



LAMANAI

HONDURAS, GUATEMALA, BELIZE

Route of the Maya Uncovered

12 DAYS | Choose your dates | Best season to travel: NOV - APR

Colonial cities, captivating Maya ruins, and indigenous civilizations will give you a taste of the Maya's rich and layered culture. Delve into the history of a people whose sophistication in art, architecture, and science rivaled the ancient Egyptians and Greeks. Examine well-known archaeological sites including Lamanai, Cahal Pech, Tikal, and Copán. Journeying through the lands that are now Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize, 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 – and discover how modern culture and Maya history combine – across three fascinating Central American countries.
- Listen to traditional instruments and folkloric recordings at the Casa K'ojom Maya Music Museum.
- Learn about Honduran chocolate production and visit a local school for insights into the educational system.
- Visit the famous indigenous market at Chichicastenango, filled with colorful textiles, handicrafts, and food.
- Discover how Maya religion has blended with Christianity during a site lecture at the Church of Santo Tomás.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Bilingual local guide
- Driver
- Internal flights
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Carbon offsetting



ANTIGUA



ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - SAN PEDRO SULA

Upon arrival to Ramón Villeda Morales International Airport (SAP) in San Pedro Sula, clear immigration and customs and transfer to the hotel. After check-in and settling in, attend a program orientation and welcome dinner. *Note: participants must book flights that arrive into San Pedro Sula no later than 4 pm if they plan on attending the program orientation at 6 pm. The airport is approximately 30 minutes from the hotel. Overnight at Hotel Copantl. (D)*

DAY 2 - COPÁN

After an early breakfast, check out of the hotel and visit Guamilito Market, where you'll have time to explore various stalls to learn about typical foods and handicraft traditions in Honduras. Then, begin the three hour journey to Copán, stopping for lunch at a local restaurant en route. Situated in a small valley in western Honduras, Copán is considered the Athens of the Mayan civilization for its advancement in art and astronomy. Upon arrival, settle into the hotel with some time to rest and explore before gathering for a lecture by Prof. David Sedat on the Maya of Copán. An expert on the subject, Prof. Sedat has been recognized for his work in the underground tombs at Copán. Following the lecture, have dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Marina Copán. (BLD)*

DAY 3 - COPÁN

After an early breakfast, head to the Copán ruins to explore the site on foot with a local expert. The great ancient Mayan civilization flourished here, and it is now held in high regard for the vast amount of carved text and hieroglyphs found throughout the site. Archaeologists are working to enhance the restoration of the ruins, and learn more about the Mayans through the numerous inscriptions they left behind. See the carved heads of deities, the pyramid temples from which

kings ruled, the ball court where ancient games were played, the hieroglyphic stairway with its 63 carved steps, and the stone columns and sculptures in the central court. After a box lunch, visit the Copán Sculpture Museum to see the large and colorful replica of the Rosalila temple. Although most of us have become used to seeing Maya architecture and sculpture without any color, archaeological findings actually show that Maya cities were once adorned with stucco and bright paint. In addition to the Rosalila temple, the museum showcases both copies and originals of stelae, facades, altars, and other sculptures found in Copán. In the afternoon, return to the hotel and have the rest of the day at leisure. Dinner tonight will be on your own to explore the different options the town offers. *Overnight at Hotel Marina Copán. (BL)*

DAY 4 - COPÁN

After breakfast, visit to the home of a local archaeologist to learn about the history of cacao as a sacred Mayan beverage, and see a demonstration on transforming cacao into chocolate the Maya way! Next, head to a local school to gain a better understanding of the educational system in Honduras and interact with students on a walk-through. *Note: while it is*



not mandatory to bring anything, anyone wishing to do so might consider bringing basic school supplies such as pencils, erasers, pens, colored markers, etc. to donate during the visit. Afterwards, transfer to Hacienda San Lucas, a century-old farmhouse. Here, take a leisurely hike along the Copán River and nearby farmland, with a stop at Los Sapos ceremonial site for picturesque views overlooking the valley and town below. After lunch at the hacienda, enjoy some free time to relax among the quiet gardens and surrounding countryside. This biologically diverse area boasts over 400 avian species, so a birding enthusiast might spot the White-fronted Parrot, Emerald Toucanet, Turquoise-browed and Blue-crowned motmots, or Elegant Trogon. In the evening, bid farewell to Honduras with a poolside barbecue at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Marina Copán. (BLD)*

DAY 5 - ANTIGUA

Breakfast will be followed by the transfer to Antigua, Guatemala, with lunch served en route. *Note: The journey is approximately 6 hours. Border crossing fees are included.* After arrival and check-in at the hotel, have time to rest and explore. Before dinner, attend a presentation by a local expert on what's behind the walls of Antigua. Dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo Antigua. (BLD)*

