



MIXED
GROUPS

NICARAGUA

the hidden gem of Central America

17 days
16 nights



HIGHLIGHTS

- Day 1: Managua
- Day 2: Managua-San Carlos-El Castillo
- Day 3: El Castillo-Mesoamerican biological corridor
- Day 4: Mancarron Island-San Fernando Island
- Day 5: Los Guatuzos-San Fernando Island
- Day 6: San Fernando Island-San Jorge-Managua
- Day 7: Managua-Leon Viejo ruins-Leon
- Day 8: Leon-Chichigalpa rum experience
- Day 9: Las Peñitas-Juan Venado-Masaya-Granada
- Day 10: Granada
- Day 11: Catarina viewpoint-San Juan de Oriente
- Day 12: Granada-San Jorge-Ometepe island
- Day 13: Ometepe island
- Day 14: San Jorge-San Juan del Sur
- Day 15: San Juan del Sur
- Day 16: San Juan del Sur
- Day 17: San Juan del Sur-Managua airport



Welcome to



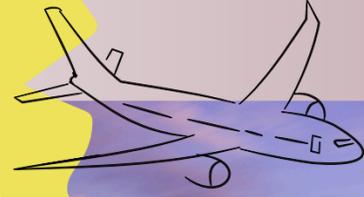
NICARAGUA

Your itinerary with a friendly mixed group begins here:

Day 1: Welcome in Managua

Arrival at Managua International Airport.

After clearing customs and immigration, look for a representative holding a sign with your group's name. The transfer from the airport to your hotel is a great opportunity to get a first glimpse of **Managua**, Nicaragua's capital city. Check-in and briefing with our guide to discuss the itinerary. Overnight.



Day 2: Managua, San Carlos, El Castillo

Breakfast included. Transfer to **San Carlos** (4h.30m. approx), capital of the **Rio San Juan** Department. The tour continues by boat along the San Juan river in an extraordinary naturalistic scenery (already known by the American shipping companies that, coming from New York, crossed **Nicaragua** from east to west, to continue the navigation reaching San Francisco, CA) up to the village of **El Castillo**. Accommodation in the hotel that offers an unparalleled view of this paradise surrounded by unspoiled nature. After sunset, in late afternoon, we take boat ride on the river in search of crocodiles. Overnight.

Lunch and dinner NOT included.

Day 3: El Castillo, Mesoamerican biological corridor

After breakfast, we will navigate through the San Juan River and reach a Reserve located in the **Mesoamerican biological corridor** to discover its virgin nature, habitat of monkeys, toucans, parrots, sloths, butterflies, mammals and frogs. Return to the hotel.

Visit to the El Castillo village, including the small craft chocolate factory and the Immaculate Conception Fortress, built by the Spanish in 1672 and strategically located on top of a hill to protect the colony from the incursions of English pirates and foreign enemies.

Lunch and dinner NOT included.



Day 4: El Castillo, Mancarron Island, San Fernando Island

After breakfast, we will travel by boat to San Carlos, then continue to the Solentiname archipelago in **Cocibolca Lake**. Visit to the island of **Mancarrón**, the largest of the Solentiname archipelago, famous throughout the country for primitives painting and balsa woodcrafts, activities born and developed due to the effort of the poet and Trappist monk Ernesto Cardenal (who received the prestigious awards Reyna Sofia and Pablo Neruda). We will also visit the **Liberation Church**, founded by the same Cardinal. Transfer by boat to the island of San Fernando, a Paradise of uncontaminated flora. Lunch and dinner NOT included.



Day 5: San Fernando Island, Los Guatuzos Reserve, San Fernando Island

Breakfast. Tour to the natural Reserve Los Guatuzos, which owes its name to an indigenous community, where we'll be able to admire its amazing flora and fauna. **Box lunch included in the Reserve**. Return to San Fernando island by boat (before arriving on the island, those who wish can fish in the lake and try to get dinner!). Dinner NOT included.



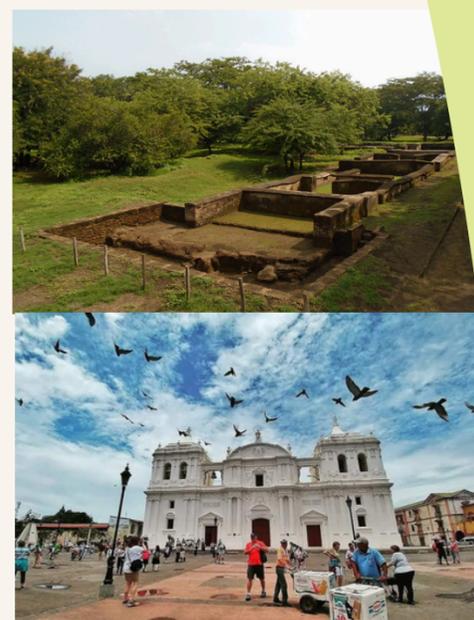
Day 6: San Fernando island, San Jorge, Managua

Return by boat to San Carlos and from there by land to Managua. In the afternoon we will visit the **Roberto Huembes market** (unknown to international tourism), where you can find tasty tropical fruit and authentic local crafts. Return to hotel. Lunch and dinner NOT included.



Day 7: Managua, Leon Viejo ruins, Leon

Transfer to the ruins of **Leon Viejo** - UNESCO heritage - the place where in 1524 **Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba** founded the city, then abandoned by its inhabitants for fear of the eruptions of the nearby **Momotombo** volcano. The site offers an important caption on the economic and social structures of the Colony at the time of its foundation. Then, we will reach the city of **Leon** (the present one).



In the afternoon, guided tour of the city: the central square; the murals, which show us an insight into the recent history of the city; **the cathedral** (the largest in Central America, registered in the **UNESCO World Heritage** List) where we will enjoy a magnificent view of the city and the surrounding volcanic mountain range from the roof; the **Museum of Legends** and Traditions; the Ortiz-Gurdian Center, the most important private art exhibition in the country, with paintings and statues by American and European artists from the 17th century to the present day. Lunch and dinner NOT included. Note: main points of interest are closed on **Monday**

Day 8: Leon, Chichigalpa rum experience

We move to the nearby town of **Chichigalpa**, home to the factory of one of the most awarded rums in the world. We will retrace the history of this excellent product, from its origins to the present day. The factory offers this experience only on weekend, there are several alternative tours in Leon the others days... Return to Leon. Lunch and dinner NOT included.



Day 9: Leon, Las Peñitas, Juan Venado reserve, Masaya volcano, Granada

Our experience begins at Las Peñitas, a fishermen village on the Pacific coast, 30 minutes from **Leon**. Boat trip to **Juan Venado** nature reserve, located on the island facing the coast. The mangrove forest between the coastline and the island is the habitat of crocodiles, crabs, and many crustaceans. The island is covered by dense vegetation where dozens of birds species live. We reach the opposite side of the island, facing the Pacific Ocean, and we enjoy the huge sandy beach unknown to tourists, where the Paslama turtles come between August and December to lay their eggs. In the afternoon we move to **Masaya volcano**, which illuminates the surrounding area with the light of its lava. We take you up to the mouth of the active crater, don't miss this amazing show! Finally, we reach **Granada**, the colonial city known as the Great Sultan, due to its architectural analogies with Spain's Andalusia region. Lunch and dinner NOT included..

Day 10: Granada

City tour to visit **Granada**'s main attractions: the central square and the neoclassical Cathedral; the **Museum of Saint Francis** (an extraordinary testimony of the pre-Columbian Nicaraguan civilization); the **Church of La Merced**, and its bell tower where visitors enjoy the view over the city; the La Polvora fortress and Xalteva area where the city was founded by the Spanish Empire.; the central colorful market. In the afternoon we head to **Cocibolca** lake harbor to take a boat and sail along some of the 365 small islands (isletas), which were created following an eruption of the Mombacho volcano. Some islands are inhabited, others are home to monkeys' families, squirrels, and different birds species. Lunch and dinner NOT included.



Day 11: Catarina viewpoint, San Juan de Oriente

Transfer to the Catarina viewpoint, a hill overlooking the Apoyo lagoon, an extinct crater filled with blue waters, surrounded by dense vegetation.

Lunch included in a typical restaurant.

Visit to a workshop where the artisans produce fine clay artifacts. Dinner NOT included.



Day 12: Granada, San Jorge, Ometepe island

Transfer to the port of San Jorge where we take the ferry to the island of **Ometepe** in the Cocibolca lake, a place of extraordinary natural beauty dominated by two volcanoes connected by a small isthmus. Once on the island, we will visit the **El Ceibo** museum, with two different exhibits: one consists of ceramics and work tools of the ethnic groups that inhabited the island in the pre-Columbian age, the other represents a collection of over 800 coins/banknotes that accompanied the history of the country

Accommodation in a hotel facing the lake. Visit to the "**Ojo de Agua**" nature reserve for an afternoon of relaxation and swimming in this natural source of refreshing and healing water, surrounded by vegetation.

Lunch and dinner NOT included.





Day 13: Ometepe island

Visit to the **Magdalena** finca (farm), to appreciate its petroglyphs, evidence of pre-Columbian civilization, and the agricultural activities practiced (organic coffee, plantain, corn, beans, rice, vegetables, cattle breeding).

In the afternoon we will know **Punta Jesus Maria** - the most westerly point of the island - where a narrow strip of land over a km long seems to be the artificial extension of the island, with currents of the lake converging from opposite directions colliding on this isthmus. At high tide the impression is that of walking on the water! We will enjoy the sunset that tinges the sky with pink-orange shades. Strongly suggested a cold local beer!

Dinner NOT included.



Day 14: Ometepe island, San Jorge, San Juan del Sur

We return by ferry to the port of San Jorge where our means of transport awaits and takes us to **San Juan del Sur**, a colorful and pleasant seaside resort on the Pacific coast. Free time to relax while strolling in this colorful village or sipping a cocktail in one of the seafront bars. Suggested optional activity (**not included**) in the afternoon: Las Nubes Park (San Juan del Sur area) to enjoy the canopy experience in the middle of the tropical forest with a view over the Ocean (1,100 meters long, 15 platforms, 1 aerial bridge and 2 hanging bridges). Options to visit the center for the protection and reproduction of the green iguana, animal in danger of extinction in Central America.

Lunch and dinner NOT included.

Days 15-16: San Juan del Sur

Two days of relaxation in a beautiful resort.

We suggest you discover the beaches around San Juan del Sur on your own (playa el Coco, playa Hermosa, playa Marsella): beautiful sandy beaches surrounded by tropical vegetation. Lunch and dinner NOT included.



Day 17: San Juan del Sur, Managua airport

Transfer to Managua airport for the return flight home.

End of services



The package includes:



- Private transport (not shared with other tourists) for the entire itinerary
- Round-trip ferry ride to Ometepe Island
- Entrance fees and private visits/excursions (not shared with other tourists) mentioned in the itinerary
- Guide service in English/Spanish
- Overnight stay in selected standard hotels
- All breakfasts, lunch on days 5th, 11th, 13th
- Local tourist tax
- English/Spanish telephone service for the entire holiday

The package doesn't include:



- Intercontinental flight
- Nicaragua entrance fee (10 usd)
- Personal purchases /tips
- Tour leader English or German speaking accompanying the group (optional)
- All that's not well specified in "the package includes"

THANK YOU & STAY TUNED ON
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