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GUATEMALA: VOLCANOES, LAKES, AND CULTURE

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Experiencing both the natural wonders and rich culture of Guatemala
- Ziplining among verdant tree canopies
- Kayaking in Lake Atitlan "the most beautiful lake in the world"
- Trekking among impressive volcanoes
- Savoring Guatemalan cuisine

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TRIP AT A GLANCE

- Location:** Antigua and Atitlan, Guatemala
- Activities:** Hiking, Camping, Kayaking, Ziplining
- Arrive:** Our first meeting is at 5PM in the lobby of our hotel in Antigua (Hotel Eterna Primavera)
- Depart:** We will have you back to the Guatemala airport by 12PM on the last day and you can plan to fly out anytime after 2PM

Trip Overview

With deep lakes, active volcanoes, miles of pristine jungle, and thousands of indigenous species of flora and fauna, Guatemala's geography is stunning. In addition to its many natural wonders, Guatemala is the Mayan heartland of Central America. Not only does Guatemala have more Mayan ruins than Mexico, the streets are still alive with indigenous people dressed in blazing colors and bustling markets that have existed for centuries and remain important elements of the fabric of this society. For any woman who wants to combine active travel with cultural exploration, Guatemala is a place you need to visit. The volcano trek will take us over and through stunning topography and lead us to the world's most beautiful lake, Atitlan. Max group size: 12.

Rating

This trip is perfect for women in good physical condition who want an active vacation exploring Guatemala. We'll get warmed up with a day hike on Pacaya Volcano before embarking on our overnight volcano trek. During the trek our miles will range from 7 - 9.3 miles per day, keeping us at elevations between 6,000 and 9,000 feet above sea level. We leave camp each morning around 8:30am, and usually arrive at our next camp by 4pm each afternoon. This trip is rated a 4 as it involves strenuous hiking, carrying daypacks (with water, snacks and rain layers), and significant elevation gain and loss. Rating: 1 2 3 [4] 5

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What's Included

- An Adventures in Good Company guide and local guides
- Eight nights double occupancy lodging
- All activities specified on the itinerary; trekking, kayaking, and ziplining
- All transportation within Guatemala
- Meals as specified on the itinerary
- Gratuities for in country drivers and guides

Not included: Travel to and from Guatemala; one dinner; AGC guide gratuities; alcoholic beverages; items of a personal nature

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

Day 1

Fly into La Aurora International Airport (GUA) anytime before 3pm and meet our representative for a group shuttle to Antigua. The colonial city of Antigua is a UNESCO World Heritage site known as one of Latin America's most enchanting cities. We'll meet as a group in the afternoon to get acquainted before heading out to a delicious Welcome Dinner at a traditional Guatemalan restaurant. Overnight: Hotel Eterna Primavera (D)

Day 2

Volcano Pacaya is one of the most impressive volcanic landscapes in all of Central America, standing at 8,370 feet. We'll depart Antigua after a hearty breakfast for the one hour drive to the trailhead. This moderate hike, with an elevation gain of 1,500 feet, lends itself to expansive vistas, starting first in Pacaya's lush forests and farmland and ascending to the dried lava fields at the base of the caldera. We'll refuel with a picnic lunch and enjoy views of nearby volcanoes; Agua, Fuego, and Acatenango. If the conditions are right, we might even be able to roast our dessert of marshmallows directly on the geothermal hot spots! We return to Antigua with time to explore for dinner on your own. Hiking Distance: 6.2 miles roundtrip. Overnight: Hotel Eterna Primavera (B,L)

Day 3

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Before starting our trek, we'll visit a shrine dedicated to the Mayan deity, Maximon (or as he later became known in the wake of Spanish influence, San Simon) to get a taste of local culture and a blessing for our travels. From there a short drive takes us to our trailhead where we begin our trek! We will walk through farms into lush Guatemalan cloud forest, admiring the views of Acatenango Volcano, the highest in the Antigua Valley at 8,700 feet elevation. We'll experience a protected forest overflowing with epiphytes like orchids and bromeliads before we arrive at Terra Camp. After hot showers and appetizers, we can warm up around a campfire before sitting down to a delicious dinner. Hiking distance: 7 miles. Elevation gain: 1,000 feet. Overnight: Terra Camp (B,L,D)

Day 4

Our second full day of the trek begins with a long gradual descent into the La Vega River valley where we cross a hanging footbridge over the river. Then we ascend back up to 2,400 feet through coffee farms to our lunch spot near a quaint Mayan village. After lunch, we continue on to Fuego Camp, arriving by late afternoon. Kick-off your boots and pull up a chair to enjoy the panoramic view of Fuego Volcano, one of the world's most active volcanoes! Learn how to make corn tortillas from scratch around the campfire before tucking into another hearty meal. Hiking distance: 8.1 miles. Elevation gain: 2,300 feet. Overnight: Fuego Camp. (B,L,D)