DAY 6 - ANTIGUA

After breakfast, join our local expert for a walking exploration of historic Antigua, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Highlights include a visit to a monastery and the Jade Museum, which features carvings and replicas of pre-Columbian masks, figures, and ceremonial knives. After lunch at a local restaurant, visit San Antonio Aguas Calientes Textile Cooperative for an opportunity to observe weavers at work and the textiles they produce. Learn about the traditional costumes of Guatemala during a site lecture by a local expert. Dinner will be on your own to explore local options. *Overnight at Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo Antigua. (BL)*

DAY 7 - ANTIGUA

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the town of Chichicastenango, high in the mountaintops. A trip here would not be complete without an excursion to the famous colorful indigenous market filled with textiles, handicrafts, and food. After exploring the market, have lunch at Hotel Santo Tomas followed by a visit to the church of Santo Tomas. Discover how Maya religion has blended with Christianity during a site lecture by a local guide on the religious rituals of the people of Guatemala. Return to Antigua late in the afternoon. Dinner is on your own to explore the local options. *Note: Chichicastenango Market is only available Thursdays and Sundays. Overnight at Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo Antigua. (BL)*

DAY 8 - TIKAL

This morning after breakfast, go to Casa K'ojom Music Museum to see the traditional instruments of the Maya and enjoy a lecture on the evolution of Maya music. Casa K'ojom is a private, educational, non-profit research center and museum dedicated to research, preservation, and dissemination of the traditional music of the Mayan communities of Guatemala. The museum houses an important audiovisual archive including sound recordings, photographs, and video footage. Afterwards, transfer to Guatemala City and arrive in time for lunch. After lunch, visit the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology to see thousands of archaeological artifacts including pottery, stelae, masks, and jewelry. Then, transfer to the airport for late afternoon flight to Flores. Upon arrival to Flores, check in at hotel and have dinner. *Overnight at Hotel Villa Maya. (BLD)*

DAY 9 - TIKAL

After an early breakfast, set out for a full-day excursion at 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. Our expert local guide will provide an overview of the ruins and talk about the history and architecture of this impressive Maya complex. After lunch at the site, visit the Tikal Museum and see exquisite ceramics and artifacts

excavated from the archaeological site. Return to the hotel in the afternoon. Dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight at Hotel Villa Maya. (BLD)*

DAY 10 - BELIZE CITY

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and begin the transfer to Belize City. *Note: the journey is approximately four hours, and includes an immigration stop at the border. Immigration proceedings can take 30 minutes or more depending on staffing at the post and the number of vehicles waiting to cross the border. Border crossing fees are included.* Once on the Belizean side, meet with a local expert and visit the Mayan ruins at Cahal Pech and its onsite museum. Cahal Pech is one of the oldest Maya settlements in Belize: evidence of habitation dates back to 1200 BCE, and continued until the end of the Classic Maya Period around 900 CE. After lunch at a local restaurant, continue to Belize City and hotel check-in. Have time to rest and relax before dinner at the hotel's restaurant. *Overnight at Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina. (BLD)*

DAY 11 - BELIZE CITY

After an early breakfast, set out on an excursion to the ruins at Lamanai. This large Mayan ceremonial center is set in



WEAVING DEMONSTRATION BY ETEL CASTILLO

a tropical forest on the banks of the New River Lagoon and features spectacular temples and hundreds of carved structures. Highlights include the Jaguar Temple, High Temple, and Mask Temple. A beautiful panoramic view of the lagoon and surrounding jungle can be seen from the top of the High Temple. Unlike most Mayan sites, the ruins found at Lamanai were built in layers, each generation adding onto the existing structures. It is believed that this ancient center was occupied for more than 3,200 years, and perhaps as recently as the 18th century. After lunch at the site, return by boat to the dock at Orange Walk and drive back to Belize City. This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight at Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina. (BLD)*

DAY 12 - DEPARTURE

Early this morning, transfer to the international airport using the hotel's shuttle service for the return flight to the U.S. (B)

LAND PRICING

\$2,795 (10 participants + 1 leader)

\$2,495 (15 participants + 1 leader)

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, internal flights, private transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, local guides in each region for duration of program, and carbon offset.

International airfare, gratuities, or items of a personal nature are not included.

Valid for travel in 2021.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/ Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Non-refundable final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure.



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe



ACTIVITY LEVEL **3** MODERATE

WHAT TO EXPECT

This journey explores some of Central America's most important pre-Columbian archaeological sites, and traces that Mayan heritage to the contemporary cultures of three distinct nations. Your 12-day itinerary is moderately paced, starting with a one-night stay in San Pedro Sula followed by two- or three-night stays in four other destinations. Daily cultural activities are not strenuous, but last from 2–3 hours at a time. There is substantial walking at ruin sites where there are steps, cobble paths, and sandy or rocky ground. Look forward to interacting with local people through expert guest lectures and demonstrations; plus visits to museums, markets, local eateries, a farm, and a school. Expect warm, humid weather. The best time to come is during the "dry" season (December–April) when average daily temperatures are in the 80s. There are two internal border crossings and one internal flight. Overland travel is in private, air-conditioned motorcoaches; the longest transfer takes six hours.



LAMANAI BY LAURA HARE