: San Jose - Arenal - San Jose
Today a guide will meet you at 08:15am, for this full day tour to the Arenal Volcano, which is one of the most active volcanoes in America. This experience is unforgettable because of the amazing and surprising things like feeling the tremble ground and seeing the nightly sky exploded with ash and lava in a natural firework. Next, we visit the hot springs of the volcano, where you can relax in the soothing waters and be caressed by the cool night air, while observing the stars and the incredible sky above the volcano. When you arrive, we will receive you with a splendid dinner.

This is an evening you will not want to miss in Costa Rica. On this tour we will also visit the town of Sarchí, well known for the beauty of the handcrafts they produce. (Lunch and dinner included). Suggested equipment: swimsuit, comfortable walking shoes (if there is good weather), sweater, insect repellent, and a towel (optional). Once the tour reaches back to San Jose you will be dropped off at the selected hotel for overnight.

Day 9: San Jose - Tortuguero - Aerial Tram Lodge
This morning at 06:30am, a guide will meet you at the hotel, so you can have the opportunity to visit the Northern Carribbean side of Costa Rica called Tortuguero. This is a one day program that will include guide, breakfast, lunch, round trip bust & boat transfers, canal tours.

On the way back to San Jose, you will be dropped off at the Aerial Tram site, where you will spend the night at the Aerial Tram Lodge. On this day you can enjoy a guided tour on the gondolas (tram) to view the plant & wildlife, all meals are included.

Day 10: Aerial Tram Lodge - San Jose
Around noon today your private transfer will meet you at the Aerial tram lodge, for your ride back to San Jose and the Hotel Britannia. Free afternoon to relax for your long trip to Peñas Blancas the next day.

Day 11: San Jose - Nicaraguan Border (Peñas Blancas)
At 7am this morning your private driver will meet you at your hotel for your transfer toward the Northern border of Costa Rica & Nicaragua (Peñas Blancas), where you will be arriving between 12:30-13:00pm. As soon as you exit the Nicaraguan immigration, you will be met by our Nicaraguan representative who will have a sign with your name on it, once in contact you will be driven to Granada which is about a 2 hour drive, where you have reservations at the Hotel Plaza Colon or similar. Rest of evening on your own to rest up after a long journey.

Day 12: Granada - Managua
Breakfast at the hotel. Prepare yourself for a panoramic tour of Granada and its quaint Colonial style and picturesque buildings. You wil also have the opportunity to visit the Isletas de Granda, consisting of small islands and canal systems. After the isletas you will be taken to the Masaya area to see the Masaya Volcano and local market. Transfer to Managua for overnight lodging at the Hotel REAL METROCENTRE (Intercontinental).

Day 13: Managua
Breakfast at your hotel. Today you will have a guided tour of the Old Managua sector of the city, with an opportunity to also visit the Malecon de Managua or also known as Lake Xolotlan or Lake Managua which is the smaller of the two large Nicaraguan lakes. Its surface covers 401.5 sq. mi. (1,042 km2) and its waters are 39 m above sea level. Like all volcanic lakes, it has a circular shape, only the Chiltepe and Panamí peninsulas distort its coast line.

After this visit the Huellas de Acuahalinca which are the oldest human footprints discovered on the continents of America. The tracks are said to be the petrified footprints of a group of Paleo-Indians who were walking to collect water or food. Whilst there were animal prints in the same ground, they were not traveling with the people. The footprints were well conserved due to volcanic activity in the area. The Acahualinca Footprints Museum can be found in the region of Managua. It is a small museum and has recently been revamped. Inside you will find various archaeological discoveries based around the footprints of Acahualinca. Continue to the aretesan market (Roberto Huembes), then back to the Hotel REAL METROCENTRE (Intercontinental). for overnight.

Day 14: Managua - Estelí

Breakfast at your hotel, then continue on a private tour to the city of Esteli which is the third largest city in Nicaragua, Located on the Panamerican highway, 150km north of Managua, Estelí is a fast growing and progressive city of about 119,000 people. It enjoys a pleasant climate throughout most of the year due to its location in the north central highlands at a mean elevation of 844 m above sea level. The city is also surrounded by forested mountains and plateaus that go up to 1600 m above sea level, some which are protected as natural reserves. Estelí was the scene of heavy fighting in the war against the Somoza government during the 1970s.

