

8-day Guatemala Highlights SIB



Included services:

- 7 overnights in good country-typical 3* hotels or good standard 4* or boutique hotels or luxury 5* hotels
- daily breakfasts, except Day 6 (American or typical or Continental breakfast due to offered choice)
- all ground transfers, boat transportation and entrance fees as indicated in tour itinerary
- local English-speaking guide for half-day archeological tour in Tikal
- hotel taxes and VAT

Not included: Other meals, drinks, tips, additional transfers or guide services, departure tax.

PLEASE NOTE THAT AIR TRANSFER AND ENTRANCE FEES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE ANYTIME WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. ALTERNATIVE ARRIVAL TUE/THUR/FRI POSSIBLE. TRANSPORTATION BASED ON COLLECTIVE SHUTTLES (SEAT-IN BASIS). ASK FOR ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION, EXTRA GUIDE SERVICES, MEALS, ADDITIONAL OVERNIGHTS ETC.

Program Itinerary:

Day 1 (Saturday):

Reception at airport and transfer to hotel in Antigua. Depending on your arrival time, you can still enjoy a relaxed evening walk through the cobble stone streets of this colonial town. Overnight in colonial-style hotel.

Day 2 (Sunday):

Transfer from Antigua to Chichi. Visit the indigenous market, observe Mayan rituals in Santo Tomás church, and alternatively hike to nearby ceremonial site Pascual Abaj. The colorful town of **Chichicastenango** located 20 miles north of this volcanic lake, hosts every Thursday and Sunday one of the biggest indigenous markets in Guatemala, attracting traders from the highlands offering beautiful traditional textiles & handicrafts. Chichi offers lots of shamanistic overtones with numerous religious brotherhoods & a mystic-spiritual combination of Mayan pagan rites and traditional Catholic devotion. Then continue to Panajachel, from where you take a boat to El Jaibalito (approx. Q15pp not included). Overnight in charming hotel with stunning volcano view.

Day 3 (Monday):

FREE DAY to swim and relax. Optional: Tour to San Pedro Volcano. Overnight.

Day 4 (Tuesday):

Boat tour of majestic Lake Atitlán visiting Santiago Atitlán with its great art galleries and the Maximón sanctuary, San Antonio Palopó and Santa Catarina Palopó, both offering a great selection of typical pottery and hand woven products. A natural treasure is the sapphire-blue **Lake Atitlán**, surrounded by 3 dormant volcanoes in the Western Highlands. Located around the lake's shore are 14 picturesque indigenous villages which are home to Kakchiquel and Tzutuhil families and where Mayan dialects are first language. Return afterwards to Pana, Lake Atitlán's second largest village, also called Gringotenango. Transfer to Antigua. Overnight.

Day 5 (Wednesday):

FREE DAY. **Antigua Guatemala** served as capital of all Central America from 1543 until 1773, when destroyed by an earthquake and the capital subsequently moved to its present location. The city was original known as *La Muy Noble y La Muy Leal Ciudad de Santiago de los Caballeros*, it is located just 45 km from Guatemala City, its splendid beauty consists in its colonial architecture, its houses painted in Mediterranean colors, and its ruins and numerous churches. Antigua has been declared UNESCO World Heritage site in 1979.

Options include: a) hike to Pacaya volcano; b) walking tour in Antigua - La Merced church, Santa Catalina arch, Central Plaza with cathedral and Palacio de Capitanes, University San Carlos, San Francisco church with the shrine of Guatemala's only saint - Hermano Pedro; c) visit to coffee plantation; d) visit to Macadamia Nut Farm; e) visit to a Women's Weaving Cooperative in San Antonio Aguascalientes; f) visit to Don Filiberto, a farmer in San Miguel Escobar; g) Tour de Pueblos visiting surrounding villages. **PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS FOR OPTIONAL TOURS IN ADVANCE.** Overnight.

Day 6 (Thursday):

Early transfer to airport in Guatemala City and flight to Flores. You will be met by our representative and brought to Tikal National Park. Start guided tour of Tikal archeological site with bilingual local guide, visiting Complex Q, Main Plaza, North and Central Acropolis, Complex Lost World, Temple IV. Lunch (included). Once the ceremonial center of the ancient Maya, the ruins at **Tikal** were rediscovered in 1955 and comprise the largest collection of Mayan ruins ever excavated. Now, a National Park covering 358 square miles of prime rainforest, Tikal is home to a rich variety of flora and fauna, including spider and howler monkeys, ocelots, jaguars, and almost 250 bird species. UNESCO declared Tikal a World Heritage site in 1979 due to its exceptional natural and cultural value. **FREE AFTERNOON** to explore and re-enter the archeological zone. Try to be in the park for sunset. Overnight in Tikal.

Day 7 (Friday):

Optional early morning bird-watching tours or canopy tours available. **FREE MORNING** to visit onsite museums and re-enter the archeological zone (approx. Q50 not included). Afternoon transfer to Flores airport and flight to Guatemala City. Transfer to centrally located hotel in Guatemala City. Overnight.

Day 8 (Saturday):

FREE MORNING. Optional: City Tour visiting National Palace, Cathedral, Museums Popol Vuh and Ixchel, and the Relieve map of Guatemala, and then it is time to say good-bye. Drop-off at airport.

END OF SERVICES