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BELIZE, GUATEMALA, & HONDURAS

Exploring the Maya World and Beyond

September 28 - October 10, 2012



Colonial cities, captivating Maya ruins, and indigenous people will give you a taste of the Maya's rich and layered cultural history. Delve into the history of a people whose sophistication in art, architecture, and science rivaled the ancient Egyptians and Greeks. Journeying through the lands that are now Belize, Honduras, and Guatemala, you will gain insight into each country while witnessing the impact of European colonization and the lifestyles and traditions of modern-day descendants of the Maya people.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the highlights of the Maya world across three of Central America's most fascinating countries.
- Witness the spectacular Maya ruins of Tikal, Copan, and Lamanai.
- Discover how modern culture and Maya history combine in the colonial city of Antigua.
- Listen to traditional instruments and folkloric recordings at the Casa K'ojom Maya Music Museum.
- Watch local weavers perform their ancient craft.
- Examine traditional Honduran chocolate production and visit a local school for insights into the educational system.
- Observe the traditions of the ancient Maya culture still practiced today.

ITINERARY

SEPTEMBER 28 - BELIZE CITY, BELIZE

Upon arrival in Belize you will be met at the airport and escorted to your hotel. After checking in, dinner will be provided at the hotel followed by an orientation to the program. *Overnight at Radisson Hotel. (D)*

SEPTEMBER 29 - SAN IGNACIO, BELIZE

After an early breakfast you will depart Belize City and travel to visit the ruins at Lamanai. Lamanai, meaning 'submerged crocodile,' features spectacular temples and hundreds of carved structures. After lunch at the site you'll return by boat to the dock at Orange Walk and drive to San Ignacio. Dinner will be at the hotel. *Overnight at San Ignacio Hotel. (BLD)*

SEPTEMBER 30 - SAN IGNACIO, BELIZE

This morning after breakfast you will visit the bustling market at San Ignacio and explore the shops, restaurants, and colonial architecture of the town. Later is a visit to the nearby Cahal Pech archaeological site, formerly a major Maya ceremonial center and a popular spot for birdwatching. After lunch at the hotel you will venture into a Maya community where the focus will be on natural healing with Maya herbal medicine. Dinner will be at the hotel. *Overnight at San Ignacio Hotel. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 1 - TIKAL, GUATEMALA

After breakfast you will head to the Xunantunich ruins. Xunantunich houses six plazas surrounded by more than 26 temples and palaces dating from the Maya Classic Era. It's largest pyramid, El Castillo, is well known for its frieze of stucco decoration. Later you will transfer to the border and arrive at the Hotel Peten Esplendido to check in and eat lunch. An orientation to the town of Flores will be provided during a boat ride before dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Peten Esplendido. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 2 - TIKAL, GUATEMALA

After an early breakfast at the hotel you will transfer to the Tikal National Park, one of the largest excavated sites in the Americas and home to over 4,000 structures. Tikal is one of the most famous sites in Guatemala with a long and mysterious history. The ruins are dominated by five enormous, pyramidal temples, as well as an impressive network of causeways, aqueducts, and canals. Your guide will provide an overview of the ruins during a lecture, "Tikal - Where Only Legend Survives." After lunch at the site is an excursion to the Tikal Museum. After transferring back to Flores, the rest of the afternoon is at leisure to explore the Mediterranean style architecture of the town before dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Peten Esplendido. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 3 - ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

After an early breakfast at the hotel you will transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Guatemala City. Upon arrival you will head to Antigua where you will check in at the hotel followed by lunch. Later you will meet with Elizabeth Bell in the lobby for a cultural walking tour of the city, visiting the cathedral and its magnificent ruins, the Jade Museum, which features carvings and replicas of pre-Colombian masks, figures, and ceremonial knives, and the best museums in Antigua at the Paseo de los Museos. *Overnight at Hotel Posada Don Rodrigo Antigua. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 4 - ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

After breakfast at the hotel you will transfer to Chichicastenango, situated high on the mountaintops. A trip here would not be complete without an excursion to the famous colorful indigenous market filled with textiles, handicrafts, and food. Lunch will be at the Hotel Santo Tomas followed by a field trip to the church of Santo Tomas. You will discover how Maya religion has blended with Christianity during a site lecture by local guide on the religious rituals of the people of Guatemala. Dinner is on your own to explore the local options. *Overnight at Hotel Posada Don Rodrigo Antigua. (BL)*

OCTOBER 5 - ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

This morning after breakfast at the hotel you will take a field trip to Casa K'ojom Music Museum to see the traditional instruments of the Maya and enjoy a lecture on the evolution of Maya music. You will return to the hotel for lunch. In the afternoon, an excursion to San Antonio Aguas Calientes Textile Cooperative will provide the opportunity to see weavers and textiles and learn about the traditional Indian costumes of Guatemala during a site lecture by a local guide. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure followed by dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight at Hotel Posada Don Rodrigo Antigua. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 6 - COPÁN, HONDURAS

Breakfast will be followed by your transfer to Honduras, with lunch served en route. After arrival and check in at the hotel in the early afternoon, you will have time to walk around the town of Copán. Later this afternoon, your explorations of the city will be complemented with a lecture by expert archaeologist David Sedat titled "Discovering Copán." Dinner will be served at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Copán Marina. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 7 - COPÁN, HONDURAS

After breakfast will be a field trip to Copán's main archaeological site, most famous for its inscribed Hieroglyphic Stairway and carved stelae. Lunch will be at the ruins. In the afternoon you will explore the Sculpture Museum, which features a beautiful and colorful collection of Maya architecture and sculpture. Later you will return to the hotel for the rest of the afternoon at leisure and dinner on your own. *Overnight at Hotel Copán Marina. (BL)*

OCTOBER 9 - COPÁN, HONDURAS

This morning after breakfast at the hotel you will take a field trip to a local school and visit a museum in town. Lunch will be at a local restaurant. The early afternoon will be at leisure to explore Copán, followed by a visit to the home of a local archaeologist for a demonstration on transforming cacao into chocolate and a lecture, "History of Cacao - The Sacred Maya Beverage." This evening, enjoy a BBQ dinner around the pool with marimba music. *Overnight at Hotel Copán Marina. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 9 - SAN PEDRO SULA, HONDURAS

After breakfast you will visit the Sepulturas site at Copán before departing to San Pedro Sula, one of the fastest growing cities in the country. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon you will visit the museum in town followed by an excursion to Guamilito Market, which features Honduran artisans, crafts, and produce from around the country. This evening a farewell dinner will be served at a local restaurant. *Overnight at Gran Sula Hotel. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 10 - FAREWELL!

This morning you will transfer to the airport for your flight home. *(B)*

PROGRAM PRICING

\$2997 (based on a minimum of 8 participants)

Single supplement available for \$500.

Cost does not include international airfare.

THE FINE PRINT

Rates are based double occupancy. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to confirm your reservation. This deposit is refundable until June 18, 2012 excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Cancellations between June 18 - July 09, 2012 will result in loss of full deposit. Final payments are due no later than July 09, 2012. Cancellations received after July 09, 2012 are not refundable. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information, call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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