While here also visit the Cathedral of of Estela, and have a chance to also visit El Salto Estanzuela which is the the region's most famous swimming hole, a gorgeous 15-meter, rainy-season-only cascade that plunges into a cold, shady pool, all smothered in colorful native flora and fauna. It's just southwest of the city. Swim behind the falls for a refreshingly cool perspective on Nicaragua.

Then continue to the arqueological site called El Bosque and the Miraflor & Morfonte reserves. Lodging this evening at the Los Arcos Hotel or similar.

Day 15: Estelí - Matagalpa
After breakfast, you will do a private tour of the friendly mountain city of Matagalpa located in the northern region of the country. This mountainous area offers superb scenery and the forested slopes of the many hills and mountains provide great possibilities for hiking and other nature-related activities. Matagalpa is also famous for its coffee production and it is an excellent place to learn more about how coffee is grown, harvested, and processed. Overnight lodging at Lomas Inn Tomas.

Day 16: Matagalpa - Managua
Breakfast. Private transfer back to Managua, dinner at the local restaurant La Finca for a typical Nicaraguan

cuisine. Transfer to the Hotel Real Metrocentre (Intercontinental), for overnight.

Day 17: Managua - Fly out from Nicaragua
Breakfast, private transfer to Managua international airport in time to meet your flight back home.

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Panama Includes:
-2 night lodging in single room at Gamboa Resort + breakfast
-3 night lodging in single room at Four Point Sheraton + breakfast
-Transportation Int'l airport – Gamboa Resort on arrival date
-Transportation Hotel – Paso Canoas on departure date
-1day tour to El Valle including guide, transportation,fees & lunch
-1day tour to Embera village including guide,transportation, fees & box lunch
-1day tour to Portobelo including guide, transportation, fees, lunch & one way train ticket

Panama Not included:
-Meals not specified in the itinerary
-Alcoholic beverages
-International airfare
-Tourist card ($5 per person)
-Tips
-Extras in hotel (laundry, telephone calls, room service, etc.).

Costa Rica Includes:
-Private transfer from Paso Canoas to San Jose
-Private transfer from Aerial Tram Lodge to San Jose
-Private transfer from San Jose to Peñas Blancas
-4 nights lodging at hotel Britannia in a Deluxe room (No meals)
-1 night lodging at Aerial Tram Lodge in 1 single room (all meals ,night hike, tram, am birding tour)
-One day group tours to Poas Volcano, La Paz waterfalls, Arenal, hot springs, and Tortuguero.

Costa Rica Not included:
-Tips & gratuities to guides & drivers
-Internatinal flights
-Airport departure taxes
-Cross border taxes
-Personal expenses (laundry, phone calls)

Nicaragua Includes:
-Meet & greet at Nicaraguan border in Peñas Blancas
-Transfers between all destinations
- Private tours with bilingual driver/guide.
-1 night lodging at Plaza Colon in Granada
-3 nights lodging at Real Metro Centre (intercontinental)
-1 night lodging at Los Arcos hotel in Esteli.
-1 night lodging at Lomas Inn in Matagalpa
-1 Dinner at restaurant La Finca
-Entrance fees to all touristic areas

Nicaragua Not included:
-Tips & gratuities to guides & drivers
-Internatinal flights
-Airport departure taxes
-Cross border taxes
-Personal expenses (laundry, phone calls).

IMPORTANT:
-For the Panama canal, the partial transit operates every Saturday (from approximately 9am-2pm , starting on the Flamenco and finishes in the city of Miraflores. During high season, they also operate on Thursdays & Fridays.

-The Full transit operates once each month during Low season, and three (3) times a week during the high season (Thurs, Fri, Sat), and starts on the pacifc ocean and finishes on the Atlantic ocean and has a longer duration, which is usually from 7am and finishes around 7,8 or 9pm) depending on the amount of ships going through.

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