Day 5

This morning we cross the highest point of the trek, just over 9,000 feet above sea level. (It will take your breath away!) We will follow a pristine ridgeline for the rest of the day with panoramic views of six volcanoes and surrounding cloud forest before arriving at Agua Camp. Once we've had a chance to relax we can visit the local Mayan community of Chuinimachicaj to learn about their women's cooperative. The artisans here specialize in traditional backstrap weaving, an ancient art practiced for centuries in Guatemala, and still used to weave fabric for clothing and other textiles. Hiking distance: 9.3 miles. Elevation gain: 1,200 feet. Overnight: Agua Camp (B,L,D)

Day 6

The final day of the trek begins with a descent into the Madre Vieja River valley, where we visit a picturesque coffee farm to learn about the planting and harvesting process. Once we've tasted a bit of caffeine, we'll ascend to the rim of Lake Atitlan. Author Aldous Huxley famously called Guatemala's Lake Atitlán "the world's most beautiful lake." With its deep, clear waters surrounded by three towering volcanoes and Mayan villages, it's easy to agree. A final descent takes us to the lakeside village of San Antonio Palopo to conclude the trek - we made it! We will board a private boat for the short trip to La Casa del Mundo (or "The House of the World"). This beautiful hotel perched on the cliffs overlooking the lake is a wonderful reward for



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our hard work. Relax in a wood-fired hot tub tonight as you gaze at the stars above you or lounge by the lake. Hiking distance: 8.5 miles. Elevation gain: 1,250 feet. Overnight: La Casa del Mundo (B,L,D)

Day 7

After breakfast, we'll hop in single and double kayaks for a paddling adventure on Lake Atitlan. Our 1.5-hour kayak tour will take us past Mayan villages and along the verdant shoreline to our stopping point of Tzununa, a small community. There we'll leave the kayaks and hike approximately 2 hours back to La Casa del Mundo and our waiting lunch. Following some much-deserved relaxation, we'll meet with a local Mayan Shaman at the hotel who can conduct astrological readings and explain the mysteries of Mayan rituals. Overnight: La Casa del Mundo (B,L,D)

Day 8

Following breakfast with a marvelous view, we'll drive back to Antigua in our private shuttle, arriving midday. After dropping our bags at the hotel, we'll travel a short distance to a local farm called Finca Filadelfia. There we'll have lunch before getting to fly through the trees on a zipline! With two distinct routes, there is something for everyone. The Forest Express offers 6 zip lines of shorter distances (between 150 feet and 700 feet long) and an assisted rappel down from a 40-foot high tree platform. The Canyon Express has two mega zip lines stretching over the canyon, each one spanning 1,700 feet long and 500 feet above the canyon floor. You can select one or the other, or go on both tours. If heights aren't your thing - no problem! You can relax at the farm in the afternoon by the pool, go birdwatching or tour the coffee plantation. Once everyone has had her thrill (zip line tours last approximately 2 hours), we'll return to Antigua for souvenir shopping before our final farewell dinner. Overnight: Hotel Eterna Prima Vera (B,L,D)

Day 9

We trekked through a volcano valley, kayaked a pristine lake and soared through the trees, now it's unfortunately time to bid farewell to this incredible country. After a final breakfast, we will depart by private shuttle back to the international airport for flights home. (B)



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ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

One of the strengths of Guatemala as a premier adventure destination is its location. Less than a two-hour flight from Miami, Houston and other major US airports - it's easy to leave home in the morning and be strolling along cobblestone streets in Antigua by late afternoon. Plan on flying into La Aurora International Airport (GUA) anytime before 3pm for our group shuttle to Antigua (about 90 minutes). If you're arriving early and would like to meet us at the hotel, we'll meet as a group at 5pm in the lobby of Hotel Eterna Primavera in Antigua.

If you would like assistance with airline tickets we recommend contacting our travel agency, Exito Travel. Start by submitting the form you can find [here](#). If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Getting Home

You will fly out of La Aurora International Airport (GUA) on the last day. We will have you there by 12pm. You can book flights that leave any time after 2pm.

Accommodations

We'll spend our first two nights in a modern hotel in Antigua [Hotel Eterna Primavera](#).

During the trek we will be in 10' x 14' spacious canvas tents that fit up to two queen-size inflatable mattresses along with a shared bedside table. The comforters are goose-down and we will be provided hot water bottles to ensure a warm and cozy night's sleep. There is a "Trek Truck" that accompanies us at each camp that has a toilet, sink and hot water shower.

While at Lake Atitlan, we will stay in the incredible La Casa del Mundo. Accessible only by boat or by foot, this lakeside hotel is an eco-friendly paradise unlike any other.

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Weather

Guatemala is known as the land of eternal spring with moderate temperatures all year long. In late April in Antigua, you can expect daytime highs in the 70s/80s and nighttime lows in the 60s. We'll be catching the last month of the dry season before the typical mid-June start of the rainy season.

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

Cancellation Policies

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

Click [here](#) for our Cancellation & Payment Policies and Booking Terms & Conditions.

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