



GUATEMALA DISCOVERY

Immerse yourself in the bygone cultures and
impossibly beautiful wilderness of Guatemala.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



Latin America, Guatemala



8 days from AU\$7,810 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Immerse yourself in the bygone cultures and impossibly beautiful wilderness of Guatemala. Home to Maya ruins, towering volcanoes and vibrant indigenous cultures, Guatemala is utterly surprising. Stroll the cobblestone streets of colonial towns soaking up the history, admire the rich and colourful handicrafts and seek out jungle-cloaked temples.

Journey Highlights

- Weave colourful textiles in a village on the shores of Lake Atitlán
- Feast on the sight of the jungle-cloaked UNESCO World Heritage site, Tikal
- Bask in an unfolding panorama as you hike towards the summit of Pacaya Volcano
- Wander the cobble-stone streets of the preserved colonial city of Antigua
- Experience the full coffee production process with small, independent growers, from husking and fermenting to sorting, roasting, and tasting



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Antigua, Guatemala

Receive a warm A&K welcome and proceed to your luxury boutique hotel in the beautifully preserved Spanish colonial city of Antigua, located one hour's drive from the airport. Situated in the shadow of a towering volcano, Antigua is one of the most enchanting colonial towns in Latin America and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Take some time to explore this fascinating town of leafy main squares, ornate churches and 500-year-old cobblestone streets lined with low-rise, multicoloured buildings.

Posada del Angel

Day 2: Antigua

Take a short drive to San Miguel Escobar, a quaint town situated at the base of Volcán Agua. Meet families supported by De La Gente (DLG), a non-profit organisation supporting small independent coffee producers. Work side-by-side with farmers as they husk the fruit, ferment, wash and dry the beans, sort and roast the beans, and finally, taste.

Later, enjoy a traditional lunch prepared and served in a family home. Return to Antigua and join your guide on a wonderful private walking tour. Explore the colonial city's cultural, architectural, and social history with a behind-the-scenes look at some of Antigua's ornately decorated churches, Spanish colonial-era ruins, and the tomb of the first Guatemalan saint. Wander through the streets and elegant plazas punctuated by flowering trees, red-tiled roofs and church bell-towers of what was once Central America's most powerful city.

Posada del Angel / Meals: BL

Day 3: Antigua

Adventure awaits those who trek Guatemala's active Pacaya Volcano. Bask in the unfolding panorama as you climb from the foothills through a lush pine forest. Step over the barren moonscape to marvel at the fiery glow of lava and steam rising from vents that dot the forever-changing landscape. Your efforts on the ascent are rewarded with incredible views from the summit (2,300 metres) over the volcanoes of Fuego, Acatenango and Agua. After a well-deserved picnic lunch, retrace your steps down. Return to town where the remainder of the day is at leisure.

Posada del Angel / Meals: BL

Day 4: Antigua - Lake Atitlán

Journey through rolling farmland and villages to the highland town of Chichicastenango. Nestled in the El Quiché valley, "Chichi" may seem like a tranquil, sleepy village outside of market days, but twice a week it comes alive as Mayan people from the whole country gather for the largest market in Central America. Follow the chaos of vibrant, almost endless stalls running from the central square, up through the stairs of the Santo Tomás Church, and beyond. From the rich textures of native textiles to smells of traditional incense, this market promises a feast for the senses. Later, visit the surprisingly colourful cemetery, and hike up the hill to the Pascual Abaj, an ancient carved stone venerated where a local shaman will perform a Maya ceremony for you. Sample local delicacies over lunch before continuing onwards to Lake Atitlán, Guatemala's geological show-stopper and your intimate hotel overlooking the lake.

Casa Palopó / Meals: BL

Day 5: Lake Atitlán

Surrounded by Mayan villages, Lake Atitlán is Guatemala's highland jewel. Cruise across the crystal-clear lake to the shore-side village of San Juan La Laguna. Meander through this petite Tz'utujil Maya town to admire impressive murals, galleries and artisan shops. Step inside a local artist's studio to spark your creativity with naïf paintings. Visit one of the women's cooperatives for a demonstration of how backstrap looms and all-natural dyes are used to make some of Guatemala's richly colourful textiles. Following a traditional lunch at one of the cooperatives, try your hand at weaving richly coloured textiles in a workshop led by a women's cooperative. Return by boat to your hotel.

Casa Palopó / Meals: BL

Day 6: Lake Atitlán - Guatemala City - Flores

Lose yourself in the magic of Lake Atitlán during your morning at leisure before the journey continues to Guatemala City for your flight to Flores.

On arrival transfer to your lakeside hotel.

Las Lagunas Boutique Hotel / Meals: B

Day 7: Tikal

Be transported to an ancient world in Uaxactun, one of the oldest complete Maya astronomical complexes yet discovered. Roam the many treasures of this site, before a traditional lunch prepared by locals. Venture further into the jungles of El Peten where the awe-inspiring pyramids of Tikal's ruined temple complex rise through the rainforest. Walk in the footsteps of royalty in the majestic Great Plaza and Temple of the Jaguar, as howler and spider monkeys look on from the dense jungle and witness the views from Temple IV for one of those never-to-be-forgotten moments at this UNESCO World Heritage site.

Las Lagunas Boutique Hotel / Meals: BL

Day 8: Flores - Depart Guatemala City

Take your private transfer to Flores for your flight to Guatemala City and your onward arrangements.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Posada del Angel



Posada del Angel was one of the original boutique hotels in Antigua and is still one of the best offering a private ambiance with excellent personal service.

The hotel is traditional and elegant: each of the seven rooms is unique and has been designed with a colour palette inspired by the famous wall textures all over La Antigua. Beds are covered with Mayan textiles made on backstrap looms using the finest cottons and traditional indigenous techniques. Carved wood sculptures, hand hammered copper, ceramic and metal pieces, flowers and candles, are all part of a warm reddish atmosphere that gets transformed into the most romantic setting after sun dawn.

With 5 rooms on the main floor and the 2 master Suites (Rose & Mary Sue) this property still maintains a small and intimate hotel in the heart of town with excellent service.

Why we like it

- The unique style makes it a perfect place to escape the hot summer sun or warm up with a hot chocolate by the fire in the cold winter nights
- Posada del Angel Toiletries were designed by a local alchemist and has made a signature scent 'Semana Santa'

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- The lap pool is heated with solar panels, making certain it is the right temperature no matter what time of year

Casa Palopó



Overlooking Lake Atitlan, described by author Aldous Huxley as the 'most beautiful lake in the world', this hotel occupies a truly privileged location. Its terraced grounds overlook the lake - a mile-high wonder of startlingly blue, windswept waters, set against a backdrop of three 10,000-foot volcanoes.

Guatemalan-Mayan heritage is displayed proudly throughout, exemplified by the jewel-coloured walls, vibrant artworks, painted furniture and wonderful candelabras. With just nine rooms and a private villa, the hotel has an exclusive, intimate feel. All the rooms have private, outdoor spaces and, inside, are decorated in vibrant colours, whilst the furniture is mostly traditional carved or painted wood.

The hotel's private villa, meanwhile, stands at the crest of the terraced grounds, and is all muted colours, stylish, plantation-style furniture and polished floors. It is a contemporary, stylish and spacious accommodation with the added luxury of Philippe Starck designed bathroom fixtures and a private pool.

Why we like it

- All rooms have private terraces
- Cuisine is excellent and guests can enjoy dining al fresco or in the restaurant
- In-room massages and spa treatments can be arranged
- An outdoor lap pool stands on sun terrace with lovely lake views
- Other facilities include an open-plan lounge area, bars, gardens and terraces, a fitness centre and parking, whilst activities range from guided tours to kayaking and scuba diving

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