

ITINERARY | DAY-BY-DAY



CAREER ENRICHMENT



Mayans, Mountains, and Medicine: GUATEMALA!

Lake Atitlan, Antigua, Tikal & Guatemala City

9 days / 8-nights

October 28-November 5, 2023

\$3,999 (based on double occupancy/land only)

\$349 (single supplement)

Enjoy the unique culture and traditions of Guatemala while you spend time with the locals and meet fellow medical professionals.

BOOK NOW 888.747.7501

Professional Connections

- ✓ **Interact with medical professionals** from a variety of facilities throughout your travels. Explore Guatemala's healthcare system including preventative medicine and the management of chronic disease along with the role of doctors and other allied health professionals in providing care.
- ✓ Develop an appreciation of Guatemala's response to health challenges through a mutual exchange with representatives from local hospitals and universities. Hosts may include local speakers as well as visit to facilities like the **Hospitalito Atitlán** and a local university such as **Universidad de San Carlos (USAC)**.
- ✓ Take part in a **medicinal plant workshop** and engage with a local **Shaman**.
- ✓ ***Accompanying guest program** – *alternate activities will be provided for those who do not wish to attend the professional meetings.*

Cultural Immersion & Exploration

- ✓ Giving back and engaging with the local community is an important part of your journey. Spend time with staff and children at one of **Niños de Guatemala's schools**.
- ✓ Hike an **active volcano**, Pacaya, and enjoy a picnic pizza lunch baked in the hot lava!
- ✓ Take a day trip (via roundtrip flights) to explore the ruins of **Tikal National Park**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and important ceremonial, cultural, and commercial center for the local people. Explore the impressive complex and stone monuments with your guide as you learn about pre-Columbian Maya civilization.
- ✓ Enjoy **privately guided explorations** of Antigua and Guatemala City and visit important historical sites

What's Included:

- 4* accommodations throughout
- Roundtrip flights to/from Tikal
- Local professional guide throughout
- Most tips to local drivers, guest guide and restaurants
- Activities and meals as mentioned

Not Included:

- International flights to/from Guatemala
- Meals not specified
- Tips for national guide
- Passport renewal or issuance
- Personal expenses at the hotel
- Trip insurance



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United States to Guatemala

DAY 1: Saturday, October 28, 2023

Fly to Guatemala

Journey to **Guatemala**, a country otherwise known as the “Land of Trees” and once referred to as the ‘closest thing to Eden on earth” by Lonely Planet. After claiming your luggage and clearing customs in Guatemala City, you will be met by your local guide and transferred to Antigua. *{Flights not included, can be booked for an additional fee}*

The **Good Hotel** is a former private mansion and a small boutique hotel infused with minimalistic design and local touches. It has been chosen for its wonderful location and relaxed and friendly environment, but more importantly, for the unique and important role it plays in giving back to the local community of Antigua. All profits from the hotel go directly to funding three local schools that have been established to educate over 500 children in underserved communities in Guatemala.

Rooms feature traditional washing sinks, private patios and open-air showers. All rooms surround the inner garden and have a small writing desk, safe, coffee and tea amenities, luxurious towels, rain and hand-held shower, as well as organic bathroom amenities made locally.

Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening at Welten Restaurant.

Overnight: Good Hotel
Included meals: Dinner



Antigua, Guatemala

DAY 2: Sunday, October 29

Welcome to Antigua

Please Note: *Breakfast is included daily at your hotel.*

After breakfast, embark upon a glorious hike up to the Pacaya Volcano. **Pacaya is an active volcano** that rises to an elevation of 8,377 ft and first erupted approximately 23,000 years ago. As you ascend the volcano, enjoy spectacular views of the valley down below and observe two other volcanoes, Agua and Fuego (active) in the distance. The hike is graded moderate and will be at a pace that accommodates the entire group (Nanda guests of all ages have completed the hike). If hiking is not for you, no problem, we will have horses available for you to ride!

We have a special treat lined up for lunch! Your guide will find the perfect spot for you to enjoy a pizza lunch. This is no ordinary pizza; it will be cooked fresh in the heat of the hot lava rocks. Relax, take in the views, sip on a beer or wine, and enjoy this unique, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Continue your exploration with an **Antigua historic & cultural walking tour**. Explore Antigua with your national guide to learn about the city’s history as well as daily life of the local people. You will visit Cerro de la Cruz (Hill of the Cross) for a fabulous panoramic view of the city as well as have a chance to explore some of Antigua’s most emblematic churches, monuments, and buildings. Time permitting, visit a handicraft or other local market or two.

Dinner will be a Hector’s Bistro.

Overnight: Good Hotel
Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner





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📍 Antigua, Guatemala

DAY 3: Monday, October 30

Professional Exchange & Volunteer Day

Begin your community interaction with a chance to give back in partnership with **Niños de Guatemala (NDG)**, a Dutch-Guatemalan NGO that provides education to underprivileged children to empower them, their families, and communities to break the cycle of poverty. NDG founded and operates two primary schools and one secondary school for approximately 500 students in the communities of Ciudad Vieja and San Lorenzo el Cubo in Guatemala.

The morning will be dedicated to **spending time at the local NDG schools** by observing medical exams for the students including routine checks for weight, height, vision, breathing, blood pressure and overall well-being. Start the morning with a tour of the project and an overview of the wellness and nutrition initiatives, meeting with some of the onsite staff with whom you will be collaborating.

All children in NDG's schools receive a daily nutritionally balanced snack, access to routine medical and dental care, instruction on proper health and hygiene, and access to on-site social work and psychology staff.

Engage in a dialogue with the healthcare team and discuss topics of mutual interest, including how participants might be able to help advance the already fabulous care NDG provide.

This afternoon, meet with a local physician who will provide an **overview of healthcare in Guatemala**. This will focus on the healthcare platform in Guatemala, delivery of care in the various sectors, influences of religion and culture, as well as unique challenges faced in the region. The unique blend of indigenous Mayan and Spanish colonial heritage has influenced the history, economy, language, and way of life as this country interfaces with the modern world. You will discuss how healthcare delivery and public health overall are heavily influenced by these factors.

Guest program: *Today accompanying guest will spend the afternoon taking part in a gastronomy workshop and cooking class. Begin with a visit to a local market to learn about, and buy, the local ingredients you will need for your class. Enjoy some time with your chef as you explore the market and learn about the local ingredients. Make your way onward to the classroom where you will learn to make some local dishes from your chef.*

Dinner is by individual arrangement today.

Overnight: Good Hotel

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch





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📍 Antigua, Guatemala

DAY 4: Tuesday, October 31

Drive to Lake Atitlán & Explore

Check out of your hotel and settle your incidentals. After breakfast, head to **Lake Atitlán**. Once referred to by Lonely Planet as “*the closest thing to Eden on earth*”. Lake Atitlán, a crater lake formed around two million years ago, is nestled between three majestic volcanoes (Atitlán, Tolimán and San Pedro), mountains, and twelve different Mayan villages. Enjoy lunch enroute.

On arrival at Lake Atitlan and enjoy a tour of the primary town by the lake **Panajachel**. Panajachel is a very popular destination with visitors from all over the world who are exploring Central and South America. It is a hub for all the local water taxis who take travelers to the surround lake villages, most of which are not accessible by car.

From here you will take a short boat transfer to your lakeside hotel, **Villas Santa Catarina**. This boutique property has magnificent views of the surrounding area and has onsite dining, heated outdoor pool, free Wi-Fi in public areas and a lounge. Spend the remainder of the day relaxing by the pool, enjoying the lake by kayak, or simply being at peace in this delightfully tranquil location. *Dinner is on your own.*

Overnight: Villas Santa Catarina
Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

📍 Atitlan, Guatemala

DAY 5: Wednesday, November 1

Professional Program Activities

This morning professional members of the group will visit **Hospitalito Atitlán**, a small private nonprofit hospital serving 75,000 Maya living on the southern shore of the lake. The facility provides inpatient and outpatient services specializing in the care of women and children. They have 24/7 emergency care and provide surgical obstetric care to people within a two-hour radius of the facility. Observe how the status of women in Guatemalan society has influenced their access to care and their participation in its delivery.

Guest program: *This morning accompanying guest will enjoy a visit to San Juan. Start with a chocolate workshop to learn how they grow cocoa beans and the transformation process to the delightful candies they make. A few blocks from there learn about the Mayan honeybee with a chance to view the varieties of bees that are cultivated and how their honey is used in Guatemala. Last stop is a visit to a corn plantation to learn about the importance of corn as the base of Mayan food with a tasting of locally made tortillas.*

Lunch will be provided this afternoon.





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This afternoon the group will take part in a **medicinal plant workshop** at a medicinal garden with a Mayan 'Birthlady' to learn about the birth process, consultation and follow up of baby care offered to the women of the community. They will explain how they use the various plants.

Head onward to meet with a **local Shaman** to learn about traditional medicine. Learn how the heavy influences of religion and local Mayan culture affect the delivery of care and discuss the differences between this type of care and traditional medicine.

Return to the hotel where the remainder of the evening is free with dinner on your own.

Overnight: Villas Santa Catarina
Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

📍 Lake Atitlán, Guatemala

DAY 6: Thursday, November 2

Return to Guatemala City

Check out of your hotel and drive back to **Guatemala City** this morning.

Lunch will be provided at a local restaurant.

After lunch head out to explore the historical center of the city with your national guide. Visit the **Palacio Nacional de la Cultura**, one of the most important buildings in Guatemala. Constructed in the early 1940's and once home to former President Jorge Ubico, the palace features impressive architecture, monuments, and historic murals. Next make your way to Guatemala City's historic center to see the **Plaza Mayor** (main plaza), the **Metropolitan Cathedral**, and **Centennial Park**.

Check into the **Good Hotel** which is in the city's creative hub. This hotel is also part of the Nino's de Guatemala organization and each evening's stay funds the education of a student for 5 days.

Dinner will be provided at La Capirucha this evening.

Overnight: Good Hotel
Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

📍 Guatemala City, Guatemala

DAY 7: Friday, November 3

Professional Program

This morning professional members of the group will meet with representatives from the **University de San Carlos**, the largest and oldest university in Guatemala. Today they have 36 academic units including 11 schools. Visit the **medical faculty** for an overview of physician education in Guatemala and a chance to talk to staff about the challenges in the prevention and treatment of both communicable and chronic diseases, the leading causes of mortality in Guatemala's very diverse population. Understand the difficulties of approaching current scientific advances in a context of limited access and scarce resources.

Lunch will be provided this afternoon with dinner on your own.

Guest program: *This morning accompanying guests will explore Ciudad Cayala with your local guide. This delightful neighborhood is known for its unique architecture, delightful scenery, and thoughtful planning with nearby shopping, clinics, and recreation. Lunch will be provided in the area.*

This afternoon professionals and guests will visit a local museum like the **City Railway Museum**. The museum has a collection of steam and diesel locomotives, passenger carriages and other pieces connected with the railway. Guatemala once had a relatively extensive railway system, which spanned from the border of Mexico to Guatemala City and onto Puerto Barrios, on the Atlantic Coast.

The city has a variety of museums so your local guide will work with you to settle on the best option for the group. Some others include the Museum of Indigenous Textiles and Clothing and Museo Popol Vuh is home to one of the largest collections of Mayan art in the world.

Dinner is by individual arrangement this evening.

Overnight: Good Hotel
Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch



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📍 Guatemala City, Guatemala

DAY 8: Saturday, November 4

Day Trip to Tikal National Park

Depart the hotel after breakfast for the airport for your short 45-minute flight to the Island of Flores where you will then bus about 40 minutes to Tikal National Park.

Tour the wonders of one of Guatemala's most important Mayan archeological sites, **Tikal**. Explore the ruins and learn about the local wildlife species that live in and around the park. Enjoy a walking tour through the complex learning about the various temples and ruins dating to the Mayan Classic Period. Today's explorations will also include a visit to a **local museum** where they showcase some of the priceless monuments and various clay works.

Lunch will be provided this afternoon inside the park.

Return to the airport for your flight back to Guatemala City where you will be met for your transfer back to the hotel.

Your farewell dinner will be provided at the hotel this evening.

Overnight: Good Hotel

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

📍 Guatemala City, Guatemala

DAY 9: Sunday, November 5

Depart for home today

While today is a time for goodbyes, we hope it will only be temporary and that you will one day return to Guatemala to deepen your connections and further your explorations of this deeply traditional and warm country.

Included meals: Breakfast

How you are helping:

- ✓ Your participation helps Ninos de Guatemala to continue their work providing education for over 500 students
- ✓ For each night at the Good Hotel, you fund the education of a child for 5 days
- ✓ Each half-day of cultural experiences and activities in which you participate funds a nutritious and wholesome snack for 3 students at a Ninos de Guatemala school for one whole month.
- ✓ By supporting social cooperatives, you're directly protecting the cultural heritage of indigenous communities and helping families remain in the local community and create a life of financial independence.





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📍 Antigua, Guatemala

Good Hotel

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📍 Lake Atitlan, Guatemala

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Telephone: +502-7761-1291

<http://www.villasdeguatemala.com/esp/villa-santa-catarina>



📍 Guatemala City, Guatemala